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Sill No Explanation

Just why the Federal Government deems it necessary to state that it does not intend to invite briefs or submissions at this stage regarding the causeway project is a puzzling question. Since there is still, apparently, doubt whether to construct it with or without rails, one would think that any expression of informed opinion on the subject would be welcomed.

It leaves us with the uncomfortable feeling that despite Ottawa's emphasis on the "preliminary" nature of the present investigation—the results of which are to be discussed with interested parties, governmental and otherwise—it's mind is made up already.

In the return tabled in the Commons this week in answer to questions by Mr. Macquarrie, we note that a copy of a letter, dated August, 1964, sent by Transport Minister Pickersgill to A. D. Margison, president of the Island Development Company, was included. The letter said that in view of the urgent demands on the government an early reply could not be expected to the company's proposal to build the causeway. This evidently referred to the now famous brief which the company sent Mr. Pickersgill on July 27 of last year, in which reference was made to "our discussions with you relating, among other things, to phasing out the railway operations in the Province."

This was considered, said the brief, "by both of us to be a desirable measure when done in conjunction with the provision of a system of all-weather roads and the causeway; and the company, at Mr. Pickersgill's request, undertook to see if a general preliminary meeting of the minds between the two levels of government could be brought about in this matter." It was the company's understanding that "the several discussions resulting therefrom led to such a meeting of the minds occurring last month in your office."

Why has there been no explanation of these mysterious meetings, if they occurred, and what bearing have they on the situation today? In view of Ottawa's attitude it is time that an emphatic, unanimous assertion of the need for rail facilities on the causeway—along with the speeding up in construction of all-weather roads to which reference was made in the Throne Speech at Thursday's opening of the Legislature—was forthcoming from our elected representatives. If not now, when do we propose to get our views across in this matter? It may be later than we think.

Sweeping Proposals The royal commission on health services, in its second and final report to Parliament, has presented some sweeping proposals for co-ordinating health facilities across the country. The purpose, as set forth, is to provide a universal pre-paid medical care plan available to all Canadians by 1967. As Prime Minister Pearson said in tabling the report on Thursday, the plan would have to be considered "very carefully" and discussed with the provinces. The central idea, as stressed in the report, is to abandon the "haphazard and piecemeal approach of the past" while leaving the traditional doctor-patient relationship unaltered. To this end the provincial health services commissions would be the body administering and operating the scheme, making grants for development work, negotiating fee schedules and ensuring orderly development. There would be advisory councils to recommend new activities, program development, personnel and facility requirements, and attractions

to medical practice recruits. These councils, along with the health service commissions, would report to provincial health authorities which would be responsible for public health grants, training grants, and the traditional public health functions of provincial departments.

At the apex in Ottawa there would be the federal department of health, the health planning council of Canada, the health sciences research council, the federal-provincial health services co-ordinating committee, and, finally, the federal-provincial health ministers' conference.

Since the program would relieve the voluntary organizations of their costs of personal health services, the report suggests they could devote more of their resources to other purposes, or they could reduce their public appeals for money. All voluntary organizations, it adds, should submit annual financial reports to the federal health department so the public could be informed of their activities and needs.

Under the plan, health services might still vary from province to province, but "a proper level of efficient operation" would be aimed at and a crash program was recommended in this connection to train teachers, specialists and pharmacists, and provide new schools and research facilities.

Just how the provinces would be able to finance their added responsibilities is not dealt with in the summaries of the commission's report that we have seen. That may prove to be the biggest headache for the politicians when they get down to discussing the plan's implications.

King's Secret Weapon

Government engineers at Ottawa are now trying to devise an air-conditioning system to fit into the Centre Block of the Parliament Building. The change, notes the Ottawa Journal, is a concession to the fact that Parliament soon will be sitting the year round and the Centre Block is a most uncomfortable place once the Summer's heat gets into the stone walls. This was once described as Mackenzie King's Secret Weapon. Mr. King was said to keep Parliament sitting as the heat built up, then he would unload a bunch of legislation onto the House and tell the members they could adjourn as soon as they dealt with it. This invariably brought prompt action, and bills that would have been debated for weeks in any other session were pushed through when the heat was on.

