

The Acton Free Press

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Founded in 1876
Don McDonald, Publisher

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Gun laws not fair

It is true that the rights or privileges of the majority are often curtailed by the irresponsible acts of a few people. One of these is gun controls, which politician Otto Jelinek and Bill Jones of the National Firearms Association spoke so intensely about at a meeting in Eden Mills last week.

Those who belong to gun clubs are annoyed and plain angry at the passage of Bill C51 which restricts ownership of guns and has some pretty strong measures to control them. Most members of gun clubs are responsible citizens who are probably doing more to ensure the proper use of firearms than all the laws passed since firearms were introduced.

However, in this newspaper's report of gun owners' call for rights to once again own guns as they see fit, there were two incidents reported close by which showed that some people still abuse the laws handling firearms carelessly and sometimes dangerously.

In one instance two dogs were killed in a shooting episode while another saw a rural Rockwood man chase a suspect who was firing a rifle nearby. They may have been isolated incidents but

they put the picture of gun control into different focus through the eyes of the public.

No self respecting gun club member would have anything to do with someone who acted irresponsibly with weapons as was evidenced by the two incidents last week. That's where the rub is. Members of gun clubs who teach gun safety and handling are victimized by the actions of a few irresponsible people who know nothing or care little about the rights of owning or shooting a gun.

It's a shame. Surely there must be a better way of ensuring that those who take a keen interest in firearms and enjoy a day of shooting can't police themselves. Surely it would be more effective than the present laws which curtail their activities and seemingly allow idiots such as the forementioned to roam the countryside shooting dogs and firing near people.

The gun clubs in this country should keep up their pressure to have the law changed because as Mr. Jelinek pointed out Bill C51 is not going to keep guns away from the criminals but it is making a lot of this country's gun collectors and sportsmen annoyed over its restrictive clauses.

A delicate issue

Thrusting an editorial pen into theological disputes has never been known to add one cubit to an editor's stature but it is hard to disagree with those ministers of the United Church who are taking a second look at the use of their churches for weddings when the participants have about as much interest in the religious aspect of the ceremony as they have for something borrowed or something blue.

Some ministers have considered relinquishing their licence to marry because they claim non-members choose a church "because of its wide centre aisle, its proximity to a large banquet hall, and even because the minister looks good in wedding photos," says The United Church Observer.

As a result of this some ministers are charging set fees for their wedding services and itemizing church wedding expenses so undoubtedly they can be borne by participants. Unfortunately the cost which can be as low as \$10 and as high as \$120, depending on individual church policy, is liable to fall on believer and unbeliever alike. Those who

support the church all year must pay the same penalties as those who only show up for Christmas and Easter or hardly ever.

As a result of the number of non-members tying the knot in United Churches some ministers are suggesting that maybe the church should leave the whole marriage business to the state, another extreme position.

Others say that although the bride and groom may never darken the church door again at least they have been exposed to the church and they will look favorably on that church if they should ever have a change of heart.

In any event it is a ticklish debate which won't be solved in these columns and likely will never be solved to the satisfaction of all concerned.

From this corner we support those who want to tighten up the requisites for marriage in a church but there's also something to be said for those ministers who don't mind overlooking failures to attend in the past for the promise of the future.

That's fence sitting for sure.

School daze indeed!

Last week was labelled Education Week and comment on education recently has been soul-searching, especially from educators. Excerpts from a letter in a recent issue of Odyssey by Dr. Frank Innes of the University of Windsor, are of special interest to educators turn the spotlight inward. He writes:

"Education in Canada is in a state of continued crisis and our young people have to suffer the consequences.

