

Letters to the Editor and other public writings

Description

****** HORIZON HIRES U DE M STUDENTS TO DO UNDERCOVER 'LANGUAGE AUDITS' ******

It's official. The undercover 'language police' in Horizon Health are indeed being paid... by Horizon Health. Our tax dollars hard at work.

This information was disclosed at Horizon Health's board meeting this past Thursday evening, and is reported on page 3 of today's Daily Gleaner. They have been hired to do undercover 'language audits' of Horizon's staff in regard to the 'active offer'. That means they're checking to see if they get, "Hello, Bonjour," every time they approach a staff member. Because, after all, it's the law that staff must use both languages in their initial communication with all members of the public.

What's more, the undercover agents are students from the Université de Moncton. Could Horizon not find enough bilingual students in each city, say from UNB in Saint John and Fredericton, for example, to spread the wealth? Or is there a reason why this and every divisive language issue in this province has some connection to U de M?

According to Margaret Melanson, vice-president of quality and patient-centred care for the Horizon Health Network, as quoted in the DG article, the health authority introduced new language policies last June to help improve its compliance with those laws.

She said, "The audits are more robust now in that they're targeted to particular departments and services. They measure a number of different contacts. This is not just one occasion, now, where someone approached a desk and did not, or did, receive an active offer. But it is a (targeted assessment of a) department where there are nine or 10 contacts made."

Apparently, when the floor was opened to members of the public, Fredericton resident Bob Biggar addressed the board of directors. He cited statistics he gathered from a public Horizon report which was released in September 2013. Those statistics showed that from April 2012 to March 2013, there were only 10 complaints lodged, out of a million people served in the Horizon network.

So Bob said, "My math isn't that great, pardon me, but with something that minuscule, does it really make sense for this issue to be receiving, given our limited resources – and we're talking about closing hospitals, closing beds, cutting nurses – does it really make sense that we put this kind of focus on whether someone is greeted in two languages? Seven out of those 10, just as a matter of interest, were not because the patient could not receive care in his or her own language. It was because they weren't greeted in two languages." Let's join together in sending kudos to Bob for talking sense!!!

Let this sink in: since 7 out of 10 complaints (out of one million people served) were simply people offended at not being greeted in 2 languages as our onerous language laws demand, Horizon is using your tax dollars to hire U de M students to go undercover, maybe even visiting ERs for fake issues, just to snoop on our dedicated Health employees. Once again we are seeing language lunacy that really is

too ludicrous to be made up.

John McGarry, CEO of the Horizon Health Network, explained that Horizon has actually done well at providing actual care in the language of a patient's choosing. Where it has struggled in the past, he said, was making the offer of service..the two-language greeting. He also noted that most people don't complain, but will simply convert to another language. "But the fact is the law in New Brunswick is the law," he said. He also said that he knows that may be an unpopular answer, and noted that many New Brunswickers find that policy frustrating. He is exactly right...we do find it frustrating!!

The article closed with another quote from McGarry: "It's really frustrating for us to deal with this. You have a problem with it, call your MLA, call the premier." We might, if we thought they actually cared.

But this is the crew which believes in segregating our children on buses according to their language, regardless of the fact that the actual families involved were content to share and get along.

And it's also the crew neglecting to include tolls on the nice highways between Moncton and Bathurst, or any of the roads in the top third of the province, from where our Premier and most of the Cabinet hails.

So I have a feeling they care not for what most of New Brunswick thinks about it.

Joyce Wright

NB Political Ponderings

Anglophones in New Brunswick need to work together for their rights, says NB Daily Star reader

Posted on 05/29/2016 by [James Risdon](#)

Dear editor:

For years a few groups have been aware of the subtle erosion of English rights in New Brunswick. But, the general public remained in a trance-like state, either choosing to ignore or totally unaware of their changing world.

Meanwhile the Acadians were organized and single-minded in their quest to take absolute control of the government, civil service and in general, and all provincial services. You have to admit that for a group representing 30 per cent of the province, they have achieved much. Some would say, as I do, too much.

Fortunately the sleeping giant has awakened, thanks in part to the draconian, heavy-handed approach taken by the (French) language commissioner. As an example pushing for French to be the language of the workplace, costly duplication of services, and separate school busing. Causing job loss or menial relocation for some. The list goes on.

Well, folks. it is time to take a stand but this time it will be different. Remember the CORE Party, they were unfairly branded as bigots, rednecks, anti French etc. They fell apart because of internal bickering

and negative press coverage. Then, the [Anglo Society of N.B.](#) was formed and have worked tirelessly to inform the unaware public of what has been happening on the language front.

A few years ago in the midst of the [Liberal Party](#)'s attempt to "Give away" N.B. Power to Quebec, Kris Austin organized and formed the [Peoples Alliance of New Brunswick \(PANB\)](#).

You will note that a [Progressive Conservative](#) MLA shooting for leadership of that party has taken portions of the PANB policy as part of his platform. A wise move on his part.

Another voice is the [Anglophone Rights Association of New Brunswick \(ARANB\)](#) They are working tirelessly to inform the public of where our tax dollars are being wasted by duplication of unnecessary services, also CAT, [Citizens Action Team](#), who publish one-page zingers on a regular basis.

With these groups on our side prepared to back us we can bring common sense back to our province. Support them, work with them, it's your future.

That's the way I see it.

Ted Ross, Miramichi

The EDITOR – PREDICTIONS!!

Have you ever heard of Nostradamus? You can be forgiven for not recognizing the name. He dates back to 1629, a few years even before my time.

He predicted many things, floods, pestilence, wars, earthquakes, eruptions etc; some with great accuracy, he would have been known as a "seer" in his time. Always considered controversial, but quite often his predictions materialized even after many centuries. There are others whose names escape me at the moment but nevertheless there are those who can and have predicted the future.

I will make a prediction and you may classify me as a silly old fool but regardless I predict that Canada will suffer a Civil War. Yes, a Civil War. A Civil War over language.

English verses French. The complacent English majority of Canada are slowly starting to awaken to the subtle and again not so subtle takeover of our once proud Nation.

Pierre Trudeau set things in motion in 1982, Louis Robichaud, the Premier of N.B. followed suit followed by Premier Hatfield who sold out for a few votes.

Think I'm crazy? Apply for a job with the civil service. If your surname is not French forget it. Better to buy a ticket out west. Even out there the Federal Government have sold out to the French zealots and demand bilingual abilities for Federal jobs.

When a minority language demands and receives precedence over the majority something has to be wrong. Do I hear politics? Right on, we are governed by a cowering few who haven't the courage to speak to the truth. Do we have a choice? You bet your butt!

The Peoples Alliance Party of New Brunswick realize that language fairness in a bilingual Province is far and away better than the confrontational approach offered by the present governing parties.

Need I say more?

That's the way I see it.

Sincerely,

Ted Ross

Dear Editor:

I see that the Commissioner of Official Languages is on the rampage again, this time demanding that all Commissionaires be bilingual.

This woman is an absolute menace. Instead of making reasonable suggestions that will unite people and encourage them to work together, she bulldozes ahead with her arrogant demands that incite and divide our linguistic communities. There is absolutely no need for all Commissionaires to be bilingual.

If a government office has a sign in their reception area clearly stating that services are available in both official languages, that is all that is necessary. Whoever is on duty will quickly and courteously provide someone who can converse in the language of choice, whether it be French in an anglophone area of the province or English in a francophone area.

The majority of Commissionaires are senior citizens who were brought up, educated, and employed in a unilingual society with no opportunity to learn French. Why, at this stage in their lives, should they be forced to learn a second language in order to hold a job?

The Corps of Commissionaires was originally formed to provide employment for former members of the armed forces, and many Commissionaire positions are still held by ex-military. What kind of message is our government sending to these people, and to the general populace – that these men and women are good enough to serve in our military, good enough to be prepared to fight and die for our country if necessary, but not good enough to work for our government in even a low-level job because they do not speak a second language?

Every member of every Legion throughout the province should be outraged at this disrespect to our veterans.

