

THE GUARDIAN

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"The Strongest Memory is Weaker Than the Weakest Ink"

CHARLOTTETOWN WEDNESDAY, FEB. 7, 1951

Flouting Parliament

The Auditor General, Mr. Watson Sellar, in his report to the House of Commons, has revealed a new list of illegal transactions which indicates a surprising disregard by Crown Ministers of the laws which Parliament has passed to govern the use of appropriations.

Mr. Sellar's report shows that money voted for the Health Department found its way into the financing of a project of the Department of Trade. The Defense Department overspent its 1949-50 appropriation by Parliament and concealed \$12 million of this over-expenditure by carrying it over into the new fiscal year, although it was due and payable in the earlier period.

"When Cabinet Ministers are openly flouting the laws laid down by Parliament to prevent juggling with public funds," says the Globe and Mail, "it is little wonder that a list of sub-departments, and agencies have developed similarly casual methods. Mr. Sellar names the War Assets Corp., set up as a collecting agency only, but also found to be disbursing funds without any parliamentary sanction; the National Film Board, which used current income as working capital, contrary to money votes authorized on its behalf. The National Research Council was a beneficiary of funds improperly allotted to its use. Payments under the Prairie Farm Assistance Act were made to persons not properly authorized by the act to receive them. And the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation used funds voted for its International Service to meet part of the cost of a real estate transaction.

Last year the Government reported a surplus of \$292 million, which presumably went into the general revenues. It was clear as the year ended that the funds had been used, but the aggregate expenditures approved by Parliament gave no clue of where it went. No clear picture has as yet emerged as to its disposition. The new Sellar report indicates, however, what happens when a Government has surplus funds to play with. It plays with them.

Every member of Parliament has an equal responsibility to see that these practices are brought to an end. The Government is about to bring down the biggest budget in our history. Parliament has all the authority there is to see that the money is spent legally. Its duty merely commences when it votes the funds. It does no good whatever to hear annually from Mr. Sellar how flagrantly Parliament has been flouted—after the damage has been done.

Saskatchewan Experiment

How policies of indiscriminate socialization have worked out in Saskatchewan is thus described in the Winnipeg Free Press: Throughout the annual reports of Premier Douglas and Provincial Treasurer C. M. Fines there runs a common theme. For the year ending March 31, 1947 the province lost \$102,000 on the woollen mill, shoe factory, tannery, fish board operations and box factory. In 1948 the first four enterprises plus clay products lost \$329,000; for that year the box factory reported a profit of \$19,663 leaving approximately \$310,000 of this uncovered. For 1949 Mr. Fines reported losses of \$277,958 on seven industries. Deficits would of course have been higher had interest on money loaned by the Government finance office been included in the picture.

To camouflage these losses, Mr. Fines and Mr. Douglas made a practice of tossing into the account profits on power and telephones (paying enterprises before they became Crown corporations) and on compulsory insurance. It became necessary, nevertheless to drop the fish board products industry. Now the compulsory automobile insurance plan is turning sour, Mr. Fines having announced that it lost \$200,000 last year.

The argument that Crown corporations should be viewed from the standpoint of their service to the public, rather than from that of profits may sound plausible to some for the simple reason that, in many other cases of public utilities, the object is point of their service to the public, rather

than from that of profits may sound plausible to some for the simple reason that, in the case of public utilities, the object is to provide services at cost. But as applied to the Saskatchewan experiment, the argument simply will not stick for the simple reason that socialization was from the outset defended as a means of making profits to pay for social services.

By No Means Idle

In Winnipeg recently Justice Minister Garson took time during a speech to pay warm-hearted tribute to Mr. John Bracken in whose Manitoba cabinet Mr. Garson served for several years before Mr. Bracken was elected to lead the Progressive Conservative Party.

