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For Parents Only

**'ONE CANADIAN FLAG'**

By Nancy Cleaver



The Canadian Flag issue is of vital interest to every parent. A flag is an honored symbol of one's country. In training in patriotism it plays an important part. We need ONE Canadian flag.

Perhaps in the last month of the year, many Canadians missed the news note about a revival of the Flag Debate on Parliament Hill. On Wednesday, December 9th, 1953, our legislators at Ottawa spent three hours discussing a private member's resolution proposing the adoption of a Canadian flag and suggesting a joint Commons-Senate Committee to study and recommend a design. A Canadian Press dispatch said: "further action this session seems remote."

A similar joint committee was set up in 1946 to choose a Canadian flag design. This is no longer in existence. After months of work and study of around two thousand designs, they recommend that Canada's National Flag should be the Red Ensign with a golden maple leaf in the fly with a bordered background of white.

Why has no action been taken on this? Are we not a democracy where the vote of the majority should be accepted? Is it because our representatives in Ottawa are unable to grasp the urgency of this flag issue? Or do they hesitate to take a stand on a controversial matter?

The absence of one Canadian flag in the eyes of thousands of our New Canadians who have come recently to our shores is a tragic blunder. We cannot wipe out the memory of the scorn in the voice of a young lad from the Netherlands as he exclaimed: "You Canadians have no official flag!"

Why have we no national flag? It is not because we do not need one. The Red Ensign, flag of our Merchant Marine is recognized at the Olympic games or at the Commonwealth gathering at the Coronation, as the Canadian flag. But it is not our official national banner.

Our growing provincialism, our lack of unity, much of our apologetic attitude as Canadians might be traced to our absence of this symbol recognized from Atlantic to Pacific, from the border to the Pole that we are one nation. John Buchan's one complaint about Canadians was their lack of appreciation of their own land. His criticism is frequently echoed by visitors

from overseas and across the line.

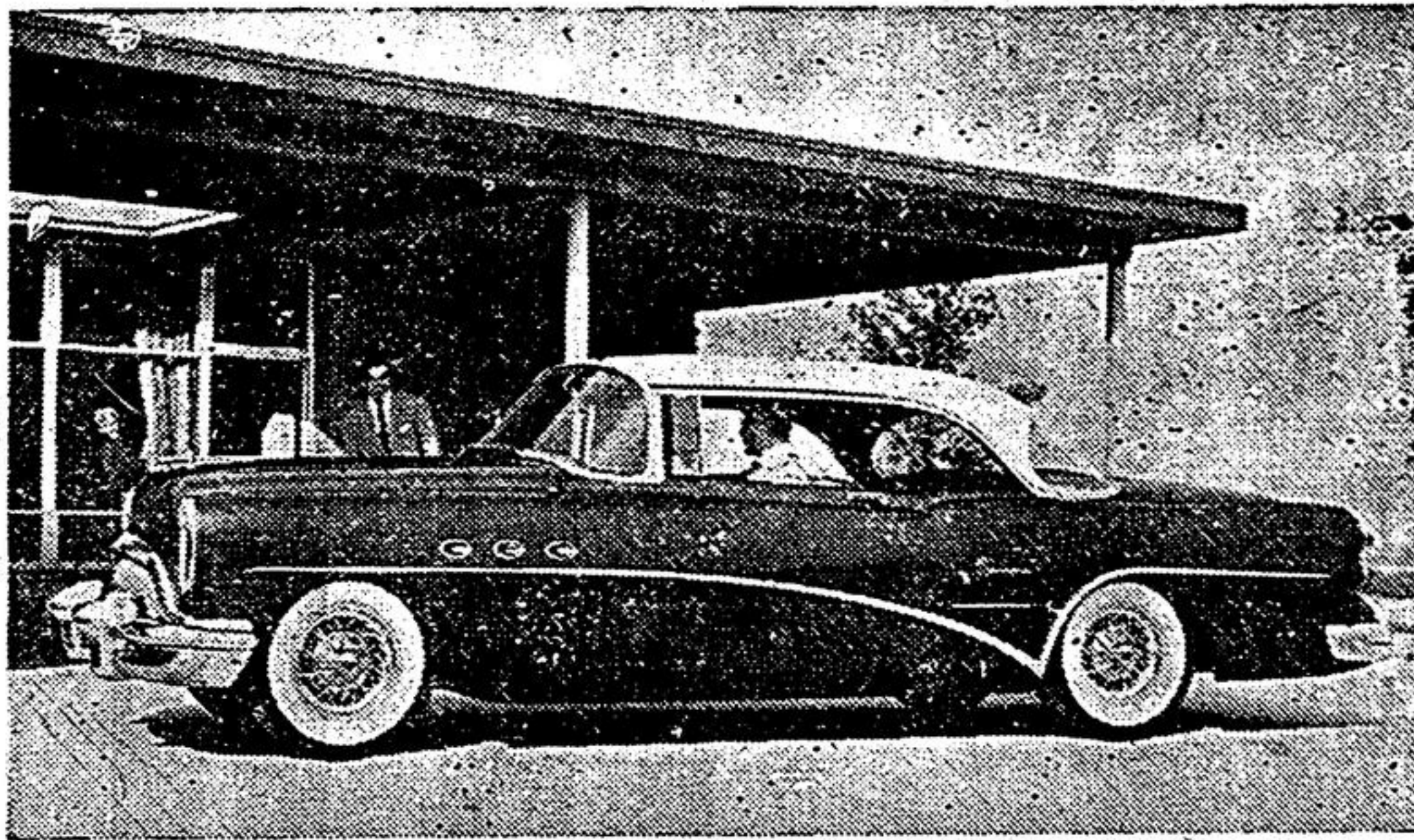
"Where is your Canadian flag?" United States tourists ask as they see the Union Jack fluttering in the breeze in some places, the Red Ensign, flag of our Merchant Marine, flying in others, and the French Canadian favourite, with the four fleur de lis on the fly, waving over centres in Quebec province. Our flagless state is no easier to justify to a visitor from another land than it is to explain to a child.