The politicians who instituted bilingualism in our country and in our province were no doubt well intentioned, although incredibly naïve. I know they would be appalled to see hardworking senior citizens being stripped of their livelihood by fanatical government officials who are abusing their powers

and instead of promoting equality between both official languages, as is their mandate under the Official Languages Act, are attempting to create francophone domination from the lowest to the highest levels of government.

If this recommendation is approved and put into force by the government, it will be one more resounding blow to the wedge that is separating and threatening to split apart our two linguistic communities.

Carol-Ann Noble
Saint John

Culture or Cult?

An early morning sunrise over New Brunswick. Isn't it beautiful? Now ask yourself this question. Is it beautiful in French or in English? Stupid question eh? Beautiful is beautiful in any language. We have an unbelievable group of citizens from many cultures in this Province who are kind, considerate and genuinely nice people. So, why does this government insist on rule based on division and segregation?

Before I carry on, let's take a look at the definition of 'Culture'. (I googled many definitions and boiled them down)

Culture: The customary beliefs, manners, etiquette, values, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group and is shaped by geography, profound historical events, and by foreign and internal forces.

Do you see what's missing in that description? Language. There was not one single definition of 'Culture' that I could find that mentioned 'Language' as a defining factor. Not one.

Last week we had to have our old family dog put down. When my 8 year old son found out he ran into the house sobbing. Was he crying in English? No. He was grieving. He loved his dog.

Death, Grief and Love know no language.

But if I tell him that the dog is now better off in Heaven, that is a belief. That belief is part of my culture.

When Pete gets a festering sore on his foot, is the infection French? No.

Pain and sickness know no language.

But tell him to take a piece of bread, wet it down with warm water, add salt and put it on the area to draw the infection out, that is an old learned and passed down cure. Traditions are a part of his culture.

When Luc spends time in the kitchen whipping up a big batch of poutine for his friends is he doing it in French? No, he's doing it for the joy of feeding his pals.

Hunger and Joy know no language.

It's poutine! What better example of French culture than that?

My Point?

Even though your Mother, Father, Relatives, Friends and fellow community members may use language to pass down, explain and teach you about your culture, it is not the language itself that defines it.

Travelling on a bus with English speaking kids is not going to harm the culture of Francophone children.

When you're in an accident and trapped in a burning car, having an English Firefighter cut you out and save your life isn't going to harm your culture.

Going to Service NB and having an English first language Agent serve you isn't going to harm your culture. Although you're just as likely of being served by a unicorn than an English Service NB agent.

But I digress.

Now let's talk about Language and Literacy in NB.

Recently, Lucie Martin, Vice President of the Francophone Teachers Association stated that upwards of 90% of students entering the Francophone school system can't speak French. Put this together with the latest Stats Canada poll where results showed 63% of adult Francophone New Brunswickers are functionally illiterate and you begin to see our ongoing problem in New Brunswick.

What does this mean?

The government of Canada defines someone who is functionally illiterate as an individual who has difficulty learning new occupational skills and for example in some cases wouldn't be able to read a drug label in order to correctly determine the appropriate dose.

If over 60% of Francophone adults are illiterate, what are they going to believe? They're going to believe what they are told by their leaders who speak their mother tongue. People they have trusted to hold their best interest.

Which leads me to the definition of a Cult: A relatively small group of people having religious beliefs or practices regarded by others as strange or sinister. Within a cult there are generally leaders and followers.

So when you have the educated Francophone elite like Gallant, Rousselle, Boudreau, D'Entremont, Doucet and others bastardizing and hiding behind their twisted interpretation of the constitution, claiming that duplication of services in French is a right and preserving their culture..... It's a lie. They segregate the illiterate and naive, feeding them full of false prophesy and stories of English boogeymen and assimilation. Our current Provincial government puts the 'Cult' in Culture.

It's been over 40 years of official Bilingualism in this province. Telling New Brunswickers to 'Just learn French' is a fallacy and a deception that is killing the province. It's a barrel full of poison Kool-Aid.

I wish somebody could tell me what their end game is. Is it about holding power over the masses? Separation? Money? Securing jobs for the French population to get votes?.....Or is it some whacked out lingering vendetta over 1755 which if you know your history was about war, loyalty and religion....not language. Whatever it is, it's got to stop!

-Closing schools and cutting Teachers jobs.

-Gouging the life savings from Seniors.

-Forcing French and English young people west to find work.

-Ignoring your own task force recommendation and putting a youth mental health care facility 300km away from the recommended ideal location just to 'pay for votes'.

-Trying to pass legislation to move electoral ridings to favor your party in the next election.

-Pushing language laws on the Private sector

-Bullying government workers to fear for their jobs if they question duality.

-Grossly uneven distribution of funds and blatant favoritism for government jobs to gain favor over the Francophone population.

You can't continue to dump money into duplicating services when this province is so far in debt. Doing so while perpetuating the lie that duality and official bilingualism are here to preserve French culture is like forgetting to buy firewood for winter and burning the boards off your own house to stay warm. It's your 'right' to burn your own house and you can hope that winter won't come next year, but don't fool yourself....Winter is coming!

STOP BURNING DOWN OUR HOUSE!!!

ALL New Brunswickers are starting to wake up and see Gallant and company for who they truly are. When your actions hurt both the English and French people of this Province, claiming that those who speak-up are Anti-French and Bigots doesn't work anymore. The United Citizens of New Brunswick are here....we're watching and we won't rest until we get our Province back!

Culture is not defined by language.

French is not a religion.

New Brunswick is broke and broken.

.....and every year more and more citizens aren't here to enjoy a beautiful New Brunswick sunrise.

Enough!

Markus Harvey

******* LANGUAGE LUNACY PERSISTS IN PROVINCE *******

Do you remember hearing about our Language Commissioner, Katherine d'Entremont, making a complaint to her own office about commissioner Wayne Grant, then investigating that complaint herself, and then writing a report based on that complaint? Remember how Wayne ended up fired, then re-hired to work a parking lot? Well, I hope you didn't assume that Wayne's removal was the end of that matter. It wasn't.

Her self-written report into that self-initiated complaint (released in March 2016) called on the provincial government to require that all commissioners who deal with the public be bilingual. Keep in mind that d'Entremont only has the power to recommend changes; she is not able to enforce her recommendations. At the time, Cabinet minister Donald Arseneault said bilingualism is important to the government "regardless of how services are delivered to the public" and that it would review the recommendations.

Now, two commissioners working at the Vitalité Health Network Community Mental Health Centre on Albert Street in Moncton are being removed from their jobs because they aren't bilingual. Commissioners are responsible for security services, and for greeting those who come to the building. 61-year old Doug Dickinson, from Riverview, and 67-year old Ward MacDonald both received letters from the Canadian Corps of Commissioners stating they are being "administratively removed" from their jobs effective June 3. The letter says they do "not possess the required linguistic skills" and the move is "not performance related."

Doug is a 23-year veteran of our military, and has served overseas. He's good enough to serve the country, and hence this province, but he's not good enough to greet visitors at a government facility in NB. How's that for a "Thanks for your service" move?

In a written statement to CBC News, Pieter Kramers, the chief executive officer of commissioners in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, says the decision to implement bilingual security services was prompted by its client, Vitalité.

Are you wondering what prompted Vitalité to prompt the corps to make this move? Well, Vitalité Health Network says it received notice from the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages for New Brunswick that said office intended to launch an investigation following a complaint, from a citizen, about a "deficiency in the OFFER (emphasis mine) of service in both official languages". Did you catch that? The complaint wasn't about whether or not the person got what was needed at the visit to the building. The complaint was simply that they weren't greeted in two languages. That's it, so it seems.

So, because Vitalite knows full well what the wrath of the Language Commissioner can entail in the the dreaded language 'reports', "Vitalité Health Network proceeded to evaluate the facts surrounding the matter." And, horror of horrors, it was found that, yes indeed, someone had neglected to say, "Hello, Bonjour". Or, in their words, "there indeed was a deficiency in the OFFER (emphasis mine) of services in both official languages." Not a lack of service. Not a lack of care. But a lack of a dual greeting, it seems.

