

The Porcupine Advance

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The Vaunted Slate

The Slate for 1948 was elected on glittering promises of 'action', 'efficiency', 'prompt decisions' and other phrases which implied that the members of the Slate would wade into the town's affairs in a businesslike manner and deal with them as they came along.

However, from the snail's pace with which they are conducting town affairs, the promises which they gave appear to be as empty as the taxpayers' pockets are going to be after said taxpayers remit the new high taxes which will soon be imposed in 1948 by the Slate of the same name.

As recounted in a news story in this edition, council at this week's meeting had 20 items on the agenda on which decisions might have been rendered if the Slate had been applying itself to the town's affairs in the manner which it had promised. But instead, only four items of business were cleared up, all of them routine matters which the Student Parliament at Timmins High and Vocational School could have dealt with just as efficiently.

The 16 other items on the agenda which had been deferred from the previous meeting were deferred again; most of them have been deferred from meeting to meeting for the past six weeks. From the fashion in which they are being dealt with it appears they will still be on the agenda when the 1949 council holds its first meeting next January.

Why this listlessness on the part of the Slate for 1948? Why this neglect of their duty as elected officials? It appears to the Advance that if these gentlemen don't start showing some signs of life at once, the suggestion made at a public meeting last Sunday that they resign is an excellent one.

Mr. Brunette Steps In

When ex-mayor J. Emile Brunette walked to the platform of the Empire theatre on Sunday evening to throw his weight behind the miners who protested the rescinding of bus bylaw No. 1027, the cause of the miners was immeasurably strengthened. And the position of the four members of the Slate for 1948 who voted to rescind the bylaw--Councillors Quinn, Bailey, Quesnel and Fay-- was correspondingly weakened.

Ex-mayor Brunette is a man whom the public of this community know and trust. He was always elected here on his own merits. There was never any suggestion that he received the backing and financial support of a special section of the public. His opinion carries more power with local residents than would that of any 10 slates such as the one which with a good deal of editorial assistance splurged forth at the last election with a bombast of publicity and advertising such as has never been seen or heard here before.

Mr. Brunette presented a reasonable explanation of why the bus bylaw was passed by the 1947 council he led. He maintained that in view of the attitude taken by bus operators the 1947 council acted justly and with forethought in passing it. He chided Councillor Quinn for running around making investigations into the bus business and said it was up to the bus operators to make their own case. He willingly joined a citizens' committee to carry on the fight for lower bus fares.

And most remarkable of all and greatest proof of his conviction that the 1947 council acted justly in passing the bylaw by his action he backed up the claims of his ancient "enemy" James P. Bartleman, who has maintained all along that Bylaw 1027 was passed in good faith. When Emile Brunette and James P. Bartleman agree on a subject the rightness of the proposition involved would appear to be unequivocal. In short, Mr. Brunette has put the Slate for 1948 solidly and squarely on the spot. They have to figure out another solution of the bus fare problem.

There is only one way in which to evaluate justly what local bus fares should be. A transportation expert from another section of the province should be hired by the town and permitted access to their books by local bus operators. The last expert hired by the town was not given access to these books, nor were enough facts concerning the bus situation presented in Mr. Quinn's recent transportation report.

Whether or not the bus fares outlined in the discarded bylaw 1027 were just and equitable will never be discovered till this is done. No one knows what are just fares in this district and no one will know till the matter is reviewed in a thorough manner by a competent person in possession of all the facts.

Hence it is quite possible it may be discovered that the present bus fares prevailing here are just and that operators were correct in protesting the passing of bylaw 1027. If such is the case local operators would be well advised to supply properly qualified persons with the data which is required and put an end to the present hullabaloo.

In proposing that an independent report be made in which both bus costs and revenue are reviewed the Advance does not suggest that the profits made by the local bus lines should be made public to everyone. To ask a man to publicly declare his profits would be an infringement of his rights as a citizen. But these figures could be released in confidence to the town council, the expert or experts sifting the case and a committee of representatives of the public who could verify for the balance of the public whether fares were just or not. In this way this bus fare mess could be cleaned up once and for all.

