

Carrier salute

Saturday is National Newspaper Carrier's Day and The Herald takes this opportunity to salute the untiring effort of its 99 carriers who oversee a most important function of this organization.

Without the effort put forward by these little businessmen and women as young as 10-years-old our readers would not learn of the day by day events and public affairs that this newspaper strives to provide.

It is a large responsibility which rests on the shoulders of our little people, and The Herald honors them for rising early each Wednesday morning, sometimes in poor weather, to complete their routes.

The little pay they receive for their work is offset by a tradition of gaining valuable business knowledge in areas of responsibility, human and business relations and a chance to learn at an early age the principles of democracy and citizenship which will last them a life-time.

Without doubt, the efforts of all departments of the Herald: editorial, classified and display advertising and composing, would not gain fruition without their efforts.

Herald carriers: You've done a great job in the past and all of us here appreciate it more than we can express.

On Parliament Hill

Really excited over Post Office salesmanship

By STEWART MACLEOD
Ottawa Bureau
Of The Herald

Today I'll let others talk about the new session of Parliament and the future of Confederation. I am so excited about the salesmanship of our Post Office department that I simply can't concentrate on anything else.

About a month ago I mounted a strong defence against our much-maligned Post Office, paying particular tribute to those senior officials who announced postal-rate increases with the enthusiasm of an automobile dealer unveiling an exciting new model.

Remember how they called that press conference with a two-foot-high model of the new 10-cent stamp, and started at it with the pride of first-time parents?

And remember how John MacKay, deputy postmaster-general, looked at the picture of the Queen on the stamp and said that "if you look at it enough, you tend to appreciate it and become empathetic."

At that time I also paid tribute to the post office for being the first department to implement the government's public-relations program on spending restraints.

This occurred after G.F. Osbandon, secretary of Treasury Board, asked deputy ministers to do a better job of explaining just how serious the government is about saving money.

He suggested that whenever a new program is announced there should be a reference to a more expensive alternative that was scrapped in the name of austerity.

And the Post Office obliged when it announced the new \$1 charge for redirecting mail to a changed address. Officials said a \$2 fee had been considered, but this plan had been scrapped to save us money. A thoughtful gesture.

NOT IMPULSIVE

I just mention this background to indicate that today's outburst of admiration for the Post Office is not a mere impulse. I have felt it for more than a month.

But the other day, when a senior government official slipped me a letter written by Mr. Mackay about a "Canadian Postal Users' Conference" in Toronto I just couldn't stop talking about those wonderful people who move our mail. They seem to think of everything.

Imagine a four-day conference for postal

users: If this catches on, we could have conventions of unemployment-insurance users, car users, chair users and washroom users. And we can thank our friendly Post Office.

Mr. Mackay's letter indicates that this is no bush-league convention either. "Twenty-eight different clinics, workshops and panel sessions have been carefully planned to present you with the facts about postal service improvements, how to improve your mailing results, and to answer your questions."

That should do it.

NO COMMENT

I am not going to be nasty enough to comment on the government's spending guidelines which say that, whenever possible, conventions should be held in federal buildings. There is probably a darned good reason why the post office is holding this meeting in Toronto's Sheraton Centre Hotel.

As Mr. Mackay explains the gathering, it is "to continue the open and constructive dialogue between our customers and the Post Office."

And you will never guess what the Post Office is offering the convention goes. Yes, folks, if you go to this convention, you will be treated to a tour of the "Gateway Postal Facility in Mississauga."

"At the new plants, you'll see why your mail must be prepared to standards if it is to receive the fastest processing."

Just think of the excitement of coming home and telling the kids you have actually toured the Gateway Postal Facility in Mississauga. You could stage a slide show in your local community centre.

Mr. Mackay seems very anxious for a good turn-out because he concludes his letter with this P.S.:

"If your registration envelope is post-marked on or before Tuesday, Oct. 12, you will be pleased to give you a souvenir collection of 1976 Olympic Stamps. Please reply promptly in order to receive this valuable gift."

Yes, folks. When one deputy minister writes another minister, a couple of blocks away, offering him a valuable gift to attend a conference 250 miles away, we taxpayers should be proud of the initiative.

Now if we can just convince the bureaucracy about the value of enclosing a boxtop with the application perhaps we can double those prizes.

Are Ma Bell's gains ill-gotten gains?

