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NOTES and COMMENTS

A Third Is Tax

So far as Canadian purchasers of gasoline are concerned, the Second World War might still be raging, so says The Financial Post. The extra taxes asked to help defray the costs of that conflict still apply and in the provincial budgets brought down so far this year there is not the least sign of any relief.

The million and a half private owners of automobiles and trucks in this country continue to pay almost 30 cents in taxes for every dollar they spend on fuel. Only from consumers of liquor and tobacco does the tax collector get a greater haul.

Almost a third of the money paid for filling the gas tank goes direct to the provincial government. In some provinces the tax is 11 cents per gallon, in the rest it is a cent or two more. At 22 miles to the gallon, and few motorists can boast better than that, this means a direct tax of half a cent a mile.

Shortly after the last war broke out gasoline taxes were taken over by the Dominion Government and the three to five cents prewar levy was jumped to the present figure. The federal move was described as temporary. The motorists hoped that the raise would be too. But that hope is still unrealized despite the fact that Ottawa moved out of this field over a year ago.

When the provinces took over again the wartime increase was maintained right up to the hilt. True, there was some sharing of the spoils with the municipalities through larger roads grants, but the motorist was left exactly where he was before.

How long the car owner can continue to be left in that position and drive enough to keep one of our most important and widespread industries functioning is extremely doubtful. At every turn he meets taxes. In addition to the 30 per cent levy on his fuel he is required to pay several hundred dollars in sales and excise taxes when he buys a new car. There is also an annual charge for a license plate and other taxes, both direct and indirect, on oil, parts and everything else.

To own and operate a car costs fully twice as much as it did in 1939 and the major reason is not higher manufacturing costs but higher taxes. It is there we must have substantial reduction if we are to have cheaper cars and cheaper driving.

From the Cradle to the Grave

Under the present scheme of things in Canada, children receive government "pup" from the time they enter the world until they are 16 years of age. Then they are taken on again when they reach the age of 70, provided they cannot make it go on their own after being taught to accept government aid through childhood.

Agnes Macphail, member for East York in Ontario house, wants old age pensions at sixty. Well, dear lady, why not back that up to sixteen, then wouldn't everybody be happy. After all its only another forty-four years, to make it a round-the-clock pension, or as we say, from the

cradle to the grave.

Yes, it would just be fine, only there is a fly in the ointment. Where is the money coming from, and with everybody on pension, who would do the work? Even now, elderly people capable of tending gardens and doing odd jobs, are just not to be found any more. They do not have to work, so why should they, when the class from 17 to 70 can carry the load.

It is not to be supposed that we do not approve of pension — we do, but not baby bonuses, oh no. Baby bonus is the primary stage of schooling that gets a nation in readiness to want to be kept by the government for as many years as possible out of the allotted span.

The Shrinking World

New achievements in long-distance flying continue to make the earth "shrink" and keep reminding us that this is indeed the air age.

Another record was established when a B-50 bomber took off from Fort Worth, Texas, and circled the globe in 94 hours in a non-stop flight on a route that lacked only about 1,000 miles of equalling the distance around the earth at the equator. The feat was achieved by refuelling the big plane in the air four times.

Aviation has made tremendous strides in long-distance flights since Alcock and Brown flew from Newfoundland to Ireland 30 years ago this coming June. The world has come a long way in three decades in improved types of flying machines, in attaining much higher speeds as well as sustained flights.

The achievement of the B-50 is described by U.S. Air Secretary Symington as evidence that B-50s flying from American bases could "deliver the atom bomb to any part of the world where it may be required." It gives a more horrible aspect to global war or to any major war for that matter.

Should Leave This Alone (Financial Post)

It is reported that the Dominion Government is preparing to toss the coarse grains marketing issue into the lap of the provinces. Ottawa shouldn't toss this anywhere. It should simply drop it. And if the provinces are wise, they will have nothing to do with this headache either.

There is no sound reason why any government should take over marketing of coarse grains in this country, but there are a great many very sound reasons why they should not.

This product is grown almost everywhere across the Dominion, in every province, in almost every municipality, and it is marketed just as widely. If any government or its representative steps into the picture they will find the problems just as widely distributed. The only solution is open marketing and that system has given general satisfaction in the past. It was only after the Government stepped in for a period during the war any serious trouble arose and that experience should have been enough to warrant against any repetition now.

