

Mini-Comment . .

You have to be careful about women's rights these days. Ask Bill Brydon, co-ordinator of management development for Sheridan College. He wrote a letter inviting businessmen to attend a weekend "triminar" at the college and forgot to include businesswomen. He denies any intention of discriminating against women in the letter, admitting only the wording of the letter was unfortunate. He said the invitation was intended for both men and women. The one objectionable paragraph which triggered protests from both in and outside the college, suggested the gentlemen "plan on a stimulating business experience for yourself and a weekend of pleasure away from home for your wife." Brydon now says the role could be reversed and the businesswoman could bring her husband if she likes or leave him at home to do the dishes. Either way he loses.

What this country needs is a soap that will prevent a telephone ring in the bathtub or the washroom.

Festooned with flags, the business section of Acton looked appropriately attractive for Sunday's Decoration Day parade and observances. Just a few sheets of bunting maybe, but indicative of co-operative efforts between several town organizations, both social and municipal.

After you hear two different eye-witness accounts about an automobile accident you begin to wonder about history.

Premier Davis has been asked to reserve any comment on the proposed 600 foot wide hydro corridor from Nanticoke to Pickering until citizen groups have the opportunity to study a report soon to be released by Ontario Hydro. A spokesman for the Coalition of Concerned Citizens said they want to prepare a case on an equal basis and so asked to premier to reserve comment. The CCC is hopeful they may have already partially won their case, with word there is a contingency plan that is going to use two existing right-of-ways. This would be good news for many in this district who could have lost homes and parcels of land to the marching towers.

The Ontario Legislature was told that the provincial Government has purchased 20 rail commuter coaches for the Go Transit system from Toronto to Georgetown. The system will run every half-hour during rush periods on present CN tracks and could have some real significance for this area as well as towns along the route. Watch for real estate values to jump.

Silence is the most perfect expression of scorn.

If you are buying a fur coat—watch out! It doesn't take a magician to turn a rabbit into a Russian leopard, it takes a furrier. A fur jacket made of dyed rabbit has no snob appeal, but call it Russian leopard, electric seal or Baltic tiger and who wouldn't wear one? Same with dyed skunk—Alaska sable sounds better. The furrier's name for a ringtail cat is California mink; sheared lamb is American broadtail; Vicuna Fox is dyed sheepskin. A furrier can call a rabbit by 35 other names. So if in doubt about the original fur, ask the furrier. But you will probably look better in Belgian beaver than plain old rabbit.

Free Press Editorial Page

The Acton Free Press, Wednesday, June 7, 1972



Decoration Day, 1972

Companies decline to comment . . .

Company officials decline comment on the strike.

This is a sentence newspapers have turned into a cliché.

Although organized labor and professional associations make every use of the media to ensure the public knows why they are on strike, executives of corporations and companies, small and large, seem to be tongue-tied when they are strike-bound.

As a result, the public often gets a poor opinion of the company; figures they don't have a case which would look good in print.

This newspaper ran into the situation last week when we attempted

to report both sides of the strike at the Acton Diston plant. Officials of the Union were most co-operative and gave our reporter their reasons for the strike, commenting freely on the issues.

Company representatives politely declined to comment.

We are surprised at the timidity of some employers when it comes to disputations with the union through the press. It can be a game, of course, with each trying to upstage the other, but the concerned newspaper is anxious to publish both sides of a controversy.

In this age when communications play an integral part in society we are frankly surprised that employers do

not relegate more importance to public relations. We would think the image of the company both as an employer and good citizen would be more important than some are willing to give.

Perhaps the press has been unkind to corporations and companies in the past and this reflects in the current lack of communications. In any event, we hope the day is long gone when the employer or the Union are pictured as heinous bloodsuckers of society.

This is not intended to be a comment on the situation at the Acton plant, which we will leave to the Union and company representatives to thresh out, but rather an expression of frustration in journalism.

Preserve our escarpment . . .

We think the Ontario Government is serious in their determination to proceed as quickly as possible to implement further policies for the conservation and public use of the Niagara Escarpment.

A series of six public meetings is being held this summer by a government task force set up to recommend provincial land acquisition and development policies for the Escarpment which follows a line through this district. The first meeting is scheduled for Milton on Wednesday, June 14, at which local authorities, organizations and individuals are invited to submit verbal presentations, briefs and letters.

The Government would like all groups and organizations interested in the future of the Escarpment to have the opportunity to advise the task force on what they think should be done to achieve the goals outlined.