Ma Bell is in the news again, this time for not seeking out and reimbursing phone-booth users who slip a quarter in the slot rather than looking for change to make a 20-cent call. The ill-gotten gains are variously computed in the millions or in the hundreds of thousands.

It may or may not be a sly way of collecting money for jam, but it's not fair to put the blame on the telephone company. Pay telephones have never, to our knowledge, been equipped with change-making devices. It therefore seems a fair presumption that anyone who pays more than he or she has to does it with eyes open.

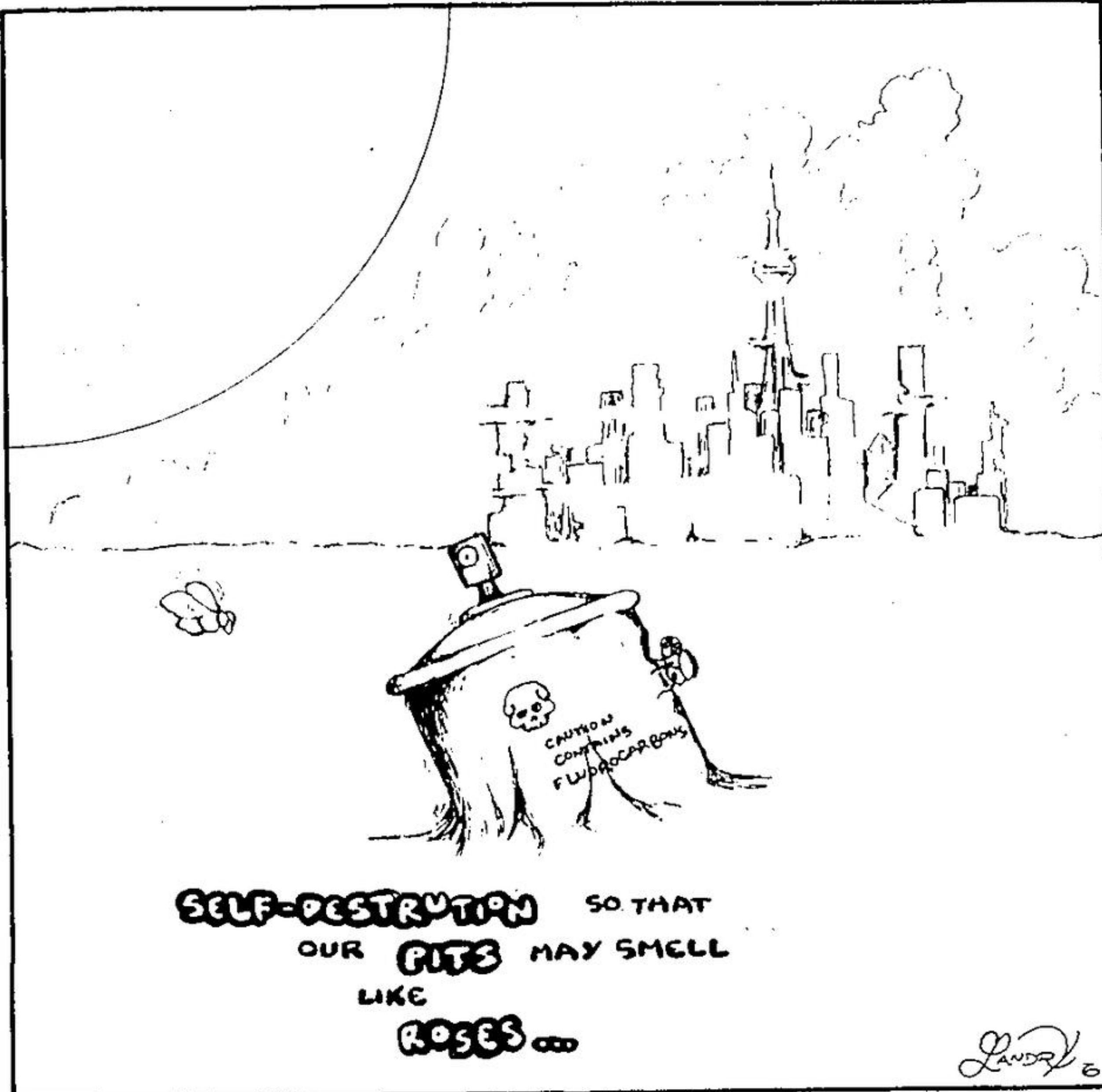
Under the gun, the Bell has indicated it will put instruction cards on pay telephones if it will help users to save on the local, 20-cent calls. In our view, that's not going to do much other than add to the company's expenses. People will still go on using quarters, especially now that that coin has become just about the basic unit of the economy.

