

Sound Advice

We have to keep reminding ourselves that the Winnipeg Free Press is a staunch Liberal paper, for it hasn't been sparing the rod on its party spokesmen at Ottawa these days, over various matters of public concern. What it has to say about the manner in which the Canada Pension Plan has been put on the political suction block is a case in point. We give a few excerpts from its latest comment on the subject.

"There is an implicit assumption on both sides of the House of Commons," says our Winnipeg contemporary, "that the electorate will confer its favors on the party which comes up with the most generous program. Among government strategists particularly it seems to be assumed that the plan must be driven through at all costs before an election. This surely is a lamentably low appraisal of the public's intelligence. Most Canadians would rather have a sound workable plan than a political one; the government is committed to bringing in such a plan and a few months' delay, until after another election if necessary, will not cost it any votes.

"It is not good enough for some members of the government to say, as Mr. Walter Gordon did the other day, that critics of the Canada Pension Plan are out to destroy it. There may be a few who are, but no one with any sense of political reality seriously questions the public's desire for the plan. Its most constructive critics, like Premiers Robarts and Roblin, have proffered their suggestions without a word of political comment and have signified their willingness to enter the scheme in spite of what they consider to be grave weaknesses.

The Free Press goes on to say that the plan is immensely complex and needs a far more comprehensive examination by Parliament than it is likely to receive if the debate is reduced to the squalid level of competitive bidding for political popularity. It reminds the government that the plan has been subject to three complete revisions since its inception and still contains many imperfections which intelligent debate can correct.

Disturbing Report

The preliminary report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism is disquieting in its implications, emphasizing as it does the "overwhelming evidence" of serious danger to the continued existence of Confederation if steps are not taken to allow French-Canadians to assume more control over their political, economic and cultural destinies.

It is stated in the 140-page report that nearly all French-Canadians see themselves as part of a distinct society and want to be recognized officially as such. Most French-Canadians in Quebec want to break out of their "shackles" and build for themselves a distinct form of nationhood. Unless there are "major changes," it is predicted, the situation will worsen, and it could worsen "much more quickly than many think."

Newspapers have been lectured, of late, for exaggerating the importance of these evidences of unrest and discontent in Quebec, and thereby making more difficult the problems of those who are seeking to find solutions. It seems now they erred on the other side. The commission does take note of the fact that "separatists" represent but a small minority of the province, but it warns that nearly all French-Canadians see themselves as part of an autonomous society and want to be recognized as such.

At the same time, it says, most English-speaking Canadians are in-

different to or unaware of the crisis centring on Quebec, which has placed Canada, in "the most critical period of its history." As a result, "Canada has come to a time when decisions must be taken and developments must occur leading either to its breakup or to a new set of conditions for its future existence."

Having raised our concern to this pitch, it is disappointing that the report doesn't get round to suggesting the major remedial changes that are necessary. These, it says, will come in the form of concrete recommendations, to be set forth in the final report. When may we expect them? Not, it would seem, for "another two years."

Frankly, we are at a loss to see the value of this report as it stands: making our flesh creep with the urgency of the crisis and the dire consequences of it worsening more quickly than we think, and then leaving us to grapple with it unaided until 1967—Confederation centennial year.

Surely the commission could have been less free with its jeremiads until it had something of a constructive nature to bring before the public. The report will create a lot of controversy, but to what end? Its diagnosis, if we may call it that, is enough to give anyone the jitters. But it is the cure that we are concerned about, and for that, it blandly tells us, we shall have to wait.

Those Breath Tests

How the breath-analyzer will work out in New Brunswick, in reducing cases of impaired driving, is anybody's guess. The experiment will be close enough to our shores to make it of special interest here. Meantime we note from an exchange that they have been doing some experimenting in this line in the United Kingdom, where the preliminary results have been published of the first voluntary breath tests of 1,727 British drivers covering the four weeks before Christmas and on Christmas Eve.