We have a vested interest in the Escarpment living in the district where it is the most pronounced natural feature, elevating us well over 1,000 feet above sea level. The high ridge is also a repository for gravel pits and

quarries which play a part in this area's financial picture as well as scooping large, unpicturesque holes in the face of the rock.

In 1970, the province passed an Act to regulate and preserve the Escarpment, making it necessary for pit and quarry owners to apply for permits before they would be allowed to operate. Under the Niagara Escarpment Protection Act 1970, the Minister may refuse a permit where, in his opinion, the operation of a mine would be against the interest of the public in preserving the character of the formation that includes the Niagara escarpment and the availability of its natural attributes for enjoyment of the public.

The wording of the Act never really insists but certainly suggests the Government's aim in preserving the escarpment is for recreational and naturalistic pursuits rather than saving the mineral resources for mining interests.

Among other things the escarpment is a haven for walkers along the Bruce Trail. When it rises majestically above the level agricultural lands in Halton, it

provides tremendous vistas for the beauty lover. Because of its rugged character it is also a sanctuary for birds and wild life, affording the visitor a glimpse of how Ontario must have looked when the first settlers climbed their way to its summits, cursing rather than blessing the obstacle in the way of crown grants.

Some settlers tried to scratch a living from its rugged contours. A few succeeded where fruit trees and vines prospered, but the great majority quit after spending fruitless years of picking stones and cultivating thin sheets of soil. They left a heritage of old stone fences and rock piles, dividing barren land into fields, a page out of history.

The escarpment must be preserved for the people of the province to appreciate. Any Government efforts towards that goal we staunchly support.

Any new developments—quarries, mines, pits or hydro lines—which would destroy its natural charm should be discouraged in order to maintain the Niagara Escarpment's face.

For a writer, facing a deadline with nothing in his head but a vacuum is about as joyous an occasion as facing his wife at 4 a.m., after phoning her at 5 p.m. to tell her he's going to have two drinks, not three or four but two, with the boys on the way home from work. I hope those figures haven't confused you, but perhaps you get the general idea.

Sometimes, however, coincidence creates a column. I had nothing in my head for this week's column. Not even fog. Just vacuum. Good old coincidence came to the rescue.

Today I met in the halls one of my English teachers. He's a mature chap and pretty tough. Been through a war and twenty-five years of marriage, spent a stretch as a weekly editor, and has raised three children. How much tougher can you get? But he was almost in tears.

"They can't read," he mumbled brokenly; "they can't read." I patted his back and wiped his eyes as we department heads do, (though I reserve weeping on my shoulder for women teachers only), and gradually found out that he was talking about a Grade 9 class in the four-year-stream.

"There, there," I consoled. "Of course they can't read. Neither, with a few exceptions, can my Grade 13 students. Kids aren't supposed to learn to read any more. It might destroy their sensitivity. Now you just go and show them a nice little movie, or let them express themselves on the tape recorder. Or let them lean out the window and watch the cars go by and then have them write a poem. But don't correct the spelling in the poem. You'll destroy their creative spirit. Just go on back in there and stimulate them."

That's one thing my teachers have to admit. When they come to the chief, they get



Bill Smiley

taught by language arts specialists instead of English teachers."

Maybe. But I take exception to the professor's sweeping generalization about students expressing themselves. They can. They do. Even the best and mildest of boys have always sworn a bit. But it shakes you a bit to hear some sweet little girl of sixteen drop her books or stub her toe and launch into a communication that would curl the hair of a World War I muleskinner.

However, I agree with the professor that the whole situation is the fault of the school system. The universities blame the high schools, which blame the elementary schools, which blame the home environment or something.

This is patent nonsense. My father got through Grade 4 and wrote a beautiful copper-plate script with intelligence. My mother had Grade 5 and wrote wittily and grammatically. That was my home environment.

You can't blame the elementary schools. They do what they can with what they get, in the face of a department of education that is about as consistent in its aims as a dart in a windstorm. And you can substitute another consonant for the "d" in dart, if you wish.

You can't blame the high schools, who do what they can with an ever-increasing mass of illiterates. What the hell, what does it matter if a brilliant science student, or a math student who will be working with slide rule and computer writes a sentence like, "Everyone should have a good education so they can go to colXXX collegxxx colitch and make a loddia bread?"