A Word To The Wise

Dr. Graham B. Lane's advice this week to men working under pressure to learn to relax are words which wise men will heed, for during the past month this district has been the scene of the sudden deaths of a number of outstanding men, men in the prime of life who have been assets to the community as well as the pillars of their families.

Life moves today at an ever-increasing pace due to the highly modernized and mechanized world in which we live. The tempo of life today is not that of the days of our great-grandfathers. And the type of life we live today will take its toll unless one learns to draw away from it once in every little while.

As late as half a century ago life moved much more slowly. The absence of artificial light forced many projects to be confined to daylight hours; now they are carried on into the night. The slowness in travelling as contrasted between the horse and buggy and the modern high-speed automobile gave much more leisure, though there was less comfort.

In business, the slow rate of communication forced transactions to be spread over a greater period of time. The high pressure selling of today did not exist. The dearth of professional entertainment--stage, screen and radio--left time for meditation and thought. People made their own entertainment. It was a healthy safety valve for worry.

Yes, life was a nice, easy-going business in those days. People lived longer for it. It would pay us to recapture some of it.

In The Days When The Porcupine Was Young

By G. A. Macdonald

No. 40 More About Past Police Officers In Timmins

It might be asked, "If the police force of past years was as efficient and honest, in the main, as suggested last week in article No. 39 of this series, why were so many police chiefs and other officers dismissed during the years?"

As the politicians in parliament say, "The answer to that question is in the negative." And the politicians should know the answer to a question like that. Indeed, since the police force control has been placed under a police commission, and away from municipal politics, there seems to be more permanence than in some previous years.

As a matter of fact, though, there have been comparatively few dismissals in Timmins, even of police chiefs. The truth is that the majority leaving the force did their leaving by the resignation route. Of course, a police chief is just as much out of the job if he resigns, as if he waited to be dismissed. The first police chief that Timmins had seemed to have the worst luck. He resigned, but the council refused to accept his resignation so that they might have the joy of discharging him.

"None Die, but a Few Resign" Speaking of office holders, Thomas Jefferson is quoted as saying that "Few Die, but None Resign." In the case of Timmins this might be changed read, "None died but a few resign." No police chief in Timmins ever died on the job, and only one police-constable, the late Norman Burke, passed away while still on the town force. As far as known only two of the twelve former chiefs succumbed even after leaving the post here.

Resign - or Else! It must be admitted that most of the resignations of former chiefs of police in Timmins were "by special request." One police chief, who claimed he had done his duty here faithfully and well, at first positively refused to resign. He was determined that he would be dismissed for cause, or rather, his plan was to show that there was no cause for his dismissal or resignation. He even wrote a letter to The Porcupine Advance, explaining his attitude.

Some of the council of that day, however, did a little explaining to that chief. They explained that if he did not resign, he would be dismissed instantly; he would have to vacate immediately the residence then supplied to police chiefs; and he would be left to sue the council for salary in lieu of notice. Anyone can guess the rest. That chief resigned promptly. He was allowed to remain in the house to his convenience and he was

paid salary in lieu of notice. Resignation by Wholesale In the neighbouring township of Tisdale, this resignation plan assumed wholesale proportions, all members of the police force being asked at a January meeting to hand in their resignations, and to apply for re-ignations, and to apply for re-ignations if they wished to resume the work.

At least one year, the same plan was adopted by Timmins. More than one good policeman those days, did resign, as asked, but made it very plain that they would not apply to be reinstated on a bet, without the odds of a change of council. Some others resigned so quickly that the council hadn't time to say "resignation."

Of course, all councils in the past were not too hard on the police. Yet, even the considerate council had an odd way of looking at police, to judge from one resolution passed in council on March 17th, 1919.

Those Uniforms Cost Money The resolution read: "That suitable raincoats be bought for members of police force, in order to protect their uniforms in the rainy season." The council, apparently, did not think that rain would hurt a policeman on his beat, though there was never a one of them who could walk between the drops. But, on the other hand, those uniforms cost money. It may be, of course that the resolution did not imply just what it said. Or, perhaps, council felt that the public would object less to protecting town uniforms than looking after the health and comfort of the police.

