



Winter scene in ACTON, ONTARIO, CANADA —(Photo by Jim Jennings)

# Free Press Editorial Page

## We must guard our rights, too . . .

Defeated Conservative candidate Bert Hinton took us to task for remarks in a mini-comment editorial last week which were intended to show we feel the French language signs on post offices are a nit-picking issue and the three candidates for the Tory nomination would be better to aim their ammunition at something worthwhile.

Mr. Hinton felt the comment made him look anti-French-Canadian, which he avows is not true, since close friends and members of his family whom he has a high degree of respect for, are of Gallic origin, and he would not trample on their feelings for any political goal. However, he feels strongly that an inner council of French-speaking M.P.'s in the Trudeau government is trying to shove French down our necks and he is opposed to it, since few of us in this area would have an opportunity to use the language.

We agree with Mr. Hinton — showing French down anyone's throat is hardly the way to start a new relationship between two peoples and we oppose it just as much as he does. By the same token we would oppose showing English down French-speaking

people's necks as some wish they could.

We believe the only way for Canada to ever attain a mature and trusting relationship between the two founding races is to meet on an equal footing with the same rights for all, throwing out all the old conqueror and conquered stuff that has done nothing but ignite old antagonisms that started way back in the middle ages in Europe.

We are firmly behind Canada staying "loyal" with the Queen as head of the Commonwealth of Nations, believing she is a symbol of the good things many republics lack. Canada was set up as a partnership under the crown and we believe firmly that is where it should stay.

There are those in our neighboring province of Quebec who would like to do away with the Queen and all semblance of royalty, just as there are people in Ontario and the rest of Canada with the same feelings.

Anyone with a rudimentary knowledge of Canadian history realizes that during the War of 1812 it was certain English speaking people of Ontario who tried to set up a republic

modelled on the United States and except for widespread opposition from French Canada it might have happened.

We believe that the majority of French speaking people still want to remain a part of Canada, and will continue to do so despite the mouthings of the radicals.

If having signs in French and English on post offices across Canada is interpreted as "giving into" the French-first faction of a Quebec lobby, then we feel we are a long way from ever solving this nation's two solitudes.

We still think that appeals by politicians of any stripe to prejudices that exist in English or French Canada is a poor way to solicit votes or support. There are many other more important tasks this country must face without squabbling among ourselves any more than necessary.

At the same time we respect Mr. Hinton's contention that we must always be on guard that our rights are not trampled on as we accord the same to all others.

## Mini Comment . . .

Deputy Reeve Pat McKenzie is right — people should know how many additional tax instalments they will have to meet so they can budget more effectively. Delay in a decision can only create hard feelings. This is all necessary, of course, because of the introduction of an interim levy that gives council capital to work with at the beginning of the year, instead of having to borrow from the bank.

March, proverbially is supposed to come in like a lamb and go out like a lion or vice versa, but this year it could go out as a wet lamb or lion, with its feet snagged in the snow. Did you realize it is now officially Spring by the calendar?

Discussing an acquaintance who was soon to get married, three yet-to-be-promised gals suggested the envied one was the kind of a girl who doesn't care for a man's company—unless he owns it.

Permanent signs indicating where the community centre and Prospect Park are located will be welcomed by visitors to town, especially when they have never been here on a previous occasion or visit only occasionally. We were glad to see council go along with the recommendation from parks board.

Although he did not make it this time, it was a different exhilarating experience to have H. H. (Bert) Hinton, running for political office, instead of relying on people from the south of the county to represent the riding. We congratulate Mr. Hinton on his decision to contest the Progressive Conservative nomination and trust he will try again when the occasion crops up.

A private school which intends to return to the traditional type of education is to be established in Elora this September, because the founder

believes the new methods in education have swept away the old values and responsibilities. To be known as St. John's College, the school will have an enrolment of about 80 boys with \$1,000 a head for tuition fees. Although attached to St. John's Anglican church the school will be inter-denominational.

Either the people of Acton are simply not interested or they feel that George can do the job of picking out a suitable centennial project for the town, since only about 40 showed up for a public meeting Sunday afternoon to debate the issue. We would hope that those who did not think it worthwhile to express their opinions do not now decide it is time to object since it will require a concerted effort on the part of the centennial commission and the citizens to attain the goal.

Less than two weeks until Easter.

## Bill Smiley



Like most people who have one foot in the grave and the other foot butting out the cigarette that's putting them there, I become increasingly averse to change.

Why can't my wife be the way she was when I married her: sweet, dumb, innocent and believing that my opinion was more important than hers? Why can't my daughter say, "Yes, dad", instead of "Look, Dad"?

Why can't my son do something besides shake his head in agony when I expound on the virtues of hard work, meeting your payments, and all that crud?

It seems that the only people with whom I am still on the same wave-length are old friends.

Now, I'm not going to give you an analogy comparing old friends to old wine. Although I do think they should be kept in the same place: a cool, dry spot, to be brought out at the exact moment.

