

Progress Reported

Welfare Minister Wedge is quoted as expressing satisfaction at the progress made at the federal-provincial conference called to discuss proposals under the Canada Assistance Plan, which was highlighted in the Throne Speech at Ottawa last week. This plan seeks to reduce all existing shared welfare programs to one uniform pattern, and would also provide for payment by Ottawa of half the cost of provincial mothers' allowances and health care programs.

As the Financial Times of Canada notes, in a sense the plan is intended to cover some of the glaring gaps in the Canada Pension Plan, and is to be welcomed for that reason. But it would seem too much to expect that the entire federal welfare system could be co-ordinated into one efficient, all-embracing program in one parliamentary session.

This corresponds to Mr. Wedge's statement on returning from last week's conference of provincial health ministers with the federal minister, Miss LaMarsh, that the new plan will not go into effect before April 1, 1966. In the early years, it will cost the federal government some \$50 million to \$60 million more than its present contributions to the provincial plans. But it looks to be a small price to pay for what promises to be a sensible co-ordination of necessary but often needlessly duplicated welfare efforts.

But there is more to it than this, as Mr. Wedge has emphasized. The plan will operate on a more flexible basis than the existing regulations, so that federal help will be apportioned where it is needed most. It is also hoped that Ottawa will agree to pay for part of the administrative costs now shouldered by the provinces.

Like some other plans outlined in the Speech, this one is still pretty much in embryo form. One can give the government full marks for proposing it, also for its shrewdness in estimating the vote-getting value of concepts of this kind in the event of an election being called before they can be brought to fruition. In this case it is to be hoped that regardless of the party stripe of the administration which may be in power at Ottawa a year hence, the need for integrating federal-provincial welfare programs will be kept in mind, and that the principle of fiscal need will be solidly embodied in the legislation.

Just Supposing

A short time ago the London Economist was complaining that "the trouble with space is that there is so much of it and so little in it." Nearly 20 years of space exploration, 20 years of forays into interplanetary dust and nothingness," it said, "have produced results almost wholly negative—no seraphs singing, no green cheese on the moon, no canals on Mars, no atmosphere on Venus." The only major contribution to science made by all the space probes has been the identification of the band of radiation—the Van Allen Belt—that girdles the earth. And even that had been predicted mathematically.

Now a Russian astronomer claims to have discovered, far out in space, a "super-civilization." A way out there somewhere, he believes, intelligent beings are beaming radio waves toward us. They follow a regular flickering pattern repeated every 100 days. Scientists in Moscow, who have "checked and rechecked" their colleague's results, assure us that this is no pipe dream; that we face, at least, "perhaps one of the most outstanding discoveries in the whole history of radio astronomy."

Western scientists, while not ruling out the possibility of an intelligent form of life on a distant stellar body, are more sceptical. The signals, they say, will need "a lot

more study." They could be caused by a natural oscillation, similar to the sunspot cycle of the solar system. They concede that the phenomenon is "extremely interesting," and must be taken seriously; but the Russians "have by no means presented conclusive evidence," and so forth and so on.

Now why throw cold water on a bright idea like this? Isn't it just what we needed to keep our sanity on this quarrelsome little space craft of ours? "Old and young," as Robert Louis Stevenson used to remind us, "we are all on our last cruise." All in one boat on the boundless main of the universe. We shall never see dry land any more. Yet—what a crew!—we can't endure the sight of each other. Now, from the crow's-nest, a lookout cries "Ship ahoy!" Shouldn't we all, with one accord, raise a lusty cheer?

A very distant sail: just a speck on the horizon; it could, indeed, be anything. But the very possibility of it being another sail—another ship—another sentient cargo—bound, like us, for the awesome port of eternity—shouldn't that be enough to make us all forget our wretched bickerings, and hail it as an omen of peace and reconciliation with our kind?

Drugs And Medicare

One of the items in the federal Speech from the Throne proposes to re-establish the Commons committee on food and drugs. This committee sat last session, chiefly for the purpose of studying drug safety in the light of the sensational thalidomide case. Now it is to undertake research work with the expressed aim of "reducing the prices paid by the public for drugs."

It is suggested that this decision to declare war on high drug prices is closely linked to the government's plans for medicare—an old Liberal pledge which the Throne Speech indicates is to be made the subject of a federal-provincial conference. On this basis, it would seem that Ottawa wants to make sure that work is already underway towards cutting the cost of medication before it proceeds further into an expensive medicare plan.

