

On Free Vote Basis

As prelude to a Commons debate on the subject, it is expected that the government White Paper on capital punishment will be in the hands of MPs this week, or by June 28 at latest. This is a remarkable document, about 100 pages in draft copy, setting out the relevant statistics and giving the main arguments for and against hanging. Justice Minister Favreau made history when he took the unprecedented course of showing this government paper to representatives of all five parties before having it printed, so that there might be no question of its impartiality.

According to a Financial Post report, the government has not yet made up its mind how to have the issue presented to Parliament, and is consulting with the other parties as to the best method. It is anxious to have a "free" vote, with the Whips off, and without committing itself to stand or fall by the outcome. In short, it is not taking the responsibility.

But if actions speak louder than words, there can be no doubt as to its attitude. Under the Diefenbaker government the number of executions in Canada declined to a handful. Under Pearson, so far, they have come to a dead stop. No convicted murderer has been put to death since Dec. 11, 1962, when there was a double hanging in Toronto. However, it is said the government realizes that while many Liberals favor abolition there is a strong retentionist sentiment among Quebec MPs. On the other hand, the movement of opinion in other countries, especially Britain and the United States, is likely to affect Canadian opinion and the votes in Parliament.

The most likely procedure will be for the government to give up time for its own business while the public bill of a private member favoring abolition of the death penalty is debated. That will commit nobody politically. But it is felt that the influence of Pearson and Diefenbaker could be decisive—if they came out into the open with their views.

The Loaded Gun

The Winnipeg Free Press has been fighting Liberal battles much longer than the Pearson government has. It is still fighting them when it says that the Pearson government "does not understand or else it deliberately misrepresents" the case against the advertising tax that is being railroaded through the House of Commons. Every Liberal MP would do well to ponder the implications of the Winnipeg Liberal paper's reply to Finance Minister Gordon's specious arguments on the subject. Here it is for the record:

"Once the state assumes the right to interfere with the revenues of the press it possesses a powerful lever which should never be trusted to any government. If the state discriminates today against one class of advertising it can discriminate tomorrow against others. A Parliament accepting this principle can use it later on to punish its political enemies and reward its friends. By a process of polite and patriotic interference the freedom of information can be eroded, and with it the freedom of the citizen.

"Following this same principle discriminatory taxes could in the future be imposed, for example, by provincial governments against English or French ownership of newspapers (or any other group or organization of citizens) in different provinces.

"To such warnings the Pearson government makes an extraordinary and almost incredible reply. It says that since the advertising tax applies discrimination only to foreigners, therefore the risk of its expansion for other purposes has been forestalled. It would be difficult to

image a less convincing defense of the advertising tax. We are asked to believe that a dangerous principle is safe because, for the moment, it is limited.

"The gun is loaded against foreigners but, because it is loaded, no government will dare to fire it at anyone else. The repugnant means are justified by the desirable ends. In short, the citizen must arm the state against the future freedom of his information but he can trust the state when all-hum an experience teaches just the opposite lesson!

"The struggle for civil liberty from the beginning has been nothing but an attempt, successful in some places and a failure in others, to curb the state's invasion of private life. By using its power to influence the press the Canadian state would invade the citizen's source of information, the essential ingredient of any free society. It would invade the nation's mind."

Car Ferry Battle

In Britain the tough battle for the custom of more than a million car drivers who want to motor in Europe this year is starting in earnest as new roll-on roll-off ferries swing into summer action in the English Channel. According to a London news letter, it promises to be a no-holds barred fight between nationalized services and free-enterprise operators, particularly on the 90-minute crossings from Dover to Calais or Boulogne.

One organization is offering 15 shilling vouchers towards the cost of car seat belts for those using its ferries. Another offers package deals for campers, who can hire equipment as they drive off at Calais. There is a similar service for the growing army of British skiers seeking snowy slopes in France, Switzerland, Austria, Italy and Germany. A third group has begun blueprinting plans for Hovercraft services for freight and leisure.

It is estimated that the British cross-channel ferry market is worth the equivalent of \$21 million a year, and this is carved up between British and French railways, with the Belgian State Marine sailing between Dover and Ostend, and a Norwegian company servicing tourists to La Havre or Cherbourg. Investment this year in the development of the trade is already in the region of \$22,400 million, and it is reckoned that by 1970 more than a million cars a year will be using the 'cross-channel' ferries.

