

Notwithstanding Clause

Description

Due to an ever increasing number of New Brunswickers futures being affected by legislated bilingualism it has once again become a serious topic of discussion.

Since many have learned that it is useless to rely on their elected representatives for information or action, they have turned to Facebook and other electronic media to express their concerns. One frustrated individual has created a petition promoting the idea of a referendum so all New Brunswickers could finally have their say which was denied us prior to the law being passed in 1981 by the Hatfield government.

On December 1st 1992 Premier McKenna brought forth a resolution to proceed with the entrenchment of BILL 88 into the Federal statutes and was hastily voted on. That was done primarily to spite the then opposition Confederation of Regions Party. One could also question whether or not it was done legally with the necessary quorums?

Official bilingualism has been in existence in this province for thirty-five years and according to recent stats the percentage of fluently bilinguals have changed insignificantly even after spending billions of tax dollars to make it happen. The question is was it ever really meant to succeed? Just ask any young New Brunswicker who has faithfully played the game of French Emersion and is still denied employment opportunities.

Some individuals contest that the existing language laws cannot be changed to reflect a more reasonable, accommodating and less costly model. Why not? Our government could take advantage of the notwithstanding clause. The province of Quebec has used it in the past to override a constitutional law. This was a tool made available to the provinces in the 1982 constitution. If one province was allowed to take advantage of it then it should be available for all the others.

Einstein once said, "The definition of Insanity is doing the same thing expecting a different result".

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