

Editorial

Who gives a.....?

DATELINE OTTAWA: The Canadian masses are huddled around their wireless sets waiting breathlessly for the results of the federally-implemented inquiry into the fast-tracking immigration process that allowed former Iraq Ambassador to the United States, Mohammed Al Mashat, to emigrate to Canada a mere 23 days after he had applied at the Canadian embassy in Vienna.

After five days of hearings, the special House of Commons committee looking into the affair, folded, basically because our country's ruling Progressive Conservative Party refused to allow key insiders into the fiasco, Barbara McDougall and Bernard Valcourt, to be recalled to testify about their respective departments' involvement in the contentious issue.

DATELINE YORKTON, SASKATCHEWAN: A farmer's family (part of the huddled masses) listening breathlessly to the wireless for reports on the Mashat affair, finally relax after five days of tension. The head of the family turns to his oldest son and comments:

"What a threat to the country, eh? Aren't you glad it's over?"

The son replies: "I guess you're right, dad. But what is Mashat and how is it going to help us plant enough crops to keep the farm going? Besides, why do you call a radio a wireless when you have to plug the thing into a socket?"

The father replies: "In the first place, son, a Mashat is a person who comes from somewhere East, or West, of Yorkton, who wanted to become a Canadian citizen but needed some help in getting into the country."

The son replies: "Well, then why didn't he just rent a rowboat and beach somewhere in Nova Scotia like those other people did?"

The father replies: "Who gives a.....?"

DATELINE OTTAWA: In the Immigration Department, civil servants are working like busy little bees attempting to finish a song that ties in with the Al Mashat affair. The opening line goes: "Al Mashat maself in ma foot, in Immigration." (to be sung to the tune of 'I left my heart in San Francisco').

A junior civil servant happens onto the scene and asks what is going on. Being the conscientious federal employee that he is, he questions that this song writing exercise just might be a waste of the taxpayer's money. Just as the inquiry into the Al Mashat affair was.

"Who gives a.....!" he is told.

(Voice-Over by Rod Serling)
We take you now to the inner

"As I See It"

by
Colin Gibson



sanctums of the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa where Prime Minister Brian Mulroney (affectionately known as BM in nursing circles) has called a hasty conference with former External Affairs Ministers, Joe Clark, to discuss the Al Mashat affair. This is your Canadian twilight zone."

Former External Affairs Minister Joe Clark walks into the inner sanctums of the Parliament Buildings and discovers the Prime Minister combing his chin.

Prime Minister - "How are you Joe? Have a seat."

Joe Clark - "I'm fine sir, but why are you combing your chin?"

Prime Minister - "I'm combing my chin because there have been some references made to the Pinocchio syndrome and I would prefer to go cheek to jowl with my critics. By the way, Joe, you can call me Brian."

Joe Clark - "Thank you Sir Brian, I must admit though, I wish I had a chin. That way I could look more attentive when questions were asked of me. As it is now, I go to stroke my chin and my tie falls off."

Prime Minister - "We all must bear the burdens of office. You better pray high-necked collars don't come back into vogue or we will lose you completely."

Joe Clark - "I have my ears to save me, Sir Brian. By the way, what is an inner sanctums, I had to ask directions just to get here."

Prime Minister - "Inner sanctums is a phrase Rod Serling uses, I had to ask for directions to get here myself. But what are huddled masses? Are we going to have another immigration problem?"

Joe Clark - "No, Sir Brian, it just refers to Canadians who wonder what is going on with their country."

Prime Minister - "By the way .. uh .. uh .. Joe, why are we meeting?"

Joe Clark - "Something about wasting Canadian taxpayers money on an enquiry into the Mashat affair that wasn't going to provide any answers in the first place."

Prime Minister - "Oh, really, "Who gives a.....?"
As I see it, anyway.

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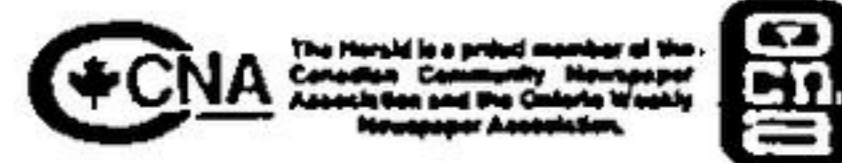
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Mind-boggling lifestyles

From time to time, the mind boggles just slightly at the lifestyle decisions people make.

This was my reaction - a distinct boggling sensation in both hemispheres of the brain - when I read an article the other day by a Utah woman whose husband has eight other wives.

Yes, the present tense is correct. This is not a man who has HAD eight other wives - this is a man who HAS nine wives.

I'm not sure why I've paused to stress this grammatical point. Somehow, the notion of having nine wives just brought the word "tense" leaping to mind.

Apparently, there's now a movement afoot to have polygamy legalized in the state of Utah. The woman wrote this article to stress the benefits of polygamy, pointing out that it offers a woman much more freedom than she would have in a conventional marriage.

Well, I'm aware, of course, that polygamy is legal in other cultures. I learned at university that Islamic law allows a man to have up to four wives, provided he is able to meet his responsibilities to all four.

As a naive undergraduate, I thought this made a certain sense. This was before I began to understand the reality of the situation - which is that it's difficult enough for a guy to meet his responsibilities to even one wife.

Statistics show that the average male is in fact capable of meeting his responsibilities to .37

Weir's World
by
Ian Weir
Thomson News Service



all nine wives are able to spend private time with the husband simply by making an appointment with him. If two of the wives want to see him on the same evening, they work it out between themselves.

Right. Well. One mustn't judge other people.

Still, a guy learns early in adult life that there are certain things to say to a woman who would like an hour or so of his time. "Take a number" is not one of them.

My personal suspicion is that a man who has nine wives might run into occasional jealousy problems - unless he simply decides to trust in dumb luck.

According to this theory, you'd just marry as many women as you want and then hope like heck that none of them like you much.

In fact, my personal belief is that this Utah family has the whole thing backward. Polygamy might indeed work in some circumstances - but only if it were a woman who had nine husbands.

This arrangement would have distinct possibilities when you stop to think about it.

There'd be one husband to share the yardwork, one to help with the child-rearing and two to communicate sensitively - and you'd still have enough left for a golf foursome.

In fact, if you look at it mathematically, each of the nine husbands would have to meet his responsibilities to just .11 of a wife.

Gee. I know quite a few guys who might be able to handle that.

Poets' Corner

Alcoholism
Once he bought a dog
To use as a peace offering.
That it hurt
When he'd been drinking
And I got numb
And I got ignored
The swearing
And the police
And the lawyers
And the questions
And he would love me
He always did.
He came back to me
Until my Mom
Got the nerve
To say "out"
Too late
To save a life-
But
Once he bought a dog
To use as a
Peace offering.

Tanya De Jong
Acton

Sometimes I
Sometimes I get very angry
Sometimes I get very mad
Sometimes I just can't agree
Sometimes I am very sad.

Sometimes I think people hate me
Sometimes I think I'm alone
Sometimes people berate me
Sometimes I moan and groan.

Sometimes I act really crazy
Sometimes I act really weird
Sometimes I think nothing'll faze me
But things always come
As I've feared.

Tanya De Jong
Acton