



THE SCOTCH BLOCK DAM in Esquesing Township, just east of Highway 25 north of 10 Sideroad, presents a scenic view from the ground but the view is much better from a plane at 700 feet. This photo looks west toward Highway 25 from over the middle of the mile and a half long, man-made lake. The earth dam and concrete spillway are shown to good advantage in the photo and apple orchards surround the lake.—(Photo by Jack Carpenter)

Free Press Editorial Page

The season's almost here . . .

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas everywhere you go . . . the stores are decorated, festive lights are festooning houses and one can detect the sudden surge of feeling which characterizes the season in Canada.

And despite the anxieties, fighting and troubles the world over people are looking for something, some reassurance that everything is going to turn out for good.

In this country Christmas comes at the same time as the shivery blasts of the winter start to blow down from the north. But instead of the weather we are watching for Santa Claus to emerge from the icy arctic tundra.

It is all part of that warm Yuletide feeling.

There are others, however, who think the holiday season isn't what it used to be. They say:

"Tis the season to be wary — not merry.

Among the gloom merchants we were surprised to see one from a church publication which takes a poke at our present day celebrations with delight and several helpings of truth wrapped in hyperbole.

It says:

"Christmas just isn't what it used to be — yule logs, electric lights on the tree, holly, mistletoe, carols, Santa Claus and all that sort of seasonal stuff. Joy, innocence, a comfortable meal."

"Take Christmas tree lights for instance. They're a No-No! on all artificial trees. The fire department would rather you didn't use them at all. As for the trees, keep them out of the house if possible — they're big enough hazard out there in the woods."

"The yule log used to be so comfy and cheery but today it only adds to the

pollution problem. As for the unguided mistletoe, it could have serious implications for the population explosion. The flowing bowl is definitely out. If you drink, don't drive. Better still, if you drive — don't drive."

"That leaves us with the Christmas dinner. Wait! Drop that fork! Don't take a chance. With all those additives, cyclamates, calories and mercury the good old Christmas dinner becomes a meal of death. Besides somebody somewhere has likely got a cranberry boycott on the go. Well, you wouldn't be able to wash the dishes because detergent is a dirty word."

"Of course, you can always go to church. On second thought, better check with your psychiatrist. See what he can do about your guilt complex when you know you're not going to be around again until Easter."

Support seals . . breathe easier . . .

Humorist Mark Twain once joked that to protect his health he never smoked "more than one cigar—at a time."

An Acton resident who prefers to remain nameless recently suffered severe chest congestion following surgery. His New Year's resolution is already made—No Smoking. He saw the statistics: Cigarette smokers are nine times more likely to get cancer of the lung, twice as likely to have heart disease and the chances of contracting emphysema are increased by 15 times.

From humor to hospital there's a reason for the Christmas Seal campaign sponsored by the Halton County TB and RD Association. Money raised through the Christmas seals supports research into many areas of respiratory diseases and supports research into many areas of respiratory diseases and supports programs to assist smokers quitting the habit and encouraging youngsters not to start.

We have a lot to learn about the effects of smoking but there is no doubt that smokers are courting danger.

There is no known cure for emphysema, smokers' disease that stretches and tears the air sacs of the lungs and eventually will affect the heart as well.

During the last 20 years, the number of patients with emphysema has doubled every five years. Sobering statistics.

As Alma Swetman, the Acton-based representative on the county TB and RD Association, so neatly puts it—It's a matter of life and breathe!!!!

Support the campaign and you'll breathe easier.



Bill Smiley

Do you have difficulty in communicating with young people? Don't worry. We all do.

I have two of my own, and I teach the critics every day, in droves, and I have trouble.

I've come to the conclusion that it's not our fault, it's theirs. We just can't keep up with their everchanging slang.

For years I thought a hang-up was something I'd had during the war. It was what we called the rather delicate situation created when one of your bombs was caught by the tail and, hanging nose-down, fused, refused to drop.

I had to land with one of these babies dangling there, one day. One bounce on landing and the aircraft and yours truly went to glory. As you can see, I landed like a feather on a snowbank, but it was a little disconcerting to see everyone on the airstrip flat on his face as I was coming in.

Now I realize that I had two hang-ups that day. There was the physical one: I had sort of a hang-up about being blown up.

Now, of course, "hang-up" is almost old hat in younger circles. It means anything from an obsession to a minor worry. You can be hung-up on the other sex, on drugs, on school work.

Another term that is enjoying quite a vogue these days is "rip-off". Basically, it means stealing, but there are milder forms. It can also mean talking somebody out of something you want, conning somebody into taking something he doesn't want, and providing something you've promised, and so on.

My daughter Kim was home from college last week. She was supposed to come home for the weekend, but it was so pleasant at home, and the food was so good, and she enjoyed being spoiled so much that she stayed the whole week.

I observed her manoeuvres as she prepared to return, and thought I was seeing a real rip-off artist at work.

I went something like this. "Oh Mom, is that ever a smart blouse! Could I try it on?" Momma, with resignation, "O.K., but you're not getting it. That's the only decent thing I have to wear." Kim, brightly, "Oh I don't need it; I have those crummy old T-shirts that you hate so much. But it really fits me, doesn't it?"