Before the thing gets out of hand and somebody clamors for installation of change-makers in the booths - another expense the Bell customer will have to pick up eventually - let us remember that the Bell is a regulated utility, with profits pegged to a rate-of-return percentage. Undue profits from overgenerous pay-phone users will go into the general pile; Ma Bell isn't going to get fatter on them.

If that knowledge doesn't solace the excess-profit watchers, perhaps Bell should consider putting the extra revenue into a special fund for catering to the telephone needs of customers with hearing handicaps. We could trust Ma to be honest about the take; after all, she didn't try to cover up the bounty gleaned from the miraculous shower of quarters.

That seems to us like a far more useful exercise than attempting to teach people that 25 cents is more than 20 cents.

(Peterborough Examiner)



Words of wisdom, or have you heard: A barking dog does not bite!

by GERRY LANDSBOURGH
This week Viewpoint offers its readers a tongue in cheek look at some of the words of wisdom handed down from generation to generation.

Many of the following are taken from a Mussion's Book of quotes printed in 1902 in Toronto.

He who takes an eel by the tail and a woman by her word may say he holds nothing. Well, girls I don't know about that - you could say the same thing about some men - and hold less.

How about - Let us enjoy the present we shall have trouble enough in the hereafter. Amen, Amen, to that one.

If young men had wit and old men strength then everything would be well done. Here's a pig, God help the rich - the poor can beg. And from the other direction - Great cry and little wool quoth the devil when he sheared his bugs.

If you are not squeamish - Mention not a rope in the house of one whose father was hanged. Now that certainly seems to make sense.

For the green thumbs among us - Plant the crab tree where you will know it will never bear pippins. What's a pippin?

Or - play women and wine make a man laugh till he dies - they forgot to mention too much play women and wine hasten the journey.

Here's what I call genuine wisdom. There are a great many asses without long ears. Oh how true that is.

How about - The old and wise still advise. Again they forgot to mention - because that's all there's left to do.

Here are some I've always pondered on. Never look a gift horse in the mouth. Why not? Or who would want to.

A rolling stone gathers no moss. Who cares?

A barking dog does not bite. Not according to my friend down at the post office.

The old saw - You do not know someone until you marry them is updated with to really know a person try a divorce.

Many cooks spoil the broth. Not to be mentioned in front of the chefs at the Town 'n Country.

Make hay while the sun shines. Who wants to make hay in the rain?

An apple a day keeps the doctor away. The doctor only comes for bread.

Set a thief to catch a thief. And you'll

In a lighter vein . . .

On the hustings

In the TV era, the old-fashioned political meeting isn't what it used to be. Organizers can get the party faithful out, but the general public doesn't pay much attention.

As a reporter, I hadn't realized how far this process had gone till I talked to one party organizer from Montreal who was bewailing the indifference of the public. In rebuttal, "I recalled that twice in one evening I'd seen large crowds turn out to hear the Prime Minister, once in the west end of the city, once in the east." "Yes," the organizer said wistfully, "and you'll never know the trouble we had getting them from the one meeting to the other."

From here and there

Back to basics

The so-called return to the 3R's in Grade 9 and 10 is giving traditionalists plenty to chortle about, and modernists something to wonder about.

Now that Education Minister Tom Wells has done some fancy back-stepping on high school curriculum, following an increasingly vocal attack by all sorts of critics on the calibre of high school graduates, the traditionalists can probably begin to relax a little, secure in the belief that students must be told what to learn instead of having the right to pick and choose some of their course.

The modernists, those who pushed for a de-emphasis on traditional approaches, will perhaps grumble about stepping back into the days when knowledge was figuratively hammered into the terrified minds of silent little robots.

We suspect the reality and the effectiveness of Wells' changes lie somewhere in between, and that education will not suffer merely because the province wants its high school students to learn certain subjects. Education is not about to collapse simply because students must contend with mandatory subjects at certain levels - nor, for that matter, will society itself crumble into insignificance.

After all, much of the liberalism of today's education approaches and techniques will remain. Wells is proposing a return to

what was called "basics" in the 1950s - not wholesale change.

When he announced some of the changes last week, Wells said the pendulum of change has swung a little too far during the 1960's. A none-too-subtle slap at the liberals who were responsible for those changes. However, he also conceded that the changes will not mean that Ontario will return "to a rigid, lock-step curriculum of the 1950s and 1960s."

