

THE GUARDIAN

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CIRCULATION "Covers Prince Edward Island like the dew"

"The strongest memory is weaker than the weakest ink"

CHARLOTTETOWN, TUESDAY, JAN. 6, 1953

European Confederation

Delegates from the Parliaments of France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg and observers from Britain and some other countries meet Wednesday at Strasbourg in north-western France to write a confederation charter on the basis of the work of a constitutional committee which has been meeting in Paris for some weeks.

The assembly is concerned with forming a vast trading area which will provide a common market for coal and steel without tariffs, quotas or other restrictions between the six countries. Yet to be considered is the relation between the confederation and the Council of Europe and with Britain and other democracies.

As with our own Confederation, the principle of free trade between members is a cardinal principle. It is noteworthy, also, that it is the pressure of an external danger which has induced the individual units to surrender part of their sovereignty. Just how far sovereignty will be merged in the centralizing move will be decided in the next few weeks or months.

Another force which has helped to bring confederation closer is the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs. GATT brought about a certain reduction in tariffs but prohibits countries from granting tariff reductions without making them available to all countries under the "most-favoured-nation" clause. In effect it prevents the European or other countries from negotiating mutually beneficial arrangements because the concessions must automatically be extended to the United States and all other countries.

Two Acts Of Tolerance

Obstructionist tactics by Opposition members in the British House of Commons just before the Christmas recess are strongly censured by The London Economist. Remarking that such tactics in the end damage the Opposition more than it discomforts the Government, The Economist proceeds to define the difference between opposition and obstruction. Thus:

"The constitutional issue is simple. Government by discussion rests on two acts of tolerance: the majority respects the right of the minority to criticize; the minority respects the right of the majority to decide. Those principles are expressed in the conventions of Parliamentary procedure. It is the Opposition's business to oppose, and the right to argue at length necessarily implies a power to delay—a power to be exercised right up to, but not beyond, the point at which it is compatible with the normally efficient discharge of the Government's business. Beyond that point opposition becomes obstruction of the will of the majority; it is quite as much a denial of democracy as is the suppression of minority criticism."

Not often, comments the Ottawa Journal, have the rights, duties and responsibilities of an Opposition, plus the meaning of obstruction, as distinguished from legitimate opposition, been stated more clearly. Remains, though, the question of the point at which argument becomes obstruction. One answer is that a government can get through the modern press of parliamentary business, and an opposition can enjoy its full rights of criticism on matters that concern it deeply, only if a great deal of routine business is treated as non-controversial and allowed by both sides to pass almost undebated. Actually a substantial part of the business of the House is within this category, and prolonged debate of it too often stems from nothing more than a habit of criticism for criticism's own sake. If time given to such discussion could be reserved for matters more vital, there would be fewer complaints of obstruction, less talk about parliament being a year-round job, and perhaps more effective criticism where criticism is needed.

Not that obstruction can never be justified. On the contrary, circumstances could arise under which a conscious rejection of the democratic process could be justified as a measure of last resort. Thus the Irish Nationalists wasted the time of the Parliament at Westminster because they denied its right to responsibility for Irish affairs; and thus the Opposition under Sir Wilfrid Laurier obstructed Sir Robert Borden's naval bill of 1912-13 on the ground that it was a matter of fundamental importance that had never been discussed before the

electorate. Also obstruction may conceivably be justified as a means of forcing an election if there is strong reason for belief that a government has exhausted the confidence of the public.

"Apart from such circumstances," observes The Journal, "obstruction in parliament is a denial of the democratic process—as much a denial of it as the autocratic suppression of speech. For the sake of our parliamentary institutions, which all of us ought to cherish, it would be a good thing if both governments and oppositions recognized such truths and, in a spirit of understanding and tolerance, practised them more faithfully."

Joint Northern Defenses

From Alaska and the Canadian Northwest, across the barren shield of north-central Canada to Presque Isle, Maine, Newfoundland and the top of Greenland, jet fighters manned by American and Canadian crews are on a 24-hour alert, notes the Wall Street Journal. At a signal, they would be soaring into the air to do battle against an invading bomber force thousands of miles from the Canadian and United States production centres.

