



SATURDAY'S FREEZING rain and snow follow up covered the countryside around Acton in a new white blanket and left trees glittering like diamonds when the sun emerged Tuesday. This scene taken from the First Line, overlooking Fairy Lake, was typical of the district. —D. Gibbons Photo

# Time there was a crackdown

Evidence has been speedily produced which shows there are widespread abuses in the country's unemployment insurance system, shedding a noxious image on those who administer the funds, the government, and above all the public.  
Although the Progressive Conservatives have been hammering away at the widespread abuses for years it only now has caught the attention of the Liberal Government, which must have been aware there were many receiving funds who were not entitled to them.  
Fundamentally the unemployment insurance is an excellent scheme which should be a blessing to those genuinely unemployed. The new scale of benefits made it possible to live better than the hand-to-mouth existence earlier benefits paid out.  
Unfortunately, the new scale of benefits was also the catalyst which loosened all the free-loaders in the country who found the earlier scale beneath their standard of living. They cheerfully gave up jobs and settled in to a life of leisure. It only needed to be

interrupted annually for another eight weeks of work which would qualify them for another "kick at the cat," as the old saw goes.  
This would have gone on indefinitely if the old "cat" hadn't begun to shrink, and borrow from its other nine lives just to stay alive.  
Now the Government has started to crack down and finds all kinds of flagrant abuses. Some who have lived on the public purse by design are finding their new life style may be difficult if there is no unemployment insurance cheque to pick up on a regular basis. Many of them may even go back to work, a shocking experience, no doubt, if you are used to leisure at the public expense.  
They may find jobs hard to come by. We doubt very much if many employers are interested in the type of employee who would not hesitate to dissolve working ties in favor of free-loading off his fellow employees and all others who pay into the unemployment insurance. We suppose there is a bit of larceny in all of us but it does not

extend to those who pilfer from our personal purse, and that is what it amounts to.  
Employers also have to divvy into the insurance fund for the benefit of looters, so there is little sympathy there either.  
Let us not lose sight of the fact, however, that those who have "milked" the fund for all it is worth are still a minority. The genuinely unemployed are still entitled to their benefits and cannot be painted with the same brush as the free-loaders.  
Unemployment insurance is a benefit which has eased much anxiety and carried many people through times of adversity. If the ills of the fund are cured it is still the best buffer against unemployment ever devised in this country.  
We are still convinced the vast bulk of the population of this country wants to earn its daily bread but they may lose their incentive if the federal government does not continue to ride shotgun on the fund.

## Free Press Editorial Page

4 The Acton Free Press, Wednesday, March 21, 1973

### Small car market rising

Although car watchers are probably aware the familiar Volkswagen beetle has been replaced by North American and Japanese small cars as the popular method of transportation on the nation's highways, few knew the VW share of the small car market had slipped 22 per cent.  
The Financial Post comments that it looked like VW was on the ropes.  
But something snapped with the introduction of 1973 models.  
Volkswagen sales are up again. In November, 1972, sales leaped 72 per cent higher than those of November, 1971, making it the best November in VW Canada's history. Total 1973 sales are expected to be up 12 per cent over last year.

Although economists will scratch their heads and car makers puzzle how the "bugs" can command so much the market when they appear to be out of step with styling, safety and schmalz, the average car buyer can give them the answer in two words.  
"They're cheaper."  
In spite of its appearance the VW beetle is cheap, reliable transportation, a panacea for many people's trip problems.  
Small cars have become increasingly accepted by the Canadian buying public with Ford Pinto leading the way. Sales of Pinto, Maverick, Comet, Cortina and Capri account for 17.8 per cent of the total small car market. Chrysler came next with 17.1

per cent, followed by GM with 15.6 per cent. Toyota has commanded 13.3 per cent of the market while Datsun has 12.1 per cent.  
The big reason for buying small cars is economy. They are cheaper to operate, less costly to buy and easier on the ecology since most have four cylinder motive power. And auto makers have been stylizing them to attract buyers.  
Unfortunately some of them have become so sophisticated they are becoming as costly as intermediate and regular size cars.  
Perhaps this is why the Volkswagen market is again on its way up.



Bill Smiley

This week, some random and rambling thoughts on a variety of topics.

A friend and colleague died yesterday, and I'll miss him. He was a free soul, beholden to none, with a mind and a tongue that paid obeisance to no man and no theory. He was ill for a long time, but fought like a demon, and never gave an inch to encroaching death.

Since I joined this teaching staff 12 years ago, six men teachers, all in their forties and early fifties, have died. Five of them were World War II veterans. That's a pretty high attrition rate.

There are only six W.W. II veterans left on the staff, including one lady and one vet of the German army, and we're sort of eyeing each other for signs of sudden deterioration. Guess we should make a pool, winner (last alive) take all.

Don't worry, I haven't a morbid bone in my body. I've already had about 30 years more than a lot of my old mates, so life doesn't owe me a thing.

