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A review

California's proposition 13, the mandate by taxpayers to chop 57 per cent or more than \$7 billion from property taxes seems to have caught everyone in North America with visions of being able to fight city hall and win.

While such a proposal might be difficult to arrive at in some Canadian jurisdictions because of the difference in law, the move has signaled to politicians that unwise use of tax funds is not in the least being tolerated.

For those of you taken up by the reduce taxation cause, there is one area where you might be able to succeed in plugging the leak of questionable, or should we say subjective approval of tax monies, and that is at the federal level.

Ed Murphy, a journalist with CIBC Radio in Vancouver recently released a paperback publication which is nothing short of a scandalous revelation of how some federal monies are, or were being used.

Since its release in December, the paperback compilation of press reports, extracts from auditor general's reports and extracts from Hansard, the daily record of parliamentary debates, has entered its second printing. It is easy to see why.

Titled "A Legacy of Spending" the book illustrates some areas where spending could be questioned, notes that since Prime Minister Trudeau announced to the nation in 1969 that "we would be on the way to financial disaster if nothing were done to bring spending under control" government

spending has risen by 230 per cent or \$34 billion. At the same time the prime minister promised a cut in the size of the civil service but it has increased by 110,000 or 45 per cent in the same time period.

The 302-page covers what must be considered all areas of concern by the populous from MP salaries to LIP and other grants available from federal sources.

Here are some examples of government action reported in Legacy:

"The air force bought 4,300 electric relays from an American company for \$175,000. They were found to be defective, but the firm refused to refund the money. Crown Assets Disposal Corporation resold the relays for \$160 to the same company that had made them."

"The auditor general also reports how the navy paid \$224,000 for eight sewage treatment units for four ships. When delivered it was found that the units were too heavy to be installed in the ships. The four units were sold for \$5,000."

"The government bought 21 buses at a cost of \$436,612, which were continually plagued by breakdowns and had a repair cost of 15.7 cents per mile compared with 6.6 cents for another type of bus."

"Among the built in defects common to all vehicles was that spark plugs on the right side of the engine could only be reached by dismantling the side of the bus and then cutting a rectangular port in the compartment wall. The 1966-67 auditor general's report stated: 'We were unable to determine why some of the defects were not discovered prior to acceptance of the buses.'"

"In April, 1973, the federal government acquired a leasehold on 55 acres waterfront property in Greater Vancouver. The Pacific Environment Centre was to be built on the site. The department of environment paid \$4 million to the previous tenant and tossed in another \$700,000 for granting 'other consideration' because of budget restrictions. The centre has not been built. Meanwhile the federal government will be paying \$241,000 in annual rental until the year 2045.

Interesting? There's more. Did you know that a 1975 consumer tax index published by the prestigious Fraser Institute showed that the average Canadian family's tax burden from 1961 to 1975 had increased by 350 per cent!"

Legacy of Spending is a document that every voter should read BEFORE the next federal election.

Bible digest

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that they that are poor have sold their land, leave thy gift before the altar, and so they way to 1:16 before thee to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Matthew 5:23-24