Few Men, Many Jobs In 1912 there were two men on the Timmins police force, the chief on day duty, and the constable for the night work, while the two of them had to be on call night and day. Before the council got more men to meet the growing needs they piled all sorts of outside jobs on the police, from acting as truant officers to collecting poll tax, acting as sanitary inspectors and what not.

It was November, 1920, before there was a four-man force, two for day duty and two for nights. It was July, 1924, before the police had a car for their use, and 1927, before a safe was purchased for the exclusive use of the department. The police van was bought in 1935. In Sept., 1925, there was a resolution passed at council "that the chief of police be supplied with four sets of grappling irons and necessary rope for same."

Padded Cell for Town Hall A resolution passed on August 14th, 1922, authorized the Board of Health to install a padded cell in the town

hall. This filled a long-felt need. There were occasions when it was used to much advantage, saving unfortunate suffering, and the town the danger of costly trouble. Often, however, it was felt that it might have been used often with good results. No names mentioned.

Anyone studying the record in fair spirit will agree that with the facilities available the old-time police forces did a good job. The law and order in the town during the years is the proof of good work well done. To the present, and to past police forces, Timmins owes the fact that it has been one of the most orderly and comfortable of mining towns on the continent. This is not to suggest that everything was always conducted on the strictest Sunday School principles.

Did So-and-So Get The Whiskey? There may have been a few cases like the one suggested by a note book found during a clean-up of the town offices some years ago. This note belonged to one of the early police chiefs of the town. There were several pages of items like "so-and-so paid dog tag." So-and-so to be summoned for unsanitary conditions on premises. "Watch So-and-so's place at around twelve Sunday evenings," and other similar items from a policeman's notes, each name, of course, being a different one.

Then sandwiched in between these formal notes was the note, "John So-and-So wants case of whiskey." It has been impossible to trace whether the worthy So-and-So, who was suspected by some suspicious people of being a blind-pigger ever received the whiskey that he wanted.

And More About Thirteen In last week's article in this series, it was pointed out that the present chief of police is the thirteenth to hold that office in Timmins; that there have been thirteen acting chiefs and thirteen deputy chiefs, that 169 men have served on the force in the past thirty-five years; and that when the present chief finishes his thirteenth year on the force, he will have been chief for thirteen months. To this it should be added that last week's article was No. 39 (three times thirteen), and it was written on the thirteenth, a Friday at that. It occupied three columns of thirteen inches in depth.

And finally, at present there are twenty-five uniformed men on the force, and two clerks, making twenty seven in all. Thus it may be said that the thirteenth chief has twenty-six in his department, and even some otherwise objectionable people know that twenty-six is twice thirteen.

Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath. I do not know the man." Thus we note that he had already told a lie, and then swore to support it. A little later others said to him, "Surely thou art one of them, for thy speech betrayeth thee." Then began to curse and to swear (positively affirm, probably by the name of God) saying, "I know not the man."

Your Pastor Speaks

This is second in a series of religious articles written for publication in the Porcupine Advance by members of the district clergy.

Simon Peter
by Rev. R. E. Goheen
Free Methodist Church

Simon Peter was a fisherman by trade. He became one of the disciples of our Lord. Perhaps there is not anywhere between the covers of the Bible a story of a man's life that appeals to more of us than that of Peter. We all love him. That may be because he combines in such a surprising way the qualities we admire and the weaknesses we recognize in ourselves.

Among the friends of Jesus there was none more human than Peter. In the list of disciples Peter is always named first, perhaps because of his temperament. Peter's leadership is apparent on the many occasions when he acted as spokesman for the group of disciples. An outstanding case is his great confession at Caesarea Philippi. When Jesus asked the disciples who they thought he was, Peter's response was instant and correct. He was convicted, not merely by John's testimony, but by what he had seen and heard, that Jesus was in truth the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

By nature, Peter seemed full of strange contradictions. He was tender-hearted and affectionate, yet he was naturally impulsive and full of many weaknesses. At times he was presumptuous and would decide or act without due consideration. Thus he was often wrong.

