

Editorial Page

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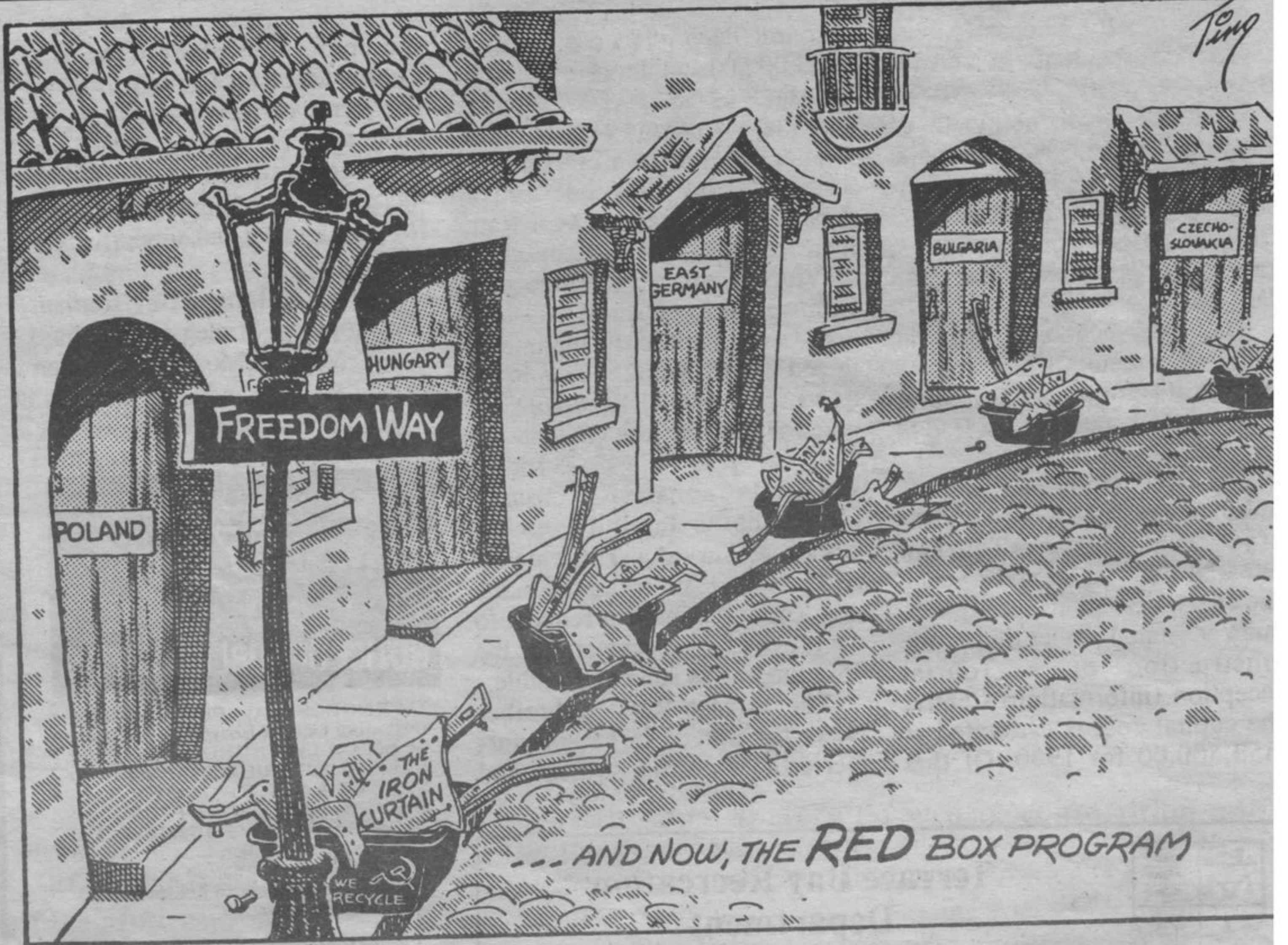
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Photo by Paul Marcon

Local legendary ice-fisherman Gary Larson tries his luck on northern lakes. Due to the amount of snow, temperatures and water levels, slush has formed on many lakes and sitting on your machine is one good way to keep your feet dry.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The News welcomes your letter to the editor. Use this space as your forum to comment on any issue of common interest. Please address letters to:

The Terrace Bay/Schreiber News
P.O. Box 579
Terrace Bay, Ontario P0T 2W0

Please sign your letter and include your phone number

British journalism, best to worst

You cannot hope to bribe or twist thank God! the British journalist but seeing what the man will do unbribed, there's no occasion to.

Humbert Wolfe

Sometimes I think I'd like to visit England just for the thrill of strolling down to a London newspaper kiosk and browsing through the morning headlines. One of the few fine remaining pleasures of life in that sad and shabby kingdom is the range of newspapers you can peruse. For a modest mittful of new pence you can take your choice of anything from the august London *Times* at the upscale end all the way down to scuzzy, unspeakable typographical excrescences like the *Mirror* and *The Sun*. For a journophile like yours truly, reading the British press is like living in a lovely English garden overlooking a garbage dump.

