

THE GUARDIAN

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"The Strongest Memory is Weaker Than the Weakest Ink" CHARLOTTETOWN TUESDAY, APRIL 3, 1951

Our New Air Service

The people of the outlying sections of this Province have long had to endure a train service which would not be tolerated in any other part of Canada. This service has resulted in delaying mail deliveries as well as freight and express, with the result that mails are regularly twenty-four hours—and on Saturdays forty-eight hours—late in being delivered.

To remedy this situation for our Western Prince County subscribers, The Guardian has inaugurated an air service which will ensure prompt delivery of this newspaper on the morning of its publication, thus placing all our readers between Miscouche and Alberton and Tignish on a par with our city subscribers. If yesterday's inaugural deliveries prove a permanent success, it is hoped to extend the service to other sections requiring it.

In the meantime, we express our warmest thanks to the Post Office and Transport Department authorities for their very satisfactory cooperation. Many commendatory remarks have already been received with regard to the service, which is not only a history-making one for this Province but we believe for all Canada, so far as the improvement effected is concerned.

Who Turns The Grindstone?

When the provinces entered into "tax rental" agreements with Ottawa it was generally believed that the per capita payments from the Federal treasury would equalize the burden of providing provincial public services. The heavy tax revenues from the wealthy provinces of Central Canada would, it was believed, thus be tapped to help pay for schools, highways, pensions and other costly outlays in those provinces less able to afford them.

The trouble, of course, was that Ontario and Quebec declined to enter into tax rental agreements with Ottawa. For those provinces which did so, the inflationary policies of Federal finance have made the purchasing power of Federal subsidies much less than what they were when the agreements were made. Thus, while Finance Minister Abbott states that Federal revenues have exceeded his estimates of twelve months ago by hundreds of millions of dollars, not a penny of this tax windfall is available to the provinces.

That is why provincial governments are ready to resort to the undesirable and dangerous device of hidden or indirect taxes in order to balance their budgets. Before embarking upon any such untried course, it would be worth the while of provincial authorities to estimate how much additional revenue they might have received had they not "farmed out" some of their most lucrative sources of revenue to Ottawa in return for annual subsidies which bear no relationship to the present value of the dollar and which vary in amount only in terms of a gain in population.

Horizontal Increases

In framing its recommendations for reforms of the Canadian freight rate structure, the Royal Commission on Transportation agrees with a basic contention of the Maritime and Western Provinces that horizontal increases in rates "aggravate the disadvantage already suffered by long haul shippers and consignees."

This was the subject of hot argument during the Ottawa hearings of the Commission. The railways showed not the slightest inclination to depart from the principle of a flat percentage increase across the board. On this subject, the C. N. R. submitted that "a horizontal increase is the only satisfactory method of dealing with general increase cases and of distributing the burden equitably." But the National system admitted such a flat increase could not be applied in practice to all competitive rates (meaning largely in Ontario and Quebec). It also noted exceptions to the rule in the case of certain specific commodities.

The only exceptions at present are western grain and flour, governed by statute, and also coal and coke.

The Royal Commission's report reviews the history of rate cases in Canada—most of which resulted in changes in an upward direction—and it says in this connection: "Following World War II the Board of Transport Commissioners seems to have treated the applications purely

from the revenue point of view and without considering the ability of different commodities to bear the increases."

The report notes that the chief reason for the Board's failure to depart from "an almost rigid adherence to horizontal percentage increases" was lack of information. "This is a situation which calls for reform."

While the Commission shows itself in full accord with the protesting Provinces in this regard, it does not follow them in all their proposals for reform. The remedy, says the Commission, "is in the hands of the railways themselves." They should make studies of their traffic and present the results, in the greatest detail, to the Transport Board when applying for rate increases in future. They should give special attention to long haul traffic and to rates on basic commodities. The report adds:

"But if the railways do not approach the task in this way, it ought to be the duty of the Board to see that they do so."

The question arises, who is to see that the Board does its duty in this regard?

EDITORIAL NOTES

"The man in the street" is thinking seriously of his future rent increases which sooner or later may land him there.

In 1950, 1,556 employees of the income tax division were laid off as part of the Government's economy drive.

Elections and extensive road work have long been closely linked, and the present contest is no exception.