I have brought out some of my old friends at the wrong moment. One in particular, can wreak havoc with my domestic relations. We're having a lovely barbecue, for example. His kids are drifting in and out. And then he says something like, "Smiler, remember the night we picked up those two . . . And I leap smartly into the breach and boller, "Oh yeah, those two unusual clamshells at the beach", while his and my wife exchange looks and make mental notes and prepare future third-degrees.

However, as they say when they don't know any other way of getting back on the track, some old friends preserve not only their sanity, but their sense of humor.

Recently had a letter from such. Dave McIntosh, a toiler in the bleached vineyards of journalism. He says he has been writing politics in Ottawa for the Canadian Press for two centuries. This is known as understatement, or litotes, if you are taking English from me, and aren't you glad you aren't?

We went to University together, "fought" (mostly our way into the Regent Palace in London) together, and he set me up with the coldest woman I have ever met, when he couldn't keep a date and had no fill in.

Dave was the only non-freak in North House, which sounds like something out of Dickens, and was a "residence". It sounds like a modern euphemism meaning someplace you are put away. Many of the inhabitants of the men's residence should have been put away then, and some have been since. Which proves nothing.

The "jocks" didn't like him, because he laughed at them. If you are not up on the latest slang, jocks were the, in those days, crew-cut boys who knew that the way to get ahead was to be on the team, marry the right girl, and kick the right people in the face as you climbed the ladder. They, unfortunately, are still with us. The only difference is the ferocity of their sideburns, as compared with the shortness of their crew-cut.

The aesthetes didn't like him, because he laughed at them. If you are not up on aesthetes, they are the people who chuckle over the latest vicious review of a play, who parrot anyone who has ever uttered a bon mot, who are seen at all the right places, but couldn't write a paragraph or a scene, or a poem.

They are the flies who buzz around a carcass. It must be dead. If it shows signs of life, they shriek with alarm and retreat into generalities like, "Well, after all, he's only doing his own thing." If his "thing" is vomiting on the carpet, that's fine.

Sorry, chaps. Didn't mean to get mean. I have a toothache. Mac and I became friendly because I was the only non-freak in Middle House.

We were talking about old friends. And in his letter, Dave said something that struck me. He said, "Weeklies are a gold mine." He's right.

And that brings me to another old friend — my favourite weekly. Naturally, it's the weekly of which I used to be editor. It was with great delight that I read recently a letter to the editor in said weekly. It stated, "The former editors (that's me) were gentlemen." I agree.

Latest issue states that Bill Smiley is "a fine man and a great writer." I think the writer of the letter thus proclaiming his either a drinking or a mental problem, but I don't even care. Although I think it might have been a fine writer and a great man.

Another gem, same issue. Classified ad: "Notice: Would the person who got my gloves from my car Thursday evening and left me two pounds of butter please phone . . ."

A local correspondent begins, "Hi, dears, let's see what's on the old swizzle stick this week . . ." A lady who has never even licked a swizzle stick, I swear. It's gold, all right.



by Hartley Coles

## COLES' SLAW

Every so often the mail bag contains some interesting controversial letters from readers about the theory of evolution, which gained Charles Darwin notoriety he never invited or deserved.

Darwin's book The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection worked a revolution in biological science and at the same time created a giant rift between those who believe in the literal truths of the Bible and those who sought a scientific explanation for the origins of man.

Church people said Darwin was making a monkey out of them, while some scientists, at first skeptical, swallowed all Darwin's theories hook, line and sinker, and made a new religion out of them.

In between were the editors and other fence sitters who had to deal with both sides of the question as fairly as they could at a time when opinions were not known for their charity.

And the argument still goes on.

God, the Bible says, created the earth in seven days. Wrong, said the scientists—it took millions of years.

I have mulled this over in my mind for decades and read countless articles and tracts from both sides of the evolution tree, but I think one of the best intelligent

explanations on the subject I have come across yet was published in the Armprior Guide of last week, written by the Rev. J. Allan D. Meakin. At the risk of competing with the Clergy Speak Out, let's continue.

Mr. Meakin says really there should be no conflict at all between religion and science because they both express the same truths in different ways. One group is concerned about the origin of things while the other is tracing the nature and destiny of man.

The theory of evolution tries to give a scientific explanation of how life began on earth. The creation stories in Genesis are not scientific treatises but rather they are religious or theological in the way they approach and interpret the beginnings of creation.

No matter what conclusion science may come to in any age regarding the beginnings of the physical universe and how man arose in it, the Bible still hammers away at the central truth—God was behind the whole process.

Ordinarily this column is not disposed to discuss such serious issues, but since we are at one of the serious times of the year—Lent and Easter—when we should think back to our origins, why are we here and how we got here.

The theory of evolution and the second

creation story in Genesis have some close parallels. For instance, both illustrate that in the on-going process of creation there is order and man is the peak of it.

The stories in Genesis do not pretend to be scientific documents. They are religious and poetic accounts of the origin of things, tuned to the age in which they were written. Scientists, of course, must also be aware that what is regarded today as scientific fact may be regarded as superstition tomorrow.

So although the Bible stories are not scientific does not make them untrue. Man is a spiritual being and not everything about him can be weighed and measured or evaluated with a slide scale.