Of his former leader Mr. Garson said it was "a privilege to serve under such a fine chief," and that "he was a good Premier for Manitoba and Manitobans are greatly in his debt for the administration which he gave this province." But, says the Ottawa Journal, the reporter who covered the talk did not know Mr. Bracken very well, for he wound up a brief sketch with: "He now lives quietly on a farm near Ottawa." The Journal adds:

"If owning and managing three large farms in Carleton County, each stocked with a herd of good dairy cattle he personally selects, plus the supervision of farms in the West; his new interest in owning and breeding Palomino horses and an interest in many community ventures, all add up to 'living quietly' then some other retired gentlemen had better wonder what they are doing. Mr. Bracken is one of the largest landowners in Carleton and an exceedingly busy man."

EDITORIAL NOTES

This Province will benefit extensively from the expansion of the Federal Government's defence program. Emphasis is being laid on the need for increased air power, and here we have a base on which that expansion can be built.

Charles Dickens, English novelist, was born this date 1812. His books are as much up-to-date, and enjoy as great a circulation as many of the present day best sellers. They deal with social problems common to all humanity and appeal to the best that is within each of us.

The Maritime Provinces Board of Trade is showing indications of rising to the occasion in connection with the furtherance of Atlantic Provinces interests. It has decided to zone the four Provinces, and make each zone responsible for urging upon the powers-that-be to follow up the recommendations which the Board may make. It is also suggested that a Federal Parliamentary liaison committee should be appointed to present the views of the Board to parliamentarians; and likewise a permanent secretary be appointed.

According to Councillor Cox meters may not be the best means of handling the city parking situation, but it is the best and most practicable that has so far been suggested. He has faith in its efficacy, and is prepared to give the meter system a fair trial before condemning it as more bother and expense than it is alleged worth. This is the right spirit, for, before long, there may be more autos and trucks in operation in our shopping centres than the police can handle.

Parking penalties in Montreal are making motorists think twice about leaving a car in a No Parking zone when the penalty for that offence jumps, as it will if plans at City Hall materialize. No figure has been reached for the new penalty, but there is one school of thought which thinks N. Y.'s example of \$15 for the first offence, \$30 for the second and \$50 for the third would curb flagrant violation of no parking regulations. This would not apply in zones where parking is permitted. The \$2 levy would still apply for overtime parking, with the stiffer penalty aimed at violation of No Parking zones, whether during certain hours or of blanket scope.

It may be recalled how stubbornly Britain during the outset of last war opposed giving the U. S. air bases in Newfoundland and elsewhere in the British Empire. Now all that is changed, and in England itself the U. S. is about to open its sixth air base there. The field is Sealand, Cheshire, 180 miles northwest of London. Both the Ministry and U. S. air quarters declined details, but it is reported that up to 3,000 airmen will be sent to man the field as an aircraft engine maintenance centre. It was used for this purpose by the R. A. F. during the Second World War. The maintenance personnel, together with 3,000 anti-aircraft gunners expected to arrive in the next few weeks, will increase U. S. Air Force strength in England to about 21,000 men.

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 PRICES

Sir,—The price of potatoes listed in your paper last week was 43¢ per 75 lb. bag. We are paying 60¢ peck or \$2.56 per bus.

As a former Islander who has had a little experience in potato growing, may I ask who makes the profit?

I am, Sir, etc., HARRY HOOPER.

16A Sonoma St., Roxbury, Mass., February 1, 1951.

THE POTATO TAX

Sir,—Most of the principal potato dealers of the Province feel that a situation is developing which is favoring a few, rather than the trade as a whole.

A tax levied by the Provincial Legislature of 1¢ per cwt. on all potatoes exported from this Province, and the fund was to be used to protect the industry against the spread of Nematode and Ring Rot, and to advertise our seed in consuming markets.

Last season's tax would have amounted to something in excess of \$50,000 if it had all been collected; but to date only a few have paid the assessment in full, and the favorites have not come across.

This large sum would have covered all legitimate expenses for quite some time, as the Nematode problem has been checked, and the Ring Rot practically eliminated.

It has now been revealed that a grant was made from this fund to the Federation of Agriculture, and presumably used to finance the potato campaign which was put on last year, resulting in the authorization of a Potato Marketing Board—which, contrary to promises given to the dealer's association, was invested with the authority to set prices and direct the channel through which all potatoes should be sold.

