

## CASTOR COMMENT

### Was justice served?

Something is awry with our judicial system. It can be said that many people have many different conceptions of what justice is or should be. Some tend to be more lenient than others. But none of the conceptions can be satisfied by the recent sentence in the case of the hit-and-run death of Denise Bourbonnais of Embrun.

Jacques Bourdeau pleaded guilty to reduced charges of careless driving and failing to remain at the scene of an accident. He was originally charged with criminal negligence causing death. That charge carries a maximum life sentence upon conviction. Mr. Bourdeau's two-year sentence upon conviction of the lesser charges: \$750 and a two-year license suspension.

If people were shocked by the death of Denise Bourbonnais, they must now feel something akin to outrage at this sentence. That it was Mr. Bourdeau does not matter. We are concerned only with how the system works.

The Crown attorney is appointed to represent the public interest. Jacques Bourdeau was to stand trial on a charge of criminal negligence causing death. In whose interest did the Crown attorney feel it necessary to reduce the charge against Mr. Bourdeau? Certainly not in the best interest of the Bourbonnais family and certainly not in the best interests of the public. Justice could have been better served if it had been allowed to follow its proper course. The trial of Mr. Bourdeau on charges of criminal negligence causing death should have been allowed to take place and judgment should have been passed on the evidence. That is true justice.

### It's only fair

That was a good subject of discussion at the annual meeting of Russell Agricultural Society. The future of the fair was placed on the carpet by Malcolm MacGregor, a dairy farmer from Dundas County and a prominent exhibitor.

The issue was whether the fair should continue as a showcase for farmers' products, or whether the emphasis ought to be on entertainment. Most present seemed to feel that the original purpose of the fair — to show off the work of farmers and their wives for educational and informational purposes — ought to be retained.

One suggestion was made to the effect that the Russell Fair was a good one day fair, probably because of possible variations in the weather. A one day fair is a one-shot thing and if that one day happens to be bad from a weather standpoint, there is no chance to recoup.

If we may be permitted a comment, it is this. The federal contribution at \$9,000 is almost insignificant. The federal government, which apparently has been able to find money to squander on a variety of obscure and doubtful purposes, should be made to realize that \$9,000 for a good, Class B fair is peanuts.

### A true friend

We Canadians had better get a few things straight. Whatever happens with the United States on the international scene in the next ten years will have a profound effect on Canada. There are rumblings south of the border right now that should stir us into a little bit of crystal ball gazing. At the moment, observers refer to it simply as the second round of the cold war. But the current atmosphere of tensions between Washington and Moscow should be our tensions too. The United States has always been a good friend and will always be there if Canada shows a little spine on occasion.

The Soviet posture of late — one of the gimme, gimme always get — is a serious threat to world peace. As an ally of the U.S. we should be prepared to support our southern neighbour in any endeavour to curb the Soviet push toward the oil rich Persian Gulf and on to world domination. Our parents banded together to stop a power hungry Germany four decades ago and we can't turn a deaf ear when our names come up.

We're not saying that war is the ultimate and singular end to this game but let us not be so naive as to insist it could never be played out that way. Alone, Canada did Afghanistan. Alone, but with our allies to the South we are strong, feared, not an easy target.

## CASTOR REVIEW

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# Examining the issues and the non-issues

This has been without doubt one of the strangest elections in Canada's history. It is a compendium of negatives; so much so that it is an accurate reflection of the state of our nation at the present time.

If one wished to be cynical, not difficult under present circumstances, it could be said that a non-nation, having suffered the defeat of a non-government in the House, was having a non-election, without issues, platforms, programs or leaders.

Is it really that bad? Is that what Canada deserves in this year of 1980, after one hundred years of striving to become a nation, respected, courted, envied around the world?

Pierre Trudeau, a man for all elections, headed the government for ten years while the country staggered into double digit inflation, began falling apart at the seams first with Quebec, then Alberta, acting as though they were not part of Canada; and, finally rushed headlong into a national economic crisis because in ten years of the Liberal party our economy had become almost totally dependent on an uninterrupted flow of the cheap oil, which the veriest freshmen in any university economic course must have known was a thing of the past, along with cheap food, clean air and free love.

The Liberals whose dead hand had been on the throttle for all the years deterioration was ripening, immediately rushed into the election with the theme that they would manage the mess which they had helped to create. They said Clark was a blundering oaf because he had not cleaned up in

six and a half months what they had taken ten years to produce.

Trudeau, blaming Clark for making promises, immediately promised cheap oil, although he knows there is no cheap oil; without telling Canadians that his plan would increase the national deficit by \$4 billion dollars; other than that, he went through the campaign like a man in a dream pinning his hopes on sliding in on the polls which, since the beginning had predicted a Liberal win.

As the election nears, it is considered a sure thing that the Liberals will win. No one can give a reason why they should, unless we are to believe that the divine right of the Stewart kings has been passed on to the Liberal Party. Without a program, policy or leader, it is hard to see what they party is offering in this election.