We parents should be able to count on our national leaders for some action on this flag question. We can learn from the Communists in the way they value and display their flag. In an ever-growing area in the world the Red Flag with its yellow hammer and sickle is flown. The perplexity of tourists and immigrants about the absence of an official flag is embarrassing. But in terms of encouraging a sturdy Canadian national spirit in our boys and girls, the absence of one approved Canadian flag is nothing short of a catastrophe.

Talk to your family and your friends about a national flag. Discuss it in the groups to which you belong. Perhaps you will find that although people have different preferences and are of different racial origins they want the same Canadian flag flying over every inch of our Dominion.

All the diverse countries in the United Nations family saw the importance of a new symbol of peace on the face of the earth. Our children know this International Flag with its white polar world, surrounded by an olive wreath of friendship on a blue background. They should also know what is our official Canadian Flag. Surely we Canadians can choose a national banner. Let us be done with lethargy and fence sitting and get some action on this Canadian Flag question.

Blaming other people is all very easy. But why not accept some of the blame ourselves. Our representatives are no better or worse than we, the people, who voted them there. In our inertia (or plain laziness) in making it clear to our legislators that we do want a Canadian flag, we have in all truth been poor citizens. Let us write to Prime Minister St. Laurent and to our Federal Member. We should tell them our convictions on this Canadian Flag question. Don't put it off, but do this today.



The rakish sports car styling of Buick's two-door Super Riviera sedan makes it a sure-fire beauty winner for 1954. Modelled after Buick's famed Skylark sports car, it features the new panoramic windshield, a cut-down door belt line, full rear-wheel cut-out and a refined sweeppear molding. The Super Riviera is mounted on a 127-inch wheel-base and is powered by a 182-horsepower V-8 engine when equipped with Twin-Turbine Dynaflo. Wire wheels are optional.

**NOTES and COMMENTS**

**Tribune Posts Another Circulation Increase**

It is with pride that The Tribune announces in this issue a new net paid circulation figure of 3,058. This is the latest figure for paid weekly circulation as published by the Audit Bureau of Circulations. The steady increase in Tribune circulation is a reflection of the development of Stouffville and immediate area. The bulk of the Tribune's circulation, or more than 95% is home yearly subscriptions. This solid type of circulation is the best guarantee an advertiser can have that his message really goes home where it is read at leisure by the family.

