

EDITORIAL COMMENT

No Place to Go

Impending action to raise salaries of members of parliament in Ontario by 50%, which will include a \$6,000 tax free allowance, leaves the voter nowhere to go in the next provincial election.

Coming on the eve of a federal-provincial conference to discuss action to combat inflation, which could include restrictions on price and wage incomes, it is a masterpiece of bad timing, entirely indefensible and a blot on Ontario's three major political parties.

At a time when pay raises are the rule, when the cost of living has skyrocketed, perhaps one cannot expect politicians to hold the line completely. A modest increase of five or ten percent would pass with little comment and no serious objections. But fifty percent? and retroactive to April?

The raise is cleverly devised, first having agreement among the three party leaders, who then got approval of their party caucuses before it became public.

And while the government will have to take the brunt of the criticism, having initiated the raise, and could and should be voted out of office at the next election, this will have no bearing on a fait accompli.

It would seem, that while political leaders can be at each others throats over such "minor" issues as medicare, education costs, and Indian affairs, when it comes to a really important issue like "What's in it for me?" is isn't hard to agree.

The federal government, of course, did the same thing not too long ago, and have just boosted their mileage allowance from a ridiculous 7c a mile to an equally ridiculous 16c, so they are on equally shaky ground when they talk about inflation curbs.

If Canadians are becoming more and more cynical in comparing what politicians say with what they do, we can hardly be blamed.

Brings Honours Here

A Georgetown man brought fame to our town when he won the international sheep shearing championship at the Royal Winter Fair.

Bill Wilson, who has been striving for the honour for eight years, defeated last year's champion and 13 others to bring the trophy back to Canada. It has been held by Americans since 1963.

Bill learned the art of shearing from his father, Clare Wilson, who is also well-known in the county for his prowess in this field.

He now has hopes of competing in a big American show next spring, where he will be pitted against another group of experts.

Interesting Competition

A quiz for elementary school pupils, a feature of book week at the library, provided interesting and informative to those who watched.

The questions were more difficult for adults, perhaps, than for the students, containing information particularly historical and geographical which many of us had forgotten.

It was interesting to watch these bright youngsters doing mental arithmetic with ease, while we adults puzzled it through with furrowed brows, seeing them snap out answers to science questions, some of which were too much for us, and displaying a good knowledge of Canadian history and world geography.

An Informative Program

For those who tire of a bland diet of TV situation comedies, we recommend a radio program which comes on at supper-time on Sundays.

It is Cross Canada Check-up, a CBC feature from Montreal, with Betty Shapiro as commentator.

Mrs. Shapiro chooses a subject, invites one or two guest experts, then receives telephone calls from all parts of Canada, hearing people's views and commenting with her guests on what they hear.

This Sunday the discussion was on whether we should aim for a shorter work week, and if it comes, how can we prepare for larger amounts of leisure time.

Listeners had a variety of opinions, from the woman who quoted the adage: "The devil finds things for idle hands to do" to the man who wants a three day, ten hour work week, so he can enjoy four days of hunting, fishing and the outdoor life.

There was a suggestion that if three or four work weeks come, there should be staggered. If not, the traffic jams to vacation spots would become hopelessly jammed.

There were some who say our governments should be providing more recreation; others who feel this is a personal responsibility.

One opinion was that we tend to think we must be on the go in every leisure hour, while contemplation and just plain resting can be important too.

Changes in our system of education, with more stress on things which would be helpful in our future recreation group were suggested by many. Concentration on public service work with groups like the Red Cross, more emphasis on physical fitness were mentioned.

The problem of more leisure time costing money was to the fore, also, with some opinions that even with the same pay for less hours of work, the average man would not enjoy the extra hours off as much as he thinks.



"MY WIFE WAS RIGHT—IT ISN'T SURVEYOR AFTER ALL"

OUR ECONOMY

Drop in Price of Gold Could Be Inflation Curb

by Frank Flaherty

From the viewpoint of inflation watchers around the world the best news lately concerned the fall in the price of gold on the free markets at London and Zurich.

Although the event may appear remote from the price of \$225 in Canada, it carries a lesson to anyone who has been speculating on continuing price increases anywhere in the free world. It is particularly relevant to Britain and Germany because their national currencies, the pound and the mark, were felt to be in danger of devaluation.

Devaluation of a national currency is a sort of last-resort weapon against rising prices. It's accepted when all other devices such as restraints on public spending have proved ineffective. That was the case with the French franc some while back and since it was devalued the pound and the mark have been exposed to pressures.