And so two good, competent men get fired. Both men say they would take French courses if they were paid for. But that's not an option, of couse. They must all of a sudden be bilingual, it seems, even though they were adults when New Brunswick was first declared "officially bilingual".

Meanwhile, the language commissioner has also completed an investigation into the City of Fredericton following two complaints from members of the public regarding English-only communication. One of the complaints was related to the city's Water and Sewer Division; did a sewer worker wielding a shovel greet a passerby in English only? It could be that trivial. The other complaint related to the Fredericton Fire Department's social media accounts (English tweets seem to be the culprit there, which seems to be a problem even though many MLAs tweet in French only). The language office said the investigation was also extended to include the Fredericton Police Force's social media platform. Yes, she unilaterally chose to 'extend' her investigation. She can do that, you see.

Although d'Entremont's report into that investigation is not being published, her office said the main "recommendation" of the report stated that Fredericton must be able to "produce and publish public information simultaneously in both official languages, including on social media platforms."

A city spokesperson confirmed that the city had received an official complaint from the language office. That complaint is "still being processed along with the development of the city's understanding of the issue and appropriate action," according to the spokesperson's statement. I am anxious to see what they will do. Likely something drastic, like Vitalite did.

You see, that's the nature of things in NB. As we found out with Wayne Grant, the Language Commissioner can be the 'citizen' making the complaint. Then, she can 'investigate' that complaint herself. And she can 'expand the scope' of an investigation at her whim, whether or not she is the complainant. Then, she writes her damning reports on the 'injustices' she finds....and the institutions targeted scurry to obey her 'recommendations'. Or, like Vitalite, they scurry at the mere threat of one of her investigations.

Every time the PCs and Liberals have been in power, language laws have been expanded and broadened (e.g. the closed-door reviews and hand-picked contributors in 2012), to the point that it is ludicrous. Each time they are in opposition, they pay lip service to words like 'equality' and 'fairness'...but that's as far as it goes. They do not table any motions that would really change things. They feign outrage over dual busing...until they throw their hat into the leadership ring (e.g. MacDonald).

While I like David Coon of the Green Party, he wanted language sign laws to apply to all private businesses, everywhere in NB. So that shows where he stands on the issue.

Dominic Cardy of the NDP also seems to support the language laws, based on several media articles which can be found online, and on a CBC panel insisted the problem is lack of access to education in

the French language.

Lack of access is a problem. But the bigger problem is that 'service in the language of choice' has been usurped by petty nonsense like being greeted in two languages. It has also been misinterpreted to mean that 'employees must be bilingual', and that access to service must be 'immediate and in-person', thereby denying the right for NB to jump feet-first into the 21st century and use -*gasp*- technology such as instant video links and language lines to help make up for any gaps in personnel linguistic ability. You know...like the rest of the 21st-century world does.

If there is any hope of restoring common sense to NB, we must elect a party and its people who are actually calling for common sense interpretation and application of what it means to offer service in the language of choice. We must elect a party that will not hold secret reviews with hand-picked contributors representing only one side of the equation. So I'll stick with the People's Alliance in 2018. They fit that bill nicely.

I am so sick and tired of the language lunacy in this province.

Are you? If so, are you willing to do something about it? I hope so!

Joyce Wright

NB Political Ponderings

This was published in the Daily Gleaner – April 2016

Dear Editor,

Several thoughtful individuals have contacted me recently with ideas to help ameliorate the bilingual problem.

A well known human rights professor suggested that the Office of Commissioner of Official Languages be dismantled and replaced with an office of 'linguistic and cultural harmony' shared jointly by a Francophone and an Anglophone. The objective would be to promote better relations between the two language groups and to ensure proportional job distribution in the Civil Service and Crown Corporations.

Currently, jobs designated as bilingual give French applicants a hugely unfair advantage. Stringent French language tests favor those who have been raised in French and have completed their education in French. Over the past 20 years, 94% of all jobs advertised as bilingual were awarded to a Francophone. French Immersion has apparently not leveled the playing field in any meaningful way. In essence, 'bilingual' means French.

Another suggestion is that a citizen's task force, comprised of Anglophones and Francophones, be appointed to study all aspects of bilingualism and duality. Their mandate would be to formulate a language solution that is fair to both sides. It could possibly become the basis of a more equitable Official Languages Act.

I hope the suggestions presented in this letter find favor with reasonable people on both sides of the linguistic fence.

Sincerely,
Jim Cogle

Doug Dickison had our backs for 23 years while serving with the Canadian Military. Why can't this province have his back now?

To lose his job over bilingualism is unbelievable and unacceptable. Shame on you!

Bilingualism is causing problems within our beautiful province, duality is creating bankruptcy!

I am neither a racist nor a bigot, but rather a realist!

Lyn MacNeil

Riverview

LETTERS FROM TED ROSS MARCH 1, 2016

TO THE EDITOR:

What is the true cost of Bilingualism and what are the benefits?

An article in the local paper would suggest that the cost is outrageous. Fifty Six Thousand Dollars (\$56,000.00) for translation of a planning document? I would hope that number was a misprint but even if it were \$5,600.00, that would be extreme.

Now I see the plan is to change all signs to a bilingual format. Of course there will be no cost to that!! If the Chatham Water Tower is part of that plan you had better hire armed guards. I still cannot see the benefit. I wonder how many people can truthfully say that they do not speak English. I do know that some people lied on a census to increase their numbers.

But I digress. Our City must be rolling in dough. Forty five Thousand Dollars (\$45,000.00) to view a property. Countless ignored studies that cost \$20 to \$25,000.00 collecting dust on a remote shelf at city hall. The Compass Point Survey at over \$250,000.00 that was being ignored until enough pressure was put on City officials that they had to act.

Our City must be THE MARITIME JOKE.

Dieppe N.B. has the right idea. They declared their City French. Look at the savings.

Miramichi should take heed and do the same, declare the City English and save millions of our taxpayer dollars.

If it is so important to City officials put it to a vote. Add a question to the next municipal election ballot. That way all city dwellers will have a vote, not just a few agitators. Appeasement will never please everyone, not even the appeased so let's get honest and let the citizens decide.

That's the way I see it.

Sincerely

Ted Ross

March 1, 2016

One complaint and two more English people lose their jobs due to bilingualism. One has to wonder who made the complaint. Maybe the same person as the Wayne Grant case. What is so wrong with us giving the active offer and then finding someone to speak to them in French? What happened to the statement that no one would lose their job over bilingualism? That's how this was presented and that's why it was accepted in this province. What has this province come to? Shame on us; English and French for letting it go this far. Bilingualism is not an asset to this province. Any benefit it did have has been washed away by the discrimination taking place now by our provincial leaders of the last 10 years. They will not stop until they've driven all English citizens to retirement or to another province. It's time everyone stood up and said this is not what we signed up for. The relationship between our two linguistic groups will only get worse as long as the pendulum continues to swing in the other direction.

"The EDITOR"

Is there waste in DUPLICATION?

You be the Judge. There is a School in Quispamsis, Kindergarten to Grade 5. Eighteen classrooms, a double Gym, a multi purpose room, Music and Art rooms, a Library, Cafeteria and a 9 by 9 padded quiet room for children who are out of control. Can you imagine your five year old being locked up in that padded cell for an hour or so!!

COST: Fourteen Million Dollars.

In all, room for 350 Students. As of December 2015 they had enrolled 153 students.

Oh! I forgot to mention this is French only territory.

One hundred and fifty students travel to and fro by segregated, French only, School Bus.

Three Students travel to and from School daily by Taxi at a cost of over \$2500.00 per month. Yes, that is Twenty five Hundred Dollars per Month paid for by the School District not the parents.

How is that for fair and conscientious use (waste) of YOUR TAX Dollars?

I thought racial segregation went out of style a hundred years ago but here it is 2016 and our government is committed to this draconian scheme and continue to promote it at all costs.

A quote from Thomas Jefferson; "To compel a man to subsidize with his taxes the propagation of ideas which he disbelieves and abhors is sinful and tyrannical." Wise words from a wise man.

