

Same Old Revelations

Last week the report of the Auditor General was tabled in Parliament—a 111-page document listing prize examples of departmental waste and extravagance. After the usual partisan tussle over the findings, Mr. Speaker declared that "the tap has now been turned off" on further questioning, and the House proceeded to other business. But the report is there, and can be obtained for fifty cents from the Queen's Printer by any taxpayer who wants to work himself into a lather over bureaucratic bungling.

Therein he will read about the aircraftmen who let 167,000 gallons of gasoline run down a man-hole; about the RCAF officer who became subject to airsickness and established a claim to a pension worth \$68,000 because he was "disabled"; about the wind tunnel that was to cost \$3,750,000 now estimated at \$9,000,000 while the plane it was primarily intended to test has been abandoned, and other weird evidences of muddling.

One case that intrigues us is about a corporal who was an "administrative nuisance". How he came to be a corporal in the first place is not stated, but if matters had been allowed to take their course he would have been eased out of the service in nine months' time, and would be entitled only to the \$2,031 he had contributed to the pension fund. But his superior officers decided to retire him compulsorily "to promote economy and efficiency." This they did only three months before his normal time for voluntary retirement. This meant that he was given a pension for life, based on his pay for ten years and nine months. He will receive a pension of \$50 a month until he reaches the age of 65, and will then receive a higher pension of \$856 a year. As the corporal is only 27 years of age, the total for the taxpayer of all these payments is estimated at \$27,000.

This case, if unusual in some respects, is typical in others. The Auditor General says he has discovered that no fewer than 14 annuities were awarded during the year to servicemen retired for misconduct. And similar cases have been reported in previous years, under both party administrations.

The Auditor General, under the law, has no option but to expose these cases. It is for Parliament to do something about them. But the urge to get into a political dogfight over these annual revelations is too strong to resist; and more time is wasted, and more taxpayers' money spent, in mutual recriminations until the Speaker calls a halt, and the battle ends in a draw.

This is what happened last Thursday, when the Opposition sought to pillory the Government, and the Government came back with countercharges about similar misdemeanors under Liberal rule. Instead, wouldn't it be better for both sides to get to work on the statutes, and plug the loopholes and stiffen the penalties in such a way that the taxpayers' money will be better protected in future?

Liberal Comment

When the Liberal party a few weeks ago announced its intention of introducing a national contributory old age pension plan it was saluted with a loud editorial salvo by the Winnipeg Free Press. That grand old Liberal paper acclaimed the scheme as constituting "an honest, straightforward way of ending, once and for all, the cynical

process by which the public is quadrennially bribed with its own money."

Its merits, however, the Free Press finds have been "considerably diluted" by Hon. Paul Martin's statements last week at the National Federation of Liberal Women at Ottawa. Mr. Martin announced that the Liberals, if elected, would raise by \$20 the present pension payment "at once." To do this a Liberal government would obviously have to draw on general revenues for some months until contributory funds accumulated. It would thus compromise from the start the very principles it was trying to establish and which the public had welcomed for their honesty.

In the printed pamphlet outlining the original Liberal plan it was stated that from the start the plan would be self-supporting through contributions. It would not require any addition to taxes; "it is not a handout." That was what our Winnipeg contemporary liked about it, and it went all out in scoring the other parties for their deviation from this policy.

But Mr. Martin has let his staunchest party newspaper down badly. His new scheme—concocted to meet the Conservative bid of a \$10 increase in the present basic old age pension—strikes it being a betrayal of sound Liberal principles. Its latest comment is headed "Compromise," and it concludes on the following note:

"To deny in part and so quickly the assurance which the Liberals gave that their program would not be a handout from general tax revenue comes as a sad disillusionment."

And that, from the Free Press, is pretty strong medicine for Mr. Martin to take.

A Massive Task

According to figures just published by the World Health Organization, 20 countries are better off than Canada as far as the ratio of doctors to inhabitants is concerned. These countries include Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, Argentina and Uruguay. Israel leads the list with one doctor for every 20 inhabitants. Canada's ratio is one to 830, the same as France's, a little behind Norway's and a little better than Japan's.