Meantime we note that a plan of this kind has been shaping up at Washington and has now received the approval of the House of Representatives. It took a long time—twenty years—to get this far since it was originally proposed by President Truman. In its revised form it would set up a voluntary insurance program, covering physicians' fees and various other services, to supplement the basic provisions for hospital care, nursing home care and visiting nurse services.

The basic benefits, financed by higher social security taxes, would be automatically available to persons over 65, who could obtain supplementary coverage by enrolling in the voluntary insurance plan and paying monthly premiums of \$3 a month. The federal government would match these payments by subsidies of about \$600 million a year from general tax revenues.

The bill now goes to the Senate for finance committee hearings that are expected to start after Easter and continue for several weeks. The prospects of favorable Senate action within the next few months are regarded as "excellent."

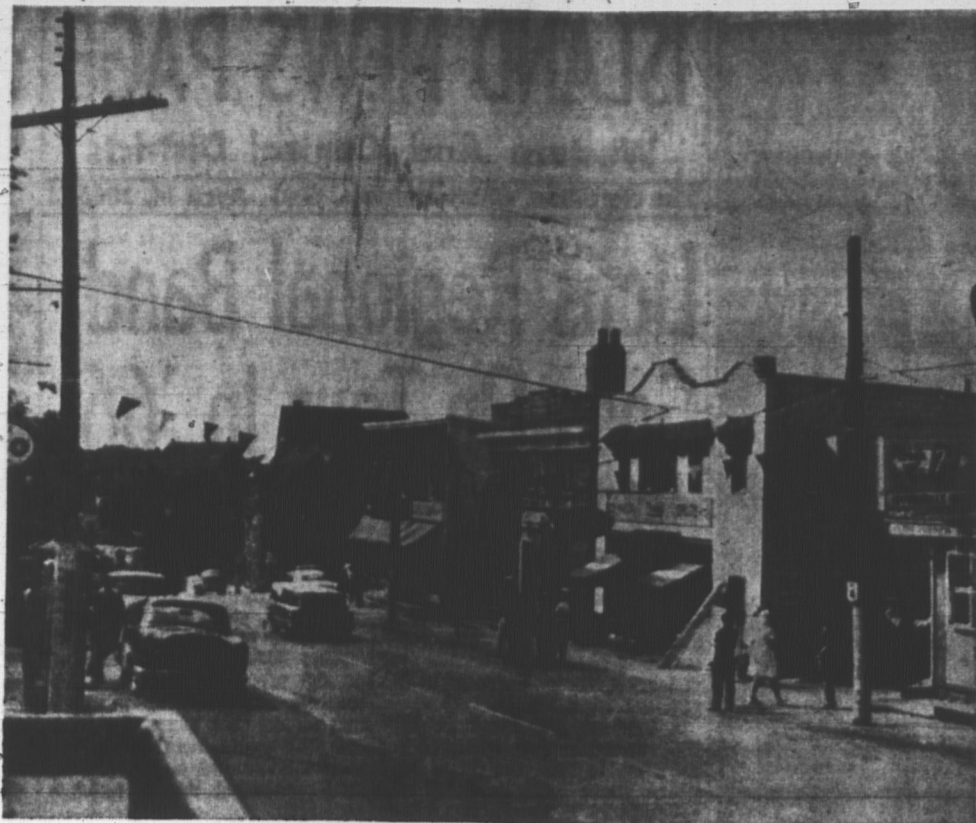
As the New York Times points out, the plan does not "socialize" medicine or compromise the doctor-patient relationship. It merely enables individuals to provide for future medical bills on the insurance system.

Should Work Both Ways

It is reported that as a result of the "free trade" auto deal between Canada and the United States, Canadian-made Fords are being sold in the United States for prevailing U.S. prices which are lower than those in Canada. If this be so, then it is pertinent to ask the reason why. Government authorities continue to insist that the deal will work out wonderfully to Canada's advantage.

"Canadian consumers," says the Ottawa Journal, "have been told that they must not expect free trade to bring the prices of their cars down to U.S. levels soon. But if Canadian cars can be competitive in the U.S. market at low prices, why can't they be cheaper at home? Industry Minister Drury, the Canadian authority on auto free trade, will have answers—shoots of them. Until he produces prices for Canadian buyers comparable to those in the U.S. none of these answers will get us a mile forward."