Spring is more a time of birth than of death. And did we have evidence this week.

Saturday morning, I often grab the chance to sleep in for an extra hour. Last Friday night the temperature went soaring up to about 50. About four a.m., the word got around among the black squirrels in my attic that spring had arrived, and they went stark, staring, raving mad.

All winter, they'd been pretty quiet, with

only the occasional Saturday night party complete with drunken fights, screaming females, bawling kids and acorns rattling around like bowling balls of concrete.

But this week, they pulled all the stops. I started out of a deep sleep, shouting something about the Yanks invading Canada. My wife was cowering, head under the covers.

The males were bellowing like bull moose. The females were chattering like well, females. The babies were shouting, in unison, "Hey, Ma. Can we go out? We don't need a coat. We've never seen spring before. What's it like?"

And all of them running and jumping and skittering and slithering and scuttling right overhead until it sounded like midnight at the Lumberjacks Ball.

This went on until daylight and so did my wife's demands that I do something about it. What would you do? I wasn't going to go up

into the attic and take them on single-handed. I was afraid to. They sounded like Genghis Khan and his boys warming up for the raping and razing of a city.

There was nothing to do but batten down the hatches and hope that some over-zealous little black rodent did not chew through the ceiling and drop on my wife's head. That would have, as they say, torn it.

At dawn the wild ululations subsided a little and I peeked out the window. There they were, goofing about in the back yard, stupidly digging in the snow for acorns, looking particularly ratty with their coats half shed.

The oldtimers soon realized with disgust that it was not spring at all, and returned, up the big cedar, flying leap to the vines, scurrying up to the hole and back to the attic for a long snooze.

But the little ones were baffled, bewildered and belligerent. They ran around in circles. They sank to their ears in wet snow. They chattered indignantly. They couldn't find anything to eat.

Had I not heard them talking so often, I'd not have been able to understand. But I had. And I did. I distinctly heard one baby buck squirrel snarling, "What the hell goes on here? We've been sold a bill of goods. THIS IS SPRING? Where are the luscious bulbs, the green stuff, the tender shoots? We've been had, brothers. Let's demonstrate."

And demonstrate they did, loudly and shrilly, for the next 12 hours, back in the attic, berating their elders.

Can't blame them. It must have been a traumatic experience, out of the warm womb of the attic into the bleak reality of a March day. Some of them (I hope) will be scarred for life, psychologically.

But I can't kick. They've been fairly quiet since, aside from a lot of mumbling and muttering among the young ones, convinced, like all kids that their parents betrayed them about life.

Dang it, I've run out of space. I wanted to mention the two baseball pitchers who have swapped not only wives but families, present some startling spring poetry, and discuss the abysmal stupidity of the Department of Education, but there's no room.

Why do I let squirrels loom so large in my life?

### Back Issues of The Free Press

20 years ago      50 years ago      75 years ago

**Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 26, 1953**  
A by-law will be prepared authorizing application of land in Esqueving township by Acton. Plans call for the inclusion of the entire Beardmore and Wool Combing property and south to the south spring.  
Mrs. Wilfred Coles was the winner of the grand prize of a mixer at the Canada Packers food school in the public school auditorium, sponsored by the Home and School Association. Over 400 ladies and also gentlemen heard hints and watched the demonstrations. The demonstrator was assisted by R.R. Parker, the master of ceremonies, and Wes Wolfe, president of the Home and School. Miss M. Z. Bennett drew the lucky tickets and there were many winners.  
Commenting on the fifth anniversary of the Rotary club president Johnny Goy said the work for crippled children has gone from \$200 five years ago to \$1,400 in the past year. Former Rotarians and charter members were present for the meeting. Y secretary Bob Kedfem entertained.  
A radio program which each week day honors some lady for her kindness and thoughtfulness last Thursday paid tribute to Mrs. Fred Anderson. The program mentioned her work in the church, the baby clinic and the Women's Institute. She was out shopping at the time of the program. She received a dozen red roses.

**Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 22, 1923**  
At the regular meeting of Lakeside chapter of the Junior I.O.G.E. officers were installed: Hon. Regent Mrs. R. M. McDonald; regent Olla Somerville, 1st vice regent Bessie Woodhall, 2nd vice regent Lucy Edwards, secretary Alice Johnstone, treasurer Laura Scott, standard bearer Jessie Anderson.  
A week ago two provincial constables arrived in town after receiving complaints. They visited the pool room and in making a survey of the basement came across a quart bottle of "moonshine" in a box near the furnace. This was seized, sealed and sent to the analyst for evidence as to its content of alcohol. The minimum penalty of \$200 was imposed.  
Later with a search warrant they searched the home of (name given) and found 14 quarts of "moonshine". They lifted up carpet, removed flooring and found them between the joists. He was fined \$200.  
Mr. Amos Mason, proprietor of Mason Knitting Works, has purchased the fine residence of the late Hon. David Henderson M.P., Bower Ave. He and Mrs. Mason and Master George will shortly remove from Park Ave. to their new home.  
Confectioners of Toronto were notified on Saturday they must discontinue selling ice cream on the Lord's Day.

**Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 24, 1898**  
The folly of using lumber for drains and sewers, especially when laid in the middle of the streets, has been manifested very fully here the past week. For several months the Mill St. drain has been defective and as a result the cellars on the north side have been flooded. The new road was torn up in four places before the obstruction was discovered. The drain was found to be decayed and caved in. The drain should be replaced with a substantial tile drain.  
The young men referred to as disturbing the slumbers of Officer Graham and other citizens on the 15th inst. repented their rash conduct and 10 of them marched up to Fairview Place where Col. Allan J. P. resides and were each assessed \$1 for their misdemeanor. They are a lot of good-hearted fellows but forgot themselves that night.  
Dr. J. M. Bell, dentist, will visit Acton on the first Tuesday in April. Office, Clark's Hotel.  
As Crewsons Corners is still increasing in population the town fathers are trying to find another industry to keep pace with the population.  
Mr. John Cameron has purchased the old Knox church property for \$25. He will erect a couple of tenements and make a new side entrance to his planing mill.

### Heart fund appreciates support

March, 1973  
Without willing co-operation in communicating our needs to the public, the Canadian Heart Fund would not be able to express such an outlook.  
Heart disease is everyone's problem - and again our thanks for helping us bring to the attention of the public - that research should be everyone's responsibility.  
With best wishes.  
Yours very truly,  
Canadian Heart Fund,  
Ontario Division,  
Esther M. Richards,  
Director of Public Relations.

## Increasing use of alcohol among teens parents' concern

No.  
One  
drug  
problem

Although lowering of the legal drinking age from 21 to 18 years of age was heralded as a progressive step when the Ontario Government made the change in 1971, some doubts have been expressed since by social workers and educators, now the change has had time to be analyzed. Parents in Acton are concerned about the use of drugs and the temptations youngsters are faced with at school functions, and this seems to fit in with the pattern in other places across the country.  
The following article from "Concerns" reflects the trends across the province and the degree to which it affects cities can be equated in lesser but still considerable degree in small towns and areas.  
"Our goalie wasn't playing any good today - he's got a hangover." These words shocked the hockey coach of a group of 14-year-old boys.  
"Fourteen-year-olds are talking about their drinking like eighteen-year-olds were a few years ago." So reports Peter Gzowski

host of CBC's This Country in the Morning. Mr. Gzowski - a sensitive reporter of events taking place in Canada, featured the problem of "Youth and Drinking" late last year in a cross-country network hook-up.  
From Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal well informed people working with youth told of a sudden upsurge of alcohol use among the younger teens.  
Dr. Martin Wolfish, Chief of Adolescent Services, Hospital for Sick Children, said he was genuinely alarmed at the number of intoxicated youngsters coming in for treatment. "Alcohol not L.S.D. or Speed is the drug of choice in the new group of experimenters."  
The testimony of Ken Lowe, Director of Education in Calgary is similar - "it's not that street drugs are being used less"; but alcohol has become accepted and available to the younger age group and its not just "behind the barn" experiments - it is regular party use in the high school crowd. These statements fit with the report on

the extent of drug use in Toronto schools conducted by the Addiction Research Foundation. This report, the third in a series of studies, conducted in 1968, 1970 and 1972, was released last month and states that "the most notable change in the past two years involves the use of alcohol."  
"There are now 71 per cent of students in Grades 7, 9, 11 and 13 who consume alcohol at least once a month, with about 23.3 per cent drinking four or more times per month. Much of the increase in the use of alcohol can be attributed to the change in 1971 of the legal drinking age in Ontario from 21 to 18."  
There has also been a steady increase in tobacco smoking in these years, but neither the increase, nor the total use of tobacco by students is as great as for alcohol. In 1972 38.3 per cent of the students in the Toronto school survey were smokers; 52.5 per cent were drinkers.  
The total consumption of alcohol by students has increased tremendously, the researchers observed, in 1968, only 7.5 per

cent of students drank four or more times per month. This almost doubled in 1970 and doubled again in 1972."  
It is of some encouragement to note recent statements by National Health and Welfare Minister, Mr. P. Lalonde, and the new Director of the Non-Medical Use of Drugs section, Mr. R. Draper, that the federal government will become "more concerned with alcohol abuse" in setting up a task force on alcohol and alcoholism.  
When more young people are drinking at a younger age then it is a well known statistical fact that Canada will rapidly see an increase in the numbers of young persons whose lives will be blighted with alcoholism.  
Governments and citizens alike share the responsibility through effective controlling legislation and enlightened educational methods to offset this alarming trend by our young toward further problems with the No. 1 adult drug.

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