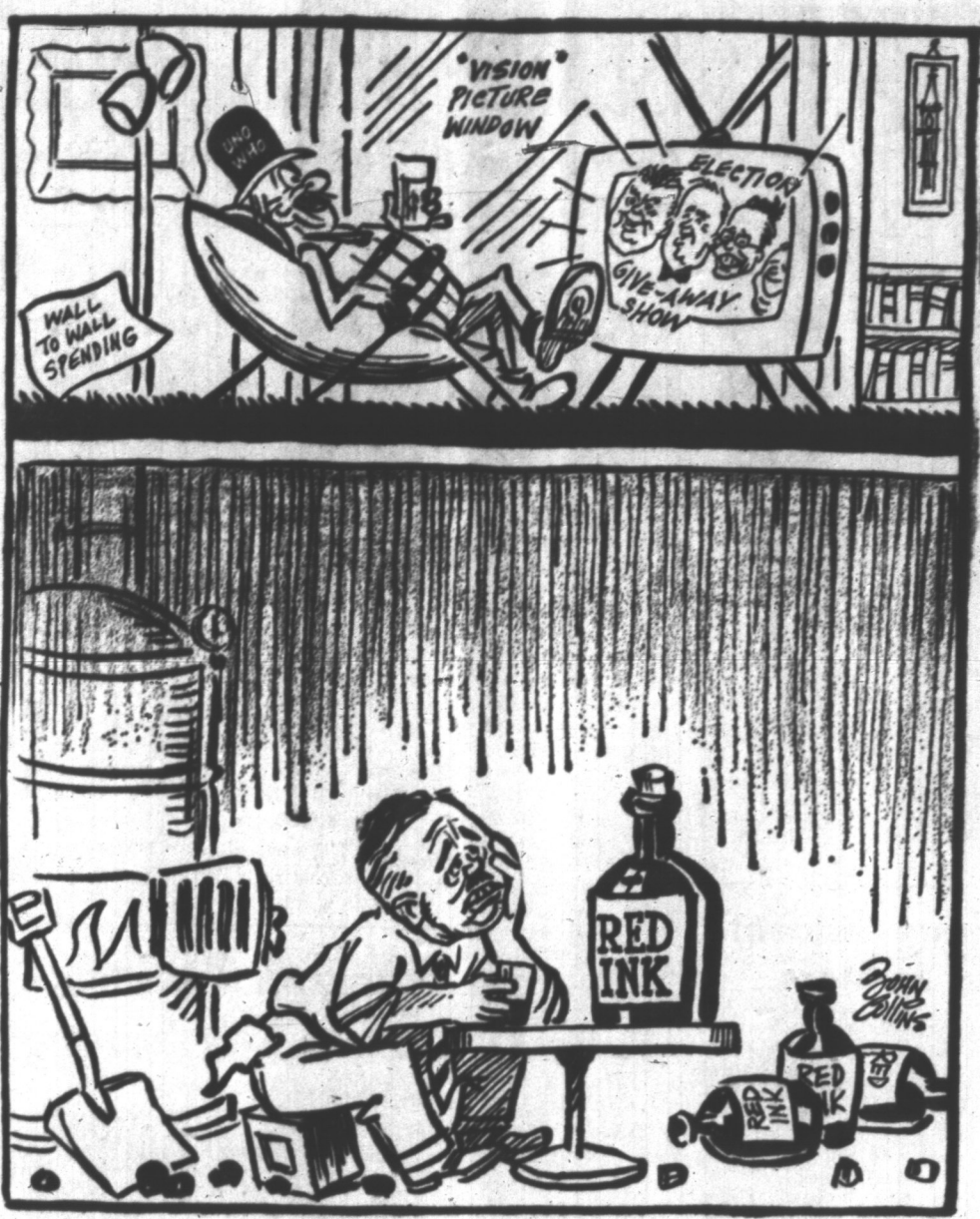
The Organization warns, however, that figures for the various countries are not truly comparable, as non-practising M.D.'s, hospital probationers, dentists and other medical personnel may be included in some of the returns. Also, the figures may give an inaccurate picture of the medical resources available to the people as they do not show distribution of the doctors.

What is apparent, however, is that in total there are about 1.5 million doctors to serve a world population of approximately three billion—about half the minimum number of doctors needed. To improve the ratio will be a massive task, probably impossible for this generation, because of the failure of many of the "have" nations to produce even the full number of doctors needed to look after their own populations.

EDITORIAL NOTES

A small oil refinery in Derbyshire, England, is helping the airline companies to economize—by turning old oil into new. However dirty and contaminated airplane lubricants become, they can be washed and used again. The point about oil, company spokesmen point out, is that it never wears out. Canadian Pacific is the latest customer of this refinery located in a picturesque corner of Derbyshire. The airline expects to save about \$50,000 a year on oil they used to throw away.

