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Get involved

Hello, fellow Americans. This seems to be a common greeting since the federal election. Guess my prediction for the election was off by a bit (at least as far as the Liberals and Conservatives are concerned). I think I made the fatal mistake of not being objective enough and allowing my personal hopes to interfere with my prediction.

Anyway, like it or not, here comes Free Trade. It's full steam ahead for Mulroney's dream. I'm still worried though. Actually, maybe not worried but very concerned. The day after the election I heard the deal will be implemented on time for the January deadline. Then I heard negotiations will begin for phase two of the deal, dealing with subsidies.

What gives? I thought the whole deal was worked out. All the I's dotted and the T's crossed. What else is there left unnegotiated in the deal that Mulroney's not telling us about.

All I can say is I hope Free Trade is as good as Mulroney is telling everybody it is.

Now a word about small towns. I was somewhat apprehensive about moving from a city of 100,000 to a town of 2,600. I wondered what there would be to do. Well, I was in for a pleasant surprise.

There's all sorts of activities to keep a person busy. The recreation centre offers a wide variety of activities to either watch or participate in. Last weekend was particularly busy with the Kleenex Huggies curling cashspiel and the Novice hockey tournament taking place. The Chamber of Commerce also held its first annual Christmas dinner and dance which was well attended.

One thing about a small town. If you want to get involved with a group it's much easier to do than in a larger city. You have you pick of what group to participate in, and, because of the smaller population, it's easier to join an organization.

Also, the impact of making such a contribution can be seen a lot better than in a large city.

There is one drawback about a small population. Because of the lack of people organizations don't always have the amount of members they need to carry out their tasks.

People often do double duty, either doing the jobs of two or three people in one organization, or working for more than one group. This is an unfortunate situation because so much more could be done if more people would get involved.

Instead of watching that television program, why not donate some of your time and energy once a week a help out a local club, charity or some other organization.



Notice of meeting for single parents

There will be a meeting for single parents to plan and organize social events to help relieve parental stress and invite socialization with a chance to meet others in the communities. The meeting will be held in Schreiber on Tuesday, December 6, at the Community Development Office at 8 p.m., and in Terrace Bay on Thursday, December 8, at the Terrace Bay Recreation Centre (multi-purpose room) at 8 p.m. For more information call the Community Development Office in Schreiber at 824-2867 or 824-2962.

Lack of respect

Dear Editor
 Do some people in this town not respect other people's property? My family has only lived here since last fall, but that is the impression that we get. Last winter we had to repeatedly ask children not to slide down into our backyard. And even then there were some who ignored our wishes and made it sound like they had the right to be there. This year we put up "no trespassing" signs on our rear property and someone had the nerve to break the pickets. We then put the signs upon steel

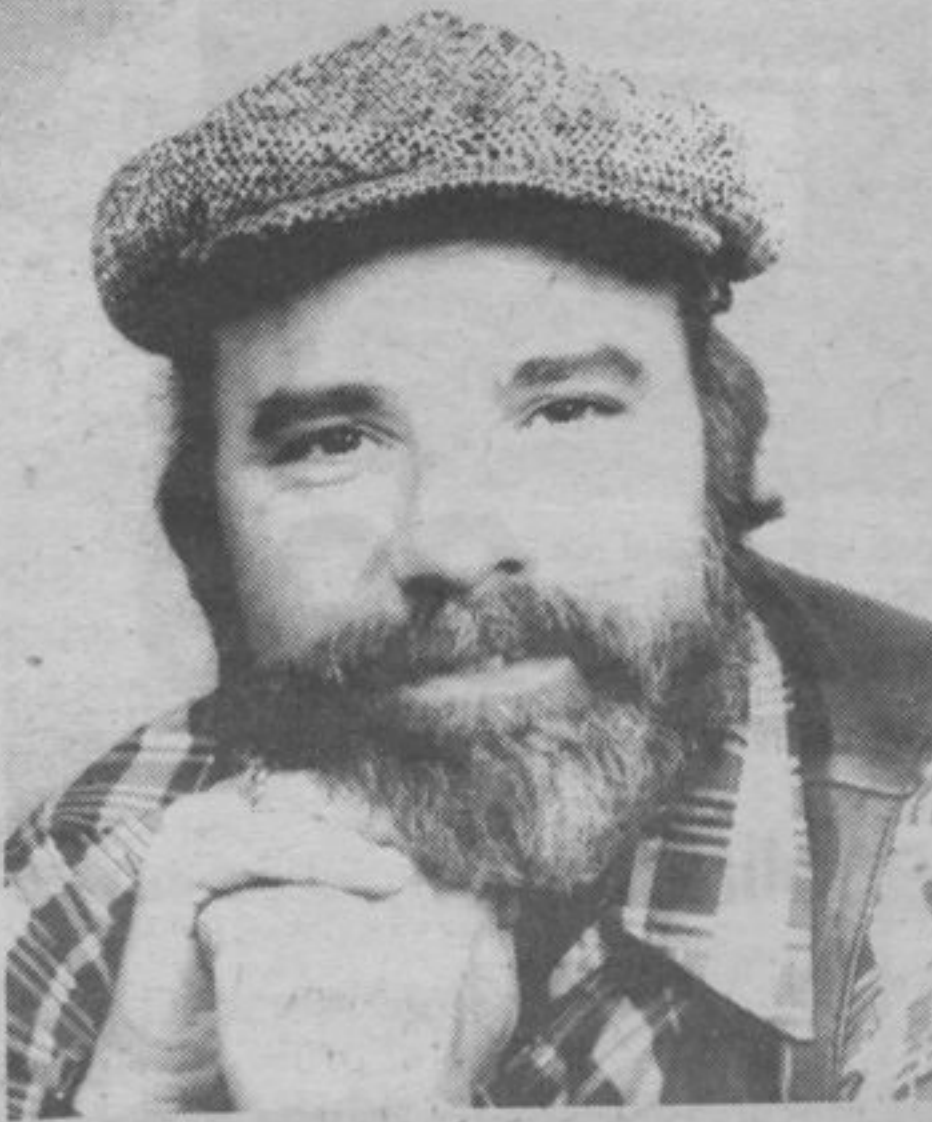
pickets and someone actually pulled one of them out of the ground and threw it into the backyard. Whether they were children or adults that did this, we don't know. So as you can see, some people do not seem to respect other people's property. I realize that not all people are like this, but I think parents should teach their children that people's yards are private not public property. I have no objections to children sliding and having fun in the snow, but not in my backyard.
Louise Tonin