The British check, made on breath samples in plastic bags later analyzed by a "breathalyzer" machine, showed that on one Saturday night 45 per cent of drivers had been drinking alcohol, and on another occasion one in 16 had drunk enough to equal or exceed the accepted danger level.

These figures, it is noted, might well have been much higher had not 220 drivers refused to co-operate in the test which was made in a busy area of southern England.

Of course, we're much more abstemious on this side of the Atlantic, especially in these parts! But we must confess that our visitors get awful thirsty when they come to see us. Think of them consuming all that liquor from our Island vendors' stores last year! \$5,381,463 in gross sales, according to the commission's report. Attorney General Farmer almost wept when he tabled it in the House. But we have to be hospitable to our guests, haven't we?

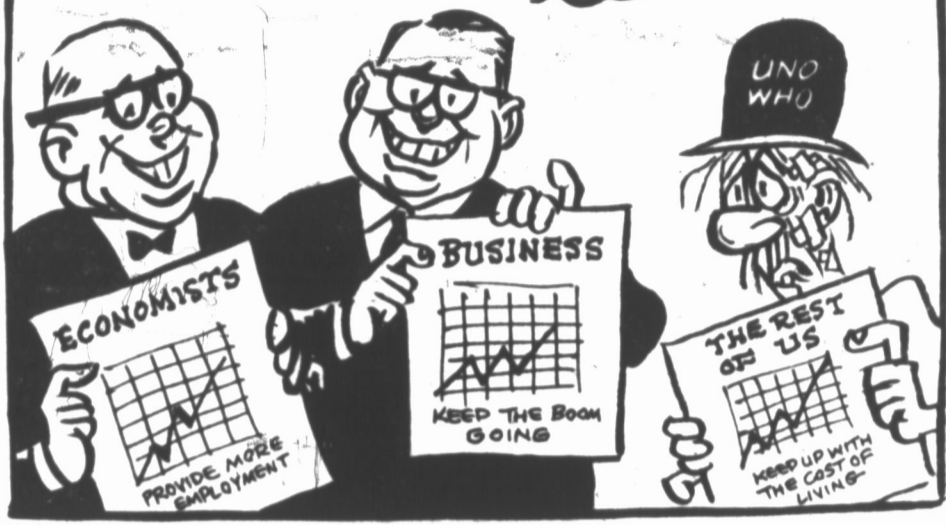
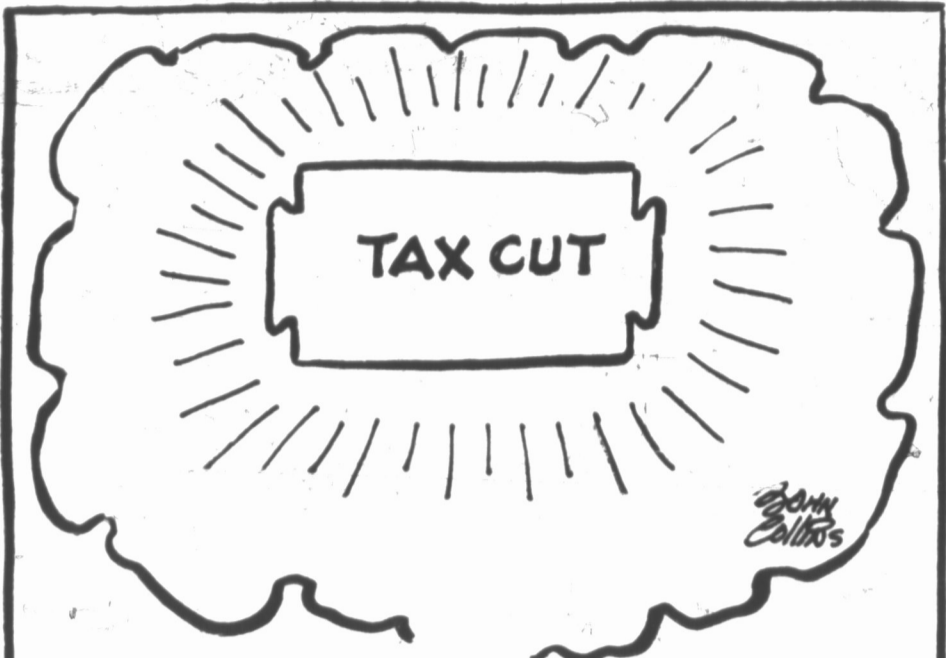
Maybe if this breath-analyzing business works out in N.B., we should ask our tourists if they wouldn't mind submitting to similar tests here, just for safety's sake. We wouldn't need to take them ourselves, of course. Though, to set a good example, perhaps it wouldn't hurt if we did, once in a while!