With all this capital being poured into ferry services, one wonders what has happened to the proposed Channel Tunnel. Anyway, the ferry operators are not worried about this. The fares which will have to be charged through the tunnel, they say, will be far in excess of what operators are charging at the moment—if the tunnel is to pay its way.

Which reminds us that at Ottawa the government hasn't yet got round to deciding what to do about our Causeway project—whether to build it or leave it to private enterprise to build on a toll-payment basis, or even whether it should or shouldn't carry rails. Maybe they're waiting for a lead from the tunnel planners overseas!

Another Federal Inquiry

According to an Ottawa report, the government is beginning a study of the feasibility of changing Canada's weights and measures to the metric system. That will take some doing. The metric system is based on grams and meters that are reckoned in multiples or divisions of ten. Once adopted, however, the system is said to be much simpler, and more adaptable to the age of computers than measuring in terms of inches and feet or weighing with pounds.

The department study will consider the views of all segments of business, from the Canadian Manufacturers' Association to traders in the farmers' markets across the country. It is understood that the changes, if they come, would have to be gradual, and would probably be extended over a period of ten years.

Britain's plans to begin a gradual conversion to the metric system have stimulated Canadian thinking on the matter, and so has the prospect of new markets over the world. At present only about 3 per cent of Canadian manufactured exports go to countries using the metric system, but it is hoped to make the percentage much higher. A Canadian change-over might pave the way for larger markets in several countries.

But the determining factor with us may well be the United States. No small part of the government survey will be concerned with the attitude of U.S. authorities.



FORESTRY MINISTER

OTTAWA REPORT By Patrick Nicholson

Weaponry Parade Draws Criticism

In the twenty years since VE-day, Canadian taxpayers have paid more than twenty-seven billion dollars — \$27,290,925,419 and 83 cents to be exact — to maintain and equip our armed forces.

The result of this expenditure by eight Ministers of Defence—a sum more than sufficient to buy all our industry back from its U.S.A. owners — was on view for Canadians to see on the Queen's Birthday, 12th June. An armed forces parade took place along one mile of Ottawa's main downtown shopping street, so not many taxpayers in such cities as Charlottetown and Nanaimo could see at first hand what was billed as this display of Canada's newly-integrated armed might. But it was watched by an Ottawa crowd — chiefly children attracted by the bands — estimated by one newspaper at 50,000 and by another at double the size.

POOR VALUE FOR MONEY What did they see? For twenty-seven billion dollars, it was not impressive. The troops looked smart and robust, but they only numbered 5,000 — assembled from all parts of Canada at a cost of \$36,000. If the staff of National Defence Headquarters and ancillary Ottawa units had marched past Parliament Hill, the parade would have totalled nearer 25,000, and the cost of what was billed as this display of Canada's newly-integrated armed might, but it was watched by an Ottawa crowd — chiefly children attracted by the bands — estimated by one newspaper at 50,000 and by another at double the size.

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Our Yesterdays

(From The Guardian Files)

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO (June 21, 1940)

Reliable quarters in Cairo, Egypt, said the French forces and fleet now in the eastern Mediterranean zone were resolved to carry on the war "whatever the outcome of the French-German negotiations."

Marshal Henri Petain, 84-year-old hero of 1914-18, took over the reins of government in "France's darkest hour." A few hours after taking office, he announced the decision to seek peace terms.

TEN YEARS AGO (June 21, 1955)

Word has been received that Mr. Joseph Revell has been awarded a Bursary to the value of \$500 at Queen's University, Kingston, Ont., where he will continue his studies this fall. Mr. Revell is a fourth year graduate of Prince of Wales College and the son of Mrs. J. E. Revell, Weymouth Street, Charlottetown.

The Queen today will launch the 22,500-ton liner Empress of Britain, another contender in the heavyweight battle for passenger trade on the North Atlantic. The 640-foot Canadian Pacific liner will slide into the Clyde from the yards of the Fairfield shipbuilding company at Govan, near Glasgow.

make-work program designed to hide unemployment and to subsidize our heavy industry.