Time to elect a real government in New Brunswick, one that represents the citizens not the University of Moncton.

That's the way I see it.

Sincerely,
Ted Ross"

I am writing this as a concerned taxpayer in this province of NB.

I have been watching and reading many of the concerns of other NBers and something comes to the forefront. There seems to be a very distinct level of concern and discontent around the use and abuse of the province's school buses , in particular those used by the Francophone school districts.

As I assume you are aware , there a numerous full sized buses running for many kms , to and from Francophone schools and residences , and many of those buses carry 1 or 2 children the entire route!

One situation in particular that I took upon myself to follow operates in the Francophone Sud district . The situation I had heard about was that 2 children are carried from Ecole Ste Anne , all the way to Harvey NB , a distance of approx. 50 km one way. So I went to Harvey and waited for him and sure enough , at about 330 along came a bus from Ecole Ste Anne carrying not 2 but 1 child ! .

Here is the part that frustrates me ,, an hour later , along came another French bus which I followed as well . Guess where it went ... to the same residence as the first one..

So there you have it , 2 children , 2 buses, same residence , 1 hour apart ,, So that is 100 Kms 1 way , out and back into F'ton, =200 kms + 1 bus in the morning 2 ways another 100kms . Total 300 kms / day , 3 buses , 3 drivers , gas (full size buses) , maintenance , salaries , Not to mention the air pollution..

So why can't these 2 children attend school in Harvey ? There is Immersion offered there.

Now this is just 1 case out of many , many of them . I will continue to try my best to track them down and publish what I learn for all NBers to be made aware of the waste of our tax dollars , manpower to further someone's apparent plan to promote Segregation in our province .

Could it be that you don't have enough faith in the Immersion program to send your French kids there ? But you feel its adequate for Anglophone kids .

Could it be you KNOW Immersion program isn't working ? Could it be you feel YOUR kids deserve better ?

Could it be the school itself doesn't reach your standards for YOUR kids , but you deem them ok for Anglophone s?

Could it be you KNOW it's substandard and you want YOUR kids to have all the advantages they can over Anglophones in the job market when they graduate ?

Could it be you are afraid the class sizes ,being so much larger than the Francophone ones , would be detrimental to YOUR childrens' education quality ?

Whatever your reasons sirs , WE the NB Taxpaying majority DEMAND to know your rationale.

We DEMAND to hear whether you truly feel you & YOUR children are superior to OURS.

We DEMAND to have our questions answered now, not months hence.

We DEMAND to have our questions answered by YOU 2 gentlemen , not to be handed off to Donald Arsenault and his ilk.

As you can see , this letter is being copied to the Editor of the Daily Gleaner , so assuming they will post it (that remains to be seen I expect) Please understand there may be many many more interested in your response(s) forthwith/

Yours Truly
Bob Biggar

The word 'segregation' has no place in N.B. language debate PATRICK O'BRIEN & MIRELLE CYR COMMENTARY

Over the past year, the word "segregation" has gained popularity in comments regarding linguistic duality in the province.

This word is frequently tossed around in letters to the editor, social media and opinion pieces. Again this month, there have been several mentions of segregation, sometimes in direct reference to the historical concept. Does the historical meaning of segregation reflect the situation in New Brunswick? How can the historical significance of the word segregation in the United States prior to the civil rights movement be compared to New Brunswick's linguistic duality? What is to be gained by comparing New

Brunswick's efforts in language preservation and vitality through the use of such heavy terms?

Segregation is a historically charged concept that is commonly recognized for the United States'forced racial segregation until the mid-1900s. The struggle of racial discrimination during this period was based on an oppressed group's desire to gain equal representation in society and before the law.

Efforts from this minority to end segregation were based on the notion that this division symbolized a lesser worth of their group. Recently, some New Brunswickers have presented a comparative argument that sensationalizes the connotation of discrimination by unfairly referring to language-specific services as segregation in an attempt to attach emotions of injustice and unfairness.

The situation in New Brunswick has never been about saying that one group is better than another, it is simply about ensuring that both groups are treated equally. In fact, New Brunswick's separate institutions were created to protect the rights and equality of all New Brunswickers. The francophone community of New Brunswick, with the support of English-speaking community leaders, worked tirelessly to obtain these fundamental rights that protect New Brunswick's official language landscape.

Social leaders, including Mr. Justice Sopinka's Supreme Court of Canada decision in regards to the special education context (Eaton), have noted that segregation can be both protective of equality and violative of equality depending upon the person, group, and state of the situation.

It is important for a concrete distinction to be made. As previously mentioned, the historical segregation of the U.S. was indicative of a lesser value associated with the minority, while today, our distinction in linguistic duality is meant to protect the equality of all individuals. This is why we must refrain from using such an emotionally charged and historically loaded term as segregation in the discussion of hard earned rights for protective separation and linguistic duality.

Using the events surrounding the civil rights movement as comparison is a gross misappropriation of their struggle and fight. This use of the term impedes the thoughtful development of equality rights and progress in our own communities. The misuse of the term segregation and the projection of an image that our diversity is hindering our collective prosperity is not conducive to our province's advancement on the world stage.

Official recognition of our distinct community needs is not a form of segregation in the common knowledge sense of the term. In our local context, distinction in services seeks to reaffirm the equal worth of the people and is not an attempt to justify a belief that different groups are of unequal value and worth. It is a means of protecting communities to ensure their equality and collective prosperity.

Dialogue New Brunswick believes in and encourages healthy and open-minded conversations between communities. However, we find it alarming that the term segregation is being brought into the discussion. We fear this is done without proper recognition of the historical symbolism of the term. Everyone needs to remember that it is not just a word, it represents a concept with great history and consequence.

Let us be clear, we are not saying that there are no conversations to be had about the importance of New Brunswick's social cohesion. Rather, this is a call to action to ask that we remain vigilant about the influence and consequences of the concepts and examples used when trying to convey our perspective. Discussions must remain respectful in order to be fruitful.

PATRICK O'BRIEN AND MIRELLE CYR

ARE CO-CHAIRS OF DIALOGUE NEW BRUNSWICK, A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION THAT PROMOTES AND CELEBRATES UNDERSTANDING, RESPECT, APPRECIATION AND INCLUSION AMONG THE FRANCOPHONE AND ANGLOPHONE CULTURES OF NEW BRUNSWICK.

Taken from today's Daily Gleaner

I have to admit that I have been really frustrated and angry about the way the language issue in NB has been forcing English people out of government jobs and creating an environment where the majority are not treated as equals.

As tax payers and citizens of this province we can't afford to continue the way things are going. Now we have anglophone and francophone schools and some are trying to create a separate bussing system. This does not build unity, it creates an environment where we don't understand or interact with each other.

This madness has to stop, we are creating an environment where English and French resent each other and things like this are only creating a bigger divide and creating more tension between the two communities.

I have always considered myself to be fair and I treat everyone equal. I have and do work with french people and have never had any problems.

But my frustration has become so bad that when I hear a french accent, hear someone speak french, see signs in french or even see an Acadian flag or anything I get angry and feel hate for all of them. I know I'm not the only English person who feels this way.

I don't want to hate these people it's wrong. They are my neighbours and people I talk to every day. We all have to live together in this province. The problem is a few people in positions of power have agendas and they have to be stopped or they are going to destroy NB. The bilingual system as it stands is not serving everyone equally and is going to bankrupt our province divide us.

French people have to take a stand against these people also. I suspect they feel like they have more to loose than English people do but they have to remember that 40 years ago or more when bilingualism started it was supported by English people who wanted everybody to be equal. now french people have to do the same if we are going to become a thriving province where we can afford to live.

I'm not against bilingualism or french people, I am against the current system we have because it is too expensive, it doesn't serve everyone equally and it is dividing our province. – Gus

School bus systems have many moving parts

I am not opposed to the idea of bilingual buses, but people need to realize that there is a lot more involved than meets the eyes.

For instance, the French and English districts operate independently of one another, meaning that PD days are scheduled on different days. After the province's dismal results at the national level some years ago, the French schools increased class time. So in the Fredericton region, English students end school at noon on Wednesdays and French students later. This involves the bus drivers' union.

