

THE GUARDIAN

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"The strongest memory is weaker than the weakest ink."

Taxing Municipalities

While Parliament is engaged in lifting taxes on fire-fighting, road-building and road-cleaning equipment purchased by municipalities a Government spokesman.

Mr. William Benidickson, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Finance, declares that the Government cannot be expected to exempt municipalities from excise and sales taxes generally while five Provinces decline to do so.

Two blacks, however, do not make a white. It is local taxpayers' money which is spent by municipalities and it seems highly unreasonable that a substantial portion of it should go into the Federal treasury.

A good case can be made for doing away with all Government privileges in the matter of freedom from taxation. Such a move would be very much to the advantage of municipalities which could then levy taxes at full rates on property owned by Federal and Provincial Governments and their numerous Crown corporations.

There is, perhaps, sound policy behind the argument that the difficulty of dealing with claims for exemption from the indirect taxes outweighs the benefits which might be expected.

As Mr. Benidickson points out Federal Departments frequently pay the tax rather than go to the trouble of getting the credits to which they are entitled. In such cases it would be a question of taking it out of one pocket and putting it in another anyway.

To those responsible for municipal finance, however, it is much more than a matter of book-keeping. They have to collect the necessary revenue from a very limited group and to turn around and hand the money over to the whole taxpaying body of the nation is a very real transaction indeed.

"For Conscience Sake"

Whether or not the United Nations Organization has done anything to improve relations among the big Powers, it certainly has given the smaller ones a new feeling of importance. Time was when a small and weak nation could not hope to be asked to express an opinion on matters of world concern;

on the very rare occasions when their representatives did appear in international conferences they were seen and not heard. Now, they have a right to speak up with the best of them. Not that anything they might say would be likely to carry much weight for, of course, influence is still related to power;

but the fact that they have the right to speak their minds indicates a new departure in world politics.

The new situation is supported by a report from Geneva conveying the information that delegates from all the nations represented, except those from Luxembourg, had expressed their views on the Korean problem.

The delegates who did not speak considered, no doubt, that they were helping to save time, since nothing they might have said would have had much force in the Conference; in that they were probably right. At the same time it seems a pity that the Luxembourgers kept silent, even from good words.

Certainly, their opinions would have been no less forceful than those of some of the delegates who did speak; for that matter, even the most powerful voices do not appear to be getting very far with their arguments.

Then, too, since "the race is not always for the swift nor the battle to the strong," it is just possible that little Luxembourg might have a thought which, if put into words, would act as a soothing touch to the fears and alarms of the nations. Anyway, a right that has been given recognition after many centuries of neglect deserves to be used, if only "for conscience sake."

A Statistician On Farming

One difficulty facing agriculture is the fact that farm prices are more flexible than farm costs, and while the former are going down, the latter are still rising.

The Rural Scene reports some of the findings of Hart Buck, statistician for the Bank of Toronto, which throw light on the farmer's plight.

Looking back to the times of the pioneers, he finds that the farming of those days produced a very meager living for the farmer and his family, and afforded them much less security than is generally credited to it.

In those days farm production per man was so small that it required 90 per cent of the working population to produce such things as

the people got from the farms.

This meant that only one man in ten was available to produce other things the people needed. It also meant that there was a very small market in which the farmers could hope to sell their surplus products.

All this added up to a life of scarcity for everybody. Today the shoe is on the other foot. It now requires only 10 per cent of the working force to operate our farms, and they produce all the food the population needs, with substantial quantities over for export.

This leaves 90 per cent of the population free to engage in the production of other things the people want; and the wants of the people are increasing as fast as their ability to supply them.

It also means that the farmers have many times the number of people to whom they can sell their products.

The net result of these changes has been to make the consuming public the master of the economy. Everybody is now striving to please the consumers; and by their shopping around the consumers are keeping the producers up on their toes.

Today the farmers' problem is much the same as the problem of the wage earners and that of the business man. They are all working to get the best returns they can for whatever they have to sell.

Constant improvement in technique and equipment and in the quality and attractiveness of the products are the means by which success is attained.

In this struggle the farmers have had invaluable assistance from science and engineering. Better understanding of the proper treatment of the soil, improved varieties of plants, better method of combating plant diseases and insect pests, better understanding of the breeding and feeding of livestock, better storage and transportation facilities have all contributed to the farmers' ability to compete for the consumers' business.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Nova Scotia will be starting an intensive "Buy Coal" campaign next month. That Province is sitting on top of vast wealth in the form of coal, but that means little unless it can be economically extracted and effectively sold.