It is noted that the big promises made to the farmers during the campaign have resulted only in the growers getting the smallest price for potatoes in many years.

It is also understood that a grant has been made from some Government source to purchase a warehouse for the Central Farmers' Institute, from which they are to connect their business. They should one group have all the plums, and the regular trade have to finance their own buildings, and be forced to compete with the favored few.

I am, Sir, etc., POTATO EXPORTER, Charlottetown, P. E. I.

SUMMERSIDE WELLS

Sir,—Being a citizen of Summerside and doing business here for a good number of years I have been following the letters in your good paper. I must say

Conrad Gomersall, L. Stewart and R. B. Dewar (together with Mr. Groom) have used up a lot of good space in trying to hide the point which, judging by the way they are talking around it they must consider it exceedingly sharp.

Why should Messrs. Stewart and Dewar give V. H. Groom & Company any more of their company contracts for two 10' or 12' wells at any price when there is proof positive of what 4' and 6' wells right here in our town, such as the Island Foods Inc., well which cost less than \$150.00 and which produce any where from two to three times as much water as the now famous Hill Top Well?

Believe it or not this Hill Top Well cost more than fifty-three times that of the Island Foods well. This sure will be a good talking point for the Council to raise our tax rates on.

We are told that \$4,000 special order pump has been ordered for this Hill Top Well. The high cost of this pump is due to the fact that it has to reach so far for the water. May I ask, as are numerous other citizens, why this pump order has not been cancelled and one ordered like the Island Foods Inc. well which would cost a fraction of the other?

The Olympia Restaurant has an overflow well now capped that has a 2' bore, 175 feet deep, costing \$175, which throws its water to 4 feet above its casing or 10 feet above its gravel arrangements might be made to use wells like these and then be reamed out to 4' or 6' at very little cost.

I am, Sir, etc., RATE PAYER, Summerside.

SUGGESTED SOLUTION

Sir,—This continuing Summerside water and sewerage controversy arouses my ire — it should be settled once and for all as outlined below.

As a taxpayer I am vitally concerned in what and how much we are paying for our water, and water system. But we're not getting anywhere, bickering back and forth in the press, reading the pros and cons, believing one thing, then the opposite, and back to the first belief.

Let's get the whole thing out in the open at one and the same time. If there's any dirty linen, let's see it cleaned in front of our eyes. Let's have an OPEN FORUM, say in the High School. Let's call together all those concerned — water commissioners, engineers, contractors, the Mayor and Council — let them appoint a referee. Then let's all hear them debate the whole matter, to a finish. Not until then should we pass judgment, decide who was right, or who was wrong, who was honest, or who was not quite absolutely honest, or perhaps who at the time in all good faith and honesty of purpose, made a decision which, in the light of subsequent events, may have turned out to be an error of human judgment.

Why did this controversy start on the eve of an election, and not after a candidate had been elected? Is a question not yet asked. "Will this whole issue be suppressed after election?", is another moot inquiry. How can I "take sides" until I know the truth? The only way I could hope to get all the facts, would be through the open forum referred to above, well publicized and open to the public, election or no election, so that the taxpayers will see, hear and believe for themselves, in the light of the outcome of a properly conducted, orderly debate by both sides, to bring out the truth — without fear or favour. A challenge from one side could hardly be ignored by the other, for fear of being justifiably accused of mistake, or even worse. I repeat "Let's Have An Open Forum" to call a "spade a ruddy shovel", "pull no punches", yet "fickle", no vindictiveness or "backbiting", and get the truth, so that we may be assured of more and more water but less and less sewage.

I am, Sir, etc., THE TRUTHSEEKER, Summerside.



The Pageant of History

(By Frank Sager, C. N. R.)

As one reads over the history of the past, the reader is impressed with a definite pattern that seems to run all through the story down the ages. This is particularly true in the field of religions. There have been epochs of religious thought and a departure from earlier forms of belief as man's knowledge advanced in the light of what the brighter minds had revealed through better interpretation of the laws of nature and those governing the human mind, or of thought.