Then there is the issue of bus routes. In the Fredericton region, English high school students have a high school on each side of the river and one in Oromocto; French students have one. This means that the bus drivers must get everyone to their school on time, yet not too early as to require extra staffing at the schools with the added expenses. Route planning will be intricate.

Finally, there is the question of language on board buses. New kindergartners will not know the other language, so the bus driver will need to effectively speak both languages for the sake of their safety.

Also, if we truly want the bus to be bilingual, then there must be a rule that one day, everyone on the bus must speak English, and the next, everyone must speak French, and so on; otherwise, I can guarantee you that by January, the buses will become unilingual English. For such rules to be implemented effectively, the bus drivers will need to be fluently bilingual. Will the people who complain about the unnecessary cost of the current bus system be the same complaining when unilingual bus drivers lose their jobs, or the other language is imposed on their children?

As one may see, if we are determined to implement the idea of bilingual buses, given the many stakeholders involved and the nature of some of the issues, we cannot realistically expect this idea to be implemented overnight, it will take time. Maybe, this will give unilingual bus drivers the chance to learn another language and not lose their job.

Guy Vezina FREDERICTON

****** LIBERALS INTERFERE WITH INDEPENDENCE OF COURT SYSTEM ******

Honestly, the low, low, low levels this Liberal government is stooping to really continue to amaze me. Probably shouldn't, though. They likely know they only have 2 and 1/2 years left to wreak the havoc they need to wreak, so, in the words of a famous TV personality, they want to "Git 'r' done."

In case you haven't heard about this latest and very alarming issue, I want to spell it out for you here.

The Liberals have put forward a bill that will directly interfere with the independence of our judicial system if it passes its third reading (it has already passed 2, thanks to the Liberal majority). Right now, the Judicature Act leaves it up to the chief justice alone to decide where judges for the Court of Queen's Bench should live. That provision was added to the Act in 2001 by the PC government of Bernard Lord.

This Liberal bill, which will amend the Judicature Act, wants to remove that independence. If it passes, the chief justice will not be able to designate "a new place of residence" for a judge "without first obtaining the consent" of the Minister. This effectively gives the Minister of Justice (currently Minister Horsman) veto power over the Chief Justice's (currently David Smith) decisions on where judges of the Court of Queen's Bench should live.

To be clear, Horsman couldn't identify any problems that have come up in the past years while the chief justice alone has decided where to assign a judge to live. According to the CBC, Horsman referred in vague terms to having seen "a lack of communication between agencies and departments." When questioned further by the Opposition, Horsman read a prepared statement that said the government wants to "balance the responsibilities and rights of all parties." There is no 'balancing' of judicial independence. Horsman should know that.

Horsman also said this amendment would help the government ensure everyone has access to justice in the official language of their choice. But he is ignoring the fact that such access is already ensured effectively by judges under the current independent structure. Grasping at the language-rights rationale is a common go-to for the the Liberals and PCs to justify anything they try to do. And it's idiotic. Especially in regard to this amendment. The fact that the independence of the judicial branch of government is obviously troubling to the Liberals for some as-yet-unknown reason should concern every citizen. You can bet there is indeed a self-serving, or crony-serving, reason that they are trying to 'fix what ain't broken', as the saying goes.

Horsman claims that, before tabling the bill, he met with judges “at all levels” to discuss the change. He clarified that Chief Justice David Smith of the Court of Queen’s Bench — the judge whose power would be curtailed by the bill — was away at the time of the meeting. Then, Horsman said that he had spoken to New Brunswick Court of Appeal Chief Justice Ernest Drapeau (who just happens to be the judge hearing the dual bus case), and Chief Justice Judy Clendenning, whom Smith left in charge during his own absence.

Chief Justice Smith says he was surprised and concerned to find out that the Liberals want to give an elected politician a veto over his decisions on where judges should be based. His comments are a rare public intervention by a sitting judge; he has asked to meet with Horsman, and has received only one reply to the three letters he wrote to Horsman asking for information and answers. Smith wants to know, “...what urgency could have precipitated the origin and presentation of this bill without consultation with the chief justice of the court that is affected by this new legislation.”

Smith also writes that in some other provinces, the chief justice consults with the attorney general on where judges should be based. “This seems a reasonable courtesy to which I would have no objection,” he added, but he says writing a veto into law may go too far.

Nicole O’Byrne, who is a University of New Brunswick law professor, said the veto may be unconstitutional because it would create the perception that the government “is either punishing or rewarding judges by having the final say with respect to their residence.” That’s even more of a problem in cases where the province is a party to a court case, like NB is with the dual bus issue. “It really can’t be seen to be influencing judges in any way,” she said.

But of course, that’s what the Liberals want, I’m sure...to be able to influence judges, that is. Perhaps it will be their little carrot on the end of the stick. The Minister of Justice (a laughable title, in this circumstance) could literally say, “Oh, so your spouse got a transfer and you want one too? Your ruling had better go the way the government wants, and maybe I’ll agree to that move.”

NB is getting to be a very scary place to live under the Liberals, isn’t it? Would you want to go to court, for any reason at all, knowing that the judge’s ability to sit in that particular bench hangs in the balance of the government of the day? I wouldn’t.

Whatever the yet-undisclosed reason behind this serious overreach of the Legislative branch of government, this amendment needs to be scrapped. Let your MLA know you aren’t happy with this, and want it voted against. They will likely ignore you. If you do get a response, it will be a pre-written blurb full of government-speak garbage. And they will vote according to party lines.

Remember that in 2 1/2 years when we go to the provincial polls. And then cast your vote for a candidate that will have the....intestinal fortitude, shall we say...to vote for what's right even when it goes against party lines. And make sure that Candidate is representing a party which hasn't been bought and paid for by special interest groups and back-door dealings.

If we have a province left in 2 1/2 years, the only hope it will have is your vote at the ballot box in September of 2018.

Don't take it lightly. Please.

Dear Editor:

Bob Biggar really hit a lot of nails on the head in his open letter to Premier Brian Gallant regarding his mishandling of all aspects of governing, especially duality and bilingualism.

Being of Acadian descent myself, I feel it's alright for me to speak out on the issue without somebody accusing me of being a bigot. But this province has really gone overboard on this effort to appease the minority French-speaking population and it's driving us over the fiscal cliff.

Bilingualism is great but duality and segregation are something else. Yes, I am aware that historically the French-speaking Acadians were discriminated against and had difficulty getting jobs and promotions in the English-speaking business world. Yes, I was raised in Moncton in the 1950s and '60s when anti-French bigotry under Mayor Leonard Jones was a scandal and I am ashamed that such events happened in my city.

It was when Louis J. Robichaud brought in the Equal Opportunities program that things started to turn around. The poorest counties where most of the Acadians lived were given more money for better schools and education and the Université de Moncton was established. Acadians began to break out from their small neighbourhoods and take their rightful place in the economy and governing of the province. The goal was equality and I believe it was attained.

However, it seems that when an oppressed people break free from the shackles that held them in poverty for so many generations, that there is a backlash and the pendulum swings the other way so that they are no longer happy with equality, but they now have more and more demands that strain the resources of this small province. Besides a small but vocal minority, I think that the majority of Acadians are quite happy to have their children travel together on the same bus with the English children.

And English parents are eager to have their children enrolled in bilingual education, because they all know the benefits of bilingualism. I am not a native of Bathurst which, next to Dalhousie and Edmundston, is probably the most completely bilingual city in NB and over the years, I have picked up a bit of French.

But I find it hard to improve my skills. Why? Because whenever they detect my English accent, they are so gracious that they immediately switch over to English.

I will never become proficient.

Ron Jessulat
Bathurst

***** SEGREGATION, SIDESTEPPING, AND SOOTHERS ******

From segregating children on buses, to being anything but neutral in its bus question before the court, to patronage use of a new and Liberal-friendly media site run by a guy who helped Brian with his campaign, to stalling on a decision to de-legislate a massive property tax bonus for a massive company, to increasing government spending and the debt, to adjourning the Legislature in order to avoid Question Periods and thus limit democratic debate, this Liberal provincial government is truly bent on destroying this province from within.

