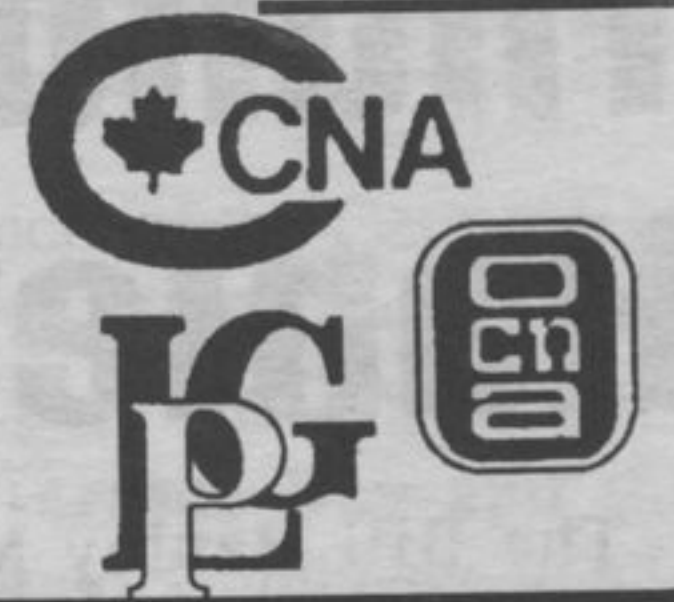


Editorial

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Toronto the good

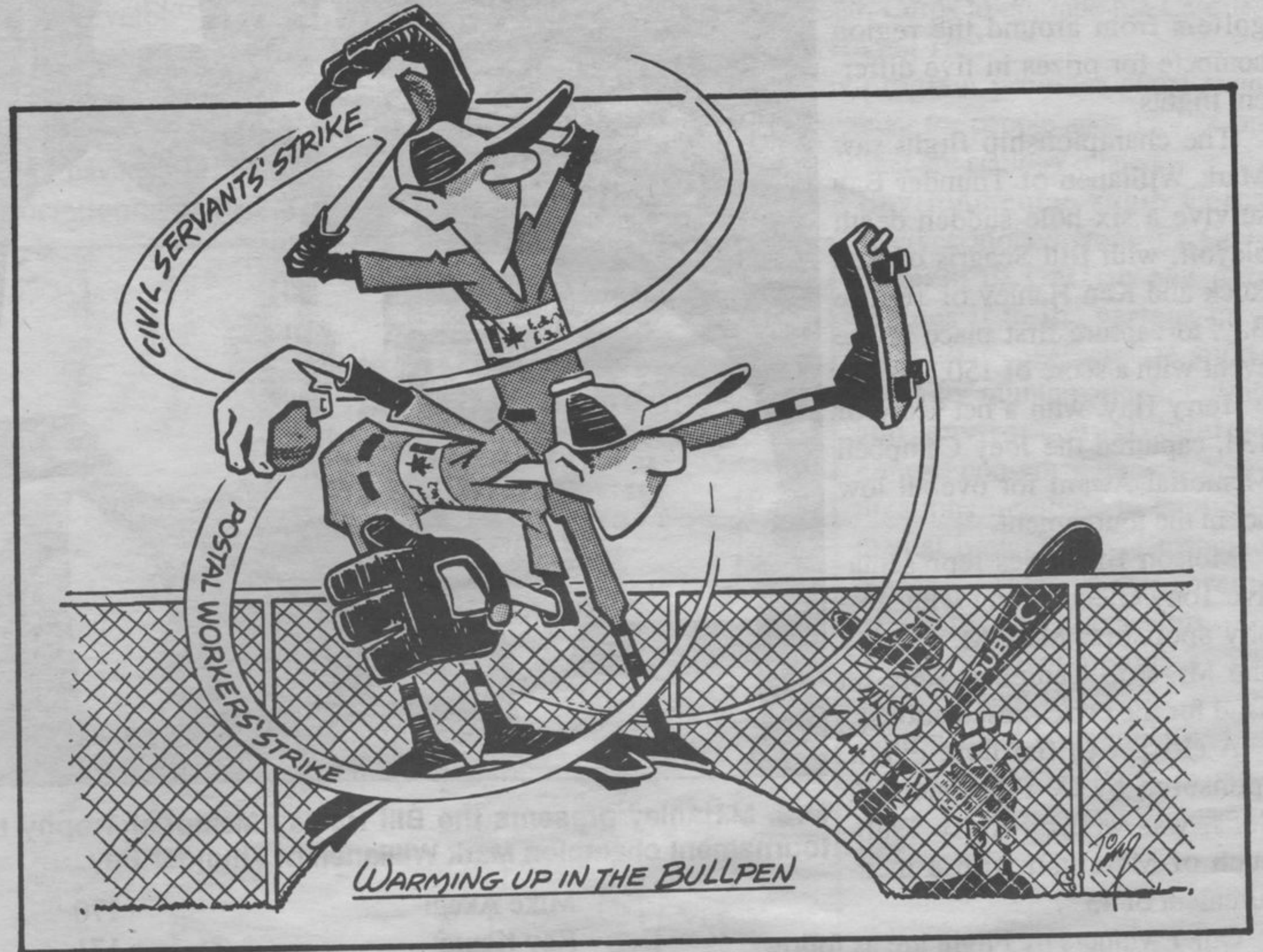
Canadians criss-cross this country in a variety of ways and most of them pass through Terrace Bay and Schreiber. On Sunday August 25, John Curtin walked through this area on his way to Victoria B.C. John's purpose, however, is different. He is walking across Canada to raise awareness about the need for bone marrow donors.