They should give the Opposition some mileage in discussing the matter in the House of Commons, however.



MAIN STREET, MONTAGUE

OTTAWA REPORT By Patrick Nicholson

Big Price Tag On Federal Cornucopia

The third session of Canada's 26th Parliament opened with the Pearson Government's declaration that it is developing a program to eliminate poverty among our people.

Detailing this program, the government listed 21 major new proposals in the Speech from the Throne. But improving upon the hawdinking technique of the slick salesman, it failed to add the price tag even in small print at the bottom of the document. Nor has any MP, even in critical comment, yet dared to put his own estimate on this program.

Of course to do so is an exercise in dreaming, because if it were to sit for three years this session could never possibly get through the massive legislative and deliberative program so wantonly set forth by a government whose only object has been to fool all of the people all the time. Nevertheless, rushing into print where angelic ministers fear to speak, I have made a reasonable estimate of what this program would cost each year, if the words of the program mean what the public are obviously expected to assume they mean.

The first group of proposals, in order of importance, relate to creating jobs for those workers displaced by automation, and fitting those workers for replacement. Two million jobs are expected to be taken over by machines in the next 10 years; this means that one-tenth of that number of workers must be retrained each year—possibly through three-month courses. 200,000 workers trained and given allowances for 13 weeks totals \$260,000,000. One in eight of those will probably need to relocate, with government aid: cost \$25,000,000. Coupled with this will be a program to assist industrial development in backward areas: cost \$50,000,000.

FARMS AND FISHERIES To raise the incomes of farm families, including dairy farmers, and fishermen, the government will take various steps. About half Canada's 750,000 farms today yield less than \$1,200 a year in cash crops. The 30,000 whole-time fishermen and some of the 50,000 occasional fishermen—commercial catchers, that is, not you and me with our holiday tackle—will also get some help. Aid to dairy farmers has already been estimated at \$67,500,000 by Agriculture Minister Harry Hays.

WELFARE MEASURES High on the list is a national health plan estimated by the Hall Commission to cost \$2,676,000,000 next year, if launched. There is, also, increased aid to veterans families; a Canadian Assistance Plan subject to a needs test; a retirement program for senators (this could average 16 ex-senators drawing \$8,000 per year each). And as a welfare measure we might include the suggested abolition of capital punishment—resulting in an average of 1,500 convicted murderers in penitentiaries costing the taxpayers \$2,800 each for keep, plus welfare payments to their families.

Our Yesterdays

(From The Guardian Files)

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

(April 14, 1940) The Royal Navy laid an unprecedented minefield far into the Baltic today—a 500-mile sea death trap in the Nazi Reich's backyard—after shattering German naval forces at Narvik Saturday, sinking seven destroyers.

Among Dalhousie University graduates winning studentships at McGill from the National Research Council, Ottawa, is C. A. Reilly. Mr. Reilly is a native of Traveller's Rest.

TEN YEARS AGO

(April 14, 1955) Mr. Al A. Nicholson who recently resigned as assistant manager of Radio Station CJRW in Summerside, has received an appointment as assistant director of the Tourist and Information Bureau in Charlottetown.

The Charlottetown Little Theatre Guild of Charlottetown presented the Victorian thriller "Angel Street" under the direction of Mrs. W. E. Scantlebury. Members of the cast were: Mary Moran, Tom Hunter, Jeanie Boomhower, H. Barry Bugden, Jean Giddings, Jack MacKinnon and Jack Boomhower.

ularies costing the taxpayers \$2,800 each for keep, plus welfare payments to their families. "Term 29" is the euphemism for a subsidy to Newfoundland—Ottawa tipping its hat to worrisome Joey Smallwood; estimated cost \$8 million. Then there are such projects as the company of Young Canadians (\$10,000 at \$100 per week); an Ordnance staff (\$1,500,000 including staff); subsidizing a Canadian Hollywood (\$4,000,000). Two proposals free of cost are officializing "O Canada" and importing the Constitution.

Cut Election Campaign

Guelph Mercury

Prime Minister Pearson probably agrees with John Diefenbaker's opinion that Canadian election campaigns are too long and therefore an unbearable strain. Mr. Pearson should accept the opening which his chief opponent has provided, and amend the legislation governing elections.