Circulation figures demonstrate to a considerable degree how well a paper serves the district in which it is published. A steady growth through the years is a fine tribute to the effort a newspaper makes to report the local news events. It is also a tribute to how successful a paper is in fostering and assisting every worthwhile municipal endeavor.

The Tribune publishes more than 625 pages a year in which appear more than 4,000 columns of news. This represents nearly 25,000 pounds of newsprint.

The local publication is provided by a staff of eight in addition to more than 20 rural correspondents.

The Tribune strives to keep its news columns clean, factual and unbiased, the formula for a truly "independent newspaper." It is true that we make mistakes occasionally. So does every other newspaper that isn't afraid of its own shadow. But when our information is shown to be faulty, we make amends cheerfully.

The Tribune is not unmindful of the privilege it has of serving this progressive community and is sincerely grateful for the patronage it has enjoyed. Every effort will be made to keep on improving the service given readers.

**Here's to Crime**

Those who are accustomed to deplore and view with alarm frequently find cause for disapproval in the newspapers' habit of playing up stories of crime and violence, thereby catering to the so-called baser tastes of their readers. Since newspapers continue their way undisturbed by the reformers, it may be taken for granted that these baser tastes are shared by the majority of readers. It might be suspected that the reformers themselves read the stories pretty thoroughly before they complain to the editor.

If news of crime and violence were removed from the general news pages the average newspaper would seem dull indeed. The stories remaining for expanded treatment would mainly be based on what people of some permanent or transitory prominence have said. As it is, a dull day in the news-gathering world will find the latest great thoughts of Senator McCarthy, Rita Hayworth or the Red Dean of Canterbury gaining the prominence of the front page.

A really good murder has this much in its favor, that it is something that has happened. Irrespective of the morals of the case, it can be enjoyed without apology by both reporters and readers. If there is an element of mystery in it, so much the better. The story then becomes a serial. From the time the chief of police announces that an arrest will be made in a few days or hours, the experienced reader, rightly interpreting this as meaning that the police haven't the least idea of who the criminal is, can prepare for at least a week of solid pleasure.

Reformers and deplorers notwithstanding, the taste for reading about crime is not to be judged too harshly. The reader may look upon the criminal as something of a benefactor in providing a spot of color for a dull world, but it is the reformer who gets up petitions in the criminal's behalf when the penalty for his crime is at last imposed. By that time the ungrateful reader of crime stories is deep in the latest mystery.

**BETHESDA**

Thursday, January 7  
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Fretz of London spent New Years with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Oran Fretz. Also Mr. Peter Stickley, Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Sheffer of Stayner had Christmas with Mr. and Mrs. Fretz.

There is always one drawback for the fellow in a budding love affair. The blooming expense.

Most people like silverware that matches but it gets monotonous going to the same restaurant all the time.

**THIS WEEK'S SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON**

**JESUS AND NICODEMUS**  
Golden Text — God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16

**THE LESSON AS A WHOLE**  
Approach to the Lesson

One of the peculiarities of John's Gospel is the great number of the evangelist's own comments interspersed with the narrative. The other Gospel writers rarely interject even explanatory notes. For clear examples of this in John's Gospel, look at 2:24, 25; 7:39; 11:13; 12:37-43; 20:30, 31; 21:19. In this week's lesson 2 passages are thought by many to be such commentaries inserted by John himself, 3:16-21 and 3:31-36. Most of us, however, like to think of John 3:16 as having been spoken by our Lord Himself; but it is just as true even if John gave it to us. It is still the Word of God.

The discourses of Jesus recorded by John are a completely different selection from those given in the synoptic Gospels. Here we have none of the Sermon on the Mount, none of the "mysteries of the kingdom" discourse, none of the great indictment of the scribes and Pharisees, none of the Olivet discourse. But see what we have: the discourses on the new birth (3:1-21), the Son of life (4:1-26), the Son and His witnesses (5:19-47), the bread of life (6:27-59), the light and life of men (8:12-58), the Good Shepherd (10:1-18), and the unspeakably precious upper room discourse (13:31 to 16:33). Here is a wealth of our Lord's teaching given to individuals and to groups, for which we must be exceedingly thankful.

