

CASTOR COMMENT

Courageous Cure

In spite of two obvious difficulties with Allan MacEachen's Budget, the fiscal policies outlined are courageous, necessary and maybe effective.

The difficulties are, first, that the Budget is difficult and constrained by the problem of the \$14 billion dollar deficit; and, secondly, that the cure is being administered by the same people who incurred that deficit, the highest in our peacetime history.

What is happening in the Budget is that the oil companies are being asked to pony up for a deficit created by Liberal Government policies under the Trudeau administration. Naturally, they don't like it.

However, there is an element of poetic justice in a situation which is essentially a battle between the Eastern banks and the Western oil companies for control of the Canadian economy. The Budget comes down on the side of the Eastern banks, in large part because the oil companies are American-owned or multi-nationals, while the banks are owned by Canadians.

The Minister of Finance was courageous in his decision to go after the oil companies. These companies, mostly foreign-owned, except for a few small Canadian exploration companies, have had a field day since the OPEC increases. Their profits have doubled and tripled and quadrupled — and to say, as they have been saying, that the relatively modest taxes imposed by MacEachen on natural gas exports will destroy incentives is simply to shed crocodile tears. That posturing is beyond belief.

Absentee owners

The farmers of Ontario are getting hot under the collar about the recent increase in the sales of farm land to absentee foreign investors. Therefore the Ontario Federation of Agriculture is demanding that the provincial government put an immediate freeze on such sales.

And they are right. After all, it's one thing to buy land and settle on it, and quite another to purchase land only as a hedge against inflation or for speculation. If farms are left uninhabited, the entire rural community suffers. Membership in churches drops and schools show a decline in enrolment. Eventually the small towns begin to disappear.

On the other hand, immigrant farmers have been well-received in the Russell area. Several Swiss farmers have settled there and have made a substantial contribution to the economic and social well-being of the community.

Changing times

Times, they are a-changin'. Well, as far as Halloween in the Castor area goes anyway. Casselman OPP report that it was so quiet Oct. 31, it was hard to believe it was really Halloween. A few small fires were set in bags of leaves but that was about the extent of the potentially-dangerous pranks. What a change! After years of fires, roadblocks, and damage to property, of Halloween when law-abiding citizens were afraid to venture into the streets, we seem to have turned the corner into more peaceful times. Finally.

CASTOR REVIEW

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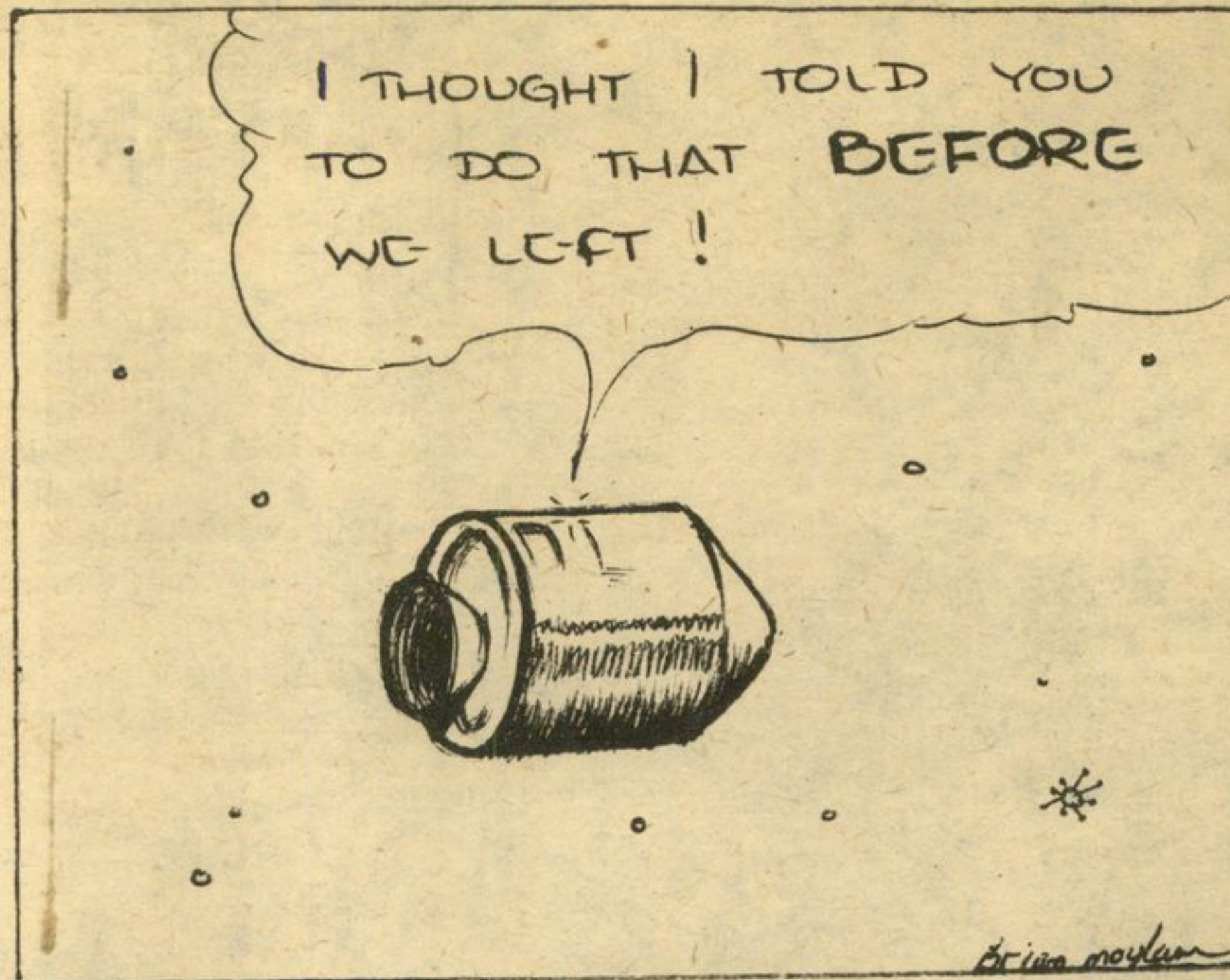
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Beaver Bob

Clucking about chicken pie

What gentle visions are conjured up in the mind at the mention of Chicken Pot Pie. Many people are unable to wax rhapsodical about Chicken Pot Pie; or, to put it another way, many people cannot whip themselves into a frenzy thinking about Chicken Pot Pie. Even hot Chicken Pot Pie leaves them cold. The effect of Cold Chicken Pot Pie had better not be imagined.

Chicken Pot Pie immediately brings the memory of the old Uwanta Lunch, named as a result of the same thought processes that name a motel the U-Nap, or a cottage Bide-a-Wee, or Dew Drop Inn. I am convinced that there is a place reserved in the deep and fierier recesses of eternity for such crassness and it is not called Dew Drop Inn.

The old Uwanta was one of the imperishable fixtures of Ottawa's gourmet circuit in the days of the Star Cafe and Bowle's lunch; that is, before and just after the war.

What destroyed all such places was that an entire generation rose up and went overseas and discovered other nations had ways of preparing food so that it could actually be eaten with enjoyment and not as a punishment inflicted by angry gods. Things were never the same again.

The old Uwanta was on Bank just off Queen, almost directly across from that much lamented and vanished monument to art and culture, the Capital Theatre. In the thirties and forties to suggest that such places, having about them something of the agelessness of the pyramids, would one day disappear would have given rise to a blank stare of incredulity, as though one were to suggest today that the Skyline or the Inn of the Provinces would one day succumb to the wrecker's ball.

On a cold winter day, the Uwanta was a haven, beckoning and beaming, a pale saffron light coming through its frosted front window, as one battled the icy winds of Bank street; winds which, in the forties were a great deal colder and more merciless than they are today.

The Uwanta at noon was crowded with overcoated and fedora-hatted figures struggling for a place at the counter where an elderly, weasened individual in a white apron and white hat bellowed incomprehensible orders through a hole in the wall. While waiting, one could feast one's eye if not one's belly, on an impressive array of pies of every variety, each one sliced into eight mathematically equal pieces by the celebrated Dinny, using only a kitchen knife, no calculators or mechanical devices of any kind. The man was a genius, a veritable Galileo.

The Uwanta had a number of specialties, all of them indistinguishable from one another. One with some claim to reliability was Boston Cream Pie, which may have come all the way from Boston; another was Chicken Pot Pie. And this was really a specialty, because Chicken Pot Pie at the Uwanta was in a class by itself. First, it came in a brown, oblong-shaped earthenware bowl. It had a crust. You picked up the container, holding it with your napkin, so as not to burn your hands because it was hot. Then you eased it onto your plate, with an immense feeling of accomplishment. It was succulent, tasty, juicy, containing pieces of actual chicken, real crust, potato and three green peas. Never more and never less than three. That was a meal.

Correspondence

Editor,
Castor Review

On Sunday, Sept. 29, I attempted to dispose of some accumulated basement garbage at the Russell dump. I was turned away (along with several others) as I am not a resident of Russell Township. The sheriff at the gate even checked licences to make sure no one would attempt to life. Even our offers to pay to dump the load were turned down. I live near Vars and have since discovered I should have gone to the Ottawa dump past Bells Corners, but felt then, that Russell was closer and garbage is garbage, no matter which dump you use. Russell must be a very wealthy township to have a paid guard at its dump. I was able to find another privately owned disposal area, but I wonder where the other four vehicles put their garbage that day, possibly the nearest ditch?

Yours truly,
Heather Gardner

Editor,
Castor Review

Enclosed is my subscription for another year. We enjoy receiving the Castor Review from month to month and though there have been many changes since I was a boy in Russell there is still a lot of news of interest to my wife — the former Beulah Shelp — and myself.

My parents lived in Russell from September 1933-October 1958 when my father, the late Dr. Thomas McNaught, was minister of St. Andrews-St. Pauls United Church. Beulah grew up in North Russell and was married to my brother, James, until his death in 1974. Then in 1978 she married me and since then we have been living in Scarborough.

Recently we completed a most interesting and enjoyable tour of Europe where we attended the Passion Play at Oberammergau. I am enclosing a "little write-up" that you might wish to include in the Review. (See P. 8)

Finally let me thank you again for a very interesting and newsy paper which I hope we can enjoy for years to come.

Yours truly,
Rev. Robert J.
McNaught,
Scarborough

Editor,
Castor Review

Beaver Bob's column in the August 16th issue of the Review was, as usual, a thoughtful and a provocative piece — one that touched a chord within me as I'm sure it did within hundreds of his regular readers.

The subject of the government's littering the parks and the roadsides of our National Capital is one that hasn't received the attention of the national press that it so clearly deserves.

As a Canadian living here on the west coast, (given the current cost of domestic air fare), I can afford to visit my capital city only en route to or from some overseas destination. Such an opportunity occurred this past summer, and I was — needless to say — distressed to observe the cavalier fashion in which our federal government has seen fit to leave (as Beaver Bob so aptly describes them) "gainfully chunks of old iron, pieces of obsolete machinery and various lengths of piping and wires" lying here and there around the heretofore lovely landscape. This arrant carelessness cannot be left unchecked.

Bravo to the Castor Review — and of course to B.B. — for your courageous stand!

Gratefully,
J.E. Wright
(faithful reader)
Victoria, B.C.

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