

the HERALD Outlook

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America's economy is still biggest in the world

Diane Maley

Your Business
Thomson News Service



America is still No. 1. So says The Economist, a British-based magazine that often pokes fun at the self-absorbed Americans.

Yes, you are the superpower, the magazine acknowledges good-naturedly.

The rise of Germany and Japan as economic powers has caused angst in the heart of Americans. In response, the American people are growing increasingly resentful toward their competitors. This is dangerous.

In a recent poll, 48 per cent of Americans thought Japan's economy is bigger than America's, The Economist notes. It is barely half the size. Americans' average income is seven per cent higher than their nearest rivals, "who are not the Japanese but those dull Canadians."

Japanese productivity is legendary, but it is modest compared to America's. Output in Japan is growing faster than it is in the United States. But the average Japanese worker still takes one hour to produce what his American counterpart can make in just 31 minutes.

Surprised? There is more. The U.S. share of the global economy is just five percentage points lower than it was 60 years ago. The United States "is a giant with a

cold, not a pigmy with cancer," the magazine concludes.

This is encouraging news for Canadians, too. Some say that, in joining in a free-trade agreement with our southern neighbor, we have hitched our wagon to a falling star. This does not appear to be the case.

But the magazine's editors raise questions about what the undisputed superpower will do with its power. Naturally, it will serve its own interests. Its interests include global stability, the magazine says.

"Only America can ensure that Japan is not tempted, because of western neglect and hauteur, to build an economic and perhaps military zone of its own in Asia."

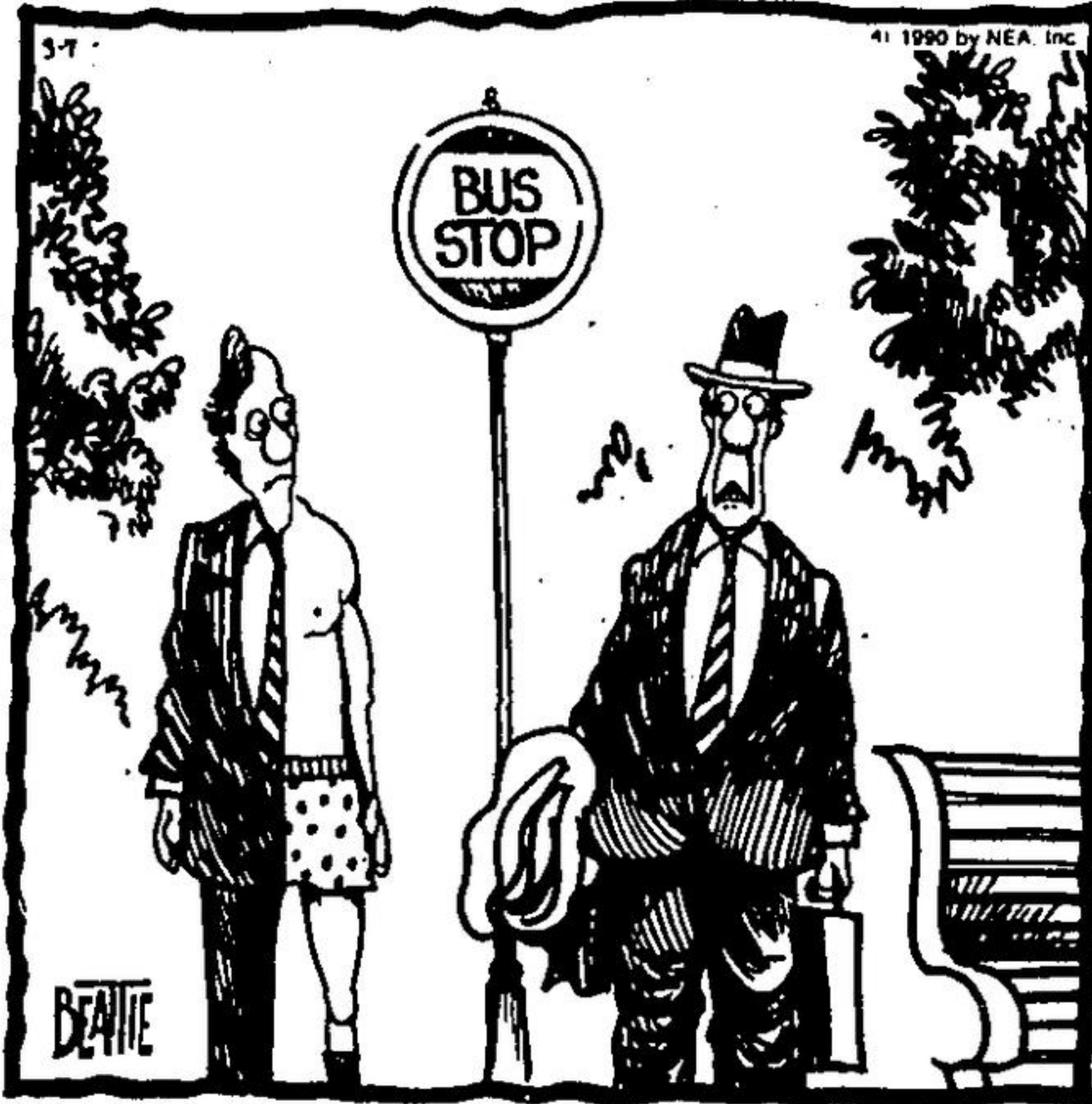
As well, the United States "may not be able to banish fear between Arab and Jew, but only it can make the two sides see the sense, indeed the inevitability, of a compromise."