Let's just recap some of these things in everyday terms, so we can truly understand just how incompetent and corrupt our government is.

Last year, Education Minister Serge Rousselle, who is also the Attorney General for NB, found out that in this officially bilingual province, there were bilingual buses carrying both French and English children to their respective schools. GASP!!!! He quickly put a stop to that. After all, in a bilingual province, how dare we have bilingual buses! The broke and in-debt government quickly forced the purchase of new school buses, so they can travel the same routes with half or less of the number of students on board.

Then, after a public outcry regarding the duality in busing, Serge in his role as AG decided to ask the NB Court of Appeals if segregation on school buses is required and protected by the Constitution. The first hearing for that matter was yesterday. And the judge was quite alarmed that Rousselle, as NB's supposedly neutral AG, was going to argue for the province in favor of segregation, thus proving that neither he nor the question are neutral at all. As if there was really any doubt about that....!

Meanwhile, in other 'news': Huddle News, which is based in Saint John and has a decidedly Liberal-friendly flair, was co-founded in the not-too-distant past by one Allan Gates of Saint John. Gates was one of Brian Gallant's campaign top dogs in 2014, that being the social media advisor for the campaign. The NB government has made a point of paying for some advertising on Huddle (amounts still unknown). Furthermore, Allan Gates was invited to several so-called

“hot button issues” meetings with Premier Brian Gallant last year and to a “strategic considerations” meeting as well. Coincidence...or patronage?

Now, let’s consider an item that began in 2008. The council of the City of Saint John voted in that year to give the Irving Canaport site a break on its municipal taxes. In order to do that, the province had to write, and pass, special legislation for that one item. Which the provincial government did, just 108 days after the City’s request. The tax concession freezes property taxes at the LNG site at \$500,000 per year until 2030...no matter how much the site earns or what its value is. The deal saves Irving Oil \$7.5 million per year in annual municipal property taxes.

Saint John Council has now decided it needs those taxes. As such, it voted to ask the province to repeal that bit of legislation. It has been ten weeks since the City’s request to the province, and they’ve not heard a whisper back from the Minister of Environment and Local Government (whose department handles such requests), or Premier Gallant....or even Victor Boudreau!!!! It’s already too late for a repeal to take effect before the provincial government sends out this year’s property tax bills on March 1. Is it possible that the provincial government is stalling to see if the scheduled municipal elections on May 9 will change the composition of the Saint John council enough to undo the request? Or are they just too afraid to admit there’s not a chance they’ll repeal any such legislation?

Yes, the City of Saint John is in dire financial straits. So is the province, as the bad budget tabled two weeks ago proves. They ‘cut’ \$296M in spending, and increased the provincial revenue stream by \$293M...but the budget still increases total spending for this year by \$303M!!!! And it adds half a BILLION dollars to our debt.

Let me put the provincial budget in everyday terms. Let’s say that in our household budget, our expenses total \$2200 per month. But we only earn \$2000 per month. We are going ‘in the red’ by spending \$200 more than we bring in every single month. That \$200 is our deficit, and it’s not a good thing. We might also have unsecured loans or credit card debt, and the payments on that debt are contributing to our monthly deficit. So we decide to do an overhaul of our finances. We find ways to save \$296 per month by cutting out some expenses, meaning we are no longer running ‘in the red’ and are actually coming ahead by \$96 each month. Good job!

But then we send our spouse out to get a third or fourth job and increase our earnings by \$293 each month as well. So we are now bringing in our previous earnings of \$2000, plus the new income of \$293, for monthly income of \$2,293. We were spending \$2,200 per month, but now we’re only spending \$1,904. Therefore, our household’s bottom line should look a little better, right? We should be coming ahead by \$389 per month, and we could even use that extra cash to pay down our debt faster.

So what on earth would make the expenses in our household budget exceed our previous one by \$303 per month? Why, that would mean we cut out the Kraft dinner and Timmy's, but went, for example, and got a loan for a new truck (thereby increasing your debt further), complete with a new monthly payment of \$599 (spending the \$296 we 'saved' by reducing other costs, and adding another \$303 to it besides). You can bet your spouse won't be happy with that new budget. Neither should we be happy with this provincial budget.

And since we're not happy with it, this Liberal government decided to close the Legislature for six weeks so they don't have to face grilling questions about this budget or anything else in Question Period. They are sidestepping the democratic process. Normally, members of the Opposition can ask the government any question at all during Question Period. On any topic. Not so with 'Committee' sessions like Gallant and his crew are doing now. Questions in committee can only be asked on the topic at hand, and that topic just so happens to be set by the Liberal government. So if a new and pressing topic hits the province, there is no time or place for the Opposition members to ask about it.

Think about this: under this new plan, the Gallant government is scheduled to face just 26 daily question periods for this session, which will close in May. The modern low of 23 question periods was set in 1991 by the first government of Frank McKenna, which didn't even have any Official Opposition which could ask questions. How's that for 'transparency and accountability', the words which were tossed around so lightly by the Liberals during the campaign? How's that 'fresh face of politics' working for us, hmmmmm???

Oh, but wait! They are considering making a new 'holiday' in February! So I guess all must be well. A soother has been offered to the masses. Don't be one who is fooled by the soother into thinking this government is actually a kind and generous caregiver who has your best interests at heart.

They aren't. And they don't. They just want you to shut up and go to sleep so they can do whatever they want.

JW

This is a tale of two boys, Timmy and Pierre.

Timmy and Pierre are next door neighbors in New Brunswick and have been best friends for as long as they both can remember.

Their families speak French in Pierre's house and English in Timmy's house. Timmy and Pierre play together every day, sometimes in Pierre's house, sometimes in Timmy's house and a lot of the time outside. They are inseparable.

As both of them have recently turned 5, Timmy and Pierre are both eagerly looking forward to starting school in the Fall. Timmy and Pierre have discussed several times during play in the

weeks leading up to the start of school how they can't wait to get to ride on the big yellow bus together, just like the big kids!

When the big day had finally arrived, Timmy and Pierre were both anxiously awaiting for the big yellow bus, and suddenly it appeared as it turned the corner and began driving up their street! When the big yellow bus stopped, Timmy excitedly jumped on with Pierre, as usual, following right behind his best friend.

But just as he was about to place his foot on the first step, Pierre was suddenly stopped by his parents and told he couldn't get on the big yellow bus. Wanting to know why, he asked his parents. They told him he was not allowed to ride on that big yellow bus because that big yellow bus was for English kids only, and he would be riding to school on a different big yellow bus that was for French kids only.

Pierre began to cry. He didn't care what language was spoken on the big yellow bus, he just wanted to ride to school with his best friend!

When Pierre's big yellow bus arrived he got on, only to find a lot of the kids speaking to each other in English, despite the fact that he was told this was a big yellow bus for French children only.

Later on that day after school was over and Timmy and Pierre had returned home, Timmy, as usual, came over to play with his best friend, Pierre. Timmy asked Pierre why he did not get on the big yellow bus that morning. Pierre told him it was because they weren't allowed to ride on the same big yellow bus together because Pierre speaks French and Timmy speaks English.

They both cried. All they wanted to do was ride on the same big yellow bus together with their best friend!

As they cried together, they couldn't understand why Grown Ups make such nonsense rules!

Roger Fraser

Children should ride school buses together

Abraham Lincoln said: "What is morally wrong can never be politically right." This could apply to segregated school buses in N.B.

This wasteful and divisive policy seems only to promote adult prejudice and teaches children to exclude all but their own kind. It is the antithesis of Pierre Trudeau's vision of Canada. He envisaged an inclusive, multicultural nation where all people regardless of race, language or creed could ride on the same bus and share every space paid for by Canadian taxpayers. All children should be able to ride on the same school bus. Only the cruelest among us would want separate buses.

We sent our soldiers to Bosnia so that Christian and Muslim children could ride on the same school bus. Yet here in our own good land, some want the courts to impose segregation on New Brunswick children. It should never be allowed. If the courts force school bus segregation, the next government should strike it down by invoking the notwithstanding clause in the constitution – a clause that was designed to protect against this type of abuse.