People worry about literacy falling into the hands of an elite group. In my opinion, it would be the best thing that could happen to English. It would take us back to the glorious days of the Elizabethans, and let the slobs fall where they may.

Back Issues of The Free Press

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, June 12, 1952

About 1,500 items and the continual bark of three auctioneers were features of the second annual community auction sponsored by the Acton Y's men's club. R. Hindley, R. Amos and W. Gibson were the auctioneers and the club netted about \$500.

St. Alban's parish hall was the scene of a pleasant gettogether Friday for the men who had contributed voluntary labor towards the building. Over 50 sat down to the bountiful supper. The event fulfilled the earnest wishes of the rector Rev. Luxton. Mrs. C. Nelles was convener.

Lorraine Pallant graduated from the University of Toronto in arts.

In Knox church, Acton, the 20 senior branches and four junior branches of the Women's Institutes of the county met for their district annual.

Mrs. Alfred Long presided at the meeting of the Duke of Devonshire chapter of the I.O.D.E. at the home of Mrs. George Mason. Present were four students who had won chapter awards, Beverley Smith, Marjorie Warne, Elizabeth Jany and Frank Mason.

The high school examination exemption list was read — Kathleen Stanley, Jean McCrae, Janice Baker, Betty Mae Lambert, Nancy Lambert, Ruth Smith, Bett; Williamson and Barbara Turner.

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, June 8, 1922.

George Henry Gordon of Milton Heights is another man who thought he could operate a whiskey still with impunity. He boasted that revenue officers or the license inspector would never catch him. It was his outfit that Revenue Officer Floody was after last fall at Speyside. Gordon moved his outfit a few hours before. A second visit to another point was equally unsuccessful. But Inspector Floody never lets up until the lawbreaker is enmeshed and forced to pay for his violation of the law. By travelling a devious route by automobile and the execution of a stealthy flank movement last Wednesday Inspector Floody and Officer Macdonald were able to steal up on the establishment at Milton Heights this time, and thus passes the industry that has earned the sobriquet of Gordon's Distillery. The officers secured a quantity of rye mash and seven gallons of whiskey which the manufacturer claimed to be equal to the best. In view of the incontrovertible evidence Gordon pleaded guilty and was fined \$300 and \$32.50 costs.

The first outside game of the season was played at the bowling green and Acton defeated Georgetown. Acton bowlers were N. McDonald, W. Worden, J. Wood, G. Hynds Jr., J. McIntosh, T. Henderson, G. Hynds Sr. and W.J. Gould.

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, June 17, 1897.

Scotchmen in Canada have taken up a bonfire project. At nine o'clock on Jubilee night it is the intention of the 200 camps of the Sons of Scotland across Canada to light a bonfire. The biggest bonfire Acton ever saw will blaze on Cobble Hill that evening.

Much interest is being manifested in the Queen's Jubilee celebrations at the school tomorrow afternoon. At 1.30 each department will be presented with a portrait of Queen Victoria. The scholars will decorate the school and then there will be a parade, ending at the town hall.

A notice was inserted in the Ontario Gazette by the provincial Secretary asking the people give all the assistance possible to the explorers who are to be sent out by the King of Sweden and Norway on a balloon excursion to the North Pole.

A merry-go-round created excitement at Rockwood the past week, and also noise, of the crank-piano brand.

An Acton Boy's Big Contract! Messrs. Mann and Mackenzie have secured the contract from the C.P.R. for the building of the Crow's Nest Pass railway. This is Dan Mann, a native of Acton, whose father Hugh Mann is one of our respected citizens. The railway will take two years at an estimated cost of \$27,000 per mile.

OUR READERS WRITE:

Change for the sake of change . . .

I had to do some shopping At my favourite grocery store. I went to where I get my stuff. It wasn't there any more; They had moved it 'round the corner. Just to make me look around. I had to ask the grinning clerk, For everything I found.

When I got home, disgusted, The furniture had changed place. My favourite chair, just wasn't there, I'm off to see the doctor, A psychologist, no less, I know I'll have to learn to live, In all this changing mess.

They are changing men in Parliament, And what is even worse,

The changes have us all confused, We don't know whom to curse. There used to be some reason For changing things around, But now it's plain confusion, So nothing can be found.

I'm glad the Great Designer Still keeps us on the tracks; We'd be making human creatures Without their fronts or backs; We've changed some future things to come, The atom bomb is here, When they've changed and spoiled the place, They'll leave this human sphere.

Victor Smith, R.R. 2, Rockwood.

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