The most awkward challenge will be in Europe. America's power will decline there as its troops are withdrawn. The United States must encourage German self-esteem while reassuring the French and the British that a strong and united Germany is not a monster stalking the continent, The Economist says.

Compared to Canada, the U.S. economy is relatively self-contained. Even so, the United States is the world's largest exporter. It depends on open markets, the British magazine argues. The implication is that the United States is as dependent as Japan on free and open trade. Is The Economist right?

Well, let's look at what Americans buy. Their stereos, televisions, VCRs and computers come from Japan. They buy cars from Japanese-owned car companies.

SNAFU® by Bruce Beattie



"Recently divorced?"

Where do all those tax dollars go?



Gil Hardy

Ottawa Bureau
Thomson News Service

Cheer up, you unemployed Newfoundland fishermen, your \$7,000 membership in the International Jute Organization will soon be all paid up!

Take heart, all you Saskatchewan farmers! You may be in debt but the government is chipping in \$30,000 on your behalf to support the Quadrangular Forum. And don't worry, you soon-to-be laid off Elliot Lake uranium miners, Ottawa is keeping the Pan American Institute for Geography and History in business with a \$10,000 grant.

These items gleaned from the 1990-91 spending estimates are among hundreds of payments that will be made to obscure and esoteric organizations by the government of Canada. The cash is siphoned from taxpayers' pockets.

But why do we care about the International Jute Organization? Jute, the fibre of an East Indian plant, is used for bags and rope, among other things. The plant doesn't grow in Canada.

For that matter, neither does coffee, but we're pouring out \$100,000 this year to the International Coffee Organization. Last fiscal year, Canada gave not a drop of cash.

Ditto, the International Rubber Study Group. No money in 1989-90 but \$24,000 from interested Canadians this year.

The External Affairs Department is responsible for these payments but shouldn't be singled out as the only source of largesse. We Canadians are supporters of everything from soup to nuts.

The Forestry Department has put us down for \$5,000 to run a Festival of Forestry. Transport needs four times as much for its

Committee.

And the Communications Department will pay \$11,000 to the International Federation of Library Associations, which is a lot of overdue books.

The Geomatics Industry Association of Canada is getting \$18,000 from Industry, Science and Technology, down from \$30,000 last year. Geomatics is not only a high-tech, computer-based way of surveying and mapping, says a department official, but also "very exportable."

The same department is forking over as much as \$1 million in each of the next five years to the Royal Society of Canada for "science co-ordination and advocacy." The money will allow the Society to organize itself into "Canada's national arts and sciences academy," which covers "the whole spectrum of scholarly endeavor," another Industry Department official says.

The Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs gets another \$25,000 this year from the Labor Department. The same ministry is setting aside \$10,000 for the Canadian Joint Fire Prevention Publicity Committee, which makes one wonder what the fire chiefs are doing for their money.