During my conversation with John Curtin about his Cross Canada Walk I asked him where his home was. He told me he was from Toronto and then to my wonderment he apologized. I told him there was no need - residents of Toronto have as much right to be proud of their community and its accomplishments as we do of ours.

"But all of the people in the smaller communities I've been through have been so kind to me. Toronto could learn a lesson in kindness from them," he explained.

Well, if Toronto is producing individuals like John Curtin, all is not lost. The citizens of Toronto, Ontario and Terrace Bay can be proud of individual Canadians like John, and those who have gone before him, who have put extraordinary efforts into bringing Canadians together in a common cause.

Robert A. Cotton



NDP interim resource management policy is not providing protection

Dear Editor;

It is more than three hundred kilometres from one end of the area being claimed by the Golden Lake Algonquin Band to the other. The land claimed encompasses Algonquin Park, untold hectares of farmland, dozens of small and medium-sized communities and the city of Ottawa itself.

Clearly, it is going to be a long time before this massive claim is settled.

As well, the provincial government must deal with a bewildering array of other native claims to land, fishing and hunting rights and other territorial disputes. While I applaud any sincere effort to settle these ongoing disputes, we must recognize that such settlements could take years to achieve.

In the meantime, the government must continue its job of protecting wildlife and the environment. Unfortunately, the NDP's misguided interim enforcement policy, and the unfair way in which the Ministry of Natural Resources has been administering it, are failing to provide that protection.

I do not believe anyone can dispute the idea that conservation and resource management must be the top priorities. All of us, whether Native Canadians, tourist operators, hunters, fishermen, campers or simply Ontario residents, have a stake in preserving the natural balance in the environment.

That is why all of these groups should have a say in the final decisions regarding natural resources such as Algonquin Park, and why their needs and concerns must be addressed in an interim policy that also safeguards our environmental future.

Wearing the hats of both Minister of Natural Resources and of Native Affairs has clearly made it impossible for Bud Wildman to develop and implement such a policy.

The answer is not to ignore violations of the law or withhold prosecutions on a political basis. Instead, the government must develop, in true consultation with all affected and interested groups, a compromise interim policy on resource management that will be respected, accepted and enforced.

Only then can both natives and non-natives be assured of their personal freedom and of the future of our national heritage. Only then can the vital negotiations on the Algonquin claim and other native territorial issues proceed in an atmosphere of calm and mutual respect.

Michael Harris

Smokers under fire

A small smoldering excerpt from a letter to the columnist:

Guess which of these groups are non-smokers:

(A) Adolph Hitler, Saddam Hussein, Richard Nixon, Idi Amin, Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker.

(B) Farley Mowat, Monsignor Athol Murray, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Mark Twain.

Ah the sharp, plaintive cry of an endangered, one could almost say extinguished, species -- the yellow-taloned nicotine sucker. I know the critters well, and this one in particular. He is Walt Humphries, an amiable, artistic and thoughtful prospector up Yellowknife way. Walt's a perfect gentleman. With emphasis on the 'gentle'.

Until you come between him and his smokes, that is. Then Walt exhibits all the affability of a beestung grizzly. "In the past four years my tobacco costs have risen from \$8 to \$35 a tin -- just ask me how p---d off I am."

Walt's fuming -- and who can blame him? Smokers are polite society's last official scapegoats, hijacked by government tax weasels, lectured in editorials, chastised by their children and scorned by waiters, shop attendants and recorded announcements.

"For your comfort and convenience, Flight 347 is a no-smoking flight and the washrooms are equipped with smoke detectors."

Translation: Light that butt and we'll kick yours.

Even if the beleaguered smoker manages to withstand the wrath of the pink-lunged portion of the human race, he or she still gets mugged at the corner store. Nicotine addicts are all but grabbed by the heels and shaken loonless every time they attempt to feed their habit. Taxes on cigarettes are so prohibitive that nobody this side of Conrad Black is buying premium brands. In fact, there's a convenience store in Kitchener, Ontario that offers "home-made" ciggies. The proprietor

a package less than the price of pre-packaged cigarettes. He was doing great business until the feds informed him it was illegal.