A much more diplomatic way of disposing of long-winded debates than the closure method, to which both Mr. King's Liberal successors in office had to resort! Indeed, that astute politician would have done a lot of head-shaking over the fumbling and bumbling that has brought the present session into disrepute across the country. He got away, in his time, with a lot more than Mr. Pearson ever did; but he was a master of his craft, which Mr. Pearson isn't, and one misses the touch of the old pro these days at almost every turn.

Launching Rural Study

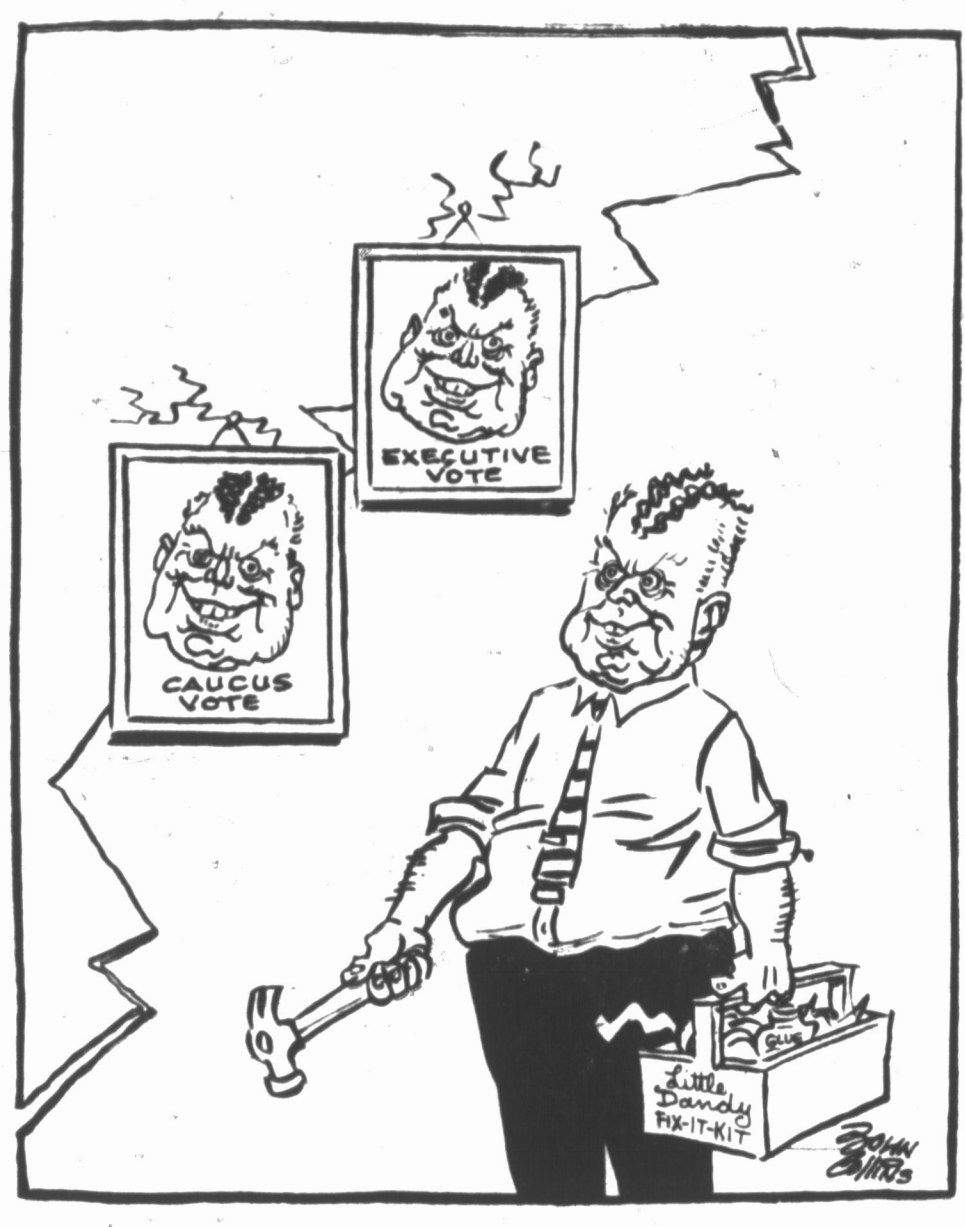
Case studies of families in four rural areas of Canada are to be undertaken by the Canadian Welfare Council under contract with the Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Administration. In making this announcement on Thursday, Forestry Minister Sauve said the Council will do the rural study as part of a long-range study of poverty in Canada.