It's also good news for the monetary authorities of the world's main trading nations, including Canada, who have been working in recent years to establish more stability in exchange rates between national currencies. Widespread hoarding of gold by speculators has withdrawn a lot of money from circulation and contributed to higher prices for other commodities. Some of that will now be released as the speculators sell their gold and look for profits in other ventures.

The free gold market came into being in 1968 when monetary authorities found themselves unable to hold the former fixed price of \$35 (U.S.) per ounce. It freed central banks from the necessity of dipping into their reserves to keep market demands supplied with gold at \$35.

The free market price rose to a high of \$44 but last week dropped to a range of \$38.50 to \$36.70 at Zurich, with Paris and London prices only a little higher. At these levels there's no danger of the big national gold reserves which form the base of being again exposed to a run-down.

Money experts also see the change as an indication that the "special drawing rights" set up in association with the International Monetary Fund last September are working. The rights are a substitute for gold and are made available by the Fund to any member country which finds itself temporarily short of metal and whose currency becomes shaky.

EFFORT, MAINLY VOCAL
Meantime, in this country, the main effort at restraining inflationary price increases continues to be vocal, and by all accounts, only marginally effective. The newly created Prices and Incomes Commission keeps preaching restraint on the part of people who have the power to increase the prices of the goods or the labor they have to sell.

For the record, organized labor holds aloof although there is reason to believe that some union demands may be less than they would otherwise have been because of an awareness of the resulting effect on prices. Members of parliament are vocal in denouncing prices that affect the average man, such as those in gasoline prices. Consumer and Corporate Affairs Minister Ron Basford admits he's powerless under the law to interfere and, echoing Prime Minister Trudeau, says the government is considering further measures if voluntary restraint doesn't work.

Reliable clues as to what these measures may be and who will decide that restraints are not working and by what criteria are still lacking. About the only thing that is clear is that from here on any big business which boosts prices on its products will get a fair amount of publicity.

BADLY TIMED?

At least a few observers think Finance Minister Benson's disclosure of the tax reform program was badly timed from the point of view of the current urgency to check inflation. They think it will upset the bond market and divert investors from bonds to stocks and commodities, thereby pushing commodity and share prices up faster than is either desirable or warranted.

Prices on low-coupon bonds have been dropping. The near certainty of a capital gains tax on the buyer who holds them to maturity makes them less attractive. The lower price on the bonds themselves has little bearing on the general price trends but it does mean that funds which would have gone into such bonds will go into some other investment and thereby help push other prices upward.

NEWS ECHOES

From the Herald's of 10, 20 and 30 Years Ago

1959
● With 34 deer taken by a large party hunting in the Magnetawan area, Georgetown and district men took part in hunts which accounted for some 75 deer this year.

● With over 48 per cent of voters going to the polls, Georgetown elected a deputy reeve and six councillors, Monday. A total of 2380 of 4941 registered voters cast their ballots. Walter Gray was returned as deputy-reeve with John Elliott, Tut Harrison, John D. Kelly, William F. Hunter, John Gunn and Ian Cass the successful candidates at the first anniversary banquet of the Pro-met. The office of mayor which Jack Armstrong has vacated is still to be filled and a second nomination meeting is scheduled for Tuesday.

1949
● A large birthday cake with one huge candle centred the tea table at the first anniversary banquet of the Provincial Paper Quarter Century Club on Sunday at Hill-top Lodge, Erin. Thirty-three of the forty-two club members gathered for the occasion. Members of the club have all been employed for at least 25 years with the company. At the dinner, Martin Cummins was welcomed as a new member and presented with an engraved watch by Hugh Dickie. Miss Jessie Leavitt read teletype messages of congratulations from other chapters. One minute's silence was observed for two members, E. McWhirter and Fred Laws, who died during the year.

1939
● No less than five business places were entered in Georgetown and district last weekend. Thugs entered the hardware store of J. Sanford and Son at Stewarttown, Friday night and blew open the safe. They took about \$40 in cash and a \$50 electric drill. A number of neighbours heard voices and an explosion about 3 a.m., but took no notice of it. On Saturday night the local hydro office was entered when thugs smashed a window to gain entrance, but nothing was stolen. It is thought the would-be burglars were interested in moving the safe but were frightened off. The same night Brill's Hosiery Mill was entered and a quantity of socks stolen. On Sunday-night the thieves continued their rampage and forced their way into Jack Squires' Service Station, stealing a radio, anti-freeze and a quantity of tobacco.