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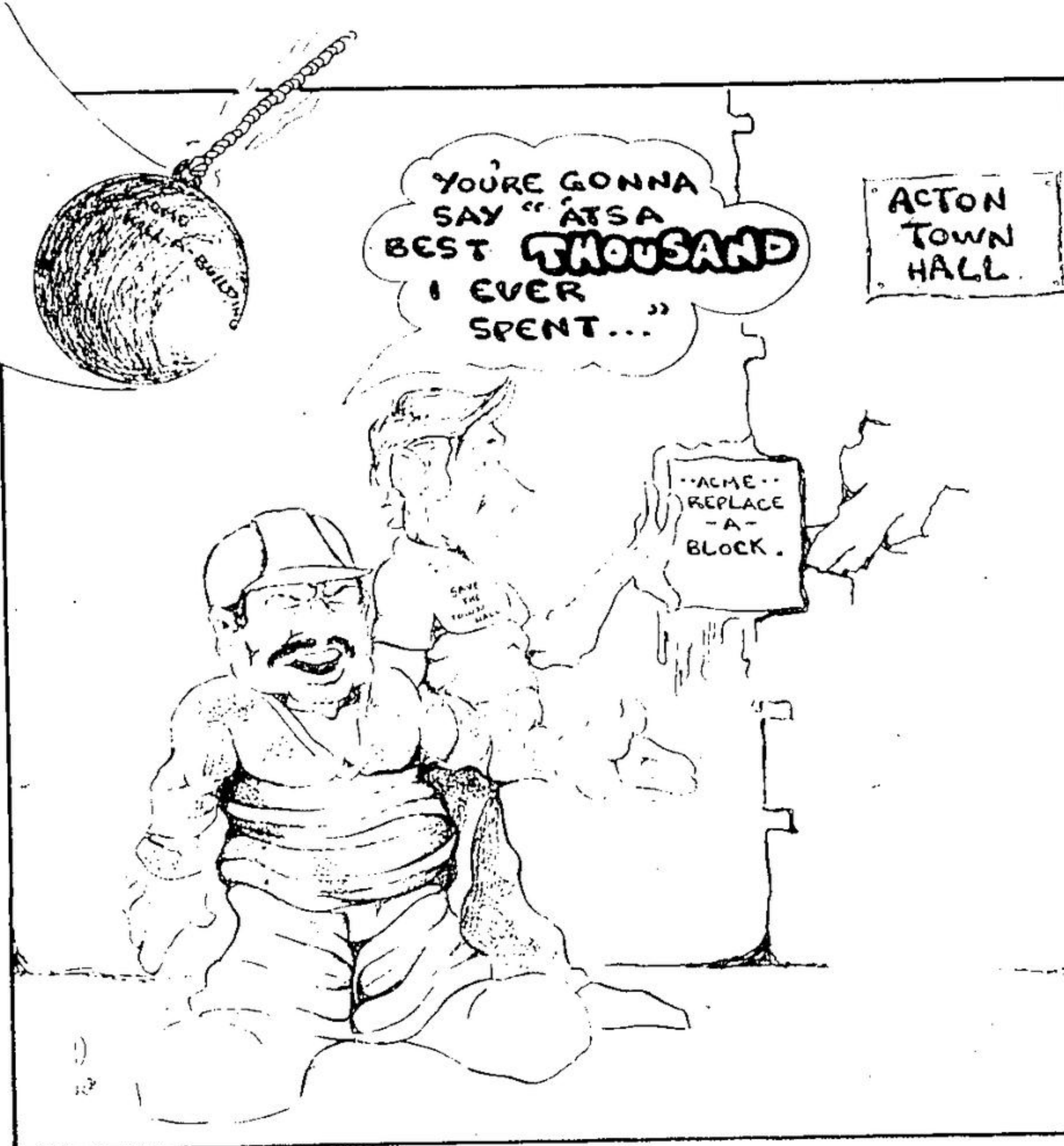
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Sympathy, but it's no win situation

By DEREK NELSON
Queen's Park Bureau
of the Herald

Reading transcripts of Ontario Provincial Police officials' testimony before a Queen's Park legislative committee one has to feel sympathy for the police.

OPP Commissioner William Ludstone, Assistant Commissioner Hugh Garry, were there to answer questions about OPP conduct at the Fleck Manufacturing Company strike at Centralia north of London.

Actually, "answer questions" is probably the wrong phrase. "Admit their guilt" might be more accurate at least as far as the New Democrats were concerned.

They started from the premise that the police were wrong, and then attempted to prove that by acting like the verbal equivalent of the Spanish Inquisition.

There's nothing wrong with that, of course. It's what one would expect from the political arm of the trade union movement in any labor dispute.

No, the problem, how transcends Fleck and the specific strike issues of higher wages and "union security."