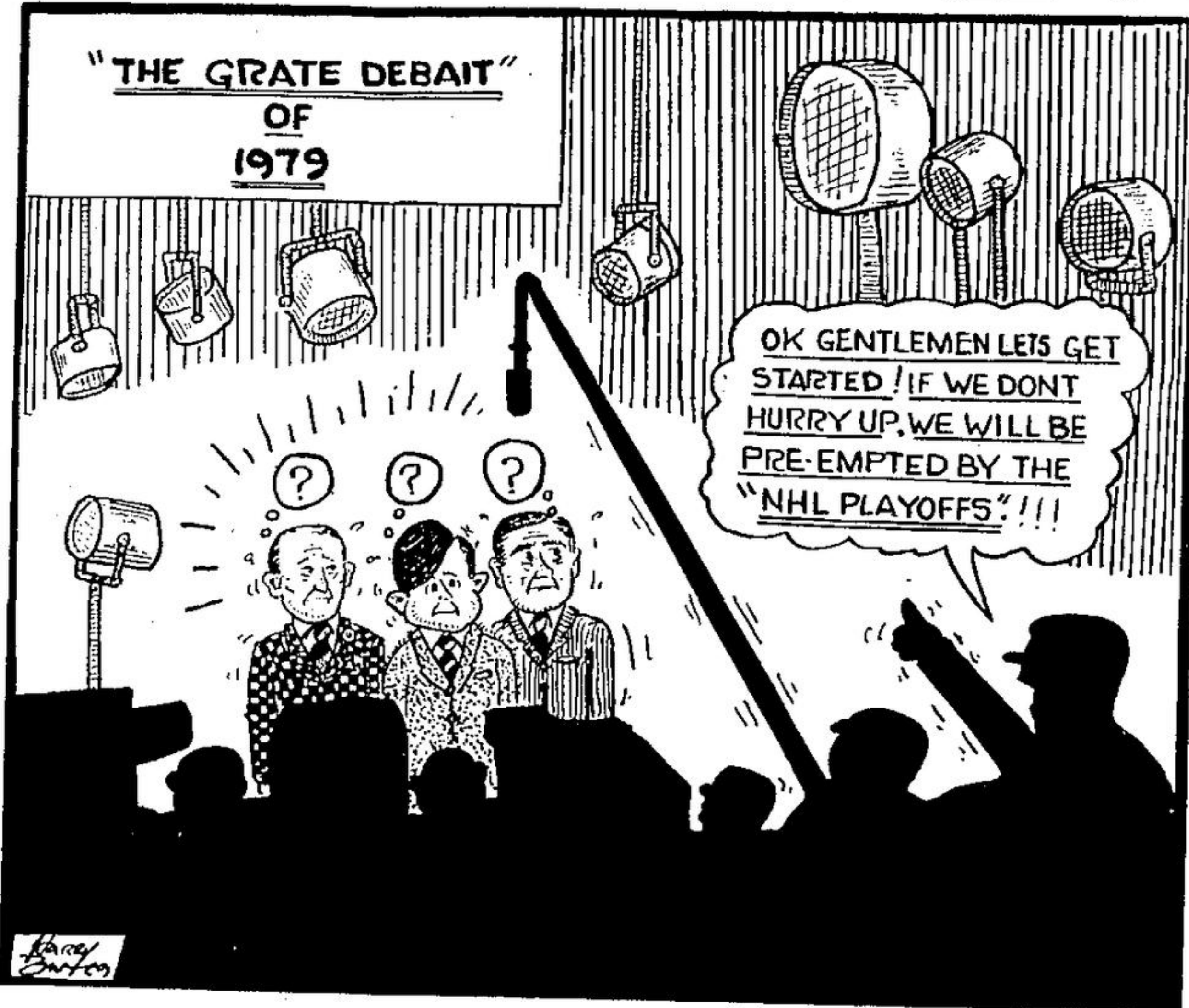
"Teachers are striking and students are dropping out. Inappropriate training has contributed to unprecedented unemployment among the young. To accommodate the baby boom triggered after the Second World War, we poured our resources into education in one of the most spectacular building and reorganizing efforts in history.

"Now the system lacks the old school inspector to ensure performance. Evaluation of teachers, when done at all, is by one's friends, the principal and

vice-principal. There are no longer province-wide examinations to indict the schools that are not producing students to a universal standard. We have fallen into the habit of allowing youngsters to choose easy options. So, although the Ontario study "At What Cost?" calls for each child to be educated to his or her potential, the "smart" ones beat the system until the reality of the job market shows up their lack of basic skills.

"We have been captivated by the idea that big schools are good schools and theoretically give economy, but at what social cost? Few instructors ever get to know their students as individuals. So the system has set up expensive counselling services to process youngsters through a counselling office once a year—for fifteen minutes each!

"The "Year of the Child" apparently requires us to splurge on children's rights, when we should cut program frills and allocate resources to a core curriculum.



What stance would candidates take to narrow rich, poor gap?

Dear Sir,

This letter arises from observations made at last night's (Monday) all-candidates' meeting at Acton High School and has a two-fold purpose.