As the Conservative leader has observed, Canadian campaigns run for 58 days compared with three weeks in Britain. In earlier years, transport and communications were slower and the long campaign was a needed permit for the leaders to cross-cross the country.

Now that the major cities are only a few hours apart by air, more newspapers reporting a campaign reach more people, and radio and television add their coverage, there is no urgent reason why a campaign should not be reduced to, say, four weeks, clipping off 30 days. Mr. Diefenbaker relishes politics and has enjoyed the cut-and-thrust of the hustings, while Mr. Pearson is known to dislike campaigning. Yet the ex-PM declares: "It's a laborious time, a physical test that's gone beyond the bounds of what a man can stand."

Would Safety Car Sell?

Vancouver Province

Some MLAs accuse car manufacturers of refusing to put safety features in autos for fear they would reduce sales.

There were even hints in the legislature that auto-makers deliberately turn out fragile cars to increase the market for new ones.

At least one MLA proposed federal legislation to require manufacturers to put safety ahead of all other automobile design considerations.

The idea of producing safer vehicles is logical, but since most products offered competitively reflect public taste it raises an important question: Do motorists want a "safety-first" car? If they do, price conscious car makers would have to divert emphasis from style, horsepower and comfort to devising and incorporating all possible safety features.

What would be the result? We can only guess, but the Safety Car would likely be much less dashing than current models.

Britain And U.S. Planes

Montreal Gazette

The British Labor government has announced the cancellation of the TSR-2 nuclear bomber project, a project which would eventually have involved the expenditure of over \$2 billion. Britain will probably buy American planes instead.

This cancellation has caused fury in some circles, including the Conservative opposition. When the decision was announced it was greeted in the House of Commons with such words as "traitor," "coward," and "abominable decision." It is evident that the decision has hurt British patriotism, as well as the British aircraft industry.

All of this is reminiscent of the cancellation of the Avro Arrow jet fighter in Canada, by the former Diefenbaker government. This cancellation was made because the immense cost was not felt comparable to the military advantages of producing the plane.

When the Arrow was cancelled, the decision was fiercely attacked on patriotic, as well as on other grounds. And this was undoubtedly one of the first heavy, and lasting blows to be sustained by the Diefenbaker government.

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Blazing new fashion trails...

Its engine, would be in the rear, for better traction and to avoid the possibility of machinery being pushed into the motorist's lap in a collision. It could not be a convertible; instead, it would have a heavily-supported and reinforced roof to resist crushing in case the car should roll over.

It would have a snub-nose to give the driver better visibility. The dashboard and doors would be heavily padded and all instruments deeply recessed. The whole body would be made of steel much thicker than that now used and the expense of this would probably eliminate all chrome strips and other decorative features.

The Safety Car might, in fact, look something like a small, thoroughly-padded tank. It might be so unattractive that motorists would demand a return to more dashing models—even if it meant they had to drive carefully—which is the best safety device of all.

Britain does, however, have an alternative. And that is close co-operation with France, which also has an aviation industry which faces a difficult future. This co-operation has already begun, and will undoubtedly be expanded. In this age of giants, it often seems that the only way to survive is to become a giant. Perhaps a Franco-British aircraft industry could survive; when its components could not.

STUDY ATHEISM

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Vatican Radio said Monday the Vatican's new secretariat for non-believers will not seek to make social and political moves toward atheists, but take only initiatives, spiritual and pastoral in nature. The broadcast indicated the secretariat's first task would not be to seek a dialogue with non-believers, but to collect information on atheists and study possible ways of establishing contact with them.

Infectious Staph

By Dr. Theodore R. Van Dellen Z.B.K. writes: "Several years ago I had a series of boils over a period of months. They were in my eyes, nose, on the back of my neck, and the biggest was in my armpit. I was underweight and went on a get-fat-quick diet without consulting my doctor. I ate fattening foods such as bacon, oatmeal, sour cream, eggs, and English walnuts. Shortly thereafter, my chin was covered with tiny pus heads. My doctor sent me to a dermatologist who gave me X-ray treatments and a diet that eliminated everything I had been eating. It took a long time to clear up the pinpoint pus blanket. After I got started on the no fat, no raw fruit diet, I never have had another boil. What do you think about this?"

Many persons are bothered along this line but the problem is not so easy to solve as that of our reader. Staphylococci are responsible for—most pimples, boils, and skin abscesses. Virulent or resistant strains are likely to be the cause when lesions recur. We know that the individual or some member of the family harbors the causative micro-organisms in the nose. They are not always easy to eliminate except through persistent treatment.

