

# Editorial Page

## The Canadian Image

A year or two ago Prince Philip made headlines in Canadian papers with a reported statement to the effect that the standard of physical fitness in Canada was low. Recently, Sir Julian Huxley was reported as saying that the Canadian city in which he was a guest was "drab". The late Sir Thomas Beecham, after a few days in Canada, during which time he must have been quite busy in his own field of music and could have had little time to listen to radio programs, nevertheless was able to produce for reporters a sweeping condemnation of Canadian radio. The comments of Brendan Behan on Canada, after some misadventures here, were mainly unprintable.

Generalizations such as these usually have a core of truth, which may be why they are annoying to Canadians who take them seriously when they are made by distinguished visitors from the British Isles. On the other hand, such generalizations could be made about almost any country. All Canadians are not physical supermen. Neither are all Britons. Canadian cities are drab, if one looks for the drab spots. So are London,

Manchester, Rome and Paris. Some Canadian radio programs are poor, but could be matched with some of those emanating from the B.B.C.

What might be more annoying to Canadians if they stopped to think is the number of closer neighbors who know little or nothing about Canada. A recent television program showed an inquiring reporter asking San Francisco residents, picked at random, some questions about Canada. To the question "What is the capital of Canada?" one out of four answered correctly. One of the others thought the capital was Ontario, one frankly didn't know and the third didn't believe that Canada had a capital. Asked for the name of the Canadian prime minister, one San Franciscan, the same who correctly answered the first question, again answered correctly. Two of the others didn't know and the third thought he was someone with a French name (Laurier, St. Laurent?). The San Franciscan who amazingly scored 100 per cent in the informal quiz showed turned out to be an immigrant from Holland, who had never visited Canada.

## Gabble Talk

In crowd scenes on the stage, the background effect of a talkative crowd can be achieved, if all the extras, with gestures and grimaces, say to each other, "Gabble-gabble-gabble-gabble."

An alarming number of people are talking gabble these days, alarming because they are people who should know better. They don't say "gabble-gabble". But their "conversation" is remarkably inflated with terms almost as meaningless.

On a TV program recently, an interviewer's subject was a young Toronto artist who had recently gained considerable recognition by switching from painting to "sculpture in steel", done with a blowtorch.

The interviewer's questions were intelligent. The answers explained almost nothing. Every time the artist seemed about to explain some interesting point, he made a vague gesture and said, "... you know ...". The listener didn't "know" and neither did the interviewer. It was not surprising that the artist's sculptures on display before the cameras seemed obscure in meaning, too. There have been good minds that have

found expression difficult, but they are not common. In general, muddled talk is the outward symbol of muddled thought.

In many cases, the "you know" technique is not the product of a mind unable to think, or to express itself; it's just another evidence of mental laziness. Anything the listener's knowledge can contribute means that much less work for the speaker. But it's being enormously overdone and it does, of course, cover a great number of instances where no thought is being generated at all.

"You know" is probably the easiest way to avoid thinking an idea into words, but there are others. "You know" gives the listener the job of working out for himself the missing heart of a sentence. It is led up to by the use of minor assists, which release the speaker from listing details or examples: "and all that sort of thing," "and so forth and so on," "et cetera, et cetera."

Language, like money, is a form of exchange. There are many ways to debase the verbal coinage. One of them is to move closer to the stage's meaningless "gabble-gabble," where mere sound replaces speech.

## City Lights

Is the true countryman in some danger of becoming extinct? The current census may provide us with the answer. At any rate, it will at least indicate whether there has been any further speed-up in the Great Canadian Trek—from countryside to town and city that is.

The census began, according to the census of 1901, with rural dwellers outnumbering urban residents in the proportion of five to three. The next forty years so changed things that by 1941 urban dwellers were in a majority although, interestingly enough, as recently as that close to half (43.5 per cent) of the total population still lived rural.

By 1956, however, fully two-thirds of all Canadians were urban dwellers and there is much evidence to suggest that the proportion has further increased in the past five years.

The reasons for this urban concentration are well known. Even so, in a country as vast and spacious as Canada (and as undeveloped) there does seem to be something anomalous about it. An indefinite continuation of the trend conjures up visions of a largely-deserted and desolate countryside into which armies of urban-dwellers venture forth in season to grow food, dig for minerals and cut lumber. Somehow the prospect doesn't please.

But the fact must be faced that for most Canadians the country nowadays is the place you spend a weekend in. The countryman, of course, might well retort that cities and towns are places where people live, work and sleep between weekends. Certainly, a weekend census would produce results very

different from the Monday to Friday kind.

Be that as it may, the answer to the question "How are you going to keep them down on the farm after they've seen Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, et al?" is that you can't. But, with two Canadians out of every three now living in towns and cities, it's possible we will yet have to answer the question of one young student who, on being told this, asked: "What will happen to the countryside when it's three out of three?"

