

More editor's mail

Reader finds column 'appalling'

Dear Editor,
It was with shock and anger that I read the article entitled 'French-English debate divides Canada' and wish to comment on a number of the statements.

First of all, the number of unilingual Canadians is thankfully becoming smaller all the time with millions of immigrants, native peoples, Inuit, etc. who all speak two or more languages.

Further, school children in at least eastern Canada all take English and French.

When have you or these other unilingual Canadians been forced to speak and understand French outside of school?

Or is this a negative attitude from school days due to low grades or negative parents? I have never been forced to speak French

in the business world unless I chose to deal with a Francophone of my choice.

Also, I am appalled at your lack of knowledge of Canada. You state French is spoken regionally in Quebec, totally ignoring northern Ontario (try driving Hwy. 11 from North Bay onwards), the northern half of New Brunswick (a legal bilingual province), eastern Cape Breton Island, southern Manitoba, and pockets to the west.

You offend the Acadians, Metis, and northern Ontario peoples by labelling French as Quebec.

Should Quebec be given special status? I think so, as anyone who has ever travelled to that province immediately notices the distinct society (a great attraction for our U.S. neighbors, by the way).

Most Francophones have lived in Canada 300 to 350 years; they are not new immigrants demanding special status but were here centuries before English was ever heard north of the 13 Colonies.

The comment about a person in Moose Jaw learning French was also poorly thought out. The only way to stop dividing Canada is for both Anglophones and Francophones (not Quebecois) to learn and appreciate each other's languages.

Ignorance has always been the root of hatred, bigotry and intolerance and I'm afraid to say this article reflects much of these traits.

Why is 'Je me souviens' a negative message? Perhaps you were also offended by the

previous licence plate 'La belle province.' You should read some of the slogans of U.S. plates!

The danger of French disappearing was evident in the late '50s and early '60s in Quebec (and other French-speaking areas) when few billboards or advertising signs were ever in French.

In Quebec the small and wealthy English population literally controlled finances, management, corporate affairs, etc. I know from personal experience the Montreal Canadiens were forbidden to speak French while travelling even though the majority of them were Francophones.

The CBC just this past week did a news documentary on the disappearance of French from

some areas of Manitoba. Yes, the danger is there.

Finally, to form such negative attitudes because of once having experienced prejudice while ordering food in Quebec, and another time while trying to obtain directions is ludicrous and immature.

Have you never dealt with a surly waiter or waitress in Toronto, Moose Jaw, Vancouver or St. John's? And try asking people in New York, Chicago, or Calgary for directions. There are good and bad in all cities and they speak many languages. Don't try to pin surliness or rudeness on just Francophones.

Yours truly,
P.D. Browne,
Uxbridge

United way wants a winner

York Region's United Way needs assistance from local charities to determine who will be the area's volunteer of the year.

The recipient will be awarded the Douglas E. Lear Memorial Award, which is being given for the first time this year.

The award is named after Douglas Lear, a 33 year employee of Allstate who devoted much of his life to volunteerism.

The award is sponsored by the York Region United Way and the Allstate Foundation, and will be awarded annually to the volunteer in York "who best exemplifies service to his/her community in a human care service."

Allstate will also provide a cash award of \$500 to the recipient's charity of choice.

The award is open to volunteers of all registered charitable organizations.

A panel of judges will be formed from United Way and the Allstate Foundation. Deadline for entries is April 25 and the award will be presented May 16 at the annual United Way Campaign Awards Banquet.

Entry forms are available at the United Way office in Markham or by calling 474-9974.

HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

UP TO \$ **350** REBATE
FACTORY **CASH**

Make your best deal on ICG Heating and Air Conditioning products and still receive up to \$350 cash in factory rebates. But hurry. This offer ends March 31, 1990.



This offer is only available from participating dealers and cannot be combined with any other ICG offers. Call Cuthbertson today for details.



The comforting choice for Canadian homes

CUTHBERTSON

HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING



1-800-668-8619
176 BULLOCK DRIVE NO. 13
MARKHAM

471-4097

Located across from Markville



Photo/ANDRE WOLBERT

Newcomer's toast

Members of the Stouffville Newcomer's Club had a wine-tasting session recently and lifted a glass to toast both the club and the visit by Hillebrand Estates Winery official Helen Edwards (far right). With her are Newcomer's Club members (from left) Kathi Phillips, Nancy Kunzel, Laurel Roe and Suze Joyce.