● C. B. Dayfoot and Co. was entered on Monday night and although a number of drawers were ransacked only a couple of pairs of shoes were missing. The typewriter was carried outside but left behind. Chief W. G. Marshall is making a desperate effort to track down the thieves and is being ably assisted by Night Constable Emmers.



Bill Smiley

They Earn Their Keep

This column is dedicated to my namesake, Bill Smiley, a high school principal in Saskatchewan. He doesn't even read my column, but I'll tell you, but his wife does.

Recently, she forced him to listen as she read a column in which I hurled a dart into the raw hides of school administrators. It made him write, but it was a friendly letter, and it is nice to hear from you, Cousin Bill.

He must be a cousin. The Smileys, five brothers of them, came out from Ireland during one of the periodic potato famines, and with the skill and foresight that has always characterized the name, chose some of the most meagre land in Canada on which to strike it rich.

The crops were mainly stones, with an occasional bonanza of boulders. Most of them had enough dim Irish wit to get out and move west, but my grandfather, with nine kids and no wife, stuck it out and the old family farm is still there in Pontiac, Quebec, pushing up its annual crop of milkweed, burdock and fieldstone.

Cousin Bill must be a descendant of one of the Smileys who went West and starved during The Depression, instead of staying home and almost starving.

We've lost contact completely. But I did meet a chap, Bev Smiley, directly ahead of me in a line-up on a troopship coming home, who turned out to be a son of my father's first cousin Joe, who went West. Isn't this fascinating?

However, this is not a family history, though I know you're intrigued. It is a heart-felt expression of sympathy for high school principals, like Cousin Bill.

A high school principal is usually a normal human being (though not always) who is caught, not between two grindstones, but four. Grinding from above are the school board and the parents. From below, he is whetted to a fine edge by teachers and students.

Either he emerges keen as an axe, or ground to a pulp. The odd one is smart enough to quit and go back to the classroom before either happens. But most, driven by the insatiable greed of their wives, keep at it until they are punchy.

This is one of their hair-raising months of unbelievable chaos, they have finally got the "big, brutal, awkward, statistical machine" that is modern high school, running with only the odd fit or start. (Be careful there, linotype operator.)

The Board has cut off all expenditures until the new budget is struck in January. The students are becoming unruly. The teachers are completely browned out with the Board, principal, students and each other. In short, everything is normal.

Then the poor old principal gets three or four resignations from his staff. They are from people who are ill, fed up, or merely going out of their minds.

Where do you pick up, in December, an art teacher who can double in typing? Or a German teacher who is a whiz at German but weighs 200 lbs. and must coach the basketball team? Or a history teacher who can pick up a wedding class without doing a Nero?

Somehow, they find bodies to put in front of the kids and the show goes on. And the principal takes another giant step, not for mankind, but toward his first coronary.

Bless you, chaps, and have a happy Christmas. It's a job I wouldn't touch with a 20-foot Hungarian, let alone a ten-foot Pole.

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THE DISTRICT AT A GLANCE

SET FOR SATURDAY POLLS
MILTON: The municipal office, nerve centre for the biggest election in Brampton's history is preparing to operate with military-like precision Saturday, December 6. The town has at least 18,001 eligible voters this year — about 2,900 more than for the last election in 1936. And 91 polling stations instead of 83 in 1966. High-light of the election will be the race for the mayor's chair involving James Archibald, William Brydon, and Russell Prouse.

INVESTIGATE TOWN POLICE
MILTON — The Ontario Police Commission has been asked to investigate the operation of the Milton Police Department.

pletion date for the construction of the supermarket is mid-April 1970. Owner John Edmunds already operates Brown's Good Foods, an independent supermarket in Hamilton.

SEEK TO JOIN VILLAGE
ERIN — A number of ratepayers of Mountainview subdivision, now part of Erin Township, intend to ask for annexation with Erin village. The ratepayers are angry over the rates of their privately owned water supply which have been hiked from \$36 to \$84 a year. At a meeting last week, 95 per cent of the ratepayers in the subdivision met with Erin village council and the township council to discuss annexation, which if approved would give them the service of the Erin village water system.

SANTA COMING
This Saturday, December 6th will be the day St. Nick arrives in town. He will be in a parade with many colourful floats and bands.

TENNIS CLUB TUMBLES
ACTON — Construction is to begin shortly on a new Goodland Supermarket on the site of the old Acton Tennis Club. Workmen have been busy demolishing the old clubhouse which was used by both tennis players and lawn bowlers. Com-