

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1954

Cheerful Wool News

The editor of Wool News in Toronto is going to be in the black books of some others in the industry. While they are crying on the Government's shoulder about declining markets and outside competition the organ of the Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers Ltd., is sturdily optimistic.

Wool News points out that in the most challenging consumer-goods market in modern history the outlook for wool is optimistic. This is the conclusion reached by R. Jackendoff, Director of Economics and Statistics for the Wool Bureau, after making analytical surveys and calling attention to figures bearing on changes in population. It is noted that consumer-expenditures on clothing have risen steadily in recent years until the 1953 figures in the United States are more than three times the average of the thirties. The long-term outlook for all textiles and other consumer goods, it is pointed out, is associated with the dynamic elements in the nation's economy, most important of which is the rate of population-growth. The Census Bureau showed an increase of 20 million in population in the 1940-50 decade and anticipates a 22 to 25 million increase in the decade which ends in 1960, and 37 to 52 million between 1950 and 1970.

Attention is directed to the fact that wool is now appreciated more than ever as the fibre with a combination of qualities for traditional uses which has not been duplicated in any one test-tube fibre, and it is noted, too, that price levels on raw wool recently have resulted in a noticeable recovery of wool's competitive standing in many men's and women's apparel markets. The fact that wool prices have remained relatively stable is accepted as a condition which enhances wool's competitive position among the fibres.

The Jackendoff survey included also a reference to the recent unfavorable condition of the textile industry and pointed out that this could not last forever. As a point in advice, it was suggested that "in the competitive economy of today, it is important to the wool textile industry that it be as efficient and economical in its operations as the mass-production industries. Consumers want a lot of things, and they are going to be 'choosy' about the values they get for their money". It might well have been added that the more choosy they become the more likely they will be to make wool their choice.

Two Kinds Of Freight Rates

Action of the Maritime Provinces Board of Trade in calling attention to the inadequacies of the Maritime Freight Rates Act is certain to evoke favorable response in Prince Edward Island. Access to the markets of Ontario and Quebec, which the Maritime Freight Rates Act was designed to ensure, has been seriously prejudiced by successive rate increases in the years since the war.

A thoughtful re-appraisal of the Maritime Freight Rates Act would serve the useful and necessary purpose of making clear the reasons for the postwar freight rate increases which have added to Prince Edward Island's cost of doing business in the central Canadian market. Among those reasons, perhaps the most important is that a large segment of the Canadian economy has been contributing nothing whatsoever to the higher rail transport costs arising from wage boosts and the ever-mounting cost of rail equipment.

That segment of the economy is the Prairie grain belt. For grain moving for export from the Prairie region to the Lakes-head or to the Pacific coast, pays freight rates set by statute at levels no higher today than in 1899. Whereas the Maritime Freight Rates Act provides only a 20 per cent differential to compensate for remoteness for central Canadian markets, the Crowsnest Pass grain rates, set by Parliament, provide western grain growers with a firm ceiling on freight rate costs.

The railways are reimbursed by subsidy for the 20 per cent differential under the Maritime Freight Rates Act. For hauling western grain which, in a normal year accounts for about one-third of the total volume of freight traffic in Canada, they receive no subsidy whatever. Obviously the deficiency in revenue has to be made up in some way. It might, therefore, be worth examining the impact of the abnormally low Crowsnest grain rates on rail freight charges in the Maritime Provinces.

Such an investigation, of course, must take into consideration the indirect benefit resulting from these rates, in that they serve to keep down the rates on domestic

grain and flour shipments within Western Canada. As pointed out in the report of the Turgeon Royal Commission, 1951, the railways were not allowed to apply the recent freight rate increase on domestic rates on these articles because the Board of Transport Commissioners thought that such an increase would produce too great a spread between the two sets of rates. A proposal to repeal the Crowsnest Pass Rates, made in the first instance by the Canadian Pacific Railway, was turned down in the Commission report. The attitude of the Maritime Board of Trade's Transportation Commission was that statutory control of these rates should be maintained, but that the railway be subsidized to meet any losses incurred. That was also the view expressed by the New Brunswick government. The governments of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland made no statement on the issue, but there is no reason to believe that they would disagree with the subsidy proposal.

Nor did the Turgeon Commission find anything objectionable in such a proposal. "This problem," it reported, "concerns the whole country and not only its western portion, and the responsibility for its solution should be assumed by the nation, as, for instance, in the case of maintenance of our canal system. It would appear suitable, in these circumstances, to provide that the cost of maintaining that portion of our transcontinental railway system which serves as a link or bridge between East and West be charged to the general revenues of the country. This arrangement would reduce the expense of the railways by relieving them of a liability for which at present they have to recoup themselves by means of relatively high freight charges on the through traffic passing over this bridge between the two areas."