What is at stake now appears to be first, the role of pickets in a strike situation and second, the role of the police in that regard.

Commissioner Graham made it plain when he told the committee that "if we had to deal only with the local picketers there would

be no problems and we wouldn't be there at all."

Nobody has bothered to argue that assertion, with him, likely because it's true.

One is then left with the impression that what Fleck is rapidly becoming is a test case in labor relations.

TWO SIDES
The NDP view is quite plain.

MPP Mike Breughel (NDP Oshawa) has introduced a bill in the legislature that could, depending on interpretation, totally shut down Fleck and any similarly struck plant.

The Ontario Federation of Labor President Cliff Pilkey is even firmer. Struck plants should close and those who try to cross picket lines should take their chances, he said.

The police, however, must enforce curfew laws.

That means the picket line is for information purposes only, and those who want to enter a struck plant may do so. In the case of Fleck, where several companies use the same entrance, many people being stopped have nothing to do with the strike.

COMMUNICATION
But MPP Jim Renwick (NDP Toronto Riverdale) asked Commissioner Graham how the pickets were supposed to communicate with people in vehicles unless they stopped them and talked to them?

The commissioner appeared stumped for an answer.

MPP Sidney Handleman (PC Carleton Place) then asked if there isn't a "right on the part of the person inside the vehicle to go into the plant without being stopped?"

Yes, Graham replied.

MPP Stephen Lewis (NDP Scarborough West) said because the OPP interpreted the law that way they are seen as an "arm of management," or in NDP Leader Michael Cassidy's phrase, "company police."

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Workers currently escorted through picket lines at Fleck are not strike-breakers in the sense it's usually meant, since they were employees prior to the strike who refused to go out.

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Looking through our files

THIRTY YEARS AGO
The town of Georgetown received a cheque for \$866.88 from the Liquor Control Board as the town's share of fees collected from local beer sales. This was a considerable increase over the previous year.

John Gordon McNally, 15-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles McNally of Terra Cotta, was killed early Thursday evening in an accident near his home.

Ideal weather conditions greeted the annual Junior Farmer Plowing Match which was held recently on the farm of Clebert McIlwain, Hornby Fourteen Halton plow boys were in action and some excellent ridges were turned. A most interesting feature was the demonstration ridge plowed by Fred Timbers, internationally famous tractor plowman of York County.

TWENTY YEARS AGO
A new company, P. Graham Bell Associates Ltd., has leased the old Dolphin Bank and has already started production of a line of architectural porcelain and metal products.

A Cub trainer piloted by Robert Dunbar, 15 Sussex St., Toronto, crashed in Moore's field west of Main Street Sunday night while attempting to land there. The crash occurred after Mr. Dunbar had brought in his plane from the north corner of the field and touched down. He was trying to regain altitude to clear a snake fence at the end of the field when the wheels caught the top bars. Neither the pilot nor his one passenger were injured in the crash which did considerable damage to the plane's motor, propeller, struts and undercarriage.

A portion of the Moore farm on the western highway entrance to town which was recently purchased by a syndicate headed by contractor Harold Fobert is Number 1 choice as a site for the Georgetown hospital.

Roaring flames fanned by high winds that carried burning embers more than half a mile destroyed two large barns at Haltonville set two houses on fire and at one time threatened to wipe out the community last week. Total damage was estimated at \$40,000. Lost in the Allison blaze, where the fire started, were 13 head of cattle, three cows, 11 pigs, several tons of hay and several items of equipment. A thoroughbred racehorse, valued at \$6,000, was a major loss to Mr. von Buchhofen, whose loss also included a donkey, a mule, riding equipment and farm equipment.

TEN YEARS AGO
Georgetown council passed a bylaw which would prevent the selling of land in the township of Esquesing until the owner has owned it for five years. The bylaw is a move to halt speculation in land.