All of the promises made by the Liberals, that they would balance the budget and manage the economy and guarantee our national security — all have gone by the board. There is no unity. Quebec is closer to separation after ten years of the Trudeau government than it was when he took office. Inflation, which was a cloud on the horizon, is now a hurricane. The oil crisis which Trudeau said was solved in 1974 has become a nightmare, because none of the necessary steps were taken to deal with it.

Clark has levelled with the Canadian people. He has told us that we will have to pay for oil, that we will have to conserve for, that we will have to clean up the deficit, rather than add to it, as Trudeau wants to do; a proposal that will lead to the virtual bankruptcy of Canada's credit around the world.

In the affair of the American hostages, no matter what anyone

may think, Clark displayed coolness and honesty worthy of a free world leader. Trudeau giggled and nit-picked and showed amazing lack of discretion and a failure to understand what the matter was all about. He couldn't seem to make up his mind whether the invasion of Afghanistan was worthy of his notice or not.

Still, we are told that Canadians will troop to the polls and vote for the Liberal Party. This would be very much in the category of asking Samson if he would mind rebuilding the temple after his head brought it crashing down.

They say a nation gets the kind of government it deserves. Are Canadians so sheeplike? Is it not time for a government that will address itself to the real problems of Canada, the farmers' problems, small businessmen's problems, of educators and artists and people who want to build, rather than destroy? Is it not time for a government that puts Canada first? That question Canadians will have to answer Feb. 18. How they answer it will determine the shape of this nation for the next 100 years, or whether, indeed, there will be either a shape or a nation.

## Correspondence

Editor, Castor Review,

As a former resident of the village — (having lived there many years ago — attending school there. Our family lived in the house which is at present Mrs. Steele's home.) — I am amazed at the changes which have occurred.

I look forward to receiving the Review each month — the odd time I recognize a name Bill Loucks, Russ Phair, Mel Stanley.

James G. Proudfoot  
South River, Ont.



## Beaver Bob Seaway Vistas

Brockville is one of my favourite cities, athwart the Seaway where it opens up in long and majestic vistas. Some of the old portside houses are worthy of anything in Halifax or St. Johns and there is about it the indefinable smell of seafaring, landlocked though it nearly is.

There is history in Brockville. The very name of the town conjures up the War of 1812, in which Brockville and the Seaway played no minor role. The fort is, of course, at Prescott but a great deal of the action took place on the St. Lawrence and certainly the good burghers of the village which later became Brockville were able to see British and American frigates hot on each other's trail.

The stately homes of Brockville front the Seaway. Fortunes were made in patent medicines and joyous entrepreneurs retired to the St. Lawrence strand and here erected these austere mausoleums which yet bear witness to their achievements. A little run down, a little seedy, some in a state of actual decay, others with their sweeping grounds filled with bungalows, they are not all fit survivors to remain. Some, however, continue to rear august rooflines against the sky.

Then there is the town square,

set on a slope with its sentinel churches, like a square in some mythical Balkan kingdom; and the long main street riding into the sunset, the beautiful Seaway route to Gananoque and Kingston. Brockville has a respectable coterie of boats, including some of yacht dimensions; and all these things add to the atmosphere and verve of the town.

The greatest asset is, of course, the Seaway with its blue, rippling surface, combed with tiny wavelets, stretching to the far headlands and the big ships stepping down to the sea and others moving up to the Lakes. Brockville watching the world go by its door.

We were a little disturbed the other day when we read about the \$60 million dollar shopping mall planned for the Seaway city, particularly the statement of one city father to the effect that the mall would turn a blank wall to the Seaway.

Whatever attractions or defects the mall may boast, shutting out the Seaway is not only a cruel blow to the citizens and visitors but an example of stupid neglect of the town's most commanding feature.

There is a mall in Ogdensburg which the Brockville mall may resemble, since most of these con-

structions are cut to a pattern; and the Ogdensburg neglects to take into account the beauty and majesty of the Seaway vista with the result that if you want to visit Ogdensburg and absorb something of the spirit and tradition of the city, don't go to the mall.

We hope this mistake will be avoided in Brockville. Perhaps the citizens will have something to say. After all, a shopping mall, with restaurants and stores is a public structure and surely must conform to some kind of city standards, architecturally as well as aesthetically. To shut out the Seaway, is like building a hotel at Niagara Falls, with its back to the Falls; or in Barbados, with its back to the beach.

Far from shutting out the Seaway, it should be brought in; the aim and purpose of the structure should be to present vistas looking up and down the Seaway, so that citizens and visitors, shopping, eating or relaxing could feel that the Seaway and its traffic was as close and intimate as though they were moving up in a great liner with high glass walls and easy access to the water by way of promenades and decks. A little imagination, gentleness, please. Let us not have a Desert Inn on the shores of the beautiful and exciting St. Lawrence.