At one such base in Labrador, it takes fifty snowplows to keep the runways constantly clear of snow so they will be ready for instant use. Pilots wear their flying clothes day in day out, and ears are tuned to the telephone ring that might send them into action.

Throughout the whole defence arc, weather and radar stations stand guard, collecting and relaying vital information. The radar screen is truly North America's first line of defence. All these safeguards are being expanded and developed steadily. Co-operation between Canadian and American military authorities is reported to be excellent.

Although these elaborate and well-organized defense establishments and weapons are an extremely expensive proposition, it must be regarded as an insurance policy against disaster. And it will be comforting to know all reasonable precautions are being taken to discourage aggression.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Epiphany. Twelfth Day. Three different events are commemorated today, the adoration of the Magi, the baptism of Christ and the miracle of Cana. It also marks the close of Christmas festivities. The Queen still observes the feast in the Chapel Royal by offerings of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Business continues at a remarkably high level as indicated by the record value of cheques passing through clearing houses in this country during 1952. Our present prosperity should not blind us to the fact that it is dependent upon maintaining export trade and that any loss of exports must be dealt with effectively if the prosperity is to continue.

In a four-day conference which opened yesterday Canada is receiving the report of its experts on fishery development and conservation, the result of the investigations of the Fisheries Research Board. To this Province, where we depend so heavily on the primary industries of farming and fishing, the findings of the Board are of particular interest.

Old age security has so far cost some \$150 millions more than has been collected in the 2 per cent sales tax, income tax and tax on corporation profits. The tax on income, however, has only been in effect since July 1st and it seems likely that on a 12-month basis the fund would prove adequate. What will happen when the proportion of old people increases is quite another matter.

The City Council tonight will discuss the brief of the School Board on the school situation. The cost of providing needed accommodation may appear high but Charlottetown is faced with a condition, not a theory, and must deal with it promptly. The high school proposal, by relieving the pressure on the schools and enabling city youth to take either academic or technical courses, would provide a particularly desirable solution to the present situation. There is no escaping the fact that some form of accommodation must be provided.

Canada took a leading part in developing the technique of aerial photographic mapping and it is of interest to this country that the process has undergone great improvement. An Italian device enables photographs to be used which are taken at 10,000 feet, yet which will give contour maps correct to within nearly half a foot. Before the Stereosimplex, as it is called, the photographing plane had to fly at 2,500 feet.

Local Coronation Coming Up



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.

A STURDY PLANT

Sir—I have a Christmas Cactus which has been in the same container (a large earthenware pot) without a change of soil for thirty-five years and it is still apparently in the pink of condition and covered with blooms at the present time.

I do not know how many blooms are on it now, as I have not yet counted them, but I can give you the exact numbers of blooms it has borne in recent years. They are as follows: In the season of 1951-52, 465 blooms; 1950-51, 522; 1949-50, 424; 1948-49, 403.

By picking up and counting the blooms as they drop off and keeping them marked down, I am able to obtain an accurate count.

I do not know the exact age of the plant which was started a long time ago from a small slip. But I do know that it has never been moved nor had any change of soil, nor any added except the usual watering in the last thirty-five years as stated above.

It is never put out doors but sits in a sunny window with southern exposure from one year's end to another and as it seems to thrive so well without being disturbed I see no reason to try to improve it in any way.

The plant is now quite large and is much admired by everyone who sees it.

I am, Sir, etc., MRS. ARTHUR MACDONALD New Dominion, P.E.I.

OLD TIMES RECALLED

Sir—A young lady friend, who recently arrived here from "the Island," kindly gave me a few copies of The Guardian, and I am writing this to congratulate you on the splendid paper you are now publishing. After attending the old Prince of Wales College and not being old enough to teach school I worked for a year as office boy for "The Guardian." It was then a four page daily with a circulation of, if my memory serves me right, about 800, with an eight page weekly with a circulation of around 4000. Mr. J. P. Hood was the business manager. A Mr. Woodworth was associate Editor. The Editor was Mr. Benjamin D. Higgs, whom I never saw, as he was in ill health, and spent most of his time in the southern States and the West Indies. A Mr. Matthews was the reporter and Mr. Doble was foreman of the printing department. I believe Mr. J. E. B. McCready took over the Editorship shortly after I left and carried on for a number of years.