A lively all candidates meeting was held at Holy Cross auditorium. Candidates in the federal race were Liberal Bud Whiting, a salesman, Progressive Conservative Peter McWilliams, a former crown attorney and New Democrat Murray Kernighan, Milton businessman.

Halton County Children's Aid Society is seeking better quarters. According to Dr. Gordon Askwith, the present quarters on Milton's High Street are too cramped.

The pipe band of the Georgetown Legion, Branch 129, made its public debut at a dance Saturday night.

The teaching staff of Georgetown and district high school changed as the board of education accepted 21 teacher resignations and hired 29 new staff members to bring the staff to 76. Anticipated pupil-teacher ratio for the next term is 17 to 1.

Nothing wrong with action

By DEREK NELSON

The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) has expressed sympathy for a Brampton Communist denied membership in the Royal Canadian Legion.

The OHRC official was quoted as saying that present law prevents the commission doing anything except pointing out the "discriminatory nature" of the Legion's action.

The Legion constitution forbids membership to Communists, fascists, or anarchists, or those who advocate overthrowing the government by force.

The OHRC spokesman found this upsetting.

In a recent report entitled Life Together, the OHRC urged that discrimination on the grounds of political belief be forbidden by law.

But my reaction is to wonder if there is anything wrong with discriminating against someone who wishes to impose her or his political system best known by its murdered millions.

Whether the Legion decides to let the man join or not is their business, but it should be no concern of the OHRC.

The commission's job is to prevent discrimination against people on grounds — such as color or place of origin — that the individual can do nothing about.

It is not to launch a crusade on behalf of those who freely choose to worship Moscow or any other creed.

Just what constitutes culture anyway?

By STEWART MACLEOD

Ottawa Bureau
of the Herald

Since I have always been a bit confused about what constitutes culture, I had eagerly awaited that all embracing, 106-page white paper on the subject from the Quebec government. After all, it had been billed as the most far-reaching cultural document ever produced in North America.

Some people predicted it would form the blueprint for an independent Quebec, that it would drastically alter the living habits of everyone in the province, that Canada would never be the same again, etc. It was to be the greatest exercise in original composition since the British North America Act.

Well, like most things that are promoted with paragon, the great document from the mind of Cultural Affairs Minister Camille Laurin, could very well be the most overrated exercise yet undertaken by his government. If you eliminate the obvious, often restated in flowery phraseology, there is really very little in this enormous epistle that is going to change anyone's life style.

And despite all the indirect rhetoric about the cultural glories of independence, along with upflattering comments about the "shackles" of Confederation, there are remarkably few examples of federal "bonuses." Even Laurin himself has said that at least three quarters of his cultural aims could be achieved within Canada.

CULTURAL LINGERS
And as for this white paper eliminating any confusion about what constitutes cultural, I can forget it. About the only activities not covered in this document are high-speed train wrecks.

"The cultural situation of Quebec is not that of an independent people," declares the

white paper by way of an opening. "The incorporation of Quebec into the Canadian federation imposes on it restrictions that become shackles when it attempts to develop its own values and cultural endeavors."

The dignity of Quebecers must make it impossible to live as a kept people, which was the idea of a workable federalism.

"We must draw up and promote a cultural policy that will be Quebec's. We must reappropriate the means that enable a culture to endure and to grow... if we are to respect the provincialization of our culture."

And with a predictable kick in the direction of Ottawa, the Parti Quebecois document says: "The federal government has a major role to play in promoting its idea, and its budgets, constantly hampering efforts at consistency and economy."

Again there are few examples of this, although Dr. Laurin's white paper does suggest that Quebec should take control of all national parks in the province.

The only activities I have ever witnessed in national parks never struck me as being particularly cultured. But again, I must confess my ignorance of what constitutes culture.

HEALTHY ADVICE
What the white paper does say is that Quebecers should listen to more Quebec music, eat less, exercise more, show more interest in their own history and cut down on cigarettes.

What the shackles of federalism have to do with these worthy objectives tend to escape me at the moment. I am also confused as to why the proliferation of country cottages should be considered a "cultural deficiency."