Added to the cost of living is now the doubling of the one cent postage on third-class mail, and the increase in parcel post and registration rates.

The potato starch subsidy is most timely and welcome to farmers worried about the effect of the surplus spuds, and not unwelcome nor untimely for Government candidates.

The Teachers' Federation annual convention was no doubt appreciated by members but probably no less so than by the pupils who returned to work yesterday after the usual Easter and convention holidays.

A Government artist has prepared a preliminary model of a crane to adorn a large stone inside the entrance to the Federal Parliament Buildings, Ottawa. A good guess is that it will be more generally taken to be another of the species that is so honoured, the stork.

The anticipated sales tax would come as a boon and a blessing to the Provincial Government with its steadily increasing expenditure. Merchants and storekeepers on the other hand generally resent being called upon to absorb such a tax, or to pass it on to their customers.

Washington Irving, American author, was born in New York this date 1783. He visited Europe for two years and on his return wrote the "Salmagundi" papers in 1806 and three years later published "Knickerbocker's History of New York," its quaint humour and felicitous style at once rendering him famous on both sides of the Atlantic. He joined his brother's firm in 1810 but on its failure in 1818, Irving turned to his pen for support. His "Bracebridge Hill" is a delightful study of old English manners.

The natural gas product of Alberta is much more worthwhile than for heating and lighting. The Minister of Industry there told the legislature that such by-products as propane, butane, hydrogen sulphide and wet gasoline would be removed before export, leaving only the residual natural gas to be shipped through any pipeline. This was his answer to opposition charges that these by-products, in event of Alberta exporting gas, would be used to establish petro-chemical industries outside of the province and prevent them from being set up in Alberta.

Problem drinkers in the United States cause 4,350 fatal accidents yearly, are absent about 29,000,000 working days and cost management \$2,000,000,000. Dr. Ralph Henderson, of Yale School of Alcohol Studies, declared in addressing a meeting of the executive branch of the committee on alcoholism of the American Association of Industrial Physicians and Surgeons in Toronto. Dr. Henderson, in charge of the industrial section of the Yale studies, said that there are 2,060,000 problem drinkers regularly employed in the U. S. He said alcoholism causes more trouble to management than any other known disease, including heart disease, and that the industrial physician is much more aware of the drinker's problems, and what to do about them, than any other medical man.

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.

GOOD AGAINST EVIL

Sir,—I met a member of the A.A. group quite recently. Having known him from boyhood, I asked him how the battle was going. And although the wind was blowing cold on the street, I stood for 10 minutes to hear of his religious experience, in defeating his enemy. He told of his moderate drinking, until finally, to be denied it was to actually cry for it like a baby. Told of his rescue by the group, of the prayer he repeats each morning "as soon as my feet strike the floor—God Almighty, keep me one more day from alcohol," and other petitions. Told of what he has done in the saving of others. He admitted that he was simply an instrument in God's hand, and that when calling at a home where the children were in rags, he would perhaps be met with a volley of abuse. But by appealing to his "Higher Power" and telling the victims "You are coming with me in just one hour," why the overcoat went on and the surrender was made.

It reminds me of the passage—"As many as received Him to them He gave power." For the word power, substitute grace, or if you wish, the word dynamite, in the case of this Christian worker. I understand that the A. A. membership in the Maritimes has grown to 5,000. And statistics show that in the United States there are 50 million drinkers, three million excessive drinkers and three-quarter of a million alcoholics. Quite a vast army. Walking in single file six feet apart, two miles per hour 24 hours per day, the alcoholics would require 17 days to pass a given point. So this is the situation. But in spite of this, we read the writings of a few, who with the pen, boost the habit of moderate drinking. I can not say whether this is done for money or not. At any rate it is assisting the "big interests" with their cunningly contrived advertisements.

I am, Sir, etc. J. A. MacKENZIE, Kensington, P.E.I.