Nose drops or ointments containing gentamicin or other antibiotics have been successful in many instances. A staphylococcal vaccine (SPL) is reported to help. This product can be injected, applied locally, swallowed, or sprayed in the nose.

Cleanliness is important. The boil should be treated with heat and antiseptics and it is important to keep the surrounding skin clean. Wash with a good antibacterial soap and rinse with 70 per cent alcohol. Wash the hands frequently with your own washcloth and dry with a paper or cloth towel. Soaps containing hexachlorophene are useful for bathing because with repeated use, they leave an antiseptic film on the skin.

Meanwhile, improve overall resistance by eating a normal diet, getting plenty of rest and exercise, and by being moderate in all things. Food enters the picture in that some individuals have an idiosyncrasy to certain items and develop boils or pimples when too much of the offender is eaten.

COLOR CHANGE Mrs. L.L. writes My hair was a natural black. It is rapidly turning gray. Is there anything I can take to get the dark color back?

REPLY Dye the hair or wear a wig. Many years ago, a part of the vitamin B complex was said to restore hair color. But it helped so few that it no longer is recommended.

NAIL GROWTH Mrs. L. B. writes I am recovering from a broken hip. I would like to know why the nails on my right hand are not growing. Is it because they are on the same side as the broken hip?

REPLY There is no relationship between these conditions. (NOTE: All correspondence to Dr. Van Dellen should be addressed to: Dr. Theodore Van Dellen, c/o Chicago Tribune, Chicago, Illinois.)

Wilson's U.S. Visit

By Boris Miskew Canadian Press Staff Writer

Prime Minister Wilson leads President Johnson a sympathetic ear Thursday with the hope of learning first-hand future American plans for the war in Viet Nam, and the possibility of a peaceful solution. The prime minister is scheduled to leave London tonight for New York where he is to meet with Secretary-General U Thant of the United Nations, address the Economic Club of New York and hold talks with the president in Washington before returning to Britain.

The Vietnamese conflict will most likely be at the top of the discussion between Johnson and Wilson although talks also are expected to touch on the North Atlantic Alliance and on Britain's financial picture. Wilson's mission to the U.S. coincides with British plans to send former foreign secretary Patrick Gordon Walker to a number of Asian capitals to study the possibility of international peace negotiations on the South Vietnamese war.

Gordon Walker had hoped to include Hanoi, the capital of North Viet Nam, and Peking on his agenda but Wilson's unquestioning support of U.S. policy in Viet Nam apparently has poured cold water on the idea.

Diplomatic sources said Monday in London that both China and North Viet Nam have told Britain they see little point in Gordon Walker's visit to their capitals when he sets off to Asia next week.

Wilson's support of U.S. action against the North Viet

names has aroused outcries from a sizable number of British Labor members of Parliament as well as from other quarters of the country. His unflinching backing of the American policy in Viet Nam obviously is going against the grain of many Labor party members, who had been critical of U.S. policy on many issues while they were in opposition. Wilson therefore will have to bring back logical arguments as to why Britain should continue to support the U.S. in Viet Nam.

His success will largely depend on whether Johnson can convince him that American plans in Southeast Asia are genuinely aimed at bringing peace to South Viet Nam and that the dangers of the crisis blossoming into a full-scale war are remote.

Wilson has shown willingness to bend backwards in his efforts to avoid U.S. - British friction since the election of his Labor party by a slim majority last October.

He needs U.S. support in his efforts to restore to an optimistic level Britain's shaky economic structure that his government had inherited from the ousted Conservative administration.

Furthermore, British opposition to U.S. policy in Viet Nam would likely have little effect on American determination to oust the rebel Viet Cong from South Viet Nam and could stand as an obstacle in future British-American discussions on other matters.

HONDA advertisement featuring images of motorcycles and text describing features like 4-cylinder engine, fantastic economy, superior performance, easy to ride, and absolute safety. Includes contact information for Keith Carmichael at 25 Brackley Pt. Road, Ch'town.

Blazing new fashion trails... for EASTER advertisement featuring an image of a woman in a dress and text describing living colors like citrus tones of lemon and lime, sun-splashed pumpkin yellow, and exotic red-orange per-simmon. Includes contact information for island furriers Ltd. at 79 Grafton St., Dial 2-1273.