There is a special angle in this matter which has not been given the public attention it deserves. With this commodity farmer interest is sharply divided. Contrary to the case with most other farm products, with coarse grains the farmer is both the producer and the largest consumer. The great bulk of our coarse grains are used for the feeding of livestock. The commercial grower, usually located in the Prairie Provinces, naturally is interested in securing the best possible price. The livestock feeder, on the other hand, naturally wants to purchase his raw material for meats, dairy and poultry products, as cheaply as possible. If the Dominion or provincial governments try to set a price, they would invariably become a target of criticism for both sides.

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CANADIAN PLOWMEN ABROAD

by ELLIOT MOSES, Director
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(Editor's Note—This is the sixth of a series of weekly stories which Elliott Moses, a director of the Ontario Plowmen's Association, is writing about the visit of Canada's champion plowmen to the British Isles.)

Aboard the Queen Mary—By the time you will be reading this letter the boys and I will be home—that is all of us except Wilbert McFaddin, the Salada silver medalist, who decides to remain in England a few extra weeks. We are very glad to relax on board this luxurious liner because from the moment we landed in England, nearly six weeks ago, until now we have been constantly on the go. The boat trips, going and returning, have given us our only moments of leisure—providing, one was not seasick.

Speaking of seasickness reminds me of a story I heard years ago but which is still timely. A young fellow on a certain ship was selling subscriptions to the magazine "Atlantic Monthly". He walked up to a passenger who was leaning over the railing and said: "Sir, would you like to subscribe to the Atlantic Monthly?" The man replied, "Son, I'm subscribing to the Atlantic daily."

The Queen Mary is a beautiful ship. To me it is like a floating island on which there is everything that one may need to live in comfort. I am not going to attempt to describe it because I know last year's team manager did a good job of that. Instead I shall try to recall the events of our last few days in Britain.

After sight-seeing in Northern Ireland we sailed for England where we spent almost a week before our ship sailed. Our first stop was Wolverhampton, county Staffordshire, one of the most heavily industrialized areas in the British Isles. The farms in this district also appeared to be more prosperous than some other sections of England we had visited. The British Isles possess a beauty

quite different from anything our Canadian party had ever seen. The architecture of the buildings, the country-side and even the people vary greatly from one section of the country to another. Often when driving a short distance we noticed that the scenery would change entirely within a radius of 50 or 60 miles.

A Castle Near the Welsh Border The farthest point reached on this, our visit to England, was the city of Ludlow near the Welsh border. We saw the remains of the old Castle Ludlow which was built as a stronghold against the invading Welsh people in the days of the Welsh and English were bitter enemies. The battles of that time would appear to have been more barbarous than the warfare carried on by the North American Indians against the new settlers.

Ludlow Castle is not as well preserved as Edinburgh Castle. Nevertheless it was a wonderful sight to behold, with its walls measuring eight to ten feet thick and the numerous rooms occupying in all about five acres of land.

From Ludlow Castle we drove to an old inn known as Whitington Inn which they say was once owned by Dick Whittington, Lord Mayor of London, and dates back to the year 1310. Here we enjoyed our first steak dinner since landing in Britain. The following day we journeyed back to London where we saw many places of historical interest, including Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral. Our visits were hurried but what impressed us most was the age and grandeur of the numerous buildings throughout the city.

Later we took a bus trip through a beautiful part of the country in and around London, terminating at Windsor Castle where the King and Queen spend a portion of their time. We were impressed with the magnificence of the Castle.

During our tour of the country-side, we had an opportunity to

visit the Anglo-American Oil Company's experimental farm located in a fertile agricultural district about 60 miles outside London. Here scientific tests are conducted on diesel oils, lubricants, tractor fuels and a host of other petroleum products. We were interested to learn that when Anglo-American bought this farm they didn't build any new buildings but simply turned the barns and other farm buildings into laboratories. What was formerly the horse barn is now the recreational building for the staff of over 200. This building has a thatched roof which is said to be the largest in England.

The Anglo people did valuable work for the government during the war years in testing lubricants and fuel for engines and aircraft and now in peacetime they are continuing their work with same scientific zeal.

Canadians in Television From the Esso Farm we were rushed back to London for a most unusual purpose—to appear on the B.C. television program. Rhys Bacher, Wilbert McFaddin and myself were interviewed. The boys appeared in their flying outfits and I don't know my Indian costume for the occasion. Those who saw the program remarked that our little part came over well and was received with much interest by the audience. Needless to say it was an unexpected privilege for us.

The next morning with Mr. Stapleford of Ontario House, we visited the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company in London. Known as Beaver House, it is said to be one of the most up to date buildings in the world. On entering, we were received by the company's leading executives who arranged a tour of the establishment.