The four regions to be studied are the interlake area of Manitoba, Lanark County in eastern Ontario, Pontiac, Gatineau and Papineau counties in western Quebec, and Inverness County in Nova Scotia. The project is to begin immediately, and is expected to cost \$23,000.

Just what bearing these studies will have on the problems of rural rehabilitation in this Province is not clear. Perhaps we shall get some light on the matter during the legislative debate on the Draft Address. The Throne Speech mentions that a new ARDA agreement is being signed with Ottawa to become effective April 1 next, and anything relating thereto would be pertinent to the debate.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Canada's Arctic region is permanently frozen, often to great depths. Yet a second edition, revised, of Dr. A. E. Porsild's "Illustrated Flora of the Arctic Archipelago," just issued by the Queen's Printer, lists 340 species and major geographical races of flowering plants and ferns in this inhospitable region.



COVERING THE CRACK

OTTAWA REPORT By Patrick Nicholson

Should Move With Responsible Haste

Toronto Globe and Mail

In an address to the Federation of Lithuanian Canadians in Toronto, Finance Minister Walter Gordon judged that Parliament ought to be able to deal with pensions and the minimum wage legislation as well in a matter of three weeks, if it were in a mood to do so.

The pension plan ought to be approved quickly, he said, so that Parliament could get on with new social security measures. He hinted that the plan was in danger because of opposition from certain pressure groups. Mr. Gordon was trying to apply his own kind of pressure, invoking the bogey of unnamed reactionary pressure groups out to undo an attempt at social justice. The parliamentary Opposition, favorable in principle to pensions but doubtful on specific points of the Government plan, need not be intimidated. The simple fact is that there are questions to be answered before approval can responsibly be given. This may take less than three weeks, or more; the important thing is that Parliament must be satisfied that the legislation is good.

It is just, for example, that the income-relation basis of the proposed plan should discriminate between Canadian citizens of nearly the same age, even if only during its introductory stage? And what of the huge fund that is to be accumulated in government hands? Surely this will have a far-reaching effect on the financial structure of Canada.

Similarly, the proposed new formula for federal-provincial relations, making shared cost programs optional, needs the most thoughtful consideration. Balkanization, the word used by some critical Opposition members, may be too strong. Undoubtedly, however, this is a proposal of fundamental change in the constitutional relationships of the Canadian Confederation. Where is it leading us, and what are the limits?

MUCH TIME WASTED

Parliament indulged itself in more than a reasonable amount of political passion during most of last year. Much of its time was wasted. Now let us have serious and dispassionate study and debate of the issues to be faced. The Opposition has a duty to criticize and demand answers. The Government is bound to explain and justify every detail of its remaining program for the session.

This is the essential democracy on Germany's part

Her conscience is still far from clear about the wartime massacre of Jews; the limited amount of aid given to Israel only eases conscience a little bit. Nevertheless Nasser has taken advantage of West Germany's greater concern over East Germany to force a concession. It is being made at Israel's expense. Egypt has gained some ground in another direction as well. Relations with the United States have been soured since Egypt permitted an attack on the American library in Cairo as a result of the U.S. intervention in the Congo. Reaction in the U.S. was swift. The House of Representatives voted a complete ban on \$7,000,000 worth of food for peace destined for Egypt. The Senate acted cautiously and watered down the House move. The president then moved in to ask for freedom of action and both House and Senate agreed to allow the President to decide whether shipments of food to Egypt were in the national interest.

Succumbed To Blackmail

West Germany has succumbed to blackmail by Egypt in its undertaking not to ship further arms to Israel. Blackmail is not an unusual diplomatic weapon in the Middle East, and probably elsewhere, but it has rarely been as barefaced as Egypt's threat to recognize East Germany unless West Germany ceased sending aid to Israel.