Hotel keepers in Llanelly, Wales, have decided to hold their annual dinner in another town because their own prices are too high. Presumably the hotel keepers elsewhere find business good enough to be able to afford to come to Llanelly.

Ottawa's Mayor Charlotte Witton put the capital's Board of Control into robes, but sees no useful purpose in continuing to provide dress uniforms for firemen. The danger of fire has been brought home painfully to her, however, by a councillor who burned her nose with a cigarette.

That Canada buys about as many table stock potatoes from the United States as we sell was an important point made by Agriculture Minister Gardiner at a potato festival in North Carolina. We sell far more seed potatoes, of course, which enable American farmers to maintain the high quality of their product.

Revelations in Australia indicate that Russian recruiting methods have changed. From seeking out those emotionally or thoughtfully sympathetic to the Communist cause, the Reds have turned to blackmail to compel compliance with their demands for information.

Summerside High School will require eight classrooms more than are properly available when the next term opens, according to Supervisor Clarence Mercer. That, however, is probably far less than the space that will be needed in the years to come when the large numbers now in the primary grades reach high school age.

The present Parliament has really revolutionized banking in this country. Having made mortgage loans permissible, the Commons banking committee has now approved bank lending on the security of chattel mortgages, introducing personal and household goods as collateral for the first time.

The Marquis de La Fayette, French general and politician, died this date 1834. At the age of 20 he went to America to aid the colonists and distinguished himself at the side of Washington, especially at the defence of Virginia and the battle of Yorktown. Returning to France to take his seat in the Assembly of Notables, he demanded the convocation of the States-General, thus becoming a leader of the French Revolution. He was unpopular with extremists on both sides. When colonel-general of the new National Guard he proposed the combination of colours which became the tricolour cockade of France.



Defence Measure

PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open to the discussion by correspondents of questions of interest. The Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinion of correspondents.

POTATO MARKETING BOARD

Sir,—I attended a meeting of the so-called Potato Board Tuesday night at Prince of Wales College. I listened to Mr. D. A. MacDonald tell the benefits that the producer has received from the Potato Board. I also heard Mr. Seales tell the other side of the story, and I am fully convinced this Potato Board is a failure for several reasons.

First of all I would like to ask Mr. MacDonald who he calls the growers. Do seven thousand who joined the Potato Board represent P. E. I.? If only those who bought licence are allowed to vote on this plebiscite the rest of the growers in the Province have been given a raw deal. And I will say right now it looks like if we growers have no say in our country.

Where is our Matheson Government today? Is it going to stand by and see our active farmers who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow be handed out this kind of treatment by white collared farmers who are operating the Potato Marketing Board and also are trying to get a Turnip and a Cabbage Marketing Board. They have become as numerous as the foxes that the Government was obliged to put a bounty on to have destroyed. If not checked at once they will do far more damage to us financially than the fox.

Let me tell you the benefits that my son and I have received from the hands of the Potato Marketing Board since 1952 to 1954. In the winter of '53 we had quite a lot of Sebago potatoes to ship. We could have sold them around \$1.65 or \$1.70 for 75 lb. bag but the Board would not allow our buyer to buy at that price as I think the Board had the price set at \$1.80 per bag. The results was we sold them late that Spring for less than 50c per bag which was quite a loss.

I have no vote as I never got a licence having shipped my potatoes in July before the Board was operating. I asked Mr. D. A. MacDonald a question Tuesday night: if I secure a licence at the present time and the Potato Board is defeated on the plebiscite, what will you do with this money? He said, I cannot answer that question.

I am, Sir, etc. J. LEO PRAUGHT, Cherry Valley, P. E. Island.

Wisconsin leads the entire nation in the number of communists using fluorides in drinking water to prevent tooth decay in children — 70 percent of Wisconsin residents have been getting fluorides in their water. Sheboygan, one of the first three cities in the country to add fluorides to its drinking water, has just completed its eight annual check on the results of fluoridation. It reports that the number of missing, decayed and filled teeth among senior kindergarten pupils has dropped from 4.8 per cent to 1.78. — Milwaukee Journal.