We were particularly interested in the fur department where the raw furs are sold by auction to buyers from all over the world. The auction room is arranged with soft cushioned seats in an elevated position and will seat 700 persons. No furs are in evidence when the sale is in progress for the buyers have visited the store-rooms previously and know by numbers the furs they wish to purchase.

The "Bay" is proud of its record of being the oldest established firm of its kind in the world and after learning the quantity of furs that are sent from Canada annually, we are convinced that the fur trade is still one of Canada's most impor-

tant industries.

On our last evening in London we were entertained at a farewell dinner at Simpson's, one of London's fashionable restaurants. This brought to a close four weeks of experiences in the old land which will long be remembered by all of us.

Rhys Bacher has just come in to say that we are only a few hours from New York. We have had a wonderful trip but like most travellers we are looking forward to our homecoming. My next letter will be written from Brantford and I shall try to sum up our impressions of conditions in the British Isles—what the people generally and the farmers in particular think about the country's nationalization program and the cancellation of food contracts with Canada.

Cabinet Ministers Get \$2,000 Pay Increase

Provincial estimates tabled Friday provide for total salaries of \$16,995 for Premier Kennedy and \$13,000 for each of the 11 cabinet members. This is \$2,000 a year more than they have been receiving.

The increase brings the basic statutory pay of the ministers back to the prewar level of \$10,000 a year. In addition, they receive \$2,000 sessional indemnity and a \$1,000 expense allowance.

In 1937, former Premier Mitchell Hepburn asked his cabinet ministers to take a voluntary cut of \$2,000. Salaries have remained below the statutory ceiling ever since.

However, no legislation was introduced to cover the lower salary. As a result, the increase can be put through without any new legislation.

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Century Old City Butcher Shop Makes Unusual History

A Canadian business dynasty covering more than 100 years ended this week, and a family firm operated by four generations passed out of its hands in Toronto.

In 1831, the town of York became Toronto and was incorporated as a city, the firebrand William Lyon Mackenzie was elected as its first mayor and James Wickson of Walworth, near London, England, came to the new city to found a meat purveying business which remained in the family for 115 years. Good beef was about seven cents a pound then.

One hundred years later, both the city and the Wickson business celebrated their centennial. Both had seen the growth of Canada from a dependency of Britain to an independent world power. The price of meat had risen considerably, too.

This week, John Wickson, a member of the fourth generation of the Wickson family, handed over control and ownership of the business to his son, Peter Macgregor, a sturdy Scot, who was trained, who came to Toronto 20 years ago to work at the Wickson stall in St. Lawrence Market. Now 42 years old and the father of two children, Mr. Macgregor will retain the family name for the time being.

But for the first time since 1831 there will be no member of the original family in charge. John H. Wickson, the last member of the family in the market, has no children.

The story of the Wickson family reads like the prototype of all those earnest hard-working Britons who came to Canada in the days of its infancy to found businesses and industries and bring up families distinguished in their service to the community.

CREAMERY FINED

Appearing before Magistrate F. Watt, in court at Guelph, Ont., the manager of the Guelph Creamery Branch of the United Co-operatives of Ontario, pleaded guilty to having sold to a retail store in Preston, Ont., creamery butter of Third Grade quality in wrappers marked First Grade. A fine of \$50 and costs was imposed.

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Says Carburetor Gives 176 Miles per Gallon Gas

A new carburetor that will give motorists 176 miles to the gallon is claimed by Paul Emile Desroches, 35-year-old Hull man, a report from Ottawa states.

In a special demonstration for newspaper men, Desroches fitted his carburetor to the engine of a 1946 standard model sedan, drained his gas tank, poured in a quart of gasoline, and drove 44 miles. He was able to drain some of the quart out of the tank at the end of the trip.

The carburetor, still unpatented, is kept in parts in safety deposit boxes. Reporters said a 220-pound bodyguard who was in attendance kept them from seeing what the gadget looked like.

Desroches, a war veteran and the father of five children, said he wanted at least \$5,000,000 for his invention. He had been working on it for 15 years.

A former garage worker, he left school at the age of 13. He claimed he has spent more than \$25,000 on the project, most of it loaned by "friends and backers—especially a Montreal engineer who has provided most of the financial aid."

His explanation for his carburetor's performance: "I turn heat from the exhaust into the carburetor, bringing the fuel to a boil. The power comes from the gasoline vapor, not from the gas itself."

"Blackboards" in some English schools are a light green and the chalk mauve, a more restful color combination than black and white.