Would you sell your mother?

Whoever sells land sells his mother. (Mexican proverb)
 So the Lubicon Indians won their land claim battle. The Alberta government, to its credit, has acknowledged that the natives have been shafted shabbily for more than 40 years. Under the terms of the agreement, the Lubicon Indians shall have their land and the rights to everything on and under it. Negotiators have finessed an honourable settlement out of a situation that had all the makings of a violent confrontation and that's a good thing, but there's a certain sense of silliness that pervades the whole situation. Who owns the land? Nobody does when you get right down to it. Of all the misguided notions we beguile ourself with, surely one of the most foolish is "land ownership". We speak of owning a downtown property or a cottage lot or a few acres in the country, but it's a myth. You can't "own"

land. If you think you own some real estate, try not paying taxes on it for a couple of years. Your friendly local government will soon straighten you out. And if they don't get you, the Feds sure will. But it goes deeper than that. The whole concept of owning land is a white man's pipe dream. It's about as sensible as trying to own sunshine or license air. I think that's why the North American tribes gave in so easily and signed so many disastrously one-sided treaties when government agents and lawyers for land barons first approached them, waving pieces of paper. It was inconceivable to the original people that any race of people, however deranged, would try to kill all the buffalo, chop down all the trees, put up fences and post "No Admittance" signs. Not that things have changed all that much for a lot of the world's native people. There

was a particularly sad photograph in my newspaper the other day showing yet another Lubicon-style confrontation, only this one was taking place on the outskirts of the city of



Arthur Black
 Belem, in Brazil. On one side stood a khaki wall of Brazilian soldiers armed with rifles. Facing them, bare-chested, barefooted and gunless, stood hundreds of bewildered-

looking Kiapo Indians. They had gathered in Belem to protest the trial of two tribe members. The two Indians had gone abroad to get publicity in their fight against government dams which, if built, will flood millions of acres of tribal land. The Brazilian government charged the two men with libel. The confrontation with the soldiers emanated from yet another sensitive and compassionate move on the part of the government -- the trial judge refused to let one of the accused take the stand in native garb, ordering him to dress in pants and a shirt. But it ill behooves a Canadian to cluck his tongue and speak disparagingly of the Brazilian government. Over the past few years we've flooded millions of acres of Cree ancestral land -- hunting areas, graves, encampments, sacred spots -- in order to build the James Bay Hydro project. Nobody asked the Cree if they

thought that would be alright. Oh well. At least we didn't force them to dress up. Maybe the most eloquent statement on the subject came from the lips of a Crowfoot Indian chief, in a speech made more than a hundred years ago. He was trying to explain why his tribe was not interested in making a deal for a tract of land. "Our land is more valuable than your money," he said. "It will last forever. It will not perish as long as the sun shines and the water flows, through all the years it will give life to men and beasts. It was put there by the Great Spirit and we cannot sell it because it does not belong to us." Not bad, but I think perhaps it was a white Canadian who said it even better. Elmer MacKay, MP for Central Nova, once said: "Land is not something you inherit from your parents. It is something you borrow from your children."