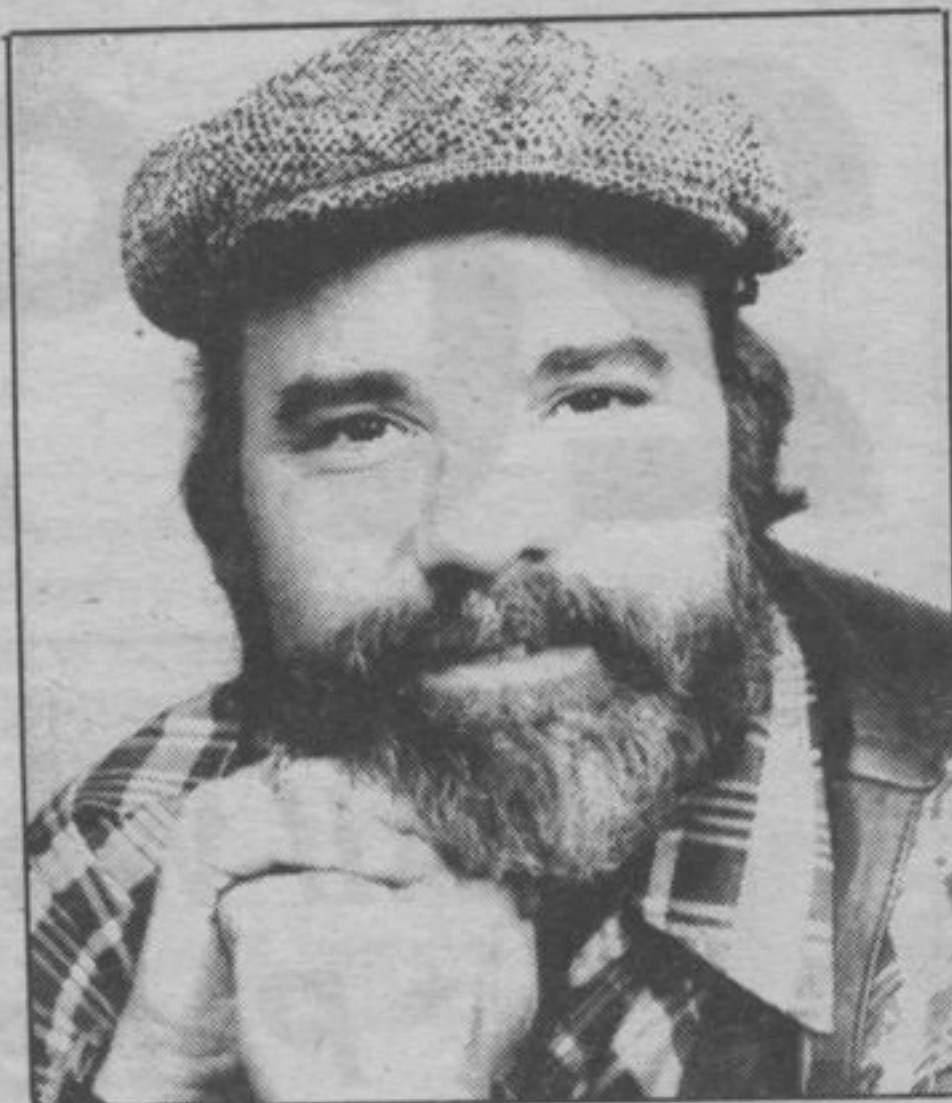
The best of British

very good indeed. But the worst, my dears, is among the very worst in the world. If you haven't stained your fingers on a typical British tabloid then you don't know how low the Fourth Estate can stoop. Canadian tabloids are flashy, irreverent and occasionally outrageous, but Canadian tabs are to British tabs as a Brownie pack is to the Mongol hordes.

Few institutions can be as mindlessly chauvinistic or stupefyingly sexist as a British tabloid newspaper in full screech. They flay the Royal family unmercifully, insinuating that Prince Charles is an airhead and Princess Margaret a souse. They publish full page photos of naked nymphets, complete with slaving, sleazy captions about "Luscious Lily's garden of natural delights." There are five basic staples for a classic British tabloid item: sex, soccer, sex, scandal and sex.

pinch of aristocratic philandery, you've got yourself a front page byline, mate.

All of which made me do a serious double take when I saw the headline in my non-



Arthur Black

British, non-tabloid copy of the *Globe and Mail* last week. U.K. tabs sign ethics code it reads.

British tabloids? An ethics code?? That's like Mike...

Under the new code, British newspapers will have to justify their intrusions into private lives, mistakes will be acknowledged in print with the same prominence the original items enjoyed and henceforth editors will no longer pay criminals, their families or their associates for rights to their "stories".

All of which sounds very laudable, but adherence to the code is strictly voluntary. There's no law that will force any newspaper to actually follow through and obey the code. You will forgive an old cynic for suspecting that it will be a frosty Friday on Fleet Street before the editors of the *Sun* or the *Mirror* send their reporters out with the gentle admonition to be fair, gentle and upright at all times.

I prefer to believe that the British press will continue to offer the bewildering and occasionally revolting kaleidoscope of journalism that it has always served up.

A full spectrum--good, bad and ugly--that has been deftly summarized in this excerpt from the book "Yes, Prime Minister" by Jonathan Lynn and Anthony Jay:

"The *Times* is read by the people who run the country. The *Daily Mirror* is read by the people who think they run the country. The *Guardian* is read by the people who think they ought to run the country. The *Morning Star* is read by people who think the country ought to be run by another country. The *Independent* is read by people who don't know who runs the country but are sure they're doing it wrong. The *Daily Mail* is read by the wives of the people the country. The *Financial Times* is read by the people who own the country. The *Daily Express* is read by the people who think the country ought to be run as it used to be run. The *Sun's* readers don't care who runs the country provided she has big boobs."