Whether Egypt has given an undertaking not to give full diplomatic recognition to East Germany is not yet clear. It will probably not be clear until East German President Walter Ulbricht visits Egypt later this month. His reception will be carefully watched, by West Germany at any rate, to see whether he is given the honors usually accorded to a leader of a friendly and recognized state. There is a complication in all this for West Germany. It has an obligation of conscience to Israel. Its postwar reparations agreement with Israel runs out on March 31 and is expected to be renewed. Not to renew it would be almost an act of treachery on Germany's part.

Meningitis Epidemic

By Dr. Theodore R. Van Dellen Meningitis made headlines last year when it became so prevalent in a California training center that officials closed the doors to new trainees. The disease was confined to recruits and occurred almost solely during the eight weeks of basic combat training. According to the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 25 per cent of the healthy recruits harbored the causative meningococci on entering the camp; 80 per cent were carriers by the seventh week.

Meningococcal meningitis always is with us but tends to occur in epidemic proportions every five to 10 years. The germ can be found in the nose and throat of 90 per cent of the population during periods of high incidence. In contrast, only five per cent are carriers at other times. We do not know why so few develop the disease, even though many harbor the causative agent. The disease is passed along like an ordinary cold and initial symptoms are confined to the upper respiratory passages. The nose is congested and the throat is sore. During this time, germs multiply and gain the upper hand, shortly thereafter, the bacteria invade the bloodstream, causing chills, fever, muscle aching and weakness. A pink or bluish-red rash develops over the body. These are hemorrhages under the skin and stem from meningococci.

The last step is invasion of the membranes surrounding the brain (meningitis). Stiffness of the neck, headache, restlessness and irritability occur along with changes in reflexes. Diagnosis is made by removing a small amount of fluid from the spinal canal. Sulphonamides are most effective and have reduced the mortality from 70 to five per cent. The big problem is that some types of meningococci are becoming resistant to our best remedy, penicillin and other antibiotics are useful, but definitely second-rate.

CEREBRAL PALSY

E. F. B. writes: Is it too late to help a 10-year-old child with cerebral palsy?

REPLY Possibly, the best way to solve this problem is to consult a clinic here various mental, aptitude, and muscle tests can be done. If such a place is not available, write to your local cerebral palsy society.

COMPULSIONS

E. K. writes: My 70-year-old sister has a peculiar habit. When she takes a walk, she has to touch everything she sees—cars, walls, etc. Can this habit be broken?

REPLY Yes, but why? This is a compulsion, a psychiatric term for an irresistible impulse to perform a certain act. Many compulsions stem from a fixed idea that constantly fills the mind despite a concentrated effort to dislodge it.

COUGH AFTER PNEUMONIA

Mr. W. writes: Is it the usual thing for cough to hang on for months after a bout of pneumonia?

REPLY It may persist for several weeks. A chest X-ray is suggested when coughing continues for months.

SETTLES FOR CEREAL

Mrs. K. writes: My 11-year-old daughter will eat only a bowl of cereal for breakfast. Can this practice be harmful?

REPLY No, provided she consumes the other basic foods at lunch and dinner.

TODAY'S HEALTH HINT—

Give me calmness instead of panic in an emergency. (NOTE: All correspondence to Dr. Van Dellen should be addressed to: Dr. Theodore R. Van Dellen, c/o Chicago Tribune, Chicago, Illinois.)

Our Yesterdays

(From the Guardian Files) TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO (February 20, 1940)

The Women's Music Club met in the Charlottetown Hotel last night with "The Story of Old English Music" as the subject of the program. Miss Margaret Sterns read an exceptionally charming and comprehensive paper on this delightful subject.

Mr. George Ayers of the Dominion Plant Pathological Laboratory, Charlottetown, will leave tomorrow morning for Ottawa where he has been transferred to the National Research Council for three months.

TEN YEARS AGO

(February 20, 1955) The early establishment of a processing plant for the purpose of handling packaged, canned and frozen food products was indicated by Hon. Eugene Cullen, Minister of Industry and Resources when he resumed his speech on the Draft Address in the Legis' ture yesterday.