First I want to express appreciation to the Chamber of Commerce that organized and conducted the meeting. It provides a useful technique for an audience to size up their candidates—so here is my belated "Thank you."

Secondly, such an event has severe time limitations and a number of us were

unable to air our concerns. Therefore I am taking this channel to ask a question about Canadian foreign policy. That area of federal jurisdiction was not touched on at all, nor has it been a "hot" election issue due, I expect, to Canadians' obsession with immediate needs. But there will be a tomorrow and so I pose the following question to the five candidates who performed so diligently last night.

"In the context of a UN report that the gap between rich and poor nations continues to widen due to the world's economic

and social structures discriminating against the poor what stance would you take in Parliament on a Canadian policy toward helping to narrow the gap?"

Copies of this letter are being sent to the following candidates: Frank Philbrook (Lib), Otto Jelinek (Cons), Doug Black (NDP), Karen Selick (libertarian), Robert Ritchie (Ind). I hope that they will reply through this same Letter-to-the-Editor column.

Sincerely,
Eldon Comfort

National Firearms Association does not condone their misuse

April 27, 1979

The Editor:
Dear Sir:

I am pleased to see in your paper a report of the addresses of Mr. Otto Jelinek, P.C. Candidate and Mr. Jones of the National Firearms Association on April 23 at the Guelph Rod and Gun Club.

I note that by intent or accident you placed your report of this meeting directly under an overall heading "Police Investigate Shooting Incident". I do not

appreciate the association of the two reports. I believe I can say without reservation that the National Firearms Association does not condone misuse of firearms.

Over the past eleven years Mr. Jones has made a thorough study of proposed legislation similar to Bill C51 and Bill C21. This study has been particularly important in the last five years when so many Orders in Council have been written into statute law without being published or

properly processed through parliament. While most of those attending the meeting were gun owners, and discussion centered around their interests, it should be understood that Orders in Council that can become law without proper procedure may well affect the average citizen who may not own a gun or have any interest in the sport.

Yours truly
E. Taylor
R.R. 1, Limehouse

Writer claims PC Perrin Beatty campaigning for Grit Harry Greene

April 24, 1979

Dear Sir:

On behalf of Harry Greene and the Federal Liberal Government, I would like to thank Mr. Beatty for campaigning for Harry Greene.

Mr. Beatty has written to your paper and most other papers in our new riding of Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe to let all know that \$50,000 has been allocated to

us for job creation under the Young Canada Works Program.

This money made available for job creation was given by the Federal Liberal Government and Mr. Beatty was most kind to write you about this. Since the present boundaries of Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe are held by three Liberals and one Conservative until Election Day, we remain hopeful that our Liberal candidate, Harry

Greene, will continue the Liberal tradition of creating new jobs as pointed out by Mr. Beatty.

Those of us on Harry's campaign committee sincerely hope that Mr. Beatty will continue to help Harry Greene in his campaign as we need more Harry Greens in Ottawa.

Yours sincerely,
Dr. G. Williams
Campaign Chairman for Harry Greene

Sounding off Put-downs don't help

by Helen Murray

For many, it is hard enough to know who to vote for in the May 22 federal election, without the mudslinging which went on Monday evening at the All Candidates' Meeting at Acton high school.

All candidates delivered fine, well-thought out speeches at the beginning of the evening, but things seemed to get out of hand during the question and answer period.

Voters in the audience of about 100 would asked reasonably intelligent answers. Out of the five candidates, the first one to answer the question seemed to have the most difficult time. All further answers were just a put down of the first person's thoughts or opinions. Some answers got so far off topic it was hard to remember what

the question was.

As in all elections, this one is no different when it comes to name calling of the incumbent, and or his party. Monday evening was no exception. Some of the candidates spent so much time downgrading the Liberals and incumbent Frank Philbrook, they failed to offer their own solutions. If they did offer a solution, they mentioned the end product, not how they were going to get about getting there. (That is not to support one candidate, but merely to emphasize the sometimes pettiness which goes on in politics.)

There were many fine solutions to Canada's problems revealed at the meeting. If they are acted on, a drowning country could be brought back to life. However, no matter who wins, and how good or bad an

MP he or she is, or how good or bad their party is, four years from now it will be the same story, but with different actors.