Honesty and common sense suggest that the huge sum of money would be better spent on financing an appreciable Canadian Peace Corps and constructing tractors to help our hungry brother-humans rather than military hardware which is rusting into obsolescence. But this is not to detract from the diligence and smartness of the 5,000 members of our newly-integrated armed forces who presented that Saturday morning spectacle.

Fuses Many Cultures

National Geographic Society

Ethiopia's 22 million people speak 70 languages and follow many religious creeds. Such bewildering variety not only hampers the long slow process of fusing the cultures into a nation; it creates problems with neighbors as well. The Somali Republic recently charged that Ethiopians were persecuting nomads along the border, the scene of previous clashes, and signs of unrest were reported among Moslem tribesmen in the north.

Christianity was introduced into Ethiopia in the 4th century A.D. and is the state religion, but there are many Moslems and pagans. Tension between Christian Ethiopia and militant Islam neighbors has existed for centuries.

BIGGER THAN TEXAS

Nathaniel T. Kenney, of the National Geographic's senior staff, sought out many kinds of Ethiopians during a four-month tour of the remote East African nation, which is the size of Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma combined. His article, "Ethiopian Adventure," appears in the April issue.

Beni Amer Moslems live in the north. These desert fighters—avid for rifles and scornful of police—sometimes ambush travellers to steal their weapons. Mr. Kenney gave a Beni Amer lift in his car. When they parted, the tribesman said, "I am happy you did not come here with guns, which we need. Now we do not have to kill you, but can welcome you as friends."

The sensitive and intelligent Amhara people of central Ethiopia have nourished its civilization from Old Testament days to the present. Though a numerical minority, the Amharas dominate Addis Ababa, the capital, and the surrounding Shoa Province. Amharic is the official state language.

Monasticism plays a prominent part in Ethiopian Orthodox Church life. James P. Blair climbed a steep cliff to reach the monastery of Debra Danno. He found the menhir, or chief priest, to be "a wonderful old man with eyes of the true mystic."

In a blazing desert of northern Ethiopia, Mr. Kenney encountered the Danakil tribesmen. "They keep goats and camels," he writes, "and fight the Isa Somalis and each other for the few precious water holes. Strangers they murder for their rills. Every man wears a curved, double-edged knife whetted to blood-chilling sharpness."

He's There Slugging

Cape Breton Post

For a man who was supposed to have been backed up against a wall, Mr. John Diefenbaker is not behaving in the way expected of him by his opponents in the Progressive Conservative Party.

It's said of Mr. Diefenbaker in Ottawa, that even when he doesn't utter a word, his presence in the House of Commons is rather overwhelming.

Everybody watches him — his baleful glower or his rare smile. Prime Minister Pearson weighs his own words with calculation for the Diefenbaker response, which sometimes is devastating.

What future could there be for one whose opponents within his own party are so prominent and influential? The answer is that Mr. Diefenbaker's supporters are not negligible although not conspicuous.

New Gout Remedy

By Dr. Theodore R. Van Dellen

Allopurinol, a new gout-remedy, is effective, well-tolerated, and side effects seldom occur. The product has an entirely different action than other uricosuric remedies and should be useful in types of gout that fail to respond to the old remedies. Best results are obtained when allopurinol is used in combination with drugs, such as probenecid.

Where does the new drug fit into this picture? Many victims have some degree of over-production of uric acid. This protein comes from certain chemicals in foods that are oxidized after being absorbed into the body and then subjected before changing into uric acid. This last process is initiated by an enzyme—the enzyme, xanthine oxidase. Allopurinol inhibits or neutralizes this enzyme so that uric acid is not produced.

What effect does this have on gout? Victims of this disorder have too much uric acid in the blood serum. A portion is eliminated by the kidneys and some solidifies into sodium urate crystals. It is the latter that get into the joints causing the acute attack of pain and swelling. A chronic form of arthritis develops when crystals accumulate in and around the affected joint, leading to destruction of the surfaces.

The older uricosuric remedies, such as probenecid, open up the kidney filtration system, allowing more uric acid to escape into the urine. The chemical may damage the kidney and cause kidney damage unless the victim drinks large amounts of water to keep the excess urates in solution. This can be avoided by combining the new and the old. Allopurinol prevents formation of uric acid and probenecid increases excretion of this chemical from the kidneys.