There are also some notable omissions in John's Gospel with regard to events. The following events are not recorded here: the birth of Christ (but see 1:14), the baptism, the temptation, the transfiguration, the last supper, the agony in the garden, and the ascension. Of these seven, Mark also omits the first and Matthew the last. These omissions may seem strange to us, but they emphasize the fact that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were not writing a biography, but a Gospel and each one had his own emphasis, as he was guided by the Holy Spirit.

Verse 1 — "A man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews." Two things are said of Nicodemus: he belonged to the sect of the Pharisees (see Acts 23:5), and that he was a ruler, which means that he was a member of the Sanhedrin; the great Jewish council.

Verse 2 — "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God..." Nicodemus was satisfied on the point of the divine mission of Jesus, but beyond that he was full of questioning.

Verse 3 — "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jesus went right to the heart of Nicodemus's questioning. For all his learning and religion, he was an unregenerate man, unable to discern the things of God. See 1 Corinthians 2:14.

Verse 4 — "How can a man be born when he is old?" His response to Christ's statement was but further evidence of his unregenerate state. He could think only in terms of the natural. The spiritual was beyond him.

Verse 5 — "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Our Lord's answer was a repetition of His former statement, with slight enlargement and explanation — "of water and of the spirit."

Verse 6 — "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Now comes the real explanation. The carnal

can only beget the carnal, and only the Spirit of God can beget what is spiritual. Garnished flesh is not spiritual.

Verse 7 — "Ye must be born again." The new birth may be a marvel but the need for it is no marvel. It is in keeping with the law of generation.

Verse 8 — "The wind bloweth... canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The phenomena of the wind can be traced, but its coming and going remain mysterious. This is more true of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 9 — "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" For "a master" read "the teacher." Nicodemus was high in the ranks of Jewry, yet blind to spiritual truth.

Verse 10 — "We speak that we do know, and ye receive not our witness." Our Lord speaks from first-hand knowledge, not acquired knowledge. The "ye" refers to the group represented by Nicodemus as an individual. As a group, the rulers of Israel did not believe, but Nicodemus came to faith.

Verse 11 — "How shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" The "earthly things" are those things which refer to our condition and experience here; the "heavenly things" are the works of God "behind the scenes."

Verse 12 — "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven..." A difficult verse, indicating that it was not by some dweller on earth ascending to Heaven that the truth came to men, but by a dweller in Heaven coming down to earth — Jesus Himself.

Verse 13 — "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness... so must the Son of man be lifted up." A reference to Numbers 21:7-9. The "lifting up" of Christ refers definitely to the cross, though His ascension to the throne may also be in view.

Verse 14 — "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." The great purpose of the "lifting up" was to secure life for man, which is available to faith.

Verse 15 — "... that he gave his only begotten Son... have everlasting life." Back of the great purpose and the costly means of attaining it is the infinite matchless love of God.

**The Heart of the Lesson**  
The second chapter of John's Gospel ends on a sad note. "Many believed," says the record, but Jesus did not believe in them. Theirs was the superficial faith, based only on the spectacular, which did not lead them to a committal of themselves to the Lord Jesus.

But there were a few earnest souls in Jerusalem who were neither willing to be swept into a hasty commitment nor satisfied to abide in smug indifference. Of this number was Nicodemus, the Pharisee, who shared the almost fanatical adherence of his sect to the Law, but did not share their hypocrisy.

This religious leader was frankly puzzled. The miracles of Jesus were valid credentials of a prophet, "a teacher come from God," yet the teachings of Jesus so cut across the traditions which the Pharisees so cherished that Nicodemus was at a loss to know what to make of it all. But while others of his sect, and other members of the great council closed their eyes to the evidence and refused to harken to Jesus, Nicodemus was bent on having the mystery solved. He chose an interview by night, when interruption was least likely.