How can you weigh out a half ton of compassion? Can you measure out six yards of courage?

Science can truthfully tell us that man is composed of 95 cents worth of chemicals, but can they explain Shakespeare, Beethoven or Michaelangelo?

What equation describes Beethoven's faculty for writing music?

For the sake of argument we don't think most scientists do try to reduce everything to data that can be fed into the jaws of the

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## Free Press back issues

### 20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 27, 1952.

St. Alban's parish hall was filled Monday evening when home color stylist Miss Betty Blight displayed the modern trend in home decoration. Mrs. F. G. Oakes introduced her and she was thanked by W. Denny, Cyril Titt of Rockwood assisted in the demonstration. Door prizes were won by Mrs. T. Hemsley, Miss J. Currie, Mrs. W. Dobie and Mrs. J. Lovell. The evening was under the auspices of St. Alban's choir.

W. K. Randall, who has been on the staff of the Bank of Nova Scotia in Acton since 1949, has been transferred to Cobourg. He will be replaced by C. R. Smith of Hamilton.

A staff dinner marked Mr. G.A. Dills' 25 years as editor and publisher of the Acton Free Press.

The Sheeny Tost trophy has come to Acton for the first time. Actually it hasn't come yet, because the confident Smith and Stone club who played the victorious Baxter Lab team Monday and Tuesday, forgot to bring the trophy to the arena. This confidence was shattered when the Acton team's final score was 16 to six. Bob Marshall was the bright star in the sparkling Baxter firmament. Line-up Doug Coleman goal; Jack Stewart, Don Timmings, Bob Marshall, Vic Masters, Mel Jordan, Ab Robinson, Julian Zajac, Lorne Masalles, Wil Duval, Dennis Coleman, Ray Everdell, Fyfe Somerville, and Bill Fields.

An article appeared in the recent issue of the Family Herald and Weekly Star entitled This Councillor is No Gentleman, by Acton councillor Esther Taylor.

### 50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 23, 1902.

Maple sugar makers are busy these days. There are some jolly times around the camp fires in the sugar orchards among the young folks.

Mr. Darwin Cripps is to the fore with 11 early chickens.

Limehouse school honor roll Campbell Ross, Helen Wright, Ritchie Benton, Mary McDonald, Jessie Norton, Hazel Scott, Anna

Meredith, Wilfred Mossop, Blanche Wright, Joe McDonald, Stanley Norton, Frank Carter, Edna McBride, Beatrice Lane, Gladys Milliere, Jean Givens, Kenneth McAlpine, Arthur Scott, Eida Tarzwell, Jean McDonald, Arthur Knowles, Jack Justin, Jack Smethurst, Jack Lawson, Irene Scott, Violet Scott, Grenfell Wright, Jim Davis, Freddie Brooks, Milly Tarzwell, Margaret McDonald, Billy Devereaux, Billy Hamilton, Russell McDonald, Doris Gowdy, Angus McDonald.

There is a strike at the brick works at Milton. The men have been getting 17 1/2 cents per thousand and they want 20 cents. Forty hands are out.

Mr. H. P. Moore, editor and proprietor of the Acton Free Press, has taken a partner into business, Mr. G. A. Dills. Mr. Dills started as an apprentice with the Free Press 13 years ago. Mr. Moore has published the Free Press for 43 years since the retirement of his brother Rev. T. Albert Moore.

Mr. Amos Mason is busily engaged in

getting the machinery to place in his new knitting mill.

At the meeting of Acton Hydro Commission last Friday evening Miss Ethel Starkman, who has been secretary for the Commission since its inception, tendered her resignation. The commission regretted very much this decision by Miss Starkman and expressed appreciation for her excellent services.

### 75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, April 1, 1897.

Stephen Vestal of Rockwood, who is mentally deranged, became troublesome last week and was removed to the Guelph Kool.

The great strength of Harvey's dray horse, "Sandy" who died a week ago is frequently referred to. When the steam fire engine came to town two years ago this fine animal hauled the biggest load ever taken through our streets by a single horse. In this draught was his loaded dray followed by the fire engine and two hose reels filled with hose. The load weighed seven tons and 390 pounds.

The roads are now in terrible state. There is some talk at Crewsons Corners of getting the mail three times a week instead of twice a week.

At Rockwood there has been considerable hustle the past week for the office of postmaster here, rendered vacant by the death of Mr. Pastmore. "A considerable number of the faithful" have been putting in their claims. It is expected, however, that Mr. Hugh Black of Aramosa has as good as secured the position.

It is very seldom that Acton is visited by midnight mechanics but a gang called off Monday night and burglarized Schlimme's tailor shop.

The surroundings of a number of stables near the streets in town resemble barnyards now the snow is gone. Mr. Wm. Stephenson has invented a steam plow which will plow one acre of prairie land in 43 minutes. The same engine can be placed on a thrasher. He says the cost is only a quarter of that for any other method of steam thrasher. Mr. Stephenson lived in Acton but is now farming in Morris, Manitoba. He manufactured plows for many years and took prizes for 17 years in succession in Halton plowing matches.

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