We are shocked that MLAs from all parties are not speaking out against this foul and atrocious policy. Why is Kris Austin of the People's Alliance the only party leader opposing this outrageous scam? Where is Bruce Fitch and the Progressive Conservative party? They should be vociferously denouncing busing segregation in the legislature. All MLAs should make it known where they stand on this issue. This is especially true of every person seeking the PC leadership. And if they support it, they should be disqualified.

Patricia LeBreton-Wilkins

"In response to the January 12th article in the Daily Gleaner entitled "Former Premier Pitches Solution to declining Population" by Krissa Donkin.

In the article former Premier McKenna promotes the escalation of immigration to help solve the population decline in New Brunswick. He has forgotten that he and his Liberal government of that time is partly responsible for the decline, by the strengthening of language laws, declaring an ever-increasing percentage of government positions bilingual and the entrenchment of Bill 88 in the Canadian Constitution, mostly to spite the then opposition COR Party. Those actions, as well as that of the previous Hatfield government and others since has escalated the outmigration of thousands of educated and talented young potential entrepreneurs who were not considered bilingual enough to be employed by their own government. Most of these families will never move back to this province once they have established a home and career elsewhere in Canada or abroad. Why would they?

One cannot help wondering who does the testing for bilingual positions. Could it be an individual or individuals educated in Quebec or France who frequently admit they do not understand the French language dialect spoken in New Brunswick and would prefer to converse in English? If so, that would explain why most English speaking applicants who have taken French immersion with high marks are still disqualified. This process of elimination opens the door for an ever increasing number of jobs for individuals from Quebec while native New Brunswickers have little choice but to search elsewhere for meaningful employment. Considering what has been happening in the provincial bilingual job market, it would appear

that this has been the plan by elite language brokers since the inception of official “forced” bilingualism.

It’s easier to fool people than to convince them that they have been fooled.

Ronald Bubar, VP
Anglo Society of New Brunswick”

****** HORIZON HIRES U DE M STUDENTS TO DO UNDERCOVER ‘LANGUAGE AUDITS’ ******

It’s official. The undercover ‘language police’ in Horizon Health are indeed being paid... by Horizon Health. Our tax dollars hard at work.

This information was disclosed at Horizon Health’s board meeting this past Thursday evening, and is reported on page 3 of today’s Daily Gleaner. They have been hired to do undercover ‘language audits’ of Horizon’s staff in regard to the ‘active offer’. That means they’re checking to see if they get, “Hello, Bonjour,” every time they approach a staff member. Because, after all, it’s the law that staff must use both languages in their initial communication with all members of the public.

What’s more, the undercover agents are students from the Universite de Moncton. Could Horizon not find enough bilingual students in each city, say from UNB in Saint John and Fredericton, for example, to spread the wealth? Or is there a reason why this and every divisive language issue in this province has some connection to U de M?

According to Margaret Melanson, vice-president of quality and patient-centred care for the Horizon Health Network, as quoted in the DG article, the health authority introduced new language policies last June to help improve its compliance with those laws.

She said, “The audits are more robust now in that they’re targeted to particular departments and services. They measure a number of different contacts. This is not just one occasion, now, where someone approached a desk and did not, or did, receive an active offer. But it is a (targeted assessment of a) department where there are nine or 10 contacts made.”

Apparently, when the floor was opened to members of the public, Fredericton resident Bob Biggar addressed the board of directors. He cited statistics he gathered from a public Horizon report which was released in September 2013. Those statistics showed that from April 2012 to March 2013, there were only 10 complaints lodged, out of a million people served in the Horizon network.

So Bob said, “My math isn’t that great, pardon me, but with something that minuscule, does it really make sense for this issue to be receiving, given our limited resources – and we’re talking about closing hospitals, closing beds, cutting nurses – does it really make sense that we put this kind of focus on whether someone is greeted in two languages? Seven out of those 10, just as a matter of interest, were not because the patient could not receive care in his or her own

language. It was because they weren't greeted in two languages." Let's join together in sending kudos to Bob for talking sense!!!

Let this sink in: since 7 out of 10 complaints (out of one million people served) were simply people offended at not being greeted in 2 languages as our onerous language laws demand, Horizon is using your tax dollars to hire U de M students to go undercover, maybe even visiting ERs for fake issues, just to snoop on our dedicated Health employees. Once again we are seeing language lunacy that really is too ludicrous to be made up.

John McGarry, CEO of the Horizon Health Network, explained that Horizon has actually done well at providing actual care in the language of a patient's choosing. Where it has struggled in the past, he said, was making the offer of service..the two-language greeting. He also noted that most people don't complain, but will simply convert to another language. "But the fact is the law in New Brunswick is the law," he said. He also said that he knows that may be an unpopular answer, and noted that many New Brunswickers find that policy frustrating. He is exactly right...we do find it frustrating!!

The article closed with another quote from McGarry: "It's really frustrating for us to deal with this. You have a problem with it, call your MLA, call the premier." We might, if we thought they actually cared.

But this is the crew which believes in segregating our children on buses according to their language, regardless of the fact that the actual families involved were content to share and get along.

And it's also the crew neglecting to include tolls on the nice highways between Moncton and Bathurst, or any of the roads in the top third of the province, from where our Premier and most of the Cabinet hails.

So I have a feeling they care not for what most of New Brunswick thinks about it.

Joyce Wright

NB Political Ponderings

***** LANGUAGE, LEARNING, AND LAWYERS – LEAPING LIZARDS, IT'S LUDICROUS! *****

As you may be aware, there are two big issues coming right up in NB. The first is the budget, being released on Feb. 2, in which we will see more financial burdens placed on the backs of citizens while the real financial savings and revenues are left untouched (see some of my earlier posts for that information). The second is the court of appeal hearing on whether or not our French and English children should continue to be segregated on school buses; that hearing is scheduled for mid-February.

While we await these huge events, we have discovered that ‘mystery patients’ have been commissioned to find ‘deficiencies’ in Horizon Health’s ‘active offer’. One can only conclude that no legitimate complaints were being made by ACTUAL patients, so someone decided to drum up business for our Language Commissioner. Who is behind this sneaky business is anybody’s guess, but I would not be surprised to find that it was orchestrated or sanctioned by the Office of the Official Language Commissioner, since that office is not required to justify or disclose much of what it does (as we found with Wayne Grant’s case).

In addition, the government and Ambulance New Brunswick are being sued by Danny and Murielle Sonier, who say they could not get ambulance service in French during a medical call in 2013. Danny was unconscious and was successfully treated by the English medics, but he was traumatized by the incident according to an Acadie Nouvelle article regarding the event.

Now it has been disclosed that French-born children are attending French immersion at English schools (though it doesn’t say whether or not those children could actually speak French when they started Immersion), and Education Minister Serge Rousselle is going to put a stop to that because it is a violation of our language laws! Apparently, according to a Radio-Canada article dated January 28th, 2016, more than half of the students enrolled in French immersion at John Caldwell school in Grand Falls were francophone, and that’s a no-no in our divisive and divided province. So now our English schools are being instructed to determine a child’s lineage before allowing such child to attend French Immersion, and even if that child is one of our “ayant droit” citizens who can’t speak French but has one parent who received French education, that child will be banned from the immersion program.

The official education policy states that children can attend a school: 1) if they speak the language of that institution, 2) if they speak both official languages, or 3) if they speak neither official language. The only time a student can enrol in a school without meeting those guidelines is if they are an ayant droit. ‘Ayant droit’ refers to children who have one parent who was schooled in French and another parent who does not speak French. The constitution grants those children the right to attend a French school even if they are not fluent in the language.

That is why we are now in a situation where, according to the francophone teachers’ association, as many as 90% of children starting French school can’t even speak French, yet other children who also can’t speak French but were born to English parents aren’t allowed to attend those same French schools. And that is also why children who are born to a French parent, but who speak only English, or both English and French to any degree, are allowed to attend English schools but aren’t allowed to participate in French Immersion programs. As a side note, having French children in our French Immersion programs most likely was a positive

influence on our admittedly dismal rates of graduating fluently bilingual students.

