

THE GUARDIAN

Authorized as Second Class Mail Post Office Department, Ottawa. The Island Guardian Publishing Co. President and Associate Editor, Ian A. Burnett, Associate Editor, Frank Walker. CIRCULATION "Covers Prince Edward Island like the dew" "The strongest memory is weaker than the weakest ink". CHARLOTTETOWN, THURSDAY, FEB. 19, 1953

Public Interest Lukewarm

What has come out of the public hearing by the Select Committee of the Legislature on electoral reform is that there is no active reform movement in this Province. Attendance was not large for such a hearing and presentations were few and lukewarm. The most vigorous was that of the C.C.F. party represented by its secretary, Mr. Douglas MacFarlane, opposing the property vote, advocating reduction of voting age to 18, the printing of party affiliations on the ballot and above all the abolition of candidates' deposits.

Only one private citizen took the opportunity to express views before the committee and the only other presentation, that of the Federation of Agriculture, was non-committal, being principally a recital of the replies sent in by the district Federation meetings on six questions sent out by the Provincial organization. Out of 375 questionnaires sent out only 112 brought replies and apart from opposing bribery in only one proposal, that of lowering the voting age, was there an absolute majority pro or con.

Despite the lack of warmth, however, there appears to be decided feeling that the Act is far from perfect and that improvements can be effected along the lines of curtailing multiple voting and reducing the amount of the deposit to be in line with the \$200 required under the Dominion Election Act for County representation, also, perhaps, by the compiling of an official list of electors.

A discussion on candidate or party putting up deposit money brought out a striking difference between C.C.F. thinking and that of the other parties. Mr. MacFarlane considers the Member as a delegate rather than a representative. "When a man is sent to the Legislature," he told the committee, "he should do the things he is sent there to do."

This proposition is directly at variance with the function and duty of a Member as described by Edmund Burke. "It is his duty," declared the great parliamentarian, to his constituents, "to sacrifice his repose, his pleasures, his satisfactions, to theirs; and above all, ever and in all cases to prefer their interest to his own. But his unbiased opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you; to any man, or to any set of men living. . . Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion." That is the principle on which representative government is founded and it is set at naught when any group or party usurps control of the conscience of the elected Members.

Reassuring Figures

Welcome news contained in the figures table yesterday in the House of Commons by Finance Minister Abbott was to the effect that Canada's national production hit a record peak of nearly twenty-three billion dollars last year. This estimate was made on the "gross national product," the value at market prices of all goods and services produced in the country, and it is of direct interest to our Provincial Governments because the payments made under the Federal-Provincial tax agreements are geared to gross national product. Allowing for the fact that 1952 prices were higher than a year earlier, the Finance Minister said there was still an estimated increase of about six percent in terms of volume or "real product." While these estimates are only approximate, they indicate that 1952 was the third successive year in which the growth of real product was of the order of five or six percent. The rate was more than double that of the previous three-year period.

As explained by Provincial Treasurer Darby at the last session of the local Legislature, under the new tax rental agreement this Province was guaranteed a minimum annual income from that source of \$2,966,856 during the next five years, plus amounts based on the gross national product for the year preceding the year of payment over that for the year 1948. In that year the gross national product resulted in increasing our payment for the next year from the minimum to \$3,905,000. In effect our income under the agreement will vary from that figure by about \$185,000 per year for every increase or decrease of one bil-

lion dollars above or below the 21 billion 217 million production. "Thus," he said, "if the G.N.P. in 1952 should be 22 billions 217 millions then the following year we will be receiving approximately \$4,090,000." The 1952 figure given yesterday by Finance Minister Abbott was actually 22 billions, 984 millions, so that even allowing for a slight variation between the estimated and the actual figure, we may safely count on payments in excess of four million dollars from Ottawa under the agreement for 1953.

Mr. Darby budgeted last session for an overall deficit of \$1,296,276 and a surplus on ordinary account of \$367,399. The continued rise in gross national product justifies his prediction, made at that time, that more revenue from this source could be expected. "We were given the option," he explained, "of a two year average compared with the base year or the one year average. Under the two year plan we would, for this year, be getting about \$300,000 less, but in the event of a recession the drop would be cushioned by the average. However, we have faith in the future of Canada, in the vast expansion of its industrial activity and in its unlimited capacity for development. Only the future can tell whether we were right or wrong, but that hazard we are prepared to take."