The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police has gone one better, rounding up cash from two departments. The Solicitor General will contribute \$49,000 while the Justice Department is kicking in \$16,150 for the chiefs' law amendments committee.

JUDGES

And the Canadian Association of Provincial Court Judges gets \$66,500 from Justice.

Canada's geographers will walk away with \$7,000 from the Environment Department. The Aero Club of Canada can fly off with \$25,000 from Transport. Defence is dropping \$170,065 on various rifle associations.

The Conference of Commonwealth Statisticians can add up the \$4,250 it is getting from Statistics Canada. Just to be sure all our number crunching bases are covered, the same department is doling out \$6,455 for membership in the Inter-American Statistical

Jessie will be back in 1992

Kevin Bell

Washington Bureau
Thomson News Service



The charismatic Jesse Jackson, a two-time presidential hopeful, loves to keep them guessing.

To supporters who were actively encouraging him to run for mayor of Washington, D.C., later this year, he has finally said no after an eternity of speculation. But the guessing game has merely shifted from the mayor's race back to Jackson's presidential ambitions.

He's too savvy a politician to announce now that he will try for a third time to grab the Democratic party's nomination - this time for the 1992 presidential campaign. Nevertheless, the smart money is saying his political ambitions are unchanged. He wants to be the first black president of the United States.

The problem is, the 48-year-old preacher and civil rights activist has never been elected to any seat. It appeared he was about to erase that mark against him when he moved to Washington from Chicago last year for an apparent run for the mayor's job, but Jackson must have realized there was more to lose than win by trying to replace Washington's controversial mayor, Marion Barry.

Polls show that many black voters oppose Jackson's candidacy for mayor while Barry remains a popular figure despite facing charges of drug possession and perjury.

Jackson must have asked himself a simple question: what if he lost in a city where the majority of voters are blacks? His political reputation would be irreparably damaged.

Jackson boasts that he could have the mayor's job if he wants it. That may be so. But if he wants to be president, he would also find it difficult to break away in mid-term for another presidential campaign.

The problems he would face as Washington's mayor would be a potential political quagmire.

Just two days before he announced he would not run for mayor, four people were gunned down in a Washington nightclub in yet another shootout over drug turf. It was just another symptom of the city's plague of problems involving drugs, poverty, racial bitterness, poor housing, inadequate services and a faltering education system.

Progress could come slowly, but why would Jackson want to risk carrying the baggage of Washington's woes into a presidential campaign? Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis found out in the last campaign how costly it was to have the filth of Boston Harbor on his hands. Even though cut-backs in federal water pollution programs were a main reason for the harbor's stench, George Bush was able to capitalize on it and paint himself as the green candidate.

The guessing over Jackson has now turned to two "shadow Senate" seats that residents in the District of Columbia may vote to

Poets' Corner

ALONE, IN THE DARK

Don't know what we want.
Don't know what to do.
We're two of a kind,
My friend, me and you.
My life's not my own,
And neither is yours.
But our dreams come together
Behind our closed doors.
We've no place to go
With these feelings we share.
Our lives are too full,
We've got no right to care.
Still the fire just won't die,
We can't kill the spark.
So we'll both keep on dreaming
Alone, in the dark.

By J.B.
Acton

LOVE POEM

Were I as beautiful and as wise as
you see me
Would my days be full of domestic
things and inconsequential
creative flings?
Would I quietly occupy daylight's
last hours
tenderly cultivating my garden of
flowers
engrossed in a passionate twilight
chat
with a cat?
Not that.
T'isn't true.
The one who is wise and beautiful
is you.

Winter morning
Red cardinal sunning on white
snow

Solitude
A book . . . blanket near the
hearth

Greed
hatred hardening hearts

Rush hour
A lost child crying

Zephyred summer sky
enveloping white balloon
gently rising. Pop.

Trees in autumn change
to red and gold and yellow;
than are naked

There once was a lady from Woot
Who had not a darn thing to do.
She sat in her room
In darkness and gloom
And dreamed of her death.
Wouldn't you?

A darling young chef named
Ragout
Delighted in making thick stew
Of cold mice and carrots
and brown fuzzy ferrets
Encased in swamp gravy, for you.

By Carolyn Balzer
Hornbv