Prairie Trees

To grow seedling trees on the Western Prairies takes knowledge and care. But the actual work has been reduced by machines that plant 1,500 seedlings an hour and have enabled one Saskatchewan farmer to put in 350,000 in one year. Year by year, sturdy groves and bushy hedges seem to multiply across the wheat lands. Their proliferation is being deliberately encouraged with government aid. The resultant advantages which Western farmers are learning, says the Ottawa Citizen, have been forgotten by all too many people in provinces where the forest cover has been ruthlessly depleted.

The northern prairie regions are already heavily wooded with timber of commercial value. Below them the trees thin out as in parkland, but they continue to flourish in the river valleys farther south. Through most of the wheat belt, they can be encouraged by man to take root and slowly grow to respectable size. Only in the dry triangle that stretches up from the international boundary does the struggle become really grim.

On prairie farms, the field shelter belt has been found to provide manifold benefits. It greatly reduces wind velocity, with the result that crop damage is less and soil drifting is checked. The loss of moisture from the land by evaporation and by transpiration from plants can be cut nearly in half. In addition, snow is trapped to fill dugouts with water and provide more moisture for spring crops. A greater variety of crops can be produced, moreover, for the trees give some protection from light frost to the more delicate garden and orchard plants. And crop-consuming insects are in deadly peril as insect-consuming birds take up residence in the branches.

EDITORIAL NOTES

That the safety value of driver training courses should receive practical recognition is the proposal of the Ontario Insurance Agents' Association. Underwriters will be asked to offer reduced insurance rates to high school graduates of such courses.

Tariff, customs and excise concessions on material for the St. Lawrence Seaway are being abruptly terminated. The idea seemed a splendid one to facilitate the international construction job but it would have resulted in almost a complete shut-out of Canadian equipment.

Today the French National Assembly is to vote on the London Act, in one way a more difficult proposal to accept than EDC. The latter proposed German rearmament integrated in a European army. The present plan permits a German national army, units of which may be made available to NATO.

Columbus Day, U.S.A.: After 70 days at sea Christopher Columbus sighted land in the Bahamas this date 1492, probably Watling Island. He went on to discover Cuba and the Santa Maria was wrecked at Haiti, so that Columbus had to return to Europe with his two smaller vessels, neither more than 50 tons. He made three more voyages across the Atlantic, never giving up the hope of finding India.



Possible Unforeseen Developments

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.

SIDELINER COMMENDED

Sir, — The thanks of all the people who support co-operative marketing are due Mr. "Sideliner" for his masterly defence of controlled or regulated marketing in The Guardian of October 5th. It is good to read or hear someone say something when they have something to say and not have to use such words as "drunk" which was used by one of the principal speakers at that Charlottetown meeting, to describe the condition of our chairman and manager Mr. Donald MacDonald; disgraceful language to say the least if true, and even worse when, as we all know, it is not true. Sideliner's letter will be preserved by me along with my most treasured clippings. Letters such as his helps me to understand better the author of the following lines: "Remarks made from stark enthusiasm are never so convincing as remarks made from an empty stomach."

I am, Sir, etc.,
W. B. McLELLAN

Alma.

THE MARKETING BOARD

Sir, — The future relative to compulsory marketing seems needless. The solution is quite simple. Those wishing a marketing board and a selling agency with all compulsory clauses, regulations, rules, restrictions and regimentation should have it. Those who do not want it should not have it inflicted on them. After all this is a democracy, and in a democracy it is unethical for any group whether a majority or an invidious minority to attempt to impose its will on the rest of the people.

Communism has contributed vivid examples in Russia and China, where Christian priests and ministers were imprisoned and tortured for refusing to endorse political creeds that were abhorrent to them. It is little use preaching and teaching ancient and revered philosophy of democracy as taught by Socrates and outlined in some of the writings of Plato and Aristotle if we deny its very essence by imposing legislation that is intolerable to some of the people and of doubtful merit. It was an unwary government that allowed a minority group to impose its will on the people by sharp politics and evasive practices. The idea of maintaining a floor price on such a perishable commodity as potatoes, subject to such basic price fluctuations, was immature and juvenile in conception. If this bombastic board had control of the produce of the North American continent, it is possible it could maintain and dictate prices and distribution.