EDITORIAL NOTES

A Milwaukee truck driver, who saved \$60,000 in cash by the time he reached 55 years, can now start all over again. He stored the cash in a metal box in his home and a thief found it.

Sweden, notes an exchange, has solved the problem of what to do with old cars which have long outlived their usefulness. They abhor the idea of having them placed in junk yards where the beauty of the highway is marred. They are now being consigned to a watery grave in the Baltic Sea.

A three-year program of studies on Canada's role in Atlantic economic affairs has been made possible by a Ford Foundation grant of \$180,000 to the Private Planning Association of Canada, a privately supported economic research organization under whose auspices the work and publications of the Canadian-American and Canadian Trade Committees have been carried forward since 1958. The new program will involve a study in depth of possible routes to closer trade and other economic relations among the countries concerned and the probable impact of such arrangements on the Canadian economy. It could prove of far-reaching importance to our exporters.



ALL SHAVING WITH THE SAME BLADE

OTTAWA REPORT By Patrick Nicholson

Gives Voice To Individual Consumer

Does affluence breed apathy? The affluence of the Canadian standard of living conditions its beneficiary to be a sucker when standing eyeball-to-eyeball with an unscrupulous retail merchant.

This seems to be the conclusion reached with a sigh by the Consumers Association of Canada, a government-subsidized voluntary group of housewives, breadwinners, economists and others, whose aim is to protect the consumer's dollar.

"The Canadian consumer is so affluent that she—it is generally the woman of the family who spends the money—does not feel unduly enraged when she loses money through a questionable marketing practice; and we are all so super-saturated with superlatives that we don't expect television advertising to tell us all the truth all the time," an official of the association told me.

Above all when, for example, we buy toothpaste marked as weighing grams and fractions of grams, we can hardly tell when we are sold short weight, as the CSAC has discovered.

The CAC publishes a bimonthly magazine, which is sent free to its 20,000 members across Canada. It believes that it is "fighting a brave game" by publishing reports on topics to help the consumer.

One retailing come-on being studied by the CAC is the "cents off" practice, wherein the package has printed on it some slogan such as "30 cents off", which might be meaningless without fuller explanation, but sometimes actually covers a rise in price.

Fractional weights of the contents of packages is a longstanding bother to consumers. Is the giant economy size really cheaper? Who can tell except a mathematical genius, for it is very hard to compare the true unit cost of three different packages containing respectively one pound four ounces, four pounds 10 ounces, and five pounds three ounces and one-half ounces. The housewife's problem of getting the best value for her dollar is compounded when a rival brand offers a jumbo package of the 5.34 pound size, but containing only three pounds three ounces of the commodity advertised, plus a bath-towel which, being concealed within an opaque package, must be acquired as "a pig in a poke."

What does the CAC think of this? It deplores fractional weights, and adds another angle: "It is a matter of personal preference, but I would prefer not to ask my dinner guest to drink wine out of a wine glass, eat meat with a knife and fork, or dry her hands off the towel,

which come cluttering up a package of cereal, a gallon of gas or a box of detergent."

PURE MILK

One of the praiseworthy items on the grocery shelf is powdered skim milk, Canadian made from Canadian cows. One well-known brand, for example, sells its product in packages containing even pounds with no fractional ounces, so simple calculation shows that the jumbo size is a true economy in price, while the product is healthy, pure and offers the conveniences of eliminating the cartage of water, the disposal of cartons or the cleansing of returnable containers.