At times Peter was timid and cowardly. One of the main causes of his denial of Christ was his fear of man. Let us briefly note the seven steps in Peter's downfall.

(1) Conceit - Peter was too sure of himself. When Jesus suggested that the disciples would be offended because of Him that night impulsive Peter quickly replied, "Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet I will never be offended." Again "Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee." Jesus' words in reply "This night, before the cock crows, thou shalt deny Me thrice," should have been warning enough for Peter not to trust in his own strength but depend on God. However, he did not heed the warning.

(2) Ease - You will remember that in Gethsemane the disciples were found sleeping while Jesus was praying. When Jesus found them asleep He saith unto Peter, "Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst not thou watch one hour?" No doubt Jesus addressed Peter in particular because of the profession he had previously made, Peter, and the others, shortly before, had all promised to die with Him, but they could not even watch one hour.

(3) Rashness - When the multitude came to seize Jesus, quick, impulsive Peter drew his sword and cut off the right ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest. But Jesus immediately healed it and rebuked Peter telling him to put the sword back into its rightful place--the sheath.

(4) Following Afar Off - His fear kept him from joining the company and publicly acknowledging his Lord; however, his affection obliged him to follow at a distance that he might see the end. But it is dangerous to keep at a distance from Christ. It encourages doubt and invites disaster. The writer of the Book of Proverbs says, "The fear of man bringeth a snare." (5) Evil Associations - Peter sat in the High Priest's palace with the servants. A Christian should avoid all dangerous places, and the company of those who are most likely to prove a snare to him. It would seem that the society he chose led to the sin he committed. So many people pray the prayer, "And lead us not into temptation," but deliberately walk into the way of temptation.

(6) Open Denial - Peter acted a denial before he spoke it with his lips. Now the evil principle gains ground. Before, he followed at a distance, now he openly denies. As Peter sat without in the palace, a damsel came unto him and said, "Thou also wast with Jesus." "But he denied before them all saying, I know not what thou sayest."

(7) Blasphemy - "And when he had gone out into the porch, another maid saw him and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with

Our Heroes Cleared!

Facing a murder charge is no cinch, even if Briefcase O'Flannigan is defending you and if you have a reasonable chance of getting off. There is something very final about the word murder. Not only does it mean the demise of the corpus delicti, but it also means the shuffling off this mortal coil by the party of the second part, should he be found guilty before the tribunals of justice.

Thus, despite Briefcase's assurances that all would be well with us in the end, both Wilbur and ourself experienced considerable trepidation in the short days which intervened till our appearance in local magistrate's court. It was an unpleasant sensation to squat in our cells all day and contemplate our fates, should it happen that Briefcase was incorrect in his judgement. We had killed all those people in the Great Dry Ice Manhunt, all right, but of course it had not been intentional. Morally we were in the clear and undoubtedly our learned legal friend would make haste to prove this in court. But what if something should go wrong? What if through some unkindly twist of fate we should be found guilty? Yes, what then?

From this you might gather that we were callous to the fates of all the persons who had been exterminated by the unfortunate result of our enterprise. Such was not the case. We simply failed to see why we should follow them into that shadowy limbo which is the other world. We had a natural repugnance for such a trip when we ourselves were involved. It is different when your own neck is at stake. Don't ever forget that, my little ones.

"Well, it is a long rope which has no ending," observed Wilbur gloomily on the morning of the day we were to make our first appearance in court. "The strain is beginning to get me. If I don't look out I am liable to stand up there and say we did it on purpose."

We were marched upstairs in handcuffs via the little stairway which leads from the police station directly to the courtroom. It was a mournful journey and we went on laggard feet. We were parked in the prisoners' dock between two gents charged with having wine in public and they smell like it. The constable in charge removed our handcuffs. Meanwhile Briefcase sat at the lawyers' table purring like a well-nourished tomcat.

The courtroom was jammed and, if we may say so, with famous faces, all of whom regarded us with intent interest. For example, William Kennedy, sole survivor among international union organizers when the union hall collapsed, was in the very front row. Beside him sat Premier George Drew and every once in a while they would mutter to one another while discussing our case. Curiosity makes strange bed-fellows indeed! Timmins town council lead by Mayor Eyre, was there in a body, possibly with a view to determining how we could be made to pay the damages inflicted on the town.