Archaeologists have dug up the story of the past from ancient ruins and language scholars have traced such in their studies of languages, particularly in the field of Oriental linguistics and comparative philology. The great classics in these latter fields are Sir William Jones and Carey of Serampore in the late eighteenth century.

In the light of archaeological research, the story of Abraham takes on a new significance. Before this research, most people had an idea that Abraham, to whom the Jews and Arabs look up to as the founder of their race, was a sort of Arab sheik, primitive in his thoughts and domestic life. Archaeology has revealed that the city of Ur of the Chaldees from whence Abraham came, was a very modern city for those times and that it had a civilization far ante-dating Abraham, with drains, two-story roofed houses and magnificent temples dedicated to the Moon-god.

Up to the time of Nebuchadnezzar the old-time rituals held sway but Nebuchadnezzar changed all this, instituting congregational worship for secret rituals, although this worship was still pagan. Then along came the Persians who adopted the monotheistic creed of Zoroaster and this was the final chapter in the disappearance of the old religion. Egyptian religion was practically the life blood of the commerce of the city. There have been other upheavals in religious thought since those times as science has revealed new interpretations of natural phenomena and the workings of the human mind, although the central truths remain such as the law of gravity. Gravity always existed but men in the past had believed it but did not understand the phenomenon until Isaac Newton discovered its laws and with the modern research into atomic energy we are beginning to understand what it actually is.

A late upheaval in religious thought was brought about with the publication of the Origin of Species by Charles Darwin. This was an epoch-making publication and upset many of the old beliefs that men set store by and created a new interest in the origin of our pump order, customs and our morals. Along with this was the "Golden Bough", a classic of revelation in the origins of our beliefs and traditions written by Sir James Frazer.

There is an evolution in thought and beliefs as there is in other spheres. The first locomotive motor car and airplane was a crude affair as compared with their modern prototypes. The original idea remains but with new interpretations the idea takes on new meanings and new uses. In

ment — (we can all make mistakes). "Why did this controversy start on the eve of an election, and not after a candidate had been elected?" is a question not yet asked. "Will this whole issue be suppressed after election?", is another moot inquiry. How can I "take sides" until I know the truth? The only way I could hope to get all the facts, would be through the open forum referred to above, well publicized and open to the public, election or no election, so that the taxpayers will see, hear and believe for themselves, in the light of the outcome of a properly conducted, orderly debate by both sides, to bring out the truth — without fear or favour. A challenge from one side could hardly be ignored by the other, for fear of being justifiably accused of mistake, or even worse. I repeat "Let's Have An Open Forum" to call a "spade a ruddy shovel", "pull no punches", yet "fickle", no vindictiveness or "backbiting", and get the truth, so that we may be assured of more and more water but less and less sewage.

I am, Sir, etc., THE TRUTHSEEKER, Summerside.

The Poet's Corner

PRELUDE TO SLEEP

Between clean sheets that smell of wine and sun, As new-mown grass, I lay me down to rest, And bow my head the while I stretch to test, Their coldness on my feet when I rise is done. The climb was long and steep; yet it was fun, Endeavoring to scale my Everest. That bare, that rolling clouds his sun-white crest, While Babbitts tapped their heads "Another one."

What matters if I never make the goal, Or hear hands clap? The mountain will be there To dare me cross crevasse and glassy knoll, So when the skies tomorrow's trumpets blare, Undaunted, I shall grasp my ax and pole; But now to dream—upon my lips a prayer.

—Mark S. Reardon

The Last Straw

(Ottawa Journal)

The patient people of the United Kingdom may find in the latest cut in the meat ration an intolerable insult to their sense of well-being and self-respect. The weekly ration of fresh meat, reduced by another one-fifth, is prescribed as though for the first time. It was bought for eight pence, being "a piece about twice the size of a penny box of matches"—about one-half the ration in the toughest days of the war. In addition the Briton gets two pence worth of canned corned beef and a tiny bit of bacon each week.