From a Western exchange we quote a minor masterpiece by a six year old girl who had been asked to write an essay and who chose "Newspapers" as her theme: "Newspapers. We need them so we can know who reks and who dorwns, and who shoots somebody. And who wants a house and who dies or gets a baby. It tells if your dog is lost. They are good on shelves and to make bond fires. They also go good under a baby's plate and to keep dogs offa things. You can wrap potato peelings in them. You can put one when you defrost. They tell about shows and how much things are." And to round out an excellent job the editor who published the essay added: "PS: They are also good to swat things with, like flies and public officials and things."



SPLIT-LEVEL PARLIAMENT

OTTAWA REPORT by Patrick Nicholson

Scores Irrelevant Partisan Cackle

Parliament had no sooner re-assembled than its flow of business again became clogged by the log-jam of irrelevant cackles, and turgid essays which vainglorious composers improperly "read" as their non-debating contribution to debate.

The rare debating speech stood out in vivid contrast. Like a Douglas fir contrasted to northern scrub, it reminded one that constructive virtuosity does exist, despite the depressing abundance of the opposite.

There is no formula for a good parliamentary speaker. His talents are a combination of conscientious home-work plus the gift of instantaneous composition; add a sense of mood and timing, the confidence to counter hecklers, and a mellifluous voice.

The House of Commons enjoyed a classic exposition of this in the speech by one of its "babies," Howard Graffey. This 33-year-old has achieved a swift political career from Liberalism to admiration by the Prime Minister. Twelve years ago he was president of the Liberal Association at McGill University. Then the abandonment of the reigns of government to the bureaucracy by the former Liberal government shocked his belief in democracy; and the Liberals' conduct of the Pipeline Debate revolted his sense of parliamentary government. He decided that the Conservative Party is the true champion of genuine parliamentary democracy, so he joined that party and backed his faith by fighting the next election in his home riding of Brome-Missisquoi.

At his first attempt in 1957, he slashed the Liberals' 22-year old majority to one-tenth its size; nine months later, he overturned his Liberal opponent by a liberal-sized majority.

PUBLIC FORUM

MARITIME PROJECTS  
Sir—We were greatly pleased with the letter in a recent issue of your paper by J. Bennett McAulay of Sussex, N.B., in which he suggests an alternative route for the proposed Chignecto Canal. What impressed us most was his unreserved recognition of the necessity of our Causeway and his confidence in its eventual implementation.

yet we must express our opinion that unless this is supplementary and additional to our transportation problem, it will do little towards satisfying the crying need of rural P. E. Islands. We have mentioned in these columns before, and recently, the huge expenditures in the West during the past two decades, and now pending—over a billion dollars, or to give it emphasis, one thousand million. Why, oh why then should the Maritimes which cradled this young family of provinces until they matured into a great nation, why should we be diffident in asking that the face of the mother of this Dominion should be turned towards the East where she gave birth to the nation, before we perish from neglect.

Eating Habits Lead To Good, Bad Health

By Dr. Theodore R. Van Dellen  
BETTER health can be maintained by smaller quantities of good food. This is much more sensible than eating unpalatable, lopsided meals or consuming a little too much and getting fat gradually. It is no fun going on a low calorie or crash diet every spring and fail to lose weight.

Unrestricted male rats lived 802 days and females 930. Animals that consumed smaller quantities (up to a level of 46 per cent below the intake of the unrestricted rats) had a life expectancy of 1,005 days for the male and 1,294 for the female. In addition to being healthier and living longer, reproductive life was not impaired and their fur was glossy and the teeth firm. Unrestricted rats became lethargic and had dull dirty fur and poor teeth.

Some of our readers may not like the idea of comparing humans with rats but I'm sure many physicians will agree that sensible eating contributes greatly to health. Authorities have used growth and development as the final judge of food requirements. This is the way the minimal requirements of minerals, vitamins, proteins, and calories were established. Why not use health as the criterion?

We frequently hear the comment that Americans are eating better. But height, weight, and development should not be made the only indication we are eating the right food. The animal studies mentioned show that rats which grow rapidly die sooner.

Good things often come in smaller packages. It is more logical to conclude that the diet is right when it keeps us healthy, vigorous, and young. Let's not feed our children to make them professional athletes; feed them to be more efficient and live longer.

(Dr. Van Dellen will answer questions on medical topics if stamped, self-addressed envelope accompanies request.)