BUILDING PROPER ROADS

Sir,—I live on a road that has two soft spots in it. Those bad spots have interfered with continuous traffic for a greater part of the winter—and every winter. With proper material, equipment, and a road foreman who is a road builder these spots could have been made passable in a matter of hours. As for the rest of the road, it could have been kept smooth and as fast as a race track all winter, if it were desirable. In summer, when road building is largely a routine matter and presents no technical difficulties, road supervisors are buzzing around like butterflies in a cabbage patch, but in winter when roadmaking becomes an exact science you wouldn't know that there was a road supervisor in the country. As a matter of fact they are not in the country. They are for the most part in the towns. Building a Trans-Canada Highway seems to have gone to our heads. A Trans-Canada Highway is a good investment for tourists, for business executives and for politicians who wish to ride the crest of the wave, but when it comes to getting produce to market or getting a doctor it doesn't answer the purpose.

The new model method of road building is to watch the thermometer, and so many degrees rises or drops as many degrees to declare the road closed to heavy traffic. The exact number of days lost from work in pursuing this course should be carefully observed, and farmers should be recompensed for losses sustained. There is lots of money with which to recompense farmers in the West.

Trying to farm with mechanical devices that don't suit this planet has put the farmers in the position where they have to guarantee John L. Lewis and his labourers a 150 a month retiring allowance after 20 years service. Just how long farmers can survive is a problem for a chartered accountant.

There is a rumor in circulation that there is a road building material that will stand the rigors of our climate. If there is let us use it, and bring this road building tragedy to an end.

I am, Sir, etc. VERNON CROCKETT

MONTREAL, April 2—(CP)—Lady Steele, widow of Sir Samuel Benfield Steele, founder of the Northwest Mounted Police, died yesterday, aged 91. She was born at Verdun, Que., and was the great-granddaughter of the last Marquis de Lotbiniere.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., April 2—(AP)—Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg (Rep. Mich.) had a comfortable week-end, his physician reported today but the seriousness of his condition remained unchanged. He has been gravely ill since a relapse Feb. 28.

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THE WRONG BAG

"The Packet from Pictou on Saturday, instead of bringing the Halifax mail, brought back the bags she carried from hence on Wednesday. The mistake was not discovered until the bag reached the Pct Office. It may be easily imagined that the disappointment was keenly felt; and in order to remedy the evil as far as possible, the Packet was immediately despatched back to Pictou for the right bag. Yesterday she again returned without it, as the Pictou Postmaster had served the good folks of Halifax precisely as he had done ourselves, by returning them their own bag. "Now, if this had been the only occasion of the kind, it might have passed without remark; but, as precisely the same thing happened last summer, and as one of the Halifax papers recently intimated that for two weeks successively the Prince Edward Island papers had not arrived, although the Postmaster at Charlottetown is ready to make an affidavit that they were regularly forwarded to Pictou, we think it is our duty to call upon the Deputy Postmaster General to look into the matter." —Prince Edward Island Register, Aug. 11, 1929.

Journey To The North

(Ottawa Journal)

Northbound Canada geese have appeared in Alberta, honking on their way to re-assure us that Spring is on the way. Thus appears again the annual miracle of courage and endurance. Despite the sanctuaries so greatly publicized, and the game laws the Provinces attempt to enforce, the truth is that the dangerous life of the migrating goose ever becomes more hazardous; even the airplane has been turned against them and the barren-land lakes where once they could rest in safety have come within range of hunters who can skip a thousand miles in a few hours.

The geese in truth are a miracle of survival, and, besides, a miracle in determination. Aggressive hunters, armed with repeating rifles, were able to deflect the normal movements of the Prairie buffalo before the last few animals were dropped in mass slaughters. The great stupid beasts at last came to the conclusion the paths their ancestors had followed no longer were safe and they took different courses.

The geese are smarter but they have not changed their migration routes to any important degree. Naturally, they no longer rest on lakes surrounded by buildings or relax their vigilance no matter how distant their nesting places. But the flying arrow-heads pointed North and the elfin cries from the distant skies were sights and sounds familiar to those who lived in Canada before the white man came.

We see and hear the great birds pass and dull is the heart that does not feel the tug of emotion, a passing satisfaction in the thought of freedom, of swift-flying adventure in far lands, in the sense of the continually, strength and beauty of nature. There may be, also, the thought that mankind has done little enough to ensure the preservation of sights and sounds he loves

The Poet's Corner

FARE WELL

When I lie where shades of darkness Shall no more assail mine eyes, Nor the rain make lamentation When the wind sighs; How will fare the world whose wonder Was the very proof of me? Memory fades, must the remembrance Perishing be? Oh, when this my dust surrenders Hand, foot, lip, to dust again, May these loved and loving faces Please other men! May the rusting harvest hedgerow Still the Traveller's Joy entwine, And as happy children gather Posies once mine. Look thy last on all things lovely. Every hour. Let no night Sealy thy sense in deathly slumber Till to delight Thou hast paid thy utmost blessing; Since that all things thou wouldst praise Beauty took from those who loved them In other days. —Walter de la Mare.

