

Trying to sell off Canada Post

The federal government, trying to beat the deadline of June 23 when this country breaks in half, is desperately trying to sell off Canada Post. Really. They've even considered selling it off in a lawn sale but they can't clear all the protesters and hijacked buses off Parliament Hill in time.

Personally I'm all for selling Canada Post, provided it's to another country and preferably one we don't like too much at the moment, like Japan. That way, after they get it home and find out it doesn't work and demand their money back, we just can tell them to drop dead. Caveat emptor...let the buyer beware...snap that and stick it in your album.

Of course, we'll have a fight

William J. Thomas

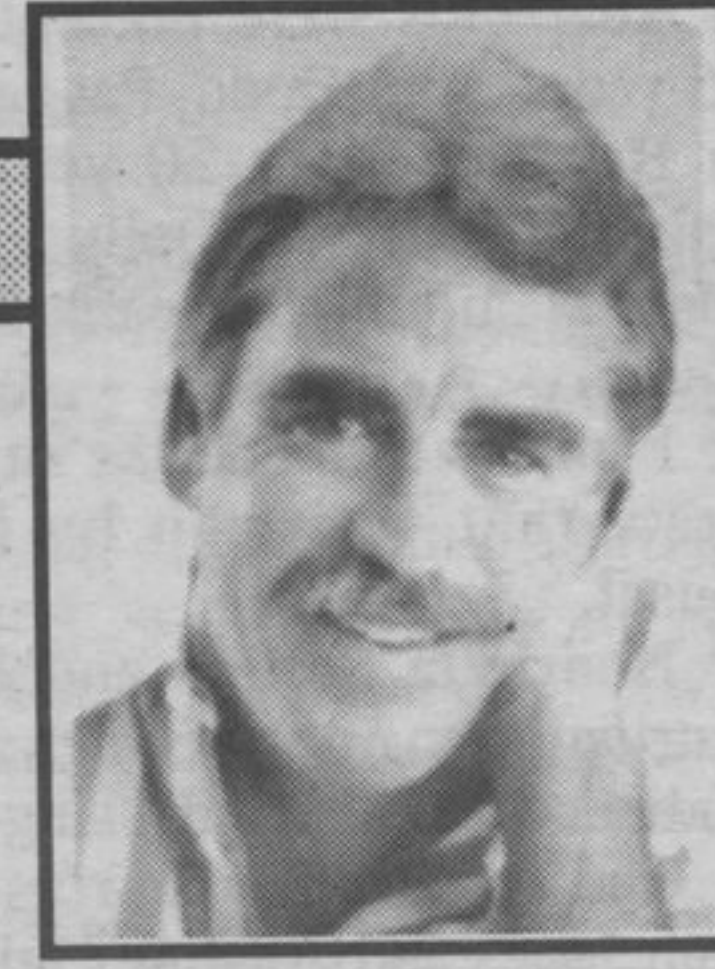
All The World's A Circus

on our hands with the Germans who are insisting like spoiled little brats that they be the ones to own everything in Canada, but then a bidding war can only work in our favor.

Can you imagine a Japanese-owned Canada Post? All the inside guys butting heads and bumping butts as they bow to each other every morning and all the outside guys standing at attention at precisely 8:01 a.m. singing the company song...Elvis' great hit "Return to Sender - Address Unknown."

Now if the federal government insists on selling Canada Post to a Canadian buyer there's only one prospect - Harry Ernest. I mean he did buy the Toronto Argonauts, right? Who knows. Dazzled by a snappy little video presentation and enough alcohol, he could be tricked twice.

I actually thought I had a buyer last week when I telephoned the curator of the San Diego Zoo. I used to be a salesman and it's amazing how you never forget the basic introducto-



ry techniques of all successful sales representatives; lie.

"You wanna buy an elephant?" I said.

"Buddy, we're up to our swim trunks in elephants here. We got so many elephants we're thinking

of letting poachers in for half price."

"Yeah, but a white one?" I ventured.

"Pure white?"

"As white as the hair on Marlin Perkins' neatly combed head," I replied. (Writer's Note: Marlin Perkins was the host of a popular television show which had a weekly storyline which went like this: "Hello...This is Marlin Perkins of *The Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom* and as you can see, although I'm sitting here in the front seat of this jeep with the doors locked, my assistant Jim appears to have an enraged female lion and her cubs

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First long bus trip was great

They say that travel broadens the mind. Well, I guess that's true enough, but I can now tell you from experience that it also broadens something else - the ole posterior. That is, if you're doing your travelling on a jolly old Hound or Goose of a bus.

Having just got back from a sojourn to Calgary on some sad family business, and thereby experiencing the travails of a lengthy bus journey first hand for the first time, I can hereby assure all dear readers that that's the way to go if time is not of the essence, but finances are.

What a way to see the country! It's like riding in a nice, big, comfy private car, leaving all the worries to the drivers (nice guys!), and seeing the countryside, towns, villages and cities close-up and nose-to as you smoothly ramble from one vital rest stop to the next. Unlike a speeding train (and anyway we've been robbed of our Via here in this part of the boondocks; thanks a bunch, Mr. Baloney!), you've got time to take in the sights, and even better than a plane where there's nothing but the monotony of clouds and sky drifting by.

