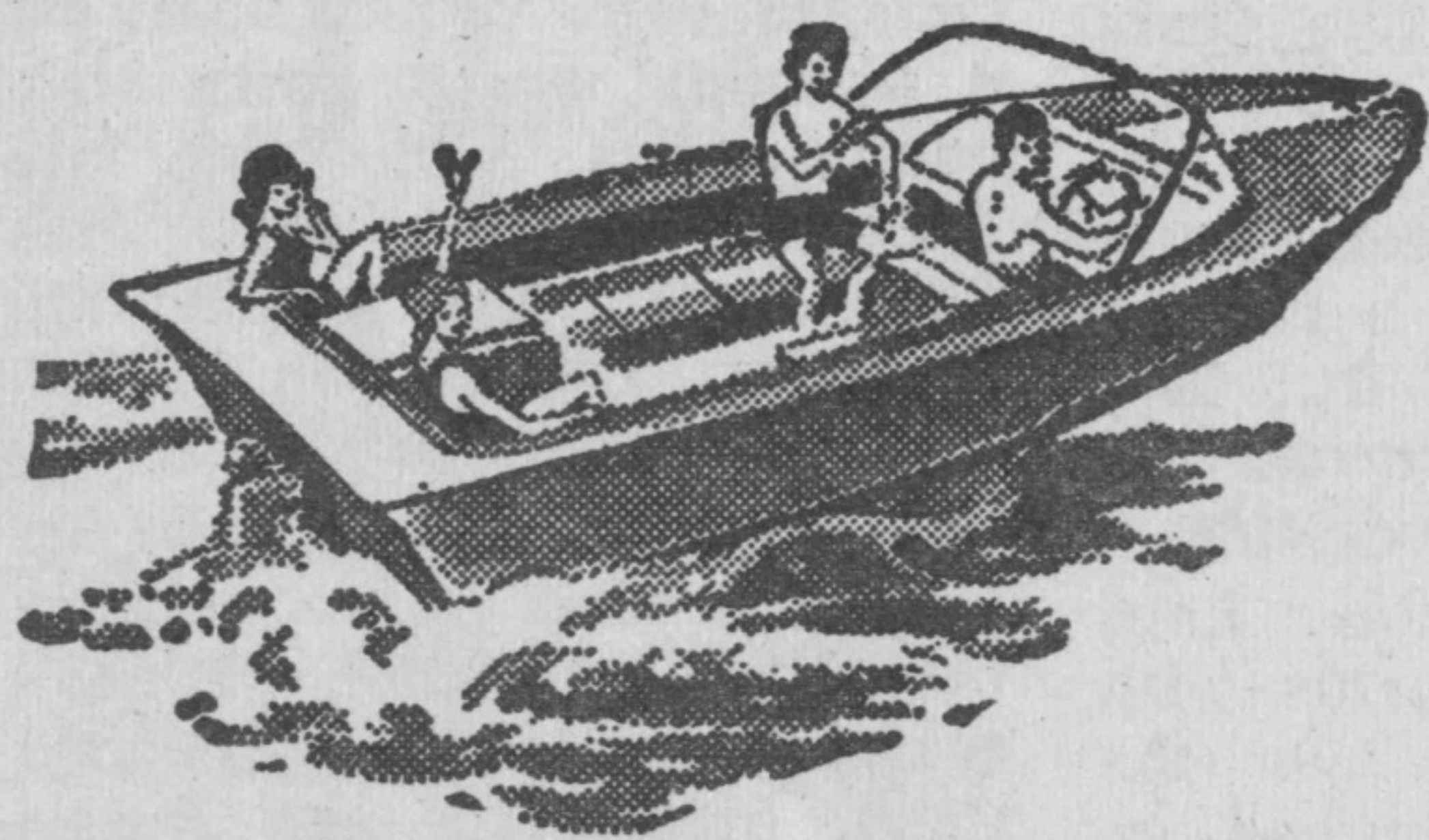


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BY BILL SMILEY

## **Unification: Part Three**

Remember? It's 1987 and we have Uniforce, alias the Canadian Cobras, 100,000 strong, pure bone and gristle, master-minded by jut-jawed Joe Garibaldi, Minister of National Defence.

The Yanks are all upset because he is dickering with the Chinese, a couple of waiters from the Nanking restaurant. It's obviously a second Cuba in the making.

Joe gets a call from the White House. He states his terms, and hangs up. He knows his man. LSD, president of the U.S. of A., is a tough cookie. He came up through the unions, like Joe, but owes his position to the huge wealth of his wife, Mary Warner, of the hideously rich Boston Warners.

Twenty minutes later, Joe's phone rings. It's LSD himself. "Now, look, Joe. We don't want trouble. We paid eight million for Alaska and I think five million for the Louisiana Purchase thing. Yeah, yeah, we know there's inflation. How about a straight eight billion, after taxes? You want ten? Don't be ridiculous. We won't go a nickel past nine. After all, we own most of the country anyway. A deal? Right. Take over."

It wasn't quite that simple, of course. Joe had to call a meeting of the War Council. This group had supplanted the Cabinet, which was relegated to such tasks as studying the Immediate Housing Bill, introduced in 1968, and the Old Age Unemployment Act, prepared in 1969.

But it didn't take long. Joe had hand-picked his senior officers. Marshall-Admiral Louis Latour had wanted to be King Louis the First of New Canada the Second. After Joe had explained how awkward this would be, Louis settled for the liquor concession at all martyrs' shrines in the country.

The others went along. Colonel-Commodore Nils Jorgenson of Winnipeg balked a little at getting no more than the remaining mineral rights of the Prairie Provinces, but finally acceded, grumbling. The rest accepted what they got: The fishing rights in Hudson Bay, the Rocky Mountains, or whatever.

It was beautifully planned, perfectly timed. At noon on July 1st, our national holiday, the Cobras struck. Flying squads took over all communications media, without a drop of blood being shed.

Nearly everybody was pooped after the long, hot holiday, so that only a few heard Marshall-Admiral Latour announce, on the 11 p.m. news, that Uniforce had unearthed and promptly squashed a Communist plot to take-over the country.

Next day the full story came out, in all media, and the Honorable Joe was lauded for the speed and decision with which he had handled the emergency.

There wasn't an iota of resistance. Parliament was on holidays. The Prime Minister was ill and in seclusion. The universities were closed, so there were no students' protests. The Mounties and militia had long since been disbanded as needless expense.

Everything was perfectly calm. Business as usual. Most Canadians were starting their holidays.

A few noticed that there were a lot of new radio and TV announcers and newspaper columnists, but they figured the new guys were just vacation replacements.

Then the good news started coming. Corporation, income and sales taxes were all to be reduced. Farm subsidies were to be raised. Food prices were to be lowered. Free housing for everybody making less than \$5,000.

I guess I don't have to tell you the rest. Popular movement demanding a republic and "Joe for President." Joe's sincere statement that he had no ambition except to serve the Canadian people, through the democratic process. Big convention. Only stipulation for delegates was that they be members of Uniforce. Joe elected unanimously. You had to hand it to him. From President of the Detraction Workers' Union to President of the great Republic of Canada in a few short years.

That's all. Oh, a few people disappeared quietly here and there, but that was because of the new Relocation Act.