The British newspapers blame the meat shortage on the Government's policy of bulk buying, and its failure to reach an agreement with Argentina. One newspaper says the price Argentina is asking for meat would cost Britain an extra \$5,000,000 a year or just over two shillings a person. But when the ration goes down the Government pays the butchers a subsidy so that they can continue in business, and it is estimated that this subsidy will amount to \$20,000,000 "So", observes the London News Chronicle, "it will cost the taxpayers four times as much not to consume meat as it would cost the consumers to have it."

That is a fantastic situation, and one wonders whether the traditional British sense of humor will be equal to the strain on a diet of oatmeal and potatoes. The British voter may decide to find out whether he wouldn't fare better if the meat industry were permitted to make its own contracts and do its own business free of all the shackles of socialist theory.

The realms of the mind, psychiatry is giving new meanings to our mental processes and beliefs and the results of these new findings a broader, more tolerant and brighter world will emerge notwithstanding the uncertainties and alarms with which we are confronted in these turbulent days. Life goes on no matter what, as the last revealed in the bombings of cities but man will ever strive towards the fulfilment of his dreams and the visions that prophets have revealed.

Old Charlottetown

(And P. E. I.)

SIX RESPONSES

The lack of interest shown by most of the early proprietors in the welfare of the Island is indicated by the following excerpt from the report of the annual meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society, January 4, 1848: "At the last general meeting of the Society, a resolution was passed establishing a scale of subscription for life members at £3 each. A circular was addressed by the secretary to the principal land proprietors explaining the views of the Society, and requesting their aid in furtherance of the desired object; but your committee regret to observe that only six of the parties written to have responded to the call, viz. the Right Hon. the Earl of Selkirk, Lord Melville, Sir George Seymour, Edward Cunard, Jr., Esq., D. S. Kenzie, Esq., J. H. Windsor, Esq."

Memoirs Of The Hon. A. E. Arsenault

Former Premier and Retired Justice Supreme Court of Prince Edward Island

Law Studies In London (Continued)

While attending Court I often had the privilege of listening to some of England's greatest lawyers and came to know some of her great Judges. I especially remember Lord Russell of Killowen, Chief Justice of England. He was a remarkable man and, when at the Bar, was considered England's ablest cross-examiner. I frequently attended his Court for one was always sure of seeing the leading counsel on one side or the other of the cases heard.

Marshall Hall was then at the height of his career, but as he was a criminal lawyer and I did not have occasion to attend the Criminal Courts, I saw but little of him. Other leading counsel whom I saw on occasion were Sir Edward Carson, Sir Edward Clark, Sir Edward Reid, Muir MacKenzie, the great Scotchman, and Rufus Isaac, later to become Lord Reading and even then looked upon as a coming man.

Carson was a tall, lanky, bony man with a large, pasty face. Russell employed him several times as a leading counsel. I remember that on one occasion, a noted counsel had been retained by Russell. On the very eve of the trial the great advocate became ill and Russell, now really worried, sent for Carson. Carson came, took the voluminous files on the case to his office, studied them all night, and appeared next day in Court and won his case. Truly, there were giants in those days.

I was present in Court during the hearing of what was to me at any rate, a most interesting case. A woman had sued one of the best hotels in London for damage alleged to have been done to her baggage by the chamber maid who attended her room. The woman charged that the maid had taken a spite against her on account of a reprimand and had cut the seams of her silted bag, had slit the silk in her night-dress, and had done other damage as well. The woman was beautiful but without doubt an adventuress who lived by her wits. It was amazing to see her make eyes at the jury while giving her evidence.

Muir MacKenzie was her counsel, and when the defense opened, the maid went on the stand and swore that the woman's whole story was a fabrication, that she had not been reprimanded, that there had been no unpleasant relations between them, that she had never laid hands on any of the woman's belongings and had caused no injury to the dress.

