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# SUGAR AND SPICE

By BILL SMILEY

Perhaps someone who has gone the whole course can tell me when one's children stop depending on their parents when it comes to the clutch.

Is it in the forties, fifties, sixties? Certainly it is not in their twenties.

Recently, we received a note from our son Hugh, to tell us he was taking some holidays and would be home for a few days' visit.

I thought, "Good. He's saved some money and won't arrive broke, as usual." He had.

Some days later, in a telephone conversation with daughter Kim, we learned that Hugh had dropped in to see her, and had drifted off, muttering something about going to Chicago. That is a slightly roundabout way of getting to our place.

And a few days later there was a collect call from Houston, Texas. You guessed it, Hugh, flat broke. Could we wire him money for bus fare to get home?

He was crafty enough to call when I was at work. I would probably have refused the collect call, and regretted it later. Or I'd have shouted, "No, I will not send you the price of one serving of Kentucky fried chicken", and slammed up the receiver.

But he sweet-talked his mother for five minutes before he popped the question. She was not only affronted but taken aback and didn't think quickly enough to tell him we were just off to Florida or the west coast or anywhere.

She waffled a bit, and eventually said she'd see what his Dad said but not to expect anything. He sighed with relief and told her where to send the money.

I came home from work on a Friday after a hard week. All I wanted was to get my shoes off, have a quiet drink before dinner, and read the latest goodies about the energy crisis.

And all I got was a family crisis, a scramble to the bank, and a dash to get to the telegraph office before it closed for the weekend.

At first I stood my ground. Not a penny. Let him starve in Houston. At least he won't freeze to death (he'd airily told his mother it was 90 degrees down there.)

And she agreed with me. "He doesn't deserve a cent. He was told he was never to do that again. Ungrateful young pup. Why doesn't he hitchhike home?"

"Well," I said, "some of those southern states are pretty tough on hitchhikers. Throw them in jail for a month."

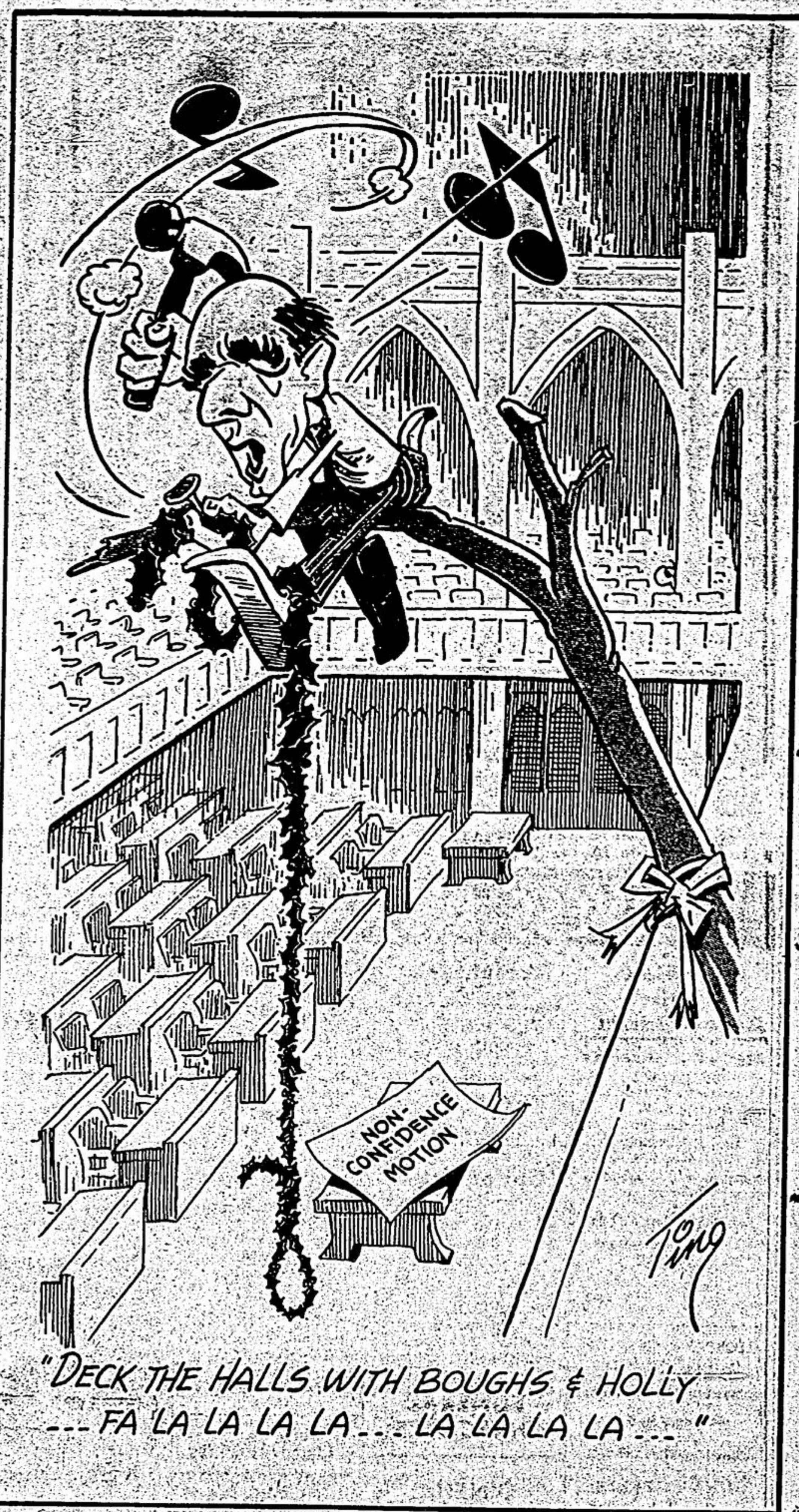
I could just see her thinking of her first-born slaving on a Georgia chain-gang or something of the sort. After a heated half-hour, we agreed that money isn't everything, that you can't take it with you, that he's the only son we have, that it would be nice to see him, and that I'd better hustle if I wanted to get to the bank in time.

It cost me about \$115, counting the bus fare and grub to get home, the cost of the collect call, and the charge for sending the money.

That's what I call sending good money after good. Of course, Hugh wouldn't dream of accepting a gift. It was strictly a loan. According to his figures, he now owes me \$380.00, without interest, and will have the whole thing paid off, any time now. According to my figures, he owes me \$880.46, at eight per cent interest, and he'll never pay it off.

This has been happening to me for years. First, the kids go to their mother, and soften her up. Then she comes to me, and softens me up. Then I go back to the kids and practically apologize for being so slow with the loot.

Of course, I reason, Hugh's only a kid. Practically a baby. He won't be twenty seven until July. You can't expect him, at that



"DECK THE HALLS WITH BOUGHS & HOLLY  
... FA LA LA LA LA ... LA LA LA LA ..."

## Editorials

### Shortages good

Are we becoming shortage conscious? We think so. Not a day goes by than the matter is discussed in homes, offices, on the street, and to help it along the national press, radio and TV brings up a continual stream, of new products now in short supply.

Surprisingly too, not everyone thinks this is all bad. Let's face it, we are spoiled. In the area of eating and driving, some reduction is certainly not going to hurt anyone — in fact it might even add a few years to our lives. We have gadgets running out of our ears, we keep

two and three cars on the go, we pour heat into our homes much beyond necessity and we eat like there was no tomorrow. Let