Is your head swimming yet? Seriously, it's so ludicrous it can't possibly be made up. As proof, I will include relevant links in the comments below this post.

And, on a different yet surely not unrelated note concerning language and education, according to a government communication from Jan. 28, 2016 (yesterday), the Liberal government has made three new appointments to the New Brunswick Court of Appeal...the same court which will be hearing the dual bus case. This brings the number of full-time provincial court judges to 23, while there are also 11 supernumerary judges. The appointments of Suzanne Bernard of Campbellton, Eric Sonier of Tracadie, and Denise LeBlanc of Moncton, are effective immediately. All three received their law degrees from Universite de Moncton.

You can draw your own conclusions as to whether or not there is a specific reason that three more lawyers who received their degrees from U de M have been appointed to the Court of Appeal just weeks before the bus hearing.

And surely you can draw your own conclusions about how well our education system is working for both our French and English citizens, who, in most cases, would be perfectly content to have their children share school buses and perhaps even share campuses as a means to saving costs and promoting harmony.

After all, neither the English nor French parents complained about the students sharing a bus. Neither the English nor French parents are complaining about the French-born students taking French immersion in the English schools. You know, if we left it up to the citizens, rather than language commissioners, undercover 'language police', the U de M, and politicians whose only concern is buying votes, I am certain we would be better off as a province.

Maybe that day will come, if we all keep working together. I certainly hope it does, for the sake of all of us and for the sake of this province.

Otherwise, this quote from an observer in Ontario just may be more than an observation: "My assessment of the NB political environment, Liberal or Conservative, is that it is a thriving mass of dysfunction fuelled by an atomic burst of chaos. It is on the verge of becoming an imploding blackhole that Stephen Hawking could not understand or define."

JW

"The EDITOR

AGITATE, AGITATE!!

Ref; Article in Provincial papers regarding language policy at Horizon Health.

You can be sure it will never end. The new language policy for Horizon Health.

The language zealots will never stop complaining until everyone in N.B. is speaking broken English or French slang. Personally I am getting tired and fed up with this never ending moaning and complaining.

It is obvious the English in N.B. are too complacent. We don't whine and complain when someone doesn't speak perfect English to us. On the other hand one misspoken word in French and you have the commissar breathing down your neck. I might ask, when will it ever end? But I know the answer. Never.

It is time for the level heads in New Brunswick to stand up and insist on a level playing field in language concerns for this province. Don't look to government for a solution; they are afraid that common sense might cost a vote. It is up to us, the backbone of our province to stand and be recognized. Attend language rallies; voice your concerns, if even on the deaf ears of government. Eventually they must listen to common sense

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That's the way I see it.
Sincerely,
Ted Ross"**

Dear Victor Boudreau,

Just when I thought the NB Liberal government couldn't possibly be more ignorant and stunned you come up with this hair-brained scheme to cut the New Brunswick deficit by a whopping \$2million dollars?!! New Brunswick is in the hole for damned near 500 million dollars!! I swear to every God above, I thought this was a joke. Kinda like putting a French Café in an English hospital.....wha?

I'll tell you what Victor, if you really want to save some money you don't even need to leave the building. Just go have a chat with the other donkeys in your cabinet.

Walk on down the hall and give a tap tap tappy on Roger Melanson's door. Ask him how much it costs to have separate busses for English/French students. I'll give you a hint. In Ontario it costs about \$450/year per student. Last year in New Brunswick it was \$720/year per student. With approx 90,000 students in NB, eliminating dual bussing and getting our cost per student down to even \$600 would save us \$10 million.

Seeing as you're already in the area, pop on over to Serge Rousselle's office and ask him how much taxpayer money is being spent going to court to try and justify dual bussing when in 2000 a Supreme court decision clearly stated that school busses are not educational institutions!!!

Ok..take a deep breath. This is a lot to take in.

Now that you've got Serge's ear, ask him if he heard the CBC interview earlier this year with the lady who is the head of admissions to Francophone schools. She stated that upwards of 90% of children being admitted into Francophone schools don't speak French. What that hell!?? Ask him why NB taxpayers are spending millions of dollars sending English speaking French kids on a French bus to a French school to learn French? I send two of my sons to school to learn French too. It's called French Immersion. The difference is, instead of getting state of the art equipment, Teachers brought in from Quebec and a country club atmosphere, they get a school where the roof fell in last year giving them an extra week of Xmas vacation! Yay!!

On second thought, just fire Serge Rousselle. Seriously, he's numb enough to believe you have the power to fire him. Do it. Be a hero.

Now go find Katherine d'Entremont and ask her how much she makes a year for opening her own bogus files against retirement aged seniors? No.....nevermind her, nobody likes her. You can't even possibly like her.

She is a friendless Satan.

Slide further down the hall and ask Minister Francine Landry how much it cost to send d'Entremont to Ottawa to beg for more money to help French immigration to New Brunswick? Even better, ask Francine how much it cost sending her and the 70+ person 'Experience Acadie' contingent for 3 months in France trying to get French nationals to immigrate to New Brunswick. I guarantee that cost well over \$2 million...and for what? 'To help protect the French language/culture and regulate the arrival of Anglo-Saxons.'

Anglo-Saxons? Yep. That's was money well spent. Ask her to write a personal cheque to reimburse New Brunswick. Tell her if it bounces, she bounces.

Ok...enough. Go back to your office and have a seat. Now open the drawer in your desk...no...not that one, the one with the mirror in it. Take a look in the mirror and ask yourself this. Why in the burning blue flames of hell do you continue to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on a dual health care system in a Province of 750,000 people? Seriously. Cancer doesn't speak French. Cursing in English when you're having a heart attack doesn't make it any less fatal. One bilingual healthcare system will work. For example, my son took a slash in a hockey

game up in Grand Falls this past weekend and had to go to the hospital. The Francophone staff at the hospital were very accommodating and all immediately switched to speaking English when dealing with my wife. It happens. New Brunswickers of different languages being nice and helping each other. Shocker.

Ok..so I've already saved you over \$100 million but I've got one more cost cutting measure for you. You know you and your Secretary and your Deputy Minister and his Secretary and your Assistant Deputy Minister and his Secretary and Translator for Secretaries? Yeah....cut that out. It's ridiculous.

You know what might work even better? Print out a list of everyone in your office. Highlight everyone with a French last name. Eliminate half of them and then give half of the jobs on the remaining list to English New Brunswickers. That way you might stem the flow of young, healthy, smart, hard working English people out of the Province so that we have some taxpayers left instead of bitter old angry men like me.

Stop saying stupid shit. You're an embarrassment to New Brunswick. If it's any consolation, you're in good company.

MH

"Preserving a culture starts in the home

The issue of having separate busing should be a non-issue and our premier should make the decision without the expensive court costs that will burden the taxpayer – French and English alike.

For some reason this has been a contentious issue with the president of the Acadian Society, Jeanne d'Arc Gaudet. In fact it has become amusing in a sad way how she insists that taking separate school buses is a "bigger way to preserve Acadian culture." I'm still trying to find how taking separate buses preserves Acadian culture. Yes, the Acadian children speak English when they leave school. Is she that certain that they do not speak English on the buses as well? That in Acadian buses only French is spoken? I doubt it.

I believe preserving a culture starts in the home and of course more importantly in the education system.

At times perhaps one should look in their own backyard before lashing out by saying that anglophones should be more tolerant. Anglophones are very tolerant, but when constant bickering becomes intolerable the question becomes, "What is it you want?"

Should the province have separate arenas so that the Acadians play in one and the anglophones in another? Or perhaps Acadians and anglophones should walk on separate sides of the street? Yes, what I have said is insane but no more insane than saying separate buses will preserve a culture.

Separate buses will not preserve a culture. Ensuring a proper educational system – whether at home or in the schools, that will teach in a way to help preserve a vibrant Acadian culture – is what should be done.

Bruce May
MONCTON “

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