## Not in Doubt

Dominion Bureau of Statistics reports that the total revenues of all governments rose from \$4,818 millions in 1950 to \$11,297 millions in 1960, a new record high.

Taxes of all kinds being what they are, we wouldn't doubt it for a minute.

## Project Successful

With the success of the Community Centre Fund practically assured the attitude that nothing can be accomplished in Acton as a community project should be dispelled. The reception that the canvassers have received indicates very forcefully that community spirit in Acton is not a thing of the past. In all segments of the canvass the response to the project has been most encouraging. The lesson we may learn from this success is that we can, as a community, accomplish anything that will improve our life in Acton and district. As a community, we feel the residents have been knit more closely together to the betterment of all.



"Garden Elf"

—Photo by Esther Taylor

## Sugar and Spice...

BY BILL SMILEY

thick lenses loaned by small liberalists.

No longer, for example, must I put up the slightest architecture. Now I can say what I think: that new churches look like either tents or silos; that you can't tell a new school from a new factory; that the new split-level homes, with picture windows above and garage yawning below, resemble one-eyed harpies who have just been delivered of monsters, by caesarean section.

Oh, I'm going to enjoy my conservatism, I can tell you. An immediate project in mind is the formation of a small conservative men's club, with one purpose in view—getting women out of our hair and back in the kitchen. We'll start in a small way of seeking legislation forbidding women to smoke in public. This would keep about 50 per cent of them at home.

Another thing that's going to give me a lot of pleasure, in my new life, is squaring around some of my small liberal friends. There's one who is always complaining about the lack of tolerance shown toward minorities, in our society. Next time he opens his mouth, I'll say, loud and clear, "You're a fine one to talk about tolerance, when you can't stand the sight of your own mother-in-law!"

## G.A.D. About

### Pessimism to Optimism

A few weeks ago when I first heard of the campaign to raise \$60,000 for the Community Centre I was not very hopeful that all the king's horses and all the king's men could put humpty dumpty together again. I was of course in favor of the plan, but I wondered how many others were of like mind. Now hearing the objective I am of course convinced that the task will be completed. The days that have intervened since the campaign opened have been anxious ones for all of us and we have watched the clock climb steadily with a great deal of satisfaction.

It is not only a source of satisfaction that we will have the community pride that so many have worked so well together in the whole district to accomplish something so worth while. It is a precedent for the future in building of the town and district. Now that this job is near completion perhaps future undertakings may not loom so formidable.

On Sunday I attended the December Day service at Fairview Cemetery and met many of my friends. Thank you all for the kind remarks about my contribution to the Free Press each week. This article provides a very convenient method for me to keep in touch with so many of my friends from time to time and my friends in typing with only one finger is not so hot or only one. If at any time I should miss a contribution please feel that I will be as disappointed as my readers may be.

I am keeping a watchful eye on

Next time one of these birds starts bleating about the poor starving people of Asia, I'm going to pull out a \$20 bill and suggest, "Let's kick in \$20 each and send it to CARE, right now." That'll turn him green.

As a conservative, naturally I'm going to come out pretty strong for some things. For example—lower taxes; cutting off the baby bonus; dispersal of revolutionary organizations like the Women's Institute and the Canadian Legion.

But I'm going to throw my weight and influence just as strongly against other things, such as: letting American tourists stay in the country between sundown and sunrise; drinking while diving off anything higher than a dock; beating children with anything thicker than a pool cue.

Froin now on, no more hiding behind that phony liberalism. Let the chips fall where they may. I'm going to proclaim my real ideas, regardless of prejudice, lack of tolerance, or any of the rest of that bolshevik jargon. I'm going all out to preserve the status quo, and if that doesn't work, we'll try the quo vadis. Better stand well back so you won't be splashed when I'm blown to bits by a bomb hurled by some wild-eyed member of the CCF.

The new telephone building and other structures about town. The census takers are making their rounds but so far they have not visited our home and collected the necessary information. I will let you know how an old Canadian gets along answering all the new fangled questions that are required in these new days of 1961.

We have had some fine summer weather at last—the kind that allows one to sit out on the veranda in the evening. I've enjoyed such an evening just listening to the sounds that fill the air and are indicative of community activities. My neighbors were watering the flowers, washing the car, putting on window screens or doing other household chores. Over and above the little noise of the street you could hear the buzz of the power mowers seeming to come from every part of the town. Then there was the boom of drums rising and falling intermingling with the noises of traffic on the streets and from our own back yard the calls of birds. It isn't an exciting evening but it is different from the blare of T.V. and radio.