For the present at least, the hazard has been successfully hurdled. The total amount is still short of what this Province should receive on a basis of fiscal need, or indeed of equity when one considers our special claims in lieu of Crown lands and other matters; but at least it provides some leeway for meeting current expenditures, and perhaps for curtailing in some measure the huge debt increases we have been incurring with monotonous regularity in recent years.

Municipal Problem

The decentralizing of public business at various jurisdictional levels under our Federal system is dealt with in the Speech from the Throne in the Ontario Legislature. It foreshadows new pressure upon the Dominion Government for the appointment of a national committee "to study the whole problem of Federal-Provincial fiscal relationships, the duties of each level of government under the constitution and the financial means to enable the performance of these duties."

Whether real progress toward that end can be made in a Dominion election year, comments the Globe and Mail, remains to be seen. But it is a valuable contribution to national policy to have this issue raised in as forceful a manner as possible. The lesser Governments, and especially the municipalities, are not getting their share of benefit from the large annual increase in our national production—last year an estimated increment of 5 per cent having been enlarged to 7 per cent over 1951. On the contrary, it is a cold fact that the municipalities suffer proportionately more as the national production of wealth increases without strengthening the fiscal position of the municipal units. They are being called on to expand obligatory services from revenue sources which were inadequate long before the war.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Since 1950, under the inspiration of the United Nations, Italy has distributed 265,000 acres of land to needy farm families, and has 650,000 more acres for redistribution. In Japan, 4,630,000 acres have been acquired and resold since 1946.

Carrying coals to Newcastle has nothing on the Americans who have been shipping potatoes to New Brunswick. New Brunswickers should restrain their wrath and reflect that nearly all the time the shoe is firmly on the other foot.

Tonight is Budget Night. The Hon. Douglas Abbott is the man of the hour. Election year means great demands for lower taxes but the requirements of defense and social security will probably restrict reductions to the more obvious levies which yield comparatively small revenue.

The drastic drop in hog marketings in Canada during January as compared with a year ago can be largely if not altogether explained by the farmers' knowledge that price support would be lowered at the end of 1952. The farmer is too much of a businessman today to plan on marketing a product at a time when he is told the props will be taken from under its market price.

Adelina Juana Maria Patti, Italian singer, was born this date 1843. She gave an early series of concerts but made her operatic debut in New York in 1859. Two years later she took London by storm with the exquisite clearness and beauty of her voice. She lived in Paris for many years, visiting London where she remained a prime favorite. In later years she gave up the stage for the concert hall.

Expecting A Softer Landing Tonight



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.

RURAL TELEPHONE COMPANIES

Sir,—In an editorial of February 18th, reference is made to financial difficulties encountered by rural telephone companies. It may not be widely known that this state of affairs is, at least in part, due to the use, free of charge, of rural company facilities in terminating messages the total revenue of which accrue to the commercial companies. This system takes unfair advantage of the rural companies which operate on a non-profit, no dividend basis. I am, Sir, etc. BRUCE JUDSON, Alexandra.

LOGIC AND LANGUAGE

Sir,—"Voice from Bedeque" adds another to the multiple proofs that the world is not ordered by logic. He draws from my letter a conclusion that is the direct opposite of the only one that could be logically inferred. It was precisely because I appreciated Mr. Pendergast's articles that I suggested the appending of a glossary so as to bring them within the intellectual orbit of more people. It is regrettable that an erudite correspondent like Mr. Pendergast should forego his contributions from so many readers by his chronic addiction to the use of sesquipedalian words. When I read the dissertation on porridge, not having a dictionary handy, I thought "Mirabile Dictu" was a name of one of those half-starved Germans who were revived by eating porridge and subsequently came to P. E. Island as railway employees.