Olga Landiak

Life, According to Baba

And something really nice happens on a bus after the first couple of stops. You begin to regard each other as sort of "family," and nods of recognition soon turn into little remarks, which soon turn into lively conversations and, first thing you know, you've made a new friend for life. Oh, not all - that would be too lucky for words - but even one person out of a whole busload is doing pretty good.

Such as Lucille, whom I met on the outward-bound part of my trip. About yer ole Baba's age and with a wonderful down-to-earth humor about everything, including absent husband Heinz, that kept me in stitches all the way to Winnipeg where, unfortunately, I lost her to another route taking her to Whitehorse. But I'll never lose touch with Lucille, 'cause I made darned sure I got her address. And on the way back, met up with Maria from Athens, Greece, who was on a holiday trip across this great

Dominion of ours after graduation from Queen's University as a computer specialist. Unfortunately, we got separated in the 'Peg also, before I could get her address, but you see what I mean about meeting up with interesting people.

Experienced the new so-called luxury Express Bus on the way back, complete with carpeting, even on the ceiling, and with three, count 'em, three T.V. screens strategically located for our viewing pleasure. The first film was very good, but the second was a terribly poor imitation of "E.T." It kept going on the fritz of blurred, zappy lines until some young university type across the aisle from me got up in exasperation, and fiddled around with the V.C.R.'s until he got it straightened out. Should have saved his energy; the film was still terrible. Should have had a third one but some numbskull of an employee forgot to put it on.

Oh well, two films was more than enough, and so we all curled up as best we could for the night coming on, on seats only made to accommodate a short dwarf, width-wise.

Dear readers, if ever you have occasion to broaden your mind this-a-way, I heartily recommend the following as practiced by the pros. (Lucille was one of them.) 1. Take a small pillow. You sure need one on which to rest the weary head either by day or by night, 2. A cup (collapsible is best). There are no cups to be had in the restrooms by which to have a slug of water, gulp a pill or brush the morning crud offen



your teeth. 3. A hearty lunch, together with a large bottle of whatever you prefer to drink, and lots of fruit. The prices charged at these rest stops are, to my Ukrainian-thrifty soul, exorbitant to say the least, and only fresh fruit to be had seemed to be bananas, and bananas are not famous for having a lot of juice. 4. A pair of foldable slippers so you can air your over-warm feet, and 5. books, crossword puzzles or mags if you're not enamored of countryside watching. Was fascinated to see how many of the lurid gossip papers were purchased enroute. Must be an object lesson there someplace, but beats me what it is.

Last but not least, sorry, but have no remedy for the aching-and-benumbed-behind condition apart from tearing madly around at the stops in a frenzy of exercise. Yer ole Baba did, and collected a barrelful of fishy eyes from other passengers, but what the heck, I'll never see any of them again (except maybe for Lucille) so I didn't worry unduly.

Apart from the sadness of the occasion, it was a great first long trip by bus.

Health needs holistic approach

PART 2, CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK

On January 18, 1988 five members of the Sandy Lake Indian Band started a hunger strike in the lounge at the Sioux Lookout Zone Hospital. They were trying to draw attention to years of frustration with native health care services. They stopped the fast three days later, after marathon negotiating sessions with leaders of the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation and Dave Nicholson, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Health and Welfare Canada, hammered out an agreement to hold a full-scale public review of native health services.

The report that arose from that review was released one year ago, in May of 1989. But the poor health services that sparked the hunger strike have not improved. Some people I've spoken to recently even say they're getting worse. Last week's column, and this one, are



devoted to that hunger strike, and what's happened since. -L.S.

The health panel set up to end the hunger strike was a classic Canadian compromise. Retired Anglican Archbishop Ted Scott was the neutral chairman. Wally McKay, a former grand chief, was appointed by the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation. A retired doctor and former Zone director of the Sioux Lookout Zone Hospital, Dr. Harry Bain, was appointed by the federal government. Together, they represented the ideal that, by working co-operatively, native and non-native people could actually change the health-care system.

NORTHERN INSIGHTS

by Larry Sanders



But decades of frustration had built up between the two sides. Native and non-native interests had become "two solitudes" - each entrenched in the feeling that the other was standing in the way of improvements. The panel itself recognized this division in its final report, by pointing out that during the hearings, "when aboriginal people were speaking, few representatives of the health care providers were present; and when health care providers were speaking, few representatives of the aboriginal people were present."

Doctors, nurses and administrators told the Health Panel the system was fine, it just needed

better funding and more health care workers, especially native ones. The native organizations and communities, in the other solitude, complained about attitudinal problems bordering on racism that stopped the federal government from staffing and funding the native health care system properly, and which sometimes showed up in actions of individual doctors and nurses. The panel's final report tried to strike a balance between those two views, by calling for both attitudinal changes, and better staffing and funding. But they suggested the system should remain essentially intact, as native leadership took over

through a new Aboriginal Health Authority.

That compromise was not acceptable to the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation. The panel also called for the amalgamation of the two hospitals in Sioux Lookout, to create one modern facility for everyone, native and non-native. The two old hospitals both need to be replaced. They've deteriorated past the point of repair. The Zone Hospital, where the hunger strike was held, serves mostly native people from the far north. The General Hospital across town serves everyone else. One of the issues that motivated the fasters to take their action was a policy decision by Ottawa approving of amalgamation. The fasters said that decision, combined with lots of foot-dragging by Ottawa on aboriginal self-government, meant that the pattern of arrogance and neglect that characterized native health care up until their hunger strike, would continue.

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