

BAPTIZED AT CIRCUIT ASSEMBLY

Local candidates baptized at the circuit assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses at Brantford over the weekend include, from left, Susan Mumby, Eunice Moore, and William Wiltshire. At right is presiding minister, Melville Taylor.

CHATTING..... with MARY BIEHN

● I hadn't realized, when staying at Yosemite Lodge, that we were actually still thousands of feet above sea level, in spite of the fact that the resort is in a valley.

● Our bus trip from Yosemite to Merced was downhill all the way, a two hour feast for the eyes of gorgeous mountain scenery. Between towering granite peaks, the road followed the course of the turbulent Merced River. This area was the scene of a gold rush many years ago. It was eerie to pass by several ghost towns — or I should say, settlements. Usually there was a large hotel like building, a store, and half a dozen houses. They had a lonely disappointed look about them.

Before we reached our destination the mountains changed character again, and became brownish and bare, before softening into rolling range country which eventually flattened down into fruit-growing plains.

The town of Merced is located in this perfectly level area. We walked along its main street while waiting for the train to San Francisco. Huge airplanes kept zooming overhead. A storekeeper told us there was a big air training base a few miles from town. I must say it was an ideal location for one.

● En route to the coast, our train passed through one of the major fruit and vegetable growing areas of California. It was interesting to see how things like figs, oranges, grapefruit, almonds and artichokes, grow. Luckily, we had a native Californian sitting near us to point them out, or we'd never have recognized them. Again, we were surprised to see so much irrigation used in the fields and orchards. Lack of enough moisture appeared to be the major problem in all of the agricultural areas we traveled thru.

● As the train approached San Francisco, we had a wonderful view of the harbour. I immediately had a strange feeling of having seen it before. Searching my mind, I came up with the answer. Athens, Greece. The entrance to the two harbours looked almost identical, even to the high brown hills flanking the shores. It wasn't to be the last time I was reminded of Athens during our visit to the Golden Gate city. The way the houses are clustered into the side of the hills, and even the way some of them are built—box-like, flat-roofed and finished in white-washed or pastel coloured stucco, was very similar to the majority of Athenian homes. Incidentally, in San Francisco, there's a by-law that says there must be at least an inch between houses. Not even the homes of the very wealthy have much property around them. Land is at a premium there.

● It's hard not to enjoy a visit to San Francisco. The city is physically attractive, the way it is on steep high hills, on the edge of the blue Pacific. Their little cable cars are fun to ride. They look like Toonerville Trolleys the way they zoom down those almost vertical grades, and around corners almost make you swallow your epiglottis. Fisherman's Wharf with its boats, beaches, seafood and glamorous boutiques, is a delight to wander around in. And Chinatown on a Saturday night is like a three ring circus with its blocks and blocks of colourful stores bursting with oriental-style merchandise and hundreds of restaurants thronging with people. In

the adjacent downtown areas there are night clubs galore with every conceivable type of entertainment.

● BUT, — and it's a big one — the hippies kept us from enjoying the city as much as we might have. The city is overrun with them — there must be thousands. It's as though a nightmarish epidemic has taken hold of the young people there. So seedy, unkempt, dirty, and downright kooky, they give an air of decadence to the city. We saw them openly

smoking 'stuff', sniffing 'stuff' and one sight that will linger long with me is that of a young girl, not more than sixteen, sitting on a curb, stoned dull-eyed on drugs, playing with strands of her long hair as the sun shone thru them.

The phenomenon of so many young people deliberately ruining their lives disturbed us deeply. And unfortunately, that is the one aspect of our stay in San Francisco that we will never be able to forget.

IN THE MAIL BAG

Vicious Circle Means Hard Squeeze for Fixed Incomes

12 Ostrander Blvd.
Dear Sir:
I read with interest recommendations by Esquing councillor K. Marshall re Halton School Board spending practices and heartily agree with him, however he should have criticized the Ontario government who implemented Regional and County system. The Czar of education, Wm. Davis is responsible and apparently has no control over budgets, expenses etc., local councils not approving school budgets but they are handed accounts covering school costs which in turn is passed on to the realty taxpayer. However, there is no purpose in criticizing school boards anymore than labour, professionals and industry. All phases is just a vicious circle, labour obtaining periodical increases and industry passing costs on to the consumer.

In the Toronto papers Nov. 27 Mr. Trudeau suggests a meeting of the Provinces to discuss price and wage con-

trols; another article states members of the Federal government have been granted a 60% increase in mileage rate allowance between Ottawa and their constituencies and yet another article states Ontario MPPs voted themselves a 50% increase in pay, a good portion tax free. How do various phases of government expect to hold the line when they don't practice what they preach.

Another most important matter which is very seldom mentioned by the press or others is the plight of the old age pensioner or other people on a fixed income. They have no recourse to obtain extra revenue, their purchasing power gradually diminishing. The Federal Government gave a cost of living bonus on old age Security this year, amounting to \$1.50 per month — what a joke. The Government considers this a cost of living bonus based on the early 60's — what happened to the 100% cost base of the 40's or 50's. The purchasing



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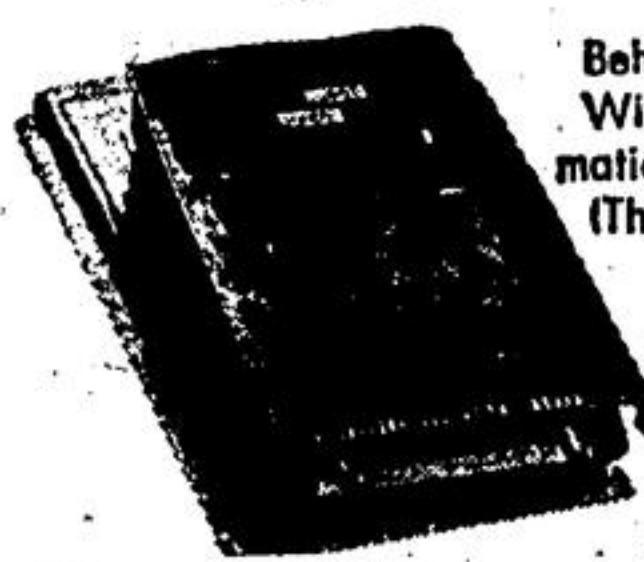
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