If the Kensington scribe would drop those long-winded digressions and substitute a lexicon to explain the meaning of such words as "oleaginous", "leguminous", "metabolism", "gastric sensibilities", etc., the common run of readers would get the full benefit of his learned effusions. The voice of logic is more muted to my ears than the "Voice from Bedeque". If everyone took the trouble to make sure that what he was going to say made sense, there would be a great deal more silence in the world and fewer and shorter epistles in the Public Forum. The college yell of the school of experience is silence. I am, Sir, etc. MCGANDREW NAVIN, Malpeque Road.

OUTDATED TEXTBOOK

Sir,—All people and particularly children like to see new places, to see the distant hills beyond their neighbors' fields; hence geography should be true in this outward look. To the school child geography is an indoor journey to beckoning fields and peopled marts beyond the horizon. To those who can travel anywhere it should serve as a first-hand guide to the places visited. By careful observation and the exercise of memory and imagination, if we cannot go to Paris, London and Berlin, we can have London, Paris and Berlin come to us. Today, all things tend to make the world our neighborhood. And yet we must be factual. Like the birds we are becoming more migratory than ever. There is still a lot of nomadism in our nature. Why this longing, this forever sighing for the far off, unattained and dim. While the beautiful all around thee lying up its low, perpetual hymn??

Many of our sons have become great abroad because the world called to that which was great within them. Behind the Iron Curtain the children are shown a false and degrading picture of the people of other countries. Is the Maritime Edition of Nelson's School Geography a book of

Notes By The Ways

It is significant that Canada is the only country in the Commonwealth which imposes a tax on books. The British government, for example, abolished such levies nearly a century ago, and refused to reimpose them even in the darkest days of the last war. We could well follow this example. The small revenue the "tax on knowledge" brings in is no compensation for the harm it does to the nation's intellectual life. —Edmonton Journal.

Why are British police unarm-ed? So far as we know, they are the only police in the world who go about their business with no protection except truncheons and considerable skill in unarmed combat. It is because they cling tenaciously to the concept of a policeman as a public helper and guardian; to arm him brings him too near to being a soldier, for their liking. The British police are very brave men; they also know that the law is deathly severe upon anyone who attacks or resists them. Peterborough Examiner.

A slight trace of asperity could be noted in the lady's voice as she related a domestic problem to her neighbor. "I can't get used to it, this business of Jim being home all the time since he retired," she said. "Sure I think he deserves a holiday for a little while after putting in all those years with the company. But it sorts of gets my goat to be doing the same old household all day while he lies on the chesterfield, reading. Yesterday I said something to him, that he should find more things to do, and do you know what he said to me? What do you mean, find something to do? Didn't I clear out the bin case today?" —Fort William Times-Journal.

We are growing distinctly weary of this dismal business of subordinating the taste and solidity of food to cuteness and originality. We don't want our food cute. We want it edible. We maintain that any wife who would deprecate the breakfast table with the sausage-and-grapefruit concoction, proposed in a recipe the other day should be force-fed with sardines dipped in molasses, and furthermore that all wives who perpetrate those monstrous little sticky salads

up-to-date facts and figures giving little Johnny an interesting preview of the world in which he lives? On page 304 Newfoundland is listed as a British Dominion, not as a Province of Canada; on page 148 its population is given at 285,423 (more than 30 years behind the times). The latest Canadian exports and imports quoted are figures of the ambitious youngster of the year 1926—all other countries are treated with the same staid champagne. On page 63 Canada's population is 10,376,786, but on page 287 it is said to be only 9,834,000. In most past dates mentioned are used no date is mentioned. This is a nice way to bury still-born virtues of necessity. However, you cannot cover those things from the eyes of the bright student. Johnny eventually says to himself, "Why this is ancient history."

It is nothing short of ridiculous to expect Johnny to drink deep of this Pierian fiction and to keep a steady hand; and no teacher could attempt while teaching to make the many corrections, for he or she would succeed only in discrediting the printed word wherein it should be authoritatively accepted in school matters. Imagine, on page 288 the population of all the countries included in North America, from the North Pole to the Isthmus of Panama and all the islands adjacent to the Atlantic and Pacific mainland consisting of North America—all these the combined population is said to be 166,000,000. The United States alone have about that number of people. It would be interesting to know how the Teachers Federation regard this matter of revision. I am, Sir, etc. J. P. MCLOSKEY

which look and taste like whipped cream on affairs should be put out to grass permanently. Please pass the bicarbonate. —Hamilton Spectator. No other incoming government in BC "ever had it so good" as the Social Credit government. The cautiously-worded speech from the Throne was overshadowed by disclosure in the public accounts of a \$20 million surplus accumulated in the 1951-52 fiscal year by the Coalition administration. Size of the surplus for the present 1952-53 fiscal year is also expected to be astonishing. It's easy to see how Premier Bennett's regime is able to announce lower car license fees, higher exemptions from sales tax on restaurant meals, better penal and mental health services, and a generous highway program "without increasing the net debt of the province." —Vancouver Sun.