Hollywood beauty expert says a new type of girl is making her appearance. The healthy, suntanned lass is giving way to the gentle, languid lady. They are curious, these feminine cycles of fashion. Is there a built-in urge in womenfolk to make themselves over every so often, just as they move the furniture around in the house? Or is it because, sheep-like, they want to follow every so-called fashion set by every so-called expert? Fortunately, however, this remodeling is only a surface job. Women can change their appearance, their styles and perhaps even some of their customs. But they can't change themselves. Their inherent characteristics have remained constant down through the ages, and perhaps it's just as well. — Windsor Daily Star.

It is customary to place a higher premium on the service of a department head than his assistant. He is the man who must assume all responsibility for decisions and expenditures. The smooth working of any department depends on the administrative ability of the men chosen to head it and it is from him that advice must come in aiding committees and council in determining policy. Because it is a natural trait for people in all walks of life to seek to better their financial condition, it is to be feared that the city council was

NOTES BY THE WAY

From Syria comes word that newspaper editors who collaborated with the deposed Shishkeily government will be punished. Surely with some recommendation for clemency for those who had his name spelled right in the early editions. — Hamilton Spectator.

It is appalling to know that more than 50,000 people are sent to jail in Ontario every year and that the majority are "repeaters." Part of that burden could be removed if payment of fines by instalments were introduced so that men could continue at their work and provide for their families at the same time, instead of perhaps losing their jobs altogether. — St. Thomas Times-Journal.

A 23-year-old man in Windsor, Ont., has been sentenced to three years in the penitentiary for holding up a cigar merchant at the point of a toy pistol and making off with \$101. The magistrate who sentenced him said the fact the gun was a toy made no difference. Perhaps not, legally speaking, but it might make some difference to the man held up when the gun pointed at him was loaded with bullets or was a water pistol. — Sydney Post-Record.

A Second-Hand book store is not a normal setting for a lesson in economics. This is the report of an exception. We found on a shelf a copy of a translation of Xenophon's "Anabasis." It was marked to sell for a dollar, and we noted on the fly-leaf that this was precisely the price asked when published new by Harper in 1928. English translations of "Anabasis" are by no means rare, and the book itself seemed to have no special distinction as a collector's item. "Why no depreciation in 65 years?" we asked the proprietor. "Oh, that's been considered," he explained. "The same book today would cost \$3 new. You're getting this at a third the price." The book's still there. But we may buy it yet as a curiosity. Maybe it's the last firm link between the dollar of 1889 and that of 1954.—From Portland Oregonian.

OLD CHARLOTTETOWN

From the reports of the House of Assembly, March 20, 1928. Mr. Nelson moved for leave to bring in a petition from certain inhabitants of this Island, stating the great inconvenience arising from the want of a Bridge across the Hillsborough River at Mount Stewart Ferry, and recommending that said Bridge be erected at the Ferry. Leave being granted, the said petition was read.

Mr. Mabey moved, that the said petition be thrown under the table, this House having, last session, come to a determination on the subject. The question being put, the House divided: For the motion: Mr. Mabey, Mr. Cambridge, Mr. Bearisto, Mr. Dockendorff, Mr. Montgomery, the Attorney General, Mr. Campbell, Against it: Mr. Nelson, Mr. Coffin, Mr. Hyde, Mr. Owen, Mr. Jardine.

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The Poet's Corner

TREES I marvel at the majesty of trees, Roots in the soil, branches that sweep the sky, Their tapering trunks stout pillars soaring high, Their silence breathing arcane mysteries: When stirred to sound by dawn or evening breeze, They mark the rhythms that crowd in and die, Among their boughs, grow still again and lie Quiescent, waiting for new harmonies. They sanctuary robins, fling out limbs As buttresses to give aspiring poles; They furnish shade and Palestrina hymns For weak, wayfaring mortals, check the noise Of thunderstorms, and when the storms are done Bring close the great rose window of the sun. —Wilbert Snow.

PROLIFIC SOW DUNCAN, B. C. (CP) — Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Dobbs' Yorkshire sow produced 24 piglets in her fourth litter, after a previous total of 11. Five of the new offspring were given to another sow to raise.