For the umpteenth time, the Quebec

government talks about its beloved minorities, and the exciting and valuable role they can play in the future of the province. "A viable society must have a diversified and accessible information on the life of the community," says the paper.

Schools should teach good nutritional habits and the heavy smoking, Dr. Laurin says, should be eradicated with that in mind. "The government has set as its goal the formation by the end of the next 10 years of a generation of non smokers."

There is no doubt the white paper is aimed with good, sound advice. But considering the fact that the document has been under preparation for more than a year, it certainly falls short on specific programs. And it falls short on examples about how the so-called shackles of federalism show the "aspirations" of Quebecers.

But with the white paper comes a near-annual series of public hearings, and it's here that Dr. Laurin and his associates may throw some light on the subject. I have a funny feeling they can hardly wait to get at it.

Meanwhile...

When Finance Minister Jean Chretien got himself mired in that horrendous sales tax hassle with the Quebec government was it sheer incompetence or was it designed as a clever campaign issue that became unstuck when Prime Minister Trudeau decided against a summer vote?

The debate over this rages on in Ottawa. Chretien and Trudeau say it was neither incompetence or part of a grand design. "The problem, as they try to explain it, is due entirely to the uncooperative attitude of the Parti Quebecois government. In their view,

Ottawa is fairly coming with good faith. When Chretien announced in his April 10 budget that the federal government would subsidize provincial sales tax reductions to encourage more consumer price spending, there had already been a series of meetings with the provinces in search of agreement. But Quebec Finance Minister Jacques Parizeau had never said his province would go along with the plan. And a few days after Chretien's budget, Parizeau took off on his own, announcing that Quebec would eliminate the sales tax on certain goods and leave it unaltered on other goods.

That effectively torpedoed Chretien's grand national scheme.

NO RETREAT
Since then, all the emphasis has been on face-saving. The federal government, understandably anxious to see that Quebecers get their share of the proposed tax subsidies, now plan to rebate \$186 million to taxpayers in this province. And, naturally, the provincial government charges that this is an unwarranted intrusion into its sacred jurisdiction. To make matters worse, all opposition parties in Quebec and Ottawa tend to agree.

As most of these opposition parties see it, the federal government has displayed incredible incompetence in charging ahead with this tax rebate scheme before getting agreement from all the provinces.

And they also seem unanimous in the opinion that Chretien was naive to think that Parizeau, dedicated as he is to Quebec independence, would suddenly become accommodating after the proposal was announced.

New Democratic Leader Ed Broadbent called it "an incredible approach."

"And when Chretien announced that Quebec taxpayers would be given a direct federal

rebate, it appeared to many that the original incompetence was being compounded with more of the same. Now, it was argued, Ottawa had absolutely no bargaining room.

How could Chretien possibly change this proposal? You just don't announce that taxpayers in a province are going to receive up to \$85 each, courtesy of the federal government, and then change your mind. No sir.

Conservative Leader Joe Clark, who hardly rates an unbiased observer, thinks Chretien is finished because of his alleged incompetence. "As minister of finance his credibility is shot," says the Tory chief. "I say that with some regret because I like Mr. Chretien, to coin the word, a street fighter, but I think that the very qualities that made him a great street fighter have made him a very dangerous minister of finance."

PLOT BACKFIRES
That's one view. But there is another, which seems to be gaining popularity. And that is the theory that Chretien hatched a very clever plan for a campaign confrontation with the Parti Quebecois — a plan that hit the skids when the Gallup Polls discouraged Trudeau from a general election.

Under this scenario, the election would have been called immediately after the budget was announced and the legislation implementing the proposals would not have to be debated. Instead the debate would take place on the hustings where the federal Liberals would be seen as the party trying to reduce taxes while the Parti Quebecois would be the villains, refusing to co-operate.

Can you imagine what Chretien, the street fighter, could do with this in Shawinigan?

the HERALD
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