With a porch at my door, both for shelter and shade too, As the sunshine or rain may prevail, And a small spot of ground for the use of the spade too, With a barn for the use of the flail: A cow for my dairy, a dog for my game, And a purse when a friend wants to borrow; I'll envy no Nabob his riches or fame, Nor what honors may wait him Tomorrow. —John Collins.

Old Charlottetown (And P. E. I.) THE POCAHONTAS "The steamer Pocahontas is again plying as usual. The accident which caused her detention had nearly proved of disastrous consequence. On her last trip from Pictou, one of the side levers (or walking beams) which connect the pulleys with the cylinder, owing to an error in the calculation of its strength, cracked nearly in the middle. By extreme care and a light pressure she was enabled to reach Charlottetown in safety. The engineer was immediately dispatched to the Albion Mines, where the necessary repairs having been made under his directions, he returned here on Thursday morning. The boat sailed on Sunday for Pictou with the mail and a number of passengers, and will return tomorrow. We understand (says the Pictou Observer) it is the intention of her enterprising proprietor, in the course of the ensuing summer, to build another steamer of greater power; and we feel assured, though the Pocahontas has so far given every satisfaction, that such a measure would be attended with the most beneficial results to all concerned." —Royal Gazette, Aug. 7, 1832. (It was earlier in this year that the Pocahontas inaugurated the Island's first steamer communication with the mainland.)

The Passing Scene

By Observer

THEY PREFER PRISON TO RUSSIA

Press reports about the recent trial and conviction of a group of American Communists reveal a somewhat curious fact, namely, that notwithstanding their admiration for Russia and its way, Communists in general regard it as a good place to stay away from. When the presiding judge offered to work out a probation plan whereby the convicted thirteen could go to Russia to live instead of to prison, they said "No!" They called it banishment.

I should imagine that most people would call the judge's offer an act of clemency and kindness. If Russia is such a fine country as Communists and their fellow-travellers make out, one would imagine that they would have jumped at the chance. But so, they prefer imprisonment to the opportunity of living in their paradise on earth.

Most of us at one time or another have wished that all the Communists and near-Communists on this continent might be rounded up and given a one-way ticket to the country they profess to love so intensely. That way we should be saved a lot of bother and expense. This is the first time, so far as I know, that such a plan on a voluntary basis has been suggested by properly constituted authority, and it has been turned down by those to whom it was proposed. One wonders why.

Speculation in a question of this kind is bound to be precarious, for Communist ways are devious and sometimes past finding out. There are, however, one or two possible answers to the question. The simplest one is that the devotees of the Communist gospel have sense enough to realize when they are well off. Russia as a political symbol they openly admire, but Russia as a place to live they secretly despise. This would be understandable enough, for any person who has known freedom is not likely to throw it away intentionally.

If we accept this explanation we are forced to the conclusion that Communists and their fellows on the continent, in fact anywhere outside of the Iron Curtain, are more doctrinaire than practical in their thinking. But this is probably only half or less than half the story. The other half or more is probably directed by the Russia leaders themselves who have no interest in rolling out the welcome mat for foreign sympathizers. The thirteen who appeared before Judge Dimock in New York are useful to the Soviet cause so long as they remain in the United States. There would be nothing for them to do in Russia.

It is interesting, though not edifying, to note that in this most recent batch of convicted conspirators were four native born Americans, the others having come originally from countries which are now under Soviet domination. While there is no excuse for any of them double guilt would appear to belong to the native born. An act of treachery towards one's native country is always heinous enough. When it is for the

The Age-Old Story

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

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