The CAC gives a voice to the individual consumer; it receives perhaps 100 letters of complaint a month, and based on these and its own findings, it makes appropriate representations to the Department of Justice—as it has recently done about what it terms an unblinking attempt at price fixing. It already boasts 80 local branches in communities which regard a dollar as being worth one hundred cents, and would like more such to be opened. Interested consumers should write to its head office: 1245 Wellington Street, Ottawa.

PUBLIC FORUM

PAINFUL AFTERTHOUGHTS

Sir,—Now that the single Maple Leaf has been declared officially by the Premier, and Queen Elizabeth II, as Canada's national flag, the battle is over as far as the outcome of this issue is concerned. We are inscribing the thoughts and emotions contained herein, without any presumptuous idea of affecting the matter in any way.

We would have written long ere this had we not been aware that the action of the leader of the government was predetermined by an election campaign promise. Aler pens and more voluble tongues than mine had failed to sway Mr. Pearson from his policy of appeasement. We do however solicit space in your valued columns, and your indulgence, to express sentiments that we believe are echoed by many in every province in Canada, including the thoughtful element in Quebec, who realize the freedom of thought and practice they have enjoyed under their connection with Britain since 1759.

We are now asked in effect to resort to mental and spiritual gymnastics that will result in oblivion for our beloved Red Ensign and spontaneous respect for this new and strange piece of bunting. May we state that we intend to offer superficial respect to this flag that is now the legal banner of Canada, and which has been thrust down our throats as the one and only Canadian emblem. But that "wily nilly" is as far as we can go. Absorbing respect and love are intangibles that belong to the realm of the spirit, and may not be invoked by command.

The many thousands of Canadians, who have just beloved relatives in the two world wars fighting under and inspired by the Red Ensign, may be excused for lacking enthusiasm for a replacement, that is the recognized result of a vote-getting pre-election promise. When we think of the many bereft homes in this little village where we live, whose brave sons have been strewn in the deep Mediterranean, the burning sands of African deserts, the Italian Alps and the bloodsoaked fields of Flanders, France and Germany, in both wars, with the

Red Ensign under their protection, we wonder at the blindness and temerity of anyone daring to replace it, even for such a prize as the very doubtful votes of the dissident element in Quebec.

Somewhat in line with the flag denouement, we are now supposed to give attention to the rantings of a few students from some of the universities in various provinces, seeking autonomy, that includes total separation from the British Commonwealth of Nations, and republican status. We recognize this as a combination of youthful effervescence and inherent rebellious instincts derived from emigrant parents from the many troubled states of Europe. We opened our borders and our doors to these disparate elements generously and with few restrictions. There is evident need for authoritative action, even within our cherished notions of democracy, that will curb these divisive ebullitions, which have had their beginnings historically in student demonstrations, and have in some cases resulted in bloody revolutions.

We believe the destiny of this country as a great nation, virile and viable can be assured by democratic methods working out, if somewhat slowly, nevertheless surely, under the benevolent wing of the Commonwealth of Nations to which we now peacefully belong.

I am, Sir, etc. C.C. PRATT St. Peters, P.E.I.

IN APPRECIATION Sir,—May I be permitted to say what a privilege and pleasure it is to have a closed rink in the Tignish area. A rink of this kind was badly needed, as an entertainment centre for children as well as adults, and as a place where they may develop ideas and exercise their talents to the fullest. Our thanks go especially to Mrs. Reg. Eldershaw, who worked so hard and successfully. Also I would like to congratulate John Gavin, our past president who is now residing in London, Ont., and other members of the organization in helping in this worthwhile project. I am, Sir, etc. TIGNISH CITIZEN

Reactions Of Drugs

By Dr. Theodore R. Van Dellen Reactions to drugs vary considerably. This time a modern product causes ulcers of the lower part of the small intestine. The story begins with the thiazide diuretics, one of the most effective remedies for dropsy. The chemical also is used in the treatment of hypertension, and as an aid in losing weight. It encourages elimination of the water that forms when excess fat is burned up as energy.