Many hands made light work and many friends made the Clarence Proctors light-hearted Sunday by building them a house from ground up in eight hours, 14 minutes, Casco, Maine.

BELGRADE (AP)—An agreement has been signed providing nearly \$8,000,000 for a master plan to rebuild the shattered city of Skopje in Macedonia. An earthquake struck the city July 26, 1963, killing more than 1,200 people and leaving nearly half its 220,000 residents homeless. The Yugoslav government and the UN special fund will each pay \$3,400,000 for the master plan. The project is expected to be completed in September.

NOTES BY THE WAY

There may be little harm in the Beatles or Elvis in the surfing cult or the transistor craze, but there is a very real menace to society in the growing power and cynicism of the manipulators who promote them. — Galt Reporter. To celebrate twelve and a half years in office may seem a little odd. Reason for such a whining ding in British Columbia is that no BC premier other than the present incumbent, W. A. C. Bennett, ever held office for that long a term. This makes twelve and a half years a record-breaker. Presumably politicians would not wish to wait for the number thirteen to put on a party. — The Printed Word. Dr. Paul J. Davis' statement in The Harvard Medical Alumni Bulletin that "ladies' slippers in the modern world are just a big to drink from" not only indicates that some women today have big feet. It also indicates that some men have big mouths. — New York Herald Tribune. Once upon a time the automobile was considered a luxury. But not any more. As a matter of fact about the only thing left in the luxury class nowadays is a space capsule for computing to the planets. Everything else you can think of is becoming so commonplace as to be automatically listed as a necessity. — St. John's Evening Telegram.

Dedicated To His Art Bruce Hutchison in The Winnipeg Free Press Most likely you have never heard of Anthony Hawthornthwaite, America's most anonymous personage, nor had I until yesterday—by name, I mean. But all of us have heard his golden voice, night after night on the television commercials, extolling impartially in sleek, rounded and gemlike syllables, the merits of automobiles, soap, deodorants, toothpaste, pre-mixed cakes and everything else vital to modern life. Mr. Hawthornthwaite is known confidentially in the television business as The Voice and the fact that his name is really Elmer Gropp doesn't diminish his stature as Hollywood's greatest discovery since Rudolph Valentino. Naturally, I seized the chance to meet The Voice when he spent a few days of vacation in these parts, hiding from the newspapers. Then I learned the amazing truth about his unique art. It was a ghastly revelation. To begin with, it takes years of rigorous training and harsh discipline to develop an accent good enough for television advertising. Mr. Hawthornthwaite told me privately that he spent five years of apprenticeship before he was permitted to explain the virtues of the latest automobiles—a task requiring not merely smooth elocution but a certain impressive solemnity and brooding status symbolism as if a new car were a religious experience. For that purpose, he and others like him are first trained as Shakespearean actors, reciting Hamlet's soliloquy and Romeo's love passages to perfect the exact tone of elegance and au-

Liquor Chief Dies

HAMILTON, Ont. (CP)—William G. Webster, 80, former Ontario cabinet minister and chairman of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario, died in hospital here Thursday after a lengthy illness.

thority needed to sell the more expensive, luxury models. In his spare time, said Mr. Hawthornthwaite, he must have learned to eat and enjoy, really enjoy, dog biscuits, cat food, bird seed, ready-to-eat fish cakes and instant mashed potatoes. For of course he cannot give these products the essential tone of authority unless he believes in them sincerely. Mr. Hawthornthwaite was so sincere, so passionately devoted to his sponsors' merchandise, that he soon shattered his digestive system and now lives mostly by infant's abum, but the sponsors never suspect his grim secret as The Voice exudes, every night, an air of justly rich and healthful, masculine appetite. Even more convincing is his familiar praise of shampoos for ladies' glamorous, glittering, lovely-to-touch hair, and gentleman's tonic to cure baldness, though Mr. Hawthornthwaite himself has been totally bald since his teens.

LIQUOR CHIEF DIES HAMILTON, Ont. (CP)—William G. Webster, 80, former Ontario cabinet minister and chairman of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario, died in hospital here Thursday after a lengthy illness.

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