The Passing Scene By Observer "SEDUCTION OF THE INNOCENT" Not before it is time it is being slowly recognized that the so-called "comic" book presents a serious social problem to modern society. This is not to suggest that every child who reads the "funny" papers is on the broad road to delinquency. As a matter of fact, some of the syndicated strips which appear in newspapers are of considerable psychological value; a few of them have real literary merit. Those reformers who advocate the doing away with all comics are unreasonable; the effect of such a drastic measure would be to take away from children—and many adults as well—something bright and cheerful which they need. The real villain is not the bonafide comic book at all but the crime story which has been masquerading so long in "comic" dress that, against all reason and, certainly, against all humour, it has stolen a virtual monopoly of the name. Amid all the talk concerning the alleged effect of comic books and pictures on the minds and manners of children, it is refreshing to read a reasoned, dispassionate, and authoritative treatise on the subject written by Dr. Frederick Wertham and his co. It is quite a large book and in places it wanders off into the broad fields of psychiatry which are unfamiliar to the average reader; but it is full of information and interest for parents and others who have direct responsibility for child training. It is called "Seduction of The Innocent." Perhaps the most amazing thing that one discovers from Dr. Wertham's statistics is the rapid propagation of crime and violence books and pictures in very recent years. At the end of the Second World War only one-tenth of all comics were devoted to crime. By 1949 over half of them were in that category. Now, crime dominates the vast majority, the figure being approximately nine-tenths. This, in itself, is a shocking indictment of mid-20th century society and an admission of weakness on the part of our social institutions. If, with all the social agencies that are working in the field of child welfare, all the increased library facilities with special attention to children's needs and capabilities, and all the financial aid given by governments for the purchase of books and other school supplies, we have gone from one-tenth to approximately nine-tenths in the pressure of crime and violence on young minds in a short period of ten years, we may well ask whether our civilization is in fact worth saving from the hydrogen bomb. Whichever way one looks at the situation, its moral effect must be staggering. On the whole, in Dr. Wertham's opinion, "trust, loyalty, confidence, solidarity, sympathy, charity, and compassion, are ridiculed." They build up racial prejudice, sadism, and every conceivable sort of unhealthy mental attitude. On this point Dr. Wertham writes: "If one were to set out to show children how to steal, lie, cheat, assault, and plunder, no better method could be devised." There are people everywhere to whom statistics and expert opinion mean nothing. They take the view that healthy normal children can read anything without bad effects. It is, of course, a fact that not every child who reads about violence and filth will turn to violence and filth in his habits; it is also true that not all delinquency can be traced to any one particular source. In the main, however, the "contact without stain" view is dangerous and very weak. As Dr. Wertham puts it: "Nothing that occupies a child for two or three hours a day can be entirely without influence on him". In any event society has a duty towards the unstable child as well as to the stable one. Every young mind is impressionable. Again to quote Dr. Wertham: "Pouring sordid stories into the minds of children is not the same thing as pouring water over a duck's back". It is almost incredible that in this day, which we like to call "enlightened", psychiatrists and other specialists have to be called upon to show cause why the propagation of crime, violence, and filth in books and pictures, is bad for children. Of course everybody knows why the books are published. They make money, and lots of it, for the publishers and distributors. What nobody seems quite clear about is why the public conscience has permitted this wholesale commercial aggression on young minds to continue, and, in fact, to increase in magnitude and in horror year after year. After spending many years in work among all kinds of children—normal and abnormal, respectable and delinquent, the quick and the slow—Dr. Wertham has reached the conclusion that all comic books which deal with crime, as well as some of the border-line ones are anti-educational, a detriment to good reading habits, and an important aid to illiteracy. Usually they degrade the young reader's mind; when they do not they are almost certain to steer it in an unsocial direction. When will public opinion recognize this menace and make an attempt to remove it from the life of youth? The Age Old Story For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away with. For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. Refrigeration SALES & SERVICE Repairs To All Makes MOTORS Rewinding and Repairs ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES Repairs Palmer Electric Phones 8548 8544 A. PICKARD & CO. LTD. PHONE 3541 COAL AND FURNACE OIL PROMPT DELIVERY The Vacation of Your Dreams FREE WIN \$300.00 IN CASH IN THE MOTHER'S OWN TEA MARITIME VACATION OFFER Send a wrapper or box front from MOTHER'S OWN TEA or TEA BAGS or a bag front from VERIBEST TEA or a reasonable facsimile to RADIO STATION CJCH HALIFAX. Simply include your name and address. Winner will be announced June 4th. Entries accepted until May 31st. Please The Graduate WITH A WATCH FROM WELLNER'S Jewelers Since 1868