His opening affirmation contained all the questions of his inquiring mind. But our Lord turned the tables on the inquirer Nicodemus thought that Jesus was the problem. Jesus showed him that Nicodemus was the problem. What he needed was not an answer to his questions, but a new birth, a birth from above. That, and that alone, would give him access to the Kingdom of God and open the eyes of his understanding to the truths of that Kingdom. In other words, his need, which was the need of all men, was not primarily intellectual, but spiritual.

Not by the scaling of the heights of Heaven by men in their search for truth, but by the eternal Truth Himself coming down from Heaven to men.

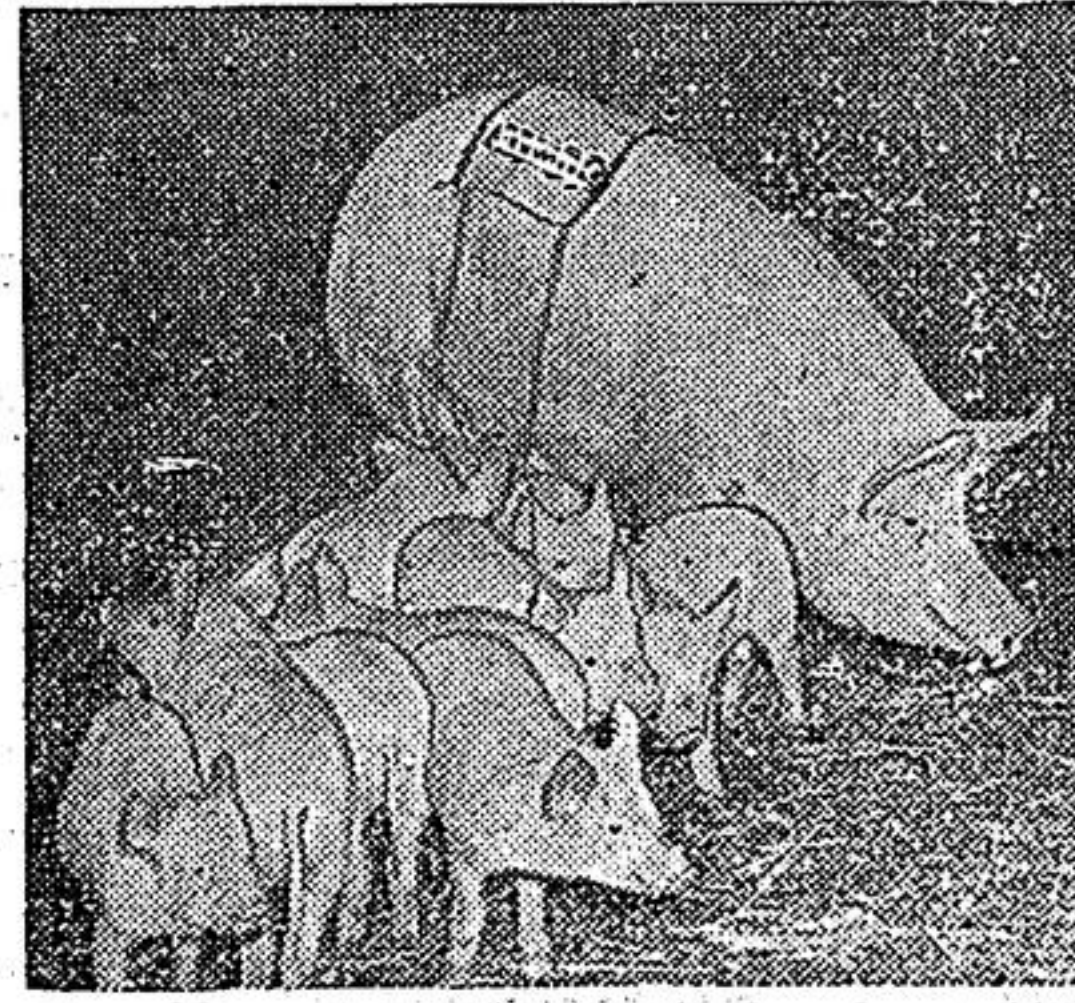
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