The Canso Strait

(Sydney Post-Record)

Beats all how many people would have men labor to create waterways where none are available but would go to great expense to abolish a natural waterway. Cases in point are the proposed Chignecto Canal and the foolish idea of filling instead of bridging the Strait of Canso. The creative forces that formed North America, tied Nova Scotia proper to the mainland by an isthmus between the Bay of Fundy and Northumberland Strait, that is to say between Fundy's upper reach, Chignecto Bay and Bale Verte of the Strait. Ever since the coming of the white man this land-bridge or natural causeway has been deplored as a barrier to water transport between Fundy and the St. Lawrence.

At the other end of this province where the land narrows and the Strait of Canso makes an island of Cape Breton, there are those who never cease lamenting that the division is water instead of an isthmus. People with so perverse an aversion to living on an island might feel more at home in the middle of Saskatchewan where the land seems limitless and the farmers pray for rain.

True, Canso is a waterway that can and will be bridged without interfering with navigation through the strait, but those who never are satisfied with leaving geography as they find her, would throw a causeway barricade across the strait. They would flatten the hills in their forested beauty and dump them into the sea.

If Canso had been an isthmus instead of a strait it is certain there would have been a hulla-balloo to get a canal dug there so that ships wouldn't have to sail all the way around Cape Breton and through Cabot Strait in order to reach the St. Lawrence.

At one time it even was proposed right well. The geese have saved themselves and we wish them godspeed on their speedy journey.

THE KEYSTONE

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Notes By The Way

It all depends on the part of Canada you come from whether the wheat deal payoff was a raid on the Federal treasury or a measly insult to the farmers. The whole sorry mess is an unhappy example of what can happen when governments decide to go into trading and all the taxpayers are the victims of it.—(St. John's News.)

At a time when Canada is spending and planning to spend extraordinary amounts for defence, the Canso project has more than ordinary importance. Such a transportation link between the mainland and Cape Breton's industrial and military centers has a vital place in the Canadian defence scheme. Steel and coal are priority materials in any defence program; and the importance of Sydney Harbor as a naval base and a convoy assembly port was clearly demonstrated during World War II.—(Halifax Chronicle-Herald.)

It will come as a pleasant surprise to citizens that Manitoba's flood cost will be considerably lower than was estimated at the special legislative session last fall. At that time it was estimated that the total flood expenditures, apart from diking, would be \$23 millions, a large part of which would be recoverable from the Federal Government. Revised estimates in February, however, have reduced

to throw a blockade across Little Bras d'Or, with its bright and cheerful current of sea water, although nothing would be simpler than to bridge it adequately. The rights of the fishermen, however, headed off that nonsense. There is a virtue in the unfettered flow of the tide. The Strait of Canso is an important shortcut for water commerce between the St. Lawrence ports and the West Indies. It is a channel of ocean trade, a national waterway of the Dominion of Canada. Yet advocates of a causeway argue that its construction would provide a harbor there. What for?

Cape Breton's really necessary harbors are where the Creator placed them, at the Sydney, Louisbourg, etc., except where they are needed and not at the upper end of this island where they are not needed. A bridge will be built across Canso without interfering with navigation, spanning securely the unhindered progress of the tide.

Capital gain is made when a man sells for \$1.50 a share of stock which he bought for a dollar. It is made when a man sells a house, bought in 1939 for \$3,500, for \$7,000. (That is a hundred per cent capital gain and, big as it is, quite common among people of low as well as medium incomes.) Capital gain is made when a housewife sells a dining room set, bought for \$20 during the depression at an auction sale, for \$40 in this year of inflated value. Capital gain is made when a prospector discovers oil and gets paid for it, handsome. It is made when a person buys a bond for \$100 and sells it on a rising market for \$105.—(Peterborough Examiner.)

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