**KEEPING TRACK**  
A young bride was given this advice and warning by her grandmother: Child, I hope your married life is going to be easier than mine. All my wedding days, I have carried two burdens — Pa and the fire. Every time I've turned to look at one, the other has gone out.

## THE GOOD OLD DAYS

### BACK IN 1941

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, June 12, 1941.  
The bingo in Acton arena last night drew a large crowd and over 40 prizes were distributed to lucky winners. The bingo in aid of funds for war work was sponsored by Beardmore and Co. employees. Mrs. F. Cole won the lucky door prize.

Pte. Norman Morton, well known baseball and hockey star, received a serious scalp injury when he was injured in a car accident east of Silvercreek hill Monday evening. William Nawn, a passenger in the Morton car, received an injury to his leg in the accident. The car, driven by Mr. Morton, was extensively damaged during the collision. The other car involved in the side-swipe was not as badly damaged.

The Victory Loan parade and service Saturday evening was a huge success and the attractive floats entered by local citizens and organizations were boosted in number by several out-of-town floats. Major M. Collier and a number of soldiers from Newmarket added to the parade as well as the pipe band of the Newmarket Training Centre. The parade was a glorious one and the service following will always be remembered by those in attendance. During the service, Amos Mason, chairman of the campaign, gave his thanks on behalf of the members to everyone who participated and made the campaign a huge success.

Skins from muskrats, trapped in this district won \$25 for Mr. Fred Wilds, out of an entry of 2,400 during a contest in Vancouver, B.C. The prize was for the best handled and prepared pelts and the winner had a dozen pelts in his collection. Most folks would think the game of this district was almost extinct but Mr. Wilds says the rats caught the past season, had the finest pelts he has ever seen, in some years.

Miss Helen Campbell had the misfortune to break a bone in her ankle while playing tennis at the tennis courts during the weekend. The injury was painful but the injured woman is progressing favorably.  
The public lavatories at the Y have been repainted and put in splendid condition once again.

### BACK IN 1911

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, June 8, 1911.  
It was with much regret that the session of Knox church accepted the resignation of Miss Lauretta Gray as organist of the church. The session would appreciate hearing from anyone interested in assuming these duties as soon as possible.

Company Lorne Scots left Monday for their annual 12-day training course at Niagara-on-the-Lake under the command of Captain C. S. Gamble. The non-commissioned officers are Sgt. Griggs, Sgt. Major, Harwood, Sgt. Hendy and Corporal Ager.

Over a thousand gallons of oil were sprinkled on Main and Mill Streets Friday and a noted improvement is evident. No residents in other areas would appreciate the same treatment in order to eliminate the dust nuisance.

On Saturday, Cpl. Tom Alger and George A. Timmerly were on a scaffold making repairs on a revolving shaft at Acton Tanning Company when young Alger's jacket pocket was caught on a bolt at the shaft head. He was being rapidly drawn into the shaft when Timmerly grabbed him and held on while the revolving shaft tore off all his clothes. Witnesses at the scene remarked it was only the prompt action of Timmerly which saved the young man's life.

During the annual session of the Hamilton Conference held at Galt last week, the question of church union was accepted by a vote of 149 for and 27 against.

Agricultural societies have been notified they must use strict force in preventing any gambling at their annual Fall Fairs. According to reports, which has been in force for some time, gambling is not allowed but this year it will be strictly enforced. Messrs. Beardmore and Co. have a group of workmen preparing lines from Fairy Lake to the Tammy this week. When completed, the new line will assure the company of pure water for tanning purposes.

A large crowd attended the colored minstrel show in the water-proof tent set up at the park last weekend and everyone reported an enjoyable evening. It has been rated as the best show to ever strike town.

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p.m. 3:06 p.m. 6:33 p.m.  
8:31 p.m. 10:01 p.m. (Sun. and  
Holi.)  
Westbound  
10:27 a.m. 1:27 p.m. 2:57  
p.m. 5:27 p.m. 7:27 p.m.  
9:12 p.m. 11:52 p.m. 1:12 a.m.  
1:12 a.m. (Fri., Sat., Sun. and  
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Sunday, 10:33 a.m. to Toronto; 8:07  
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ronto Sunday Only.  
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to Stratford; 8:07 p.m. to Stratford;  
1:30 a.m. to Stratford (7 days a  
week); 2:22 p.m. to Stratford Sat-  
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## The Acton Free Press



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G. A. Dills, Editor-in-Chief  
David R. Dills, Managing Editor

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"Oh, boy!" I chortled. "No more having to get sore at anti-Semites. No more having to be nice to Irishmen or Armenians or Negroes, unless I like them. No more having to be tolerant of half-baked religious sects. No more pretending that women are as smart as men."

It's wonderfully refreshing to be able to look at life through your own sharp prejudices and emotions for a change, after years of gazing at it murky through the thumb-printed,