MacKenzie then began his cross-examination. He handled the maid most delicately and began to draw her out in a most friendly way. "This woman was somewhat difficult, was she not?" MacKenzie asked. "Oh, yes, sir, she was," the maid replied. "She was very exacting, was she not?" "Yes, sir, she was; she was very exacting and very high strung and difficult to please." He continued in this strain and soon had her abasing the plaintiff.

It was a great show, and MacKenzie with his Scotch wit and his masterpiece of cross-examination, coupled with the beauty and winning ways of his client, left but little hope for the defense. He secured a verdict of fifty guineas for his client.

I said it was likely that the woman was an adventuress. The damage done to her possessions could have been repaired at the cost of a few shillings. I believe that the woman herself had done the damage and had blamed it on the maid to the profit of the substantial sum which the jury gave her.

One day I learned that there was a case against Dr. Jamieson to be tried, so I made it a point to be present. I do not recall who was the presiding judge nor the names of the opposing counsel.

The case arose from the celebrated Jamieson Raid against the Boers of the Transvaal in South Africa. The plaintiff was a soldier who said he had been induced by Dr. Jamieson to take part in the raid, and who had been so badly wounded that he remained a cripple. The soldier appeared in Court on crutches to give his evidence. He related the whole circumstances of the raid, told of how the Boers had ambushed them, and how, after the raiders had been routed, he had been found wounded and nearly dead.

Dr. Jamieson denied that there had been any inducement offered on his part, said he had not even known the soldier, and that, in any event, those who had taken part in the raid had been volunteers who had been told that the object of the raid was to free British settlers in the Transvaal from the oppression of the Boer Government. Sympathy in England was with Dr. Jamieson and it was no surprise to me when the jury brought in a verdict in his favour.

On another occasion I was in the Lord Chief Justice's Court when the case being heard was concerning an injunction to abate a nuisance. It was alleged by those seeking of a certain mill the operations of a certain mill caused such vibrations in the vicinity of the mill that the dishes in nearby houses rattled and that many of them would fall from the shelves and break. The defense denied that there was any such vibration, and the evidence of the witnesses was so contradictory that when they had all been heard, the Lord Chief Justice said he did not know whom to believe. He suggested that he adjourn Court and that he and opposing counsel should go to the mill, have it put into operation and allow the facts to speak for themselves. His suggestion was accepted by both sides but I never learned what was the outcome of the case.

Lord Russell was a big man with a florid face, steel gray hair, and a piercing eye. As he sat on the Bench, he would pull out his silver snuff box, take a pinch of snuff, snap the box closed, inhale the snuff, then produce a large silk handkerchief from his pocket and flourish it in front of his nose. This very expressive gesture he would repeat from time to time.

Among other Courts I visited was that of Lord Darling. He was a great wit and one was always sure to find entertainment in his Court. I was present one day when he was trying a case relating to some fracas that had occurred in one of the bars. The bars in England are divided into sections, the middle one is the public bar, and the side sections are known as the saloon bar and the private bar.

One of the witnesses, a caddy mentioned the public bar and the private bar. Lord Darling, pretending to be ignorant on the subject of bars, said to the witness: "My good man, will you please tell me what is the difference between the public bar and the private bar?" The caddy did not hesitate. "My Lord," he replied, "the only difference I know of is that in the private bar you can't get a drink under tuppence." The caddy's reply caused quite a laugh in the Court and no one enjoyed the answer more than Lord Darling. The fact is that in the public bar you could get a drink of "all sorts" for a penny.

On another occasion the case related to some event which had occurred on a ship and the gob who was giving evidence said that at the time in question he had been standing "abaft the binnacle." Lord Darling enquired what he meant by that expression. In an aside which everyone heard, the saloon said, "A pretty judge to try a case who doesn't know what 'abaft the binnacle' is!" Lord Darling tried to act as if he had not heard the aside, but he could not prevent the grin which stole over his face.

(To be continued)

The Age-Old Story

For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

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COMPLETE INSURANCE SERVICE W.K. Rogers Agencies Limited 181 QUEEN ST. AGENTS THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE Any of our Customers wishing Calendars, please call at our Office, or write.