These products are safe and efficient. They stimulate the kidneys to filter out more of the sodium ion (sodium chloride is salt) that holds fluid in the tissues. But it is difficult to eliminate one chemical without removing others and, in this case, potassium (K) is lost along with the sodium (Na). A deficiency of K leads to weakness and is overcome by eating foods rich in potassium or by taking potassium chloride tablets. However, K irritates the lining of the stomach and must be enveloped in a hard capsule or shell (enteric coated) that does not dissolve until it passes through the gastric pouch. Some manufacturers combine K and the thiazide in a single enteric-coated tablet.

Several months ago there was a striking increase in the number of individuals with ulcers and narrowing of the lower intestine. The ulcers ruptured in some, leading to peritonitis. Further investigation showed all were taking thiazide and potassium in enteric-coated tablets. None were reported among those taking thiazide without K. This incriminated the enteric-coated potassium chloride. The chemical was released in a small segment of the intestine after the outer shell was dissolved. It is logical to assume that if it irritates the lining of the stomach, it will do the same in the intestines.

More than 140 cases, including four deaths, have been reported to the Food and Drug Administration. Physicians breathe a sigh of relief when the diuretic was exonerated because it is a valuable remedy. Hereafter, potassium will be taken in food or in drops as a saturated potassium iodide solution.

MULTIPLE COLDS

Mrs. L. writes: My two-year-old grandson gets one cold after another. He is hardly over one when the next comes along. Is he likely to develop rheumatic fever from so many colds?

REPLY Colds are common at this age and his experience is par for the course. Time will tell whether he is likely to develop rheumatic fever.

INFLAMED COLON

D. B. writes: Is dieting the best treatment for colitis?

REPLY A bland diet helps because it leaves little residue, giving the bowel a rest. But diet is not the sole treatment because there are various types of colitis (spastic, bacterial, and influenza) each requiring specific care.

HORMONES AND YOUTH

F. L. writes: Is it dangerous for a 75-year-old woman to take a hormone shot once a week to make her feel young again?

REPLY Not dangerous unless she has a malignancy of the breast or hormones are not the waters from the Fountain of Youth.

NOTES BY THE WAY

If you help a man who is in trouble, he'll never forget you... especially the next time he's in trouble.—Montreal Star.

Butcher: "I'm sorry, but we have no ducks today. How about a nice leg of lamb?" Hunter: "Don't be silly. I can't tell my wife I shot a leg of lamb, can I?"—Toronto Globe and Mail.

The furore over Mr. Berton's perceptive, but unoriginal, criticism of the churches has a direct relation to our current political mess. The question which cries for study is why the newspapers and the public get so excited about certain kinds of moral dereliction and cheerfully tolerate many more damaging forms of public and private wickedness.—Financial Post.

Little by little, Russia is becoming more like a capitalistic country. Recently there have been increasingly complaints that clerks in Russian department stores are rude.—Woodstock Sentinel-Review.

The average American's consumption of wine is .933 gallons a year. He has a long way to go to catch up to the average Frenchman's 35 gallons, the Italian's 31 or even the German's two-and-one-half.—Ottawa Journal.

Seat belts are to be standard equipment for back seats of cars, which will likely mean that in many cases four belts will be kept lying on the seat instead of two.—Fort William Times Journal.

Keeping His Own Counsel

By Arch MacKenzie Canadian Press Staff Writer

The American public at large and the Communist Viet Cong are helping shore up part of President Johnson's current Viet Nam policy.

The president, who is United States military and diplomatic signal-caller, isn't talking either to the American public or to the growing array of international forces urging a negotiated settlement of the war. There is no evidence that the U.S. public feels strongly one way or the other. A lull in spectacular Communist guerrilla activity has also been a factor.

To observers, President Johnson clearly wants all the elbow room he can get in a situation which can erupt into international crisis at any hour.

He does not consider it timely to negotiate, either from the U.S. point of view or that of the tottering South Vietnamese administration in Saigon.