SOFTENED BONES

W. L. writes: A relative in her fifties has broken several bones recently. This never happened before. The doctor says her bones are thin. Can they be strengthened by diet or medicine?

REPLY

A diet high in calcium and vitamins A and D may help, along with calcium tablets and a mixture of male and female sex hormones. I assume the thin and brittle bones are caused by osteoporosis, a condition in which the bones soften.

SHOTS AFTER POLIO

W. L. M. writes: I'm 25 years old and had polio when I was 9. Should I take polio shots?

REPLY

Yes. One attack of this disease confers lasting immunity but second attacks have been noted, probably due to one of the other two types of polio.

MALE BABY MORTALITY

Mrs. K. writes: Are more boys than girls miscarried?

REPLY

Yes. More male babies are conceived than girls; consequently more miscarriages involve boys. In addition, more male than female babies go on to normal delivery.

TODAY'S HEALTH HINT—

The best bed is a day of satisfaction.

OUR YESTERDAYS

From the Guardian Files

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

(February 6, 1937)  
A largely attended meeting was held at Wood Island to consider and report upon the proposed ferry between that point and Carleton Place, N.S. The meeting was addressed by men from Wood Island, Belle River, Belfast, Bunbury and Montague. The speakers set forth their reasons in a most convincing manner for supporting this project.

TEN YEARS AGO

(February 6, 1952)  
The Laborers Protective Union celebrated their 50th anniversary in their splendid building on Water Street, opened two years ago. This new brick structure with other holdings, gives the L.P.U. possession of property valued at approximately \$20,000. A far cry from its first organizational meeting held behind closed doors in a stable, with a lookout man to watch for the police.

NOTES BY THE WAY

A man in Worcester, Mass., got a divorce because his wife watered his whisky. And our government does it and charges \$5.50 a bottle.—Brandon Sun.

Reuters reports that an advertisement for a European girl as "2nd wife of an Arab sheik" brought 2,000 applications in West Germany. There must have been a revival of Valentino films.—Ottawa Journal.

Thirty-two is the ideal age. Old enough to know what you're doing, and young enough to do it anyway.—Kitchener-Waterloo Record.

How many of the people who sit and dream over the seed catalogues that come in the mail these days will be out actually putting seeds in the ground come Spring?—Hamilton Spectator.

The only prerequisites to dancing the Twist are a strong back and weak inhibitions.—Galt Reporter.

There isn't a household in Canada that does not throw out items that would be a godsend to people in some lands. The fancy packaging by stores of goods alone, not to speak of the vast extravagance in wrapping paper, reflects the high, wide and handsome view taken by society in general in practically all its dealings.—Victoria Colonist.

Five Against One

Frederick Glenner

The "reservations" to the report of the MacPherson Transportation Commission by one of its members, Mr. Herbert Anscumb, should be examined. His views, rejected by his colleagues, reflect the philosophy that has inspired much of Canada's fiscal policy since Confederation.

Mr. Anscumb would eliminate all further transportation subsidies to the Maritimes, a step which would necessitate repeal of the Maritime Freight Rates Act. On the subject of Federal aid to shipments from the Atlantic Provinces to Central Canada he says:

"The industrial life of Ontario and Quebec together with the rest of Canada would be called upon to pay a large percentage of the freight of their competitors in their own home market." NO MARITIME TEARS

This solicitude for the industrial giants of Ontario and Quebec will bring no tears to the eyes of Maritimers. Those same industrial complexes were built up under the protection of fiscal policies directly opposed to the best interests of the Maritimes.

Hard Work With Mittens

Montreal Gazette

The columns of The Times have seen many a controversy. But recently there has been one about reading in bed.

It began when Lord Birkett wrote a letter about reading in bed being one of the pleasures of life. At once readers began to write to The Times with indignation. "It would be a great service," one of them said, "to those of us who do not enjoy central heating if he, or any kind reader, could suggest how this can be done without hands and shoulders becoming numb with cold."

Lord Birkett rose to the attack. He did not have central heating either. But he had to admit that reading in bed requires rather elaborate preparations. An electric heater in the room is necessary. Then the bed should be warmed with a hot water bottle or an electric blanket. Finally, the book reader should put on a thick sweater.

Nor was the practice made more cheering by suggestions from other letter-writers to The Times. One said he had found that "a pair of mittens is invaluable in particularly cold weather."

Still another correspondent suggested that the answer lay

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