When I first started to work my hours were from four in the morning till one in the afternoon. My first job was to get out the morning mail and to start the four delivery boys on their routes. The press, which was operated by hand, usually started about one and took about one and a half hours to run off the first side and the whole edition was finished about four. Of course all the type was set by hand.

In those days (1895) there were three daily papers, The "Guardian," "Patriot" and "Examining." I left the Island for British Columbia in the spring of 1898, and have only been back once, that was in the summer of 1913, when fox farming was in its heyday. They were just starting to run motor cars in Charlottetown and Royalty that summer. I made a call at the "Guardian" office and found Fenton Newsome the business manager. He was the boy who took my place when I quit in 1896.

In your advertising columns I miss many old names, although others, such as Prowse Bros., Rogers Hardware Co., Hughes Drugstore and B. T. Holman Co. are familiar. The latter had no business in Charlottetown then, only in Summerside. Some of the others prominent at that time were Jas. Paton, Dawson's Hardware, Davies Bros., druggists, Beer and

Old Charlottetown

(And P. E. I.)

WINTER COMMUNICATION

"We are very glad to observe that the Government is going to take up the matter of winter steam communication between this Province and the mainland, and insist upon the Dominion Government carrying out the terms of the compact under which we became part of the Confederation. We are now at the close of the eighth winter which has elapsed since we entered the Union, on terms which guaranteed the establishment of efficient steam service, winter and summer, with the intention of placing us in continental communication with the Intercolonial and other railway systems of the Dominion, and we are very little, if any, better off than before. The 'Albert' which was placed on the route for the second and third winters was a 'tub' but still giving her fair play, she was very nearly as good as her successor, the 'Northern Light', which the Minister of Marine has, more than once, pronounced a huge fraud.

"This season our business men have suffered great loss and inconvenience on account of the irregularity and detention of the steamer. Hundreds of tons of freight have been lying at Pictou awaiting shipment, and will probably remain there until the 'St. Lawrence' or 'Princess' bring them. Passengers have suffered seriously, starvation has stared them in the face; and forced to leave the steamer to seek the shore, they have been severely frozen, although, providentially, none have perished."

—The Examiner, March 30, 1881.

PRICELESS GIFT

KIRKLAND LAKE, Ont.—(CP)—Mrs. Nancy Smith, 48, of nearby Coral Rapids received a priceless gift from an eye specialist who restored her eyesight after she had been blind for more than 10 years.

Weeks, and numerous others whom I cannot recall.

I forgot to tell you that my starting salary was \$150 per week and after six months it was raised to \$175. I afterwards taught school at Cape Bear for two years at the magnificent salary of \$225.00 per year.

In case you don't know where Rutland is I may say that it is the Onanagan Valley about five miles north of Kelowna where they grow the 'big red apples.'

I hope you will pardon my taking up your space with this letter but I did want you to know how pleased I was when I got those papers and to see how it had grown from the old days nearly sixty years ago.

With best wishes for the New Year to yourself and the "Guardian".

I am, Sir, etc., E. MUGFORD Rutland, B.C.

The Poet's Corner

GOOSE CALENDAR

In the place we live the wild geese pass When the lake is clear as a looking glass. Once in Spring and once in Fall I see them pass and hear them call. There is a pine tree, lone and bare, That stands on our land to guide them there. Just at the pine, the column veers — I have seen it so for forty years. Yearly, my wife she says to me, "Jim, get an axe and clear that tree."

I take an axe, and I go to clear, But I let it stand for one more year. I worry that when the geese come back They might miss the pine and lose the track. And forty years from Fall to Fall I have measured by the wild geese call.

—Eric Rhodin, in the Christian Science Monitor.

The Age-Old Story

Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts. . . . Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

PAINTED CATS

SAULT STE. MARIE, Ont.—(CP)—The humane society is looking for residents who torture small animals. Two cats that were destroyed by the society had been covered with paint.