The issue at stake in the coming plebiscite is not merely that of our potatoes. Every aspect of free living is involved. Thoughtless and careless balloting has been responsible for much adverse legislation. If this legislation should be carried it will be the thin edge of the wedge that will eventually separate us from every facet of choice and selection in our living and we will be at the mercy of a militant few who have proven that they will wield power with reckless abandon. It is little wonder that at the meeting in Charlottetown our dissenting farmers, many of whom had been threatened some fined, and others facing ruin as a result of this net were up in arms and perhaps a little hysterical when the sponsors of this legislation had the temerity to bring it before the public at a meeting promoted by them. The fact that they could not force the result is significant of a deluded sense of public opinion. There was no organized heckling. Statements that there was are just alibis. It was entirely a spontaneous expression of indignation at some of the false claims made at this meeting.

Though we took no part in the demonstrations we were in close contact with a group of farmers, some of whom had been severely fined and arrogantly dealt with by this autocratic board for daring to

The Age Old Story

Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.

ship some of their own potatoes to their former markets. These were farmers, not dealers in the sense of the United States and bought their crops direct without any marketing board or any other medium collecting a percentage. Little wonder they were loud and resentful at Mr. McDonald's claim to merit for denying any and every farmer this privilege and accepting farmers' money for the disservice. Less wonder that they will, along with other growers, take every possible means within the law to prevent continuance or extension of these dictatorial powers.

No wonder at all that they vigorously booted Mr. McDonald's ridiculous demands for their gratitude. Mr. McDonald as head of the Board had more power over the farmers activities than the highest court in Canada. It was his prerogative and he certainly exercised it most daringly to direct, or prevent or restrict the potato shipments of any farmer at his discretion. This is too much power to delegate to any group of men, much less to a group dominated by one man. Men of more proven ability than Mr. McDonald can lay claim to, would be bold indeed to attempt to carry out this type of legislation to its ultimate limit as he did.

Our interpretation of the mind of that most representative meeting we refer particularly to Mr. Tilley's letter relative to supporting our own organization as farmers. This is definitely not our organization. It was placed on our statutes by smart politics, and we believe it will be defeated by an election that we will insist will extend the ballot to every owner of five acres of ground who may or may not wish to grow potatoes. If he is not growing them this year who is to say that he will not wish to grow them another year? Membership in the Farmers' Federation or the Marketing Board or business of any sort must not be allowed to restrict voters. No more smart politics. We will insist that the voice of the farmers as a whole be heard this time, and whatever the result, that the dissidents be allowed to control their own crops.

Our farmers are anything except stupid. A little common sense thinking should show that they will favor any movement or innovation that they know to be for their own welfare. The farmer's experience with the Board has shown him that instead of benefiting him it prevents his having any say in the disposal of his crop, the price he gets or the time he gets it.

Mr. McDonald's claim to merit for securing federal aid should have our attention. Any decent representation would have gotten the same or better results. We have had floor prices, and subsidies many times when badly needed without the solicitations of any marketing board. Why should any farmer wax sentimental over cherishing this sort of expensive incubus, and paying good money that could be much better employed for the privilege. It is the usual effort of theorists, whether political, religious, racial or economic to inflict their intolerant opinions on the rest of society. The sinister aspect of this board was the fact that they obtained legal sanction for their activities. If this had been allowed to continue it could be the wedge that would divide and rend our peaceful way

The Poet's Corner

THE LAKE

The blue serenity is vast.
No ripple shakes the thought, nor tide
Advances, Neither foam nor surge
Plunges loud on any side.
Yet there is depth in which to find
The blueness that we know as sky's
Clear wondrous reach. With peaceful joy,
Wide as the speck-like bird that flies
Upon some journey heaven-flown,
We see the deep tranquillity,
Sky's color, and the mirrored growth.
We look on this as if we see
Vast oceans come at last to rest.
We search for all the depth that lies
Beneath the surface. Water-clear,
The lake looks back with quiet eyes.

—Joseph Joel Keith in the Christian Science Monitor.

Old Charlottetown and P. E. I.