The changes certainly have support, from teachers' federations, administrators and trustees. It will take several years, of course, before we discover whether or not the changes will result in better educated students.

We're inclined to agree with Wellington County's education director, Bill Forsythe, when he says that Ontario's high school education system should be kept flexible. There surely is little wrong with introducing certain mandatory courses while allowing students a degree of flexibility and giving teachers more latitude in approach and technique.

The return to the basics is perhaps not as severe as some liberals think. Larry Kelly, principal of Bishop Macdonald high school, summarized the new policy as being "middle of the road." That's as good a description as you're likely to encounter.

GUELPH MERCURY

On The Home Front

Tony Bennett makes life easier

By SUSAN DeFACENDIS

You will simply have to bear with me this week. Quite obviously entering ones fifth decade propels me into a state of advanced senility and I am no longer functioning quite to the degree I should.

Saturday, October 9th was the catalyst. He looked at me - he smiled - he touched me! - and I shall never be quite the same again.

Yes, this normally inhibited housewife, after hearing the perfection of 'Someone Who Needs Me', threw caution to the winds and, springing to her feet in the Royal York Hotel's Imperial Room, extended her hand and made contact with Tony Bennett.

I shook hands with Tony Bennett and I may just stay in orbit forever.

Now logically, I realize this is a totally illogical way to feel but perfection, in any field, just happens to turn me on. Give me a song, a painting, an intellect, a beautifully written book - and I am unreachable. Besides, why should a feeling have to be justified? Isn't it more than enough that something in this crazy, freaky world can simply make you feel better just by its existence?

For 24 hours after the event, so my family later informed me, strange non-conversations took place in our house.

"Hey Mom! Where are my Lee Jeans?"

"Huh!" was my dazed response.

"Mom! Where's Dad going?"

"Who?"

"Mom, when are we going to eat?"

"What?"

I believe they eventually gave up and mutually decided to just let this strange disease that had overtaken their mother run its appointed course.

However, this physical contact with my idol is going to have some far reaching effects.

For instance, can this hand ever again be used for such mundane purposes as cleaning an oven or washing dishes? - and I shall definitely have to request a raise in pay from the office manager who employs me on a part time basis. It is after all, only reasonable to assume, unless he is prepared to settle for a one handed typist, that a right hand that has touched greatness must be worth considerably more than a left hand that has never been anywhere.

In fact, I believe my only recourse will be to get my hand bronzed and thus preserve it for all the future generations of little De Facendis.

While nothing can really compensate for having to face yet another birthday, Tony Bennett certainly makes that shipping from one decade into another a little easier to bear.

Queen's Park

Education policy is a clean win for Grits

By DON O'HEARN
Queen's Park Bureau
Of The Herald

Politically the cleanest win in recent times here would be the triumph of the Liberals when the Ontario government, announced its change in education policy and the return to a core curriculum in secondary schools.

The Liberals have been fighting for this for a long time.

Then Leader Bob Nixon tried to feature it during the last election campaign.

And during that campaign Education Minister Tom Wells made some bold statements that now look ridiculous.

And this was entirely a Liberal issue. The NDP, which is loaded with educators both in its membership and its representation in the legislature, has largely taken a hands-off position on secondary education.

The Liberals applied the pressure. And this ended with the most striking reversal in government policy in recent memory.

A BOTCH?

It is interesting to speculate now what might have happened if they had been able to skillfully press the issue in the last campaign.

It obviously was a good issue, and one which had wide appeal across the electorate.

(Touching not only parents and employers out students themselves and at least some teachers).

The fact that the government finally has acted in itself is at least partial testimony to this.

But in their campaign the Grits made a political botch of it.

Nixon did try to stress it in one speech. But when this apparently didn't grab (partly because he used some incorrect figures) he tended to underplay it from then on.

MIGHT HAVE BEEN

But if he and his party machine had had the election skills of the NDP, one can wonder just how far they might have gone.

If they had played it with the same tactics as Stephen Lewis and his people played the rental issue, they might have made some gains.

The NDP rent campaign, of course, was a masterpiece.

Lewis introduced it with a flourish, with an elaborate statement backed with case histories.

And he didn't let up.

Practically every day he had a new angle and more case histories.

If the Nixon Liberals had had the political skill to use the same compelling approach on education, they might even be the government today.