Studies have demonstrated that this combination reduces the serum urate level to normal or, if desired, holds it to a minimum indefinitely. This is a breakthrough in the treatment of gout because it is difficult to lower the level to normal with diet and our present drugs. It will help most in preventing complications and reducing the uric acid level in those with gout secondary to other conditions.

NONVIVANT ORGAN

H. L. writes: A friend of mine had gall bladder surgery and the physician found the organ imbedded in the liver. When X-rays were taken they never could get a good picture. Why was this?

REPLY The gall bladder usually is imbedded in the liver. It is considered abnormal when the dye fails to enter the sac, resulting in a poor picture.

IT'S THE HUMIDITY

J. I. writes: Why does a high humidity make a person feel like not working?

REPLY The exact cause is not known, except that when humidity and temperature are high, perspiration does not evaporate from the body's surface. The person thus is deprived of his number one cooling device.

TODAY'S HEALTH HINT—

Youngsters need constant supervision.

NOTES BY THE WAY

We like the story about the Italian who went into a hardware store to buy a colander and told the clerk: "I want water go and macaroni stop." He got his spaghetti strainer.—Iron County Miner.

Mr. Lloyd Francis, MP for Carleton, says that Parliament Hill has become a "glorified parking lot." What's "glorified" about it?—Ottawa Journal.

You're that certain age if it makes you feel young to read that Jackie Coogan is only 50.—Calgary Herald.

If you don't think that you are getting older, look at you in picture in your high school annual.—Door County Advocate.

Humphrey's Paris Visit

By Arch MacKenzie

President Johnson's snap decision to send the latest American space heroes to Paris is regarded as Texas-brand diplomacy at its biggest and best. One result will be to complete with the propaganda that the Soviet Union has harvested at the Paris air show by showing a huge aircraft capable of carrying more than 700 people.

Considerable interest has been aroused as to why he sent Vice-President Humphrey into international orbit for the first time. Humphrey was accompanied on his Paris jaunt by space heroes James A. McDivitt and Edward H. White, the first American to leave his space ship and float in space.

EASE TENSION

The visit by the vice-president and the two astronauts will no doubt take some tension out of strained French-American relations, as might Humphrey's meeting with French President de Gaulle.

There is some speculation that Humphrey may be kept on the foreign circuit. That would add another responsibility to the heavy load he has been handed by the president.

The president surprised a lot of people last January when he omitted Humphrey from the official American delegation to Sir Winston Churchill's funeral. The president reacted somewhat testily to criticism of that omission.

Those Romantic Tourists

Winnipeg Free Press

For years the pleasantly situated town of Stratford—upon Avon has prospered on what has come to be known as "bardolatry." At the famous theatre by the river it is possible to see the best actors in England performing the works of the town's most successful son and in the streets and shops of the town itself it is possible for the enchanted tourist to spend vast amounts of money to fill the already brimming coffers of the Shakespeare industry.

Tourists are hustled out to Shottery to see what is alleged to have been the home of Shakespeare's wife and in the town they are taken to view "the birthplace."

Now, however, a British historian, Francis Carr, has thrown a monkey-wrench into the works by insisting that much of the Stratford tourist tour is a gigantic hoax.

Mr. Carr, of course, is on firm ground. The "Shakespeare house" shown to tourists in Stratford with the implication that it was the scene of the bard's nativity, is no more than a house like the one he might have been born in.

The famous cottage at Shottery is really no more than a house like the one Anne Hathaway might have lived in. The numerous photographs and post-cards showing the bed in which the infant Shakespeare is supposed to have slept is no more authentic than the numerous chairs and tables to be found in old London pubs that are described to eager tourists as "Dr. Johnson's favorite chair" and "the table at which Charles Dickens ate many a hearty meal."

Tourists familiar with the workings of the sightseeing industry have all seen pens with which famous poems were written, desks at which great novels were penned and beds in which great gentlemen might have died. Such experiences are simply part of the hazards of being a tourist.

Mr. Carr and others like him may be dead right but it is hardly likely that the situation will be altered. Every tourist, especially the one following what he takes to be the paths of history, is a hopelessly wrong-headed romantic.

On a grand tour fact and fiction merge pleasantly and what never yields graciously to what should have been. Francis Carr probably has the angels on his side but he is certainly wasting his valuable time. The Shakespeare industry is as safe as Anne Hathaway's house.

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