There will always be mudslinging. However, isn't it about time the name calling stopped and someone offered a viable answer rather than pointing out someone's weak points?

Instead of convincing voters who to vote for this month, Monday's meeting, like all other candidates meetings, only helped confuse those who want to help in their decision. No one is impressed with put downs, and I don't think anyone was Monday.

May the best candidate win, not the one with the thickest dictionary of put downs.

Back issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, May 7, 1969

The first high school open house was a lively happening. The rocket club made a special launching.

About 175 enjoyed the Citizens' Band spring concert. Guest soloist was district resident Mrs. Donna Bell.

Esquing dump, a trouble spot for the township council, sent smoke swirling down the Dolly Varden valley again this week. All dumps may soon be barred from burning open fires by air pollution laws.

Top speakers Steven Van Fleet and Carol Masales won dictionaries in the high school speaking contest. Runner-up was Patricia Sampson. Also competing were Shelly Roy, Diane Fisher, Chris Brunelle and Mark Hurst.

Acton high school won the District 4 CWSSA field day. Competitors included Donna Moore, Cathy Dunn, Cathy Ashley, Marg Van Arragon, Nancy Morris, Shirley Mitchell, Irene Severinski, Evelyn Vander Brink, Sharon White, Dale Fisher, Randy Coker, Pet Morrison, George McPhail, Carl Reed, Steve Van Fleet, Bob Andrews, Andy Miller, Steve Garrett, Gary Turkosz, Bob McCallum, Brian Sampson, Ron Newman, Jim Slaven, Jim Lee, Harry Oehrich, Mike Marcoux, Gord Reed, Bob Price.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, April 30, 1959

A venture which proved a huge success was the delicatessen sponsored by the Duke of Devonshire chapter of the I.O.D.E. Most gratified with the response to the two-day sale were the members of the committee, Mrs. Fred Salt, Mrs. Charles Heller, regent Mrs. Ken Knox, Mrs. Don Bothwell and Mrs. Wes Beatty.

Local organizations, spearheaded by the Legion Ladies' Auxiliary, began their canvass of homes making their annual appeal for the Cancer fund. Mrs. R. Johnson is chairman and zone captains are Mrs. H. Helwig, Mrs. J. Jany, Ron Smith, Ted Pope, Mrs. F. Stuckey, Mrs. R. Smith, Mrs. J. Bradshaw, Mrs. G. James, Mrs. R. Agnew, Mrs. B. Angell, Mrs. C. Sinclair, Mrs. M. Nellis, Mrs. G. Fryer and Mrs. G. Haggart, with over 100 canvassers.

Some 197 Robert Little school students abandon their quarters in the older condemned school as demolition will start soon. Temporary accommodation has been set up in the auditorium, the stone school and the more recent addition, says principal McKenzie.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday May 2, 1929

The summer schedule of the Canadian National Electric Railway Company went into effect Sunday. A new morning car leaves Acton every morning at 6 a.m. The eastbound cars arrive at Acton at three minutes earlier than formerly and the westbound cars are now scheduled at Acton at 17 minutes after the even hour, rather than five minutes before. After May 24 there will be added daily cars to run from Toronto to Acton.

Forty English and Welsh boys arrived at the United Church Boys' Hostel in Norval over the weekend for distribution to farms. Six groups have been looked after at this hostel totalling 234 this year. They appear to be a bright lot of prospective Canadian citizens.

The evening service at the United church was in charge of the girls of the C.G.I.T. On the platform assisting in the service were Misses Marjorie Switzer, Selma Blair and Clara Savage.

Police Magistrate Moore hears about 10 cases of infractions of the Highway Traffic Act each week now.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, May 1, 1879

There are people among us so lost to habits of taste and cleanliness as to deliberately throw their accumulation of winter garbage into the street, and that in front of their own premises. Even refuse of stables is boldly pitched on the street to the disgust of persons who occupy the premises opposite. There is also a disposition to make the streets a depository for vehicles, harrows, plows, etc. Cannot something be done?

Is no attempt being made by council to replace the trees found dead on Bower Ave.? In a few years this street, by proper attention, would form a beautiful avenue and a pleasant resort on a summer evening. Surely laxity and indifference is not going to deprive us of such a benefit.

Several of the young men of this village have been engaged in removing the stumps from Nicklin's Pond which for ages have marred the pleasure of those who have boats there.