And so on. I don't think I need to elaborate. She got the blouse, our teapot, my typewriter, various pots and pans, the only deodorant in the house and about 64 other items, too miscellaneous to list.

The Old Lady finally balked when Kim tried on a fur jacket and started swanking

around in front of the mirror, cooing. "This really does something for me, doesn't it Mom?" Her mother stood her ground and said, in effect, you got your rotten hands off that jacket.

Well, as I said, I thought Kim was an artist at ripping off. I changed my mind when we took her to the city and saw the apartment she and another girl had rented in the fall. Kim is a rank amateur, a babe-in-the-woods, compared to city landlords. The apartment is on the fringe of a slum area.

In September, she told us glowingly that the apartment was "really neat". It had a new stove and fridge. There were three bedrooms, kitchen, dining room and living room and bathroom, all for \$145 a month. It was unfurnished, of course. Sounded pretty good.

The "new" stove has an oven that does not work. The "new" fridge might fetch twelve dollars at a rummage sale and the handle is falling off.

The kitchen is like something out of Dickens. The bedrooms are boxes, only one with a window. There are no locks on the doors. The toilet doesn't work, except when it feels like it. Etc.

Rip-off. I'll never be a wealthy old school-teacher. But I'm certainly going to look into the prospects of becoming a wealthy old slum landlord.

A sense of perspective . . .

Our environment is too important to be left to the sensationalists. They have helped to focus public opinion on pollution all right, but now they are tending to overdo it. A backlash, unfortunately, is setting in and, unless we are careful, the word "ecology" is going to fall into disrepute.

True, some issues which the sensationalists raise are real issues. But others are questionable by comparison. They are second-order threats to our environment. They attract a lot of attention for a while but they aren't really serious from a biological point of view.

What is needed, more and more, is a sense of balance, of timing, of priorities. Environmentalists worthy of the name take a broad gauge approach to things. They are concerned about posterity. They don't cry wolf day in

and day out. They choose targets carefully. They try to head off developments which can really be harmful to our tender biosphere using arguments which will stand up in the highest court in the land.

Granted, some shouting was necessary. It was necessary especially in the 60's when we were still thinking in terms of economic growth for growth's sake. We were mesmerized by one side of nature's balance sheet and one side only. We needed a shower of multi-colored paperbacks in order to bring us to our senses. We needed a few dramatic headlines to tell us that the preservation of our living environment was essential to the survival of mankind.

But the bandwagon started by the first ecologists has attracted a lot of noisy adherents. Too many 'me too'

artists are starting too many hares. They are predicting catastrophes — imminent catastrophes — which fail to materialize. They are shooting from the hip and their credibility is evaporating as one after another of their forecasts fail to come true.

This hurts the environmental movement. It tends to discredit it.

Changes in people's attitudes take time. Also they lose their momentum if a few sour notes are struck by those who are wont to lead the charge in a given direction. It follows that we must be sure of our ground if we are to protect our natural environment in the 1970's.

—From a speech by the Hon. Jack Davis, Federal Minister of the Environment.



by Hartley Coles

COLES' SLAW

Perhaps you have noticed that this particular corner of the Free Press editorial page has been confused in the last few weeks. We've been experimenting with columns, trying to find the right combination to balance off Smiley, serious editorials, the columns from the past, which make up the page each week.

You may remember this space was occupied by the Salt and Pepper Column for almost two years. It was discontinued because I felt it had run its course and the page needed a more serious type of approach, which could be provided by a column such as "From the Editor's Desk".

Apparently I was wrong.

Although there have been some kind comments about the more serious columns, most people have been critical—not of the columns—but because they replaced Salt and Pepper.

Readers of this journal who cared to comment obviously like to peruse matters in a lighter vein, rather than the serious side of happenings which are provided in plenty by other media.

Last week as I relaxed in front of the magic lantern, while Harry Hibbs crooned an Irish rebel song for a Caribou club full of enthusiasts, my daughter threw an acid comment about the week's paper being full of gloom and doom, just like the old man had been lately.

I've heard and absorbed lots of adverse comments in my day but this one particular dart seemed to hit right on the nose. That's why you see a new heading and a different approach in this corner this week. The current idea is to combine the best elements of the humorous and the serious approach

into one column written from a personal viewpoint.

The difficulty in grinding out this kind of nonsense is that it may tickle my funny bone but it's noassurance that it will strike others that way. Some possibly will think it is ludicrous but for them I have an outstretched tongue dripping with venom, stored up several years in an editor's chair.

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There, you see, I'm already getting into the mood for whimsy.

It started this morning as I went through the mail. One item was an account of a motor accident in England. It concerned a pretty blonde. Enough, of course, to make most gentlemen raise an eyebrow.

It seems that motorists driving along a west of England road in pouring rain early one morning were shaken by the sight of a pretty young blonde, standing by the roadside. Her only clothing—a cardboard box, which was getting pretty soggy.

Although she was obviously in some difficulty, most of the motorists, drove on, probably trying to figure out how they would explain to wives the unlikely story of how they picked up a blonde in a cardboard box.