COLES' ESTABLISHMENT

"During the course of last season Mr. Coles' extensive establishment has undergone great additions and improvements. It now consists of a steam mill of two 5 horse power engines, propelling the machinery of a double gear, for the manufacture of flour and oatmeal, driving two pairs of stones, three pumps, and other conveniences. It contains besides the brewery, four stills, two granaries, three malt floors, with very capacious cellars and vaults. His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, having intimated to the proprietor his wish to visit this establishment on Tuesday last, the proprietor was honored by a visit from His Excellency Sir Charles and Lady Mary Fitzroy and family. After inspecting the different parts of the establishment, and the various and complicated machinery of the steam mill, etc., with which he expressed himself highly pleased, His Excellency, Lady Mary, and party partook of some refreshment prepared by Mrs. Coles, in the good old English style, soon after which they took their departure."
—Royal Gazette, Jan. 19, 1841.

of life, and place our destiny in the hands of a small minority group that would soon control governments and every phase of our lives. Witness the ten per cent Communist minority that controls the vast area and population of Russia.
When this plebiscite comes I would urge upon all our farmers: Think carefully before you throw away your freedom; you might never win it back.
I am, Sir, etc.,
C. C. PRATT

St. Peters.

SCHOOLS REBUILT

OSLO, Norway (CP) — Forty of the 95 school buildings destroyed during the Second World War in Norway's Finnmark province have been rebuilt and work is well under way on 10 others. All of the schools are slated to be rebuilt by 1957.

BIGGEST DESERT

World's largest desert area, the Sahara in North Africa, covers about 3,500,000 square miles.

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By Observer

THE COMING MAN

Who is the coming man in world affairs? Well, if what is being said about him is true, competitors will have more than their hands full to keep top place from going to Dr. Ralph Alexander, a New Zealand physician. No. Dr. Alexander hasn't discovered a new wonder drug, or a badness preventive, or anything like that; he has discovered something a million times more spectacular—the power to make clouds dissolve into nothingness. He just looks at them intensely for a minute or two and, before anyone can say Jack Robinson, or any other name for that matter, they silently steal away.

Dr. Alexander says there is no miracle involved in all this; it is simply the result of many years of study in what he calls "Constructive Realism," which is very similar to but not identical with another occult force which goes by the name of "Extra-Sensory Perception." It just goes to prove, he says, that "the human brain has power over inanimate matter."

Without meaning any disrespect to the worthy and learned physician, one might suggest that his conclusion is a bit premature. If true — more than 100 witnesses say they are prepared to confirm the doctor's alleged achievement — all it means, so far, is that one brain has built up that very strange and very useful power. It will be up to him now to instruct a few chosen disciples in the necessary techniques and soon, no doubt, we shall be hearing of "Constructive Realism" departments in forward-looking Universities everywhere.

What that will mean to many of the vexing problems of day to day living, once a way has been found to direct the power into mass production, is beyond the imagination, but certain practical benefits can be foreseen at once. Take for example the matter of snow-bound, ice-ridden roads, which despite technological advances still present a big problem in Northern regions. In the "Constructive Realism" Age, which promises to overtake the Atomic Age before the latter has had time to prove its worth, there will be no need of snowplow operating crews, relief crews, and all the other expensive items which are now essential.

After a heavy fall of snow or sleet Highway officials will just have to call on a Constructive Realist, who in two minutes or less will have that part of the road which lies within his jurisdiction as clear as a whistle. Mud, dust, and all other highway irritants will disappear in the same summary manner. Indeed, if the Realists in another department are alert to their duties, there won't be any snow or sleet for the experts in the Highway Department to disperse; the snow-clouds will scurry away before they have time to do any mischief.

To the farmer the new science — or art, or whatever it is — will be the greatest boon in agrarian history. Gone will be all uncertainties regarding the weather; for if the Realist can make the clouds scatter he surely can make them come together and send down rain to refresh the earth. Result: no floods, no droughts, no need of weather forecasters who are wrong as often as they are right, no speculation on when to sow or reap.

One occult practitioner to a district—perhaps two in the larger ones—will be enough to bend the elements to the farmers' will. Of course, making the weeds disappear will be a full time job; one expert in each district will have to do nothing else but run from one garden to another and a little intense concentration in each. I don't like to say this, because it sounds ungracious. But I feel sure that not even Dr. Alexander himself would have been able to keep ahead of the witch-grass in our garden this summer.

Politically, the new science will produce both good and bad results. Candidates for election will vie with one another in concentrating on voter-appealability and voter-appealability with equal intensity. Of course they have been doing that all along in a more or

NATURAL WOOL CHEAPER
 SYDNEY, Australia (CP)—Prof. P. R. McMahon, wool technologist in the New South Wales University of Technology, told a textile research convention synthetic fibres will not replace wool in the near future. Research must help wool to maintain its price advantage over synthetics, he said.

The daily average petroleum production in Mexico is more than 230,000 barrels.

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