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The Passing Scene

By Observer

A NEW YEAR'S PARTY

I have never been very keen on New Year parties although of course I would never think of criticizing anyone who is. It is all a matter of temperament, no doubt, and different temperaments find delight in different things. It would be a drab sort of life indeed if we were all of one mind in everything. Moreover if one may believe the evidence of many active participants in the honoured rite, New Year's parties can sometimes produce a lot of fun and entertainment.

This January 1st was an exception to my general rule and, more by accident than design, I was present at what I am sure was one of the strangest parties ever staged. It may be that some readers of this column would be interested in hearing about what went on, so perhaps I had better start at the beginning.

Almost every evening from seven o'clock on I am occupied in reading or writing and I was following the same routine on Wednesday. Around 11:30, I think it was, I was called to the front door. Naturally, I wondered who the late caller might be, but before I got around to inviting him inside he said: "I am going to a New Year's party. Would you like to come?" Ordinarily I would have declined the invitation but this time, for some reason I could never explain, I said, "Yes, of course." Not bothering to put on extra clothing, although the night was the coldest for the winter so far, I followed my strange visitor as he went lightly over the snowy roads.

At first I was inclined to lag a bit but soon I caught on to the urgency of the journey and within a few minutes, or so it seemed, we arrived at a place of indescribable beauty. I had never seen the like before nor do I expect to see the like again. So far as I can give any picture at all of the strange place it was a mingling of all the seasons in one.

Birds were singing, brooks were babbling, as in the spring and summer; the trees were dressed in technicolour as in the autumn; white snow was on the ground as in the winter. It was singular, as I remember it now, that I felt no uneasiness. The peace that was evident on all sides more than made up for the seeming incongruity and I began to like the environment very much. However, there was still wonderment in my mind as to why anyone should invite me to such a delightful place and I ventured to ask my guide about it.

"In every man's heart," he told me, "there is the hope that some day he might see with his own eyes a little bit of perfection. The perfection you will see here is not so much of form as of purpose. The beauty you have already sensed comes more from within your own hopes than from the visible things around you. The witnesses who will presently speak are here to tell you, each in his own way, that deep within the soul of the Universe there is a voice that cries out for order in the chaos of man's world. You will see how step by step and thought by thought they found the secret of living with the highest they knew."

The scene was changed slightly. There was still beauty in abundance but the emphasis now was on the voices of human beings who had left the world better than they had found it.

The first voice that came to my attention was that of St. Augustine: "God is more truly imagined than expressed and He exists more truly than He is imagined." Then Simon the Just: "The world rests upon three things—belief, the service of God, and benevolence." Then Ovid: "When you have set yourself a task, finish it. He who is not prepared today will be less so tomorrow." Then Plautus: "Acts of kindness shown to the worthy are never thrown away." Then Plato: "Self conquest is the greatest of victories." Then Pythagoras: "No one is free who has not obtained the empire of himself."

There was a brief, very brief, intermission, and then I heard the voice of my guide: "Take the most of time it flies away so fast." And Voltaire: "Love the truth but pardon error." And Shakespeare: "Let never day nor night unhalloved pass, but still remember what the Lord hath done." And Thoreau: "Associate reverently with your loftiest thoughts." And Dickens: "It is in the nature of things that no man can improve himself without in some degree improving other men." And Addison: "What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity."

Again a pause before I heard Whitman: "I say the whole earth and all the stars in the sky are for religious sake." And Lowell: "Truly there is a tide in the affairs of men but there is no gulf stream setting forever in one direction." And Hugo: "The beautiful is as useful as the useful." And Pascal: "To think well is the first principle of morality." And Brooks: "Do not pray for tasks equal to your strength but for strength equal to your tasks." And Emerson: "The reward of a thing well done is to have done it." Then Longfellow: "The rays of happiness, like those of light, are colorless when unbroken."

There are many, many more waiting to be heard but my guide touched my arm ever so gently and said: "That will be all for now."

Yes, I had fallen asleep, and I suppose it was all a dream. Who can say? I'm sure I cannot. Who knows for certain what a dream is or where it parts company with reality? And what does it matter, anyway? It was a grand New Year's party and would not have missed it for anything.

The National Geographic Society maintains a geographic library of 20,000 volumes.

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