Hence the cool and calculated rejection of overtures from Britain, France, Russia the United Nations and others for negotiations. The president also is toughly resisting demands from within the United States that he take the public into his confidence and spell out Viet Nam policy, past, present and future.

State Secretary Dean Rusk, in a press conference, Thursday underlined both presidential practices.

Rusk said repeatedly there will be no negotiation as far as the U.S. is concerned until North Viet Nam halts aggression in the south. He called this the "missing piece" in the picture.

He also declined under ques-

tioning to even hint at what the U.S. will do in the future if aggression continues, other than to refer to past statements by Johnson that action will be appropriate and fitting.

His opposition to negotiations or policy statements has incidental support from the Communist battle lull. Their attacks increase in size and scope but there has been no repetition of the blows against American forces which brought about U.S. bombing of North Viet Nam.

Within the U.S., there is no visible wide demand at present that he lay down his cards on Viet Nam. Rather, there seems to be a lack of firm opinion and almost a condition of apathy.

CONGRESS SUPPORTS HIM Informed opinion in Washington appears to be swinging behind President Johnson in keeping his own counsel. Congress has stiffened its support for his no-negotiation stand.

The U.S. revealed Wednesday that the 23,000 U.S. troops now in South Viet Nam have shed their role as "advisers." American bombers began striking guerrillas this week without any pretence of Vietnamese influence.

This development was described by officials as "continuous action that is appropriate, fitting and measured." It was linked with the virtual carte blanche for action given to the president by Congress last August after the Communist attacks on U.S. destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin.

The president thus seems to have all the flexibility he needs to execute his Viet Nam policy but he isn't broadcasting it.



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Tampering With The Law

Montreal Star

The Canadian Association of Police Chiefs has informed Prime Minister Pearson of its opposition to the government's policy on capital punishment. It says it is "astounded" by the Cabinet's policy of commuting death sentences, it opposes the holding of a free vote in the House of Commons on the question of abolishing the death penalty, and it believes the commutation of death sentences has contributed to the increase of violent crime.

On at least one point it is easy to go a long way towards agreeing with the Police Chiefs—on the question of commuting death sentences. These sentences have been imposed by the courts, according to the laws of the land, with all the usual facilities for appeal. Then the Cabinet has moved in to change the verdict, in effect taking justice out of the hands of the courts.

This could be questioned in itself as being a dubious method of justice, since it is arbitrary and a relatively recent practice. Worse, it cannot help but throw confusion into the ranks of law enforcement officers, and of the courts involved in capital cases. Police morale is bound to suffer.

And the courts are bound to wonder what the law now is in capital cases, or if there is any law at all apart from that made on each occasion by the Cabinet. There is further, the old question of whether criminals may be encouraged to violence by knowing they will escape the death penalty.

Over the years, there has been a growing body of opinion in favor of abolishing the death penalty. It may well be that this is both humane and desirable, provided it is replaced by an effective form of life imprisonment. In any event, this is a matter which Parliament has the authority to decide.

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Our Yesterdays

(From the Guardian Files)

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO (February 27, 1940) Mrs. J.A. Mathieson was elected Regent of the Royal Edict Chapter, IOE, in Charlottetown.

Winston Churchill asked the House of Commons for 'a few men, some ships and a little money' to run the Royal Navy for the year and presented a picture of the tremendous 'seapower' which we live.

TEN YEARS AGO (February 27, 1955) Lieut. Col. W.C. Cook, Harry Hyde and Ambrose Rodd, three local survivors of the South African Campaign paraded yesterday with 50 members of the Canadian Legion to the South African monument in Queen Square to honor the memory of Roland Taylor and Alfred Riggs.

Two other survivors of the South African War, Charles Hine and Edward MacDonald were unable to be present owing to ill health.

Mr. F. Morris Deacon, B.Sc. Fieldman with the P.E.I. Department of Agriculture, has resigned to accept the position of Personal Selection Officer with the Civil Service Commission at Halifax.