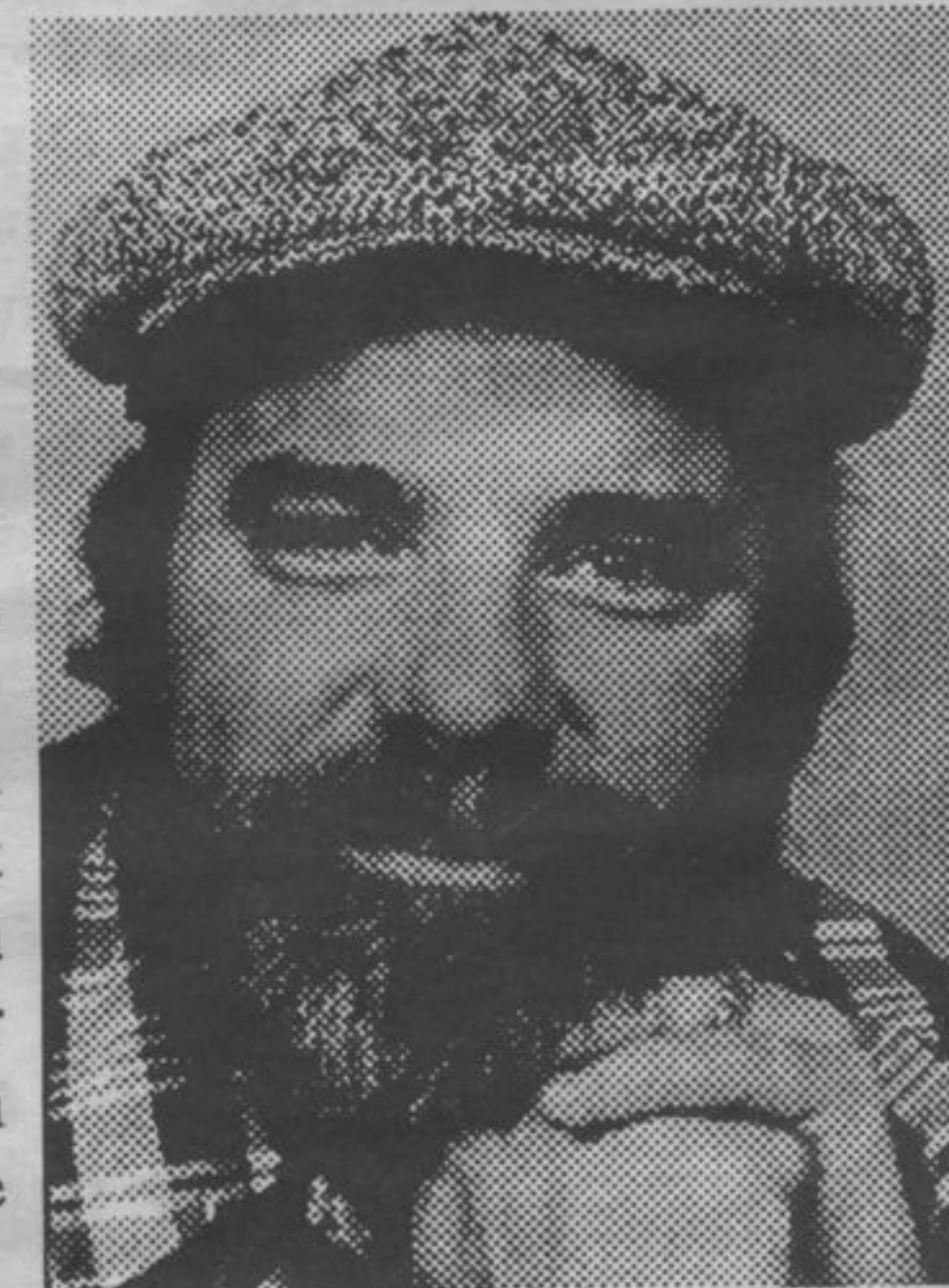
No-name smokes. It had to come.

I think it's just the beginning. In Spain, there are wizened little guys standing on street corners who will sell you cigarettes in tens, fives, even one at a time. If Ottawa and the provinces keep slapping on tobacco taxes it won't be long before "one at a time" is about all Walt and his friends will be able to afford.

Our governments are singularly hypocritical about tobacco. They publicly denounce it, while privately wringing every possible shekel out of its victims.

It is the modus operandi of the drug pusher, writ large.

Am I saying that smoking should be lionized, rendered "Hollywood sexy" once again? No. Smoking is an addiction -- and a smelly, messy, lethal one at that. Besides, I like riding in smoke-free airplanes and



Arthur Black

buses. I appreciate eating a restaurant meal unperfumed by human smudge pots at the next table.

All I'm saying is, it might be nice if we could all go a little easier on smokers. Their vice is an unglamorous one, and they know it. They've got enough to handle without the monkey on their back and the taxmen nibbling somewhat lower.

Let me leave you with a fag-end of tobacco trivia. Feel free to use it at your next smoke-free cocktail party: Who said "What this country needs is a good five cent cigar."? Answer: Thomas R. Marshall, U.S. Vice President, 1913-21.

About which the humourist Will Rogers observed: "This country has plenty of five cent cigars. Trouble is, they charge fifteen cents for them."

I think Walt Humphries would say amen to all of that.