But fortunately it turned out there were some in the crowd with more Samaritan than Levite who reported the incident to police. The police had no qualms. They are expected to deal with unusual incidents. Out they drove in their Bentleys and accosted the young lady.

"I say old girl, what are you doing in that cardboard box?" I can hear the Bobbie enquiring.

It turned out the blonde in the box was a social worker who had spent the night in her car. Awakened by an early morning downpour and noting there were few people around, she decided to take an open-air shower. She took her clothes off, put them on the seat and stepped out into the refreshing rain with only her skin for covering.

As she stepped out into the rain she heard the car's self locking doors shut behind her.

(Continued on Page 5)

Free Press back issues

- 20 years ago
- 50 years ago
- 75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, December 13, 1951.

The municipal elections on Monday proved one of the keenest in years. Mayor-elect is Thomas Salmon who defeated the present incumbent Ted Tyler. Miss Esther Taylor, the first woman elected to Acton council, again headed the polls followed by present councillors Fryer, Thompson and Weick. Two newcomers are A. Irwin and C. Rogvaldson. For P.U.C. C. Woods, a member of the 1951 council, nosed out present commissioner T. Ware. The vote was 65 per cent.

Acton council at their regular meeting on Friday night granted the Acton Minor Sports Club the use of the arena ice facilities for two nights a week and arranged a 60-40 per cent split of any gate receipts. A free night was also granted to Booster Night J. Goy and Dr. Sirrs pointed out about 120 boys are involved.

In honor of Miss Mary Ellen (Nellie) Anderson, who has returned to her home on furrough from British Guiana, the Senior Auxiliary W.M.S. of Knox Church held a missionary family party with all groups invited.

The annual banquet of Acton Citizens' Band was held in the Legion hall with a turkey dinner served by the Ladies' Auxiliary. President Kingsmill was in charge. Tom Nicol is vice-president Ted Tyler Jr. secretary and Tom Ware treasurer. Honorary presidents are G. A. Dills, E. Tyler, Sr., J. Chalmers and Bert Mason.

Most of the traditional Christmas food items are in the best supply since the war. New fire truck had its first run to a chimney fire at the home of Mrs. W. Gowdy. Wool Combing Corp. will not pay the quarterly dividend due to unsatisfactory conditions in the wool combing industry.

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, December 15, 1921.

A branch of the Catholic Women's League has been organized in connection with St. Joseph's church. A meeting was held Monday in the parish hall when the following officers were elected: Miss Anna Mulholland president; Mrs. Jane Sayers first vice-president; Miss Marion McIntosh second vice-president; Mrs. Wm. Arnold third vice-president; Miss Lena N. Costello, recording and corresponding secretary; Miss Mary K. Gibbons treasurer, Rev. Father Goodrow chaplain. Arrangements were completed for the holding of the Christmas tree Dec. 21.

Caucuses are being held to bring out new blood for Acton reeve and councillors. Two issues are evidently in the crop of the voters. First, the continued high rate of taxation and second, the action of the reeve and councillors of 1921 in voting themselves remuneration for their services in performing the reasonable citizenship duties, which folks say every citizen should hold himself ready to perform, loyally and economically, without fear, favor or remuneration.

A disastrous fire broke out in the barn and storehouse of C. A. Easley, Campbellville just as the funeral service of the late Murray Crawford at St. David's church was completed. The funeral had brought the people of the countryside to the village and many willing hands were soon at work to stay the flames. The barn was totally destroyed but the flames which ignited three houses were subdued.

Negotiations are now completed for Amos Mason of Alton to remove here and establish a woollen mill. The old Power House building will be provided for \$300 with the consideration it is used for a factory. (Now the Free Press plant.) Acton is fortunate in securing such a splendid business.

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, December 17, 1896

Dandelions in bloom last week, zero weather this. Some of the roads are execrable.

Miss Edna Earl has been engaged teacher at Milton at \$200.

A public examination of the pupils of Acton school will be held tomorrow. The public is welcome.

The railways holiday rates are very unsatisfactory. The rates extend only from Thursday to Saturday.

Messrs. Hiltz and Graham, the popular school masters of Ballinafad, are busy with preparation for their Christmas exercises. Mr. Hiltz purposes attending High School for his first class certificate. All wish him success.

The supplies of wheat in the world are the lightest in 10 years, as all spring crops have been failures.

Shaw, Rockwood, Pure Drugs—Correct Stationery, Christmas Lines at Very Close Prices. Porridge sets, individual teas, fancy cups and saucers, bread and butter plates, cake dishes, berry sets, lamps etc.

A couple of young men disgraced themselves by indulging in a street fight Saturday night at Arthurs, flour and feed store.

You need not cough all night and disturb your friends. Get Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup.

Attractions! Greenland seal capes \$14.50; fur storm collars \$1.50; milk muffs \$3.50; grey lamb muffs \$2.50; long fur coats \$35. Bollert and Co. Guelph.

There has been considerable talk about a poor house for Halton and Peel counties. Wingham is requiring that tie posts on the streets be 30 inches high with a ring on top, covered with aluminum and painted red.