Famous criminologists were here by the score, including Frank Armstrong, the Great Northern Pike and Philo Vance, who had interrupted their joint investigation of the latest Cochrane murder in order to attend. Ozzie Lacroix the noted president of the Porcupine Barbers and Hairdressers Association, sat beside E. L. Longmore, manager of Hollinger Consolidated Gold Mines. Both were financially interested in the case; with Mr. Lacroix it looked like a bad year ahead in the barbering business with so many clients being wiped out; similarly, who was going to dig gold at Hollinger when half the mine's personnel was underground in a fashion other than in their regular employment?

Joe Bradette, Liberal M.P. for Cochrane South, had journeyed to his constituency for the hearing and there beside him, almost sitting on his coat tails was Mrs. Ray Stevenson, wife of the local Labor Progressive organizer. Seated in a solid phalanx nearby were the town's four undertakers, eyeing the two of us with measuring looks.

Scattered here and there in the crowd were famous faces galore, faces we had seen in the newspapers but which we could not recall at once, figures of international importance in the scientific and political world.

"I don't like the look on those undertakers' faces," Wilbur murmured. "We get hanged at Cochrane, don't we? Are they trying to get our business before the Cochrane undertakers have a chance to put in a bid?"

He gave us a quick nudge in the ribs. "Hey, do you see who I see?... Down there on the left about the centre of the hall... The guy with the studious look and the bushy hair. Am I seeing things or is that HIM?" We looked where he indicated and with astonishment recognized the great man. Meanwhile Briefcase had followed our gaze. He looked at us and nodded his head in a self-satisfied way to confirm our recognition.

"What's he doing here? Is Briefcase calling him as a witness or will he testify against us?" Wilbur demanded fiercely.

"That I do not know," we replied. "But I can tell you that I hope with all my heart that he is on our side. If not, it is curtains, the gallows, the rope, etc. for us."

But our exposure to the gaze of all these distinguished individuals was short and sweet. A succession of police constables recounted the story we had told about the dry ice. Briefcase formally pleaded not guilty to the charge of murder we faced and the magistrate set a date two weeks in advance for our preliminary hearing. We were hustled from the courtroom, down the stairs and back to our cells.

Within five minutes, Briefcase popped in. "Say, is he going to be a witness for or against us?" was Wilbur's first inquiry of the noted jurist, whose eyes were gleaming with the thought of the sensation the case was causing.

"He is for us, boys, for us," said Briefcase. "His appearance here will cost plenty, though. On the other hand you have plenty of the long and ready."

Briefcase opened his briefcase and began to thumb through the papers he was carrying. A paper fluttered to the floor and Wilbur stooped to pick it up. He glanced at it casually and then his eyes popped out.

"You snake!" he shouted at Briefcase. "You've known this for three days and we're still sat in jail. You could have got us off right this afternoon if you had produced this you inhuman fiend!"

He jumped to his feet flourishing the paper, which bore the letterhead of the Continental Dry Ice Company. It looked as though he was going to assault Briefcase on the spot. Briefcase retreated to a corner of the cell, hands raised to fend off the imminent attack. "Now, now," he said, "Take it easy. Relax."

Wilbur threw his hands in the air once, then planked himself down on the cell cot with his head on his hands. He tossed the paper to himself. "Read that, Heathcliff," he muttered.

The letter was addressed to the party at South End from whom Wilbur had borrowed the dry ice for our manhunt. It read:

"Dear Sirs: "This is to inform you of the regrettable and entirely inexcusable error which was made by our shipping department on your recent order for a quantity of dry ice. Through the mistake of a foreman (he has since been removed from our staff) it was not dry ice at all which we shipped to you. It was a concentrated form of pineapple extract which we also manufacture.

"Will you kindly return the pineapple extract at once and we shall immediately ship your original order of dry ice. We render our sincere apologies for any inconvenience our mistake may have caused you.

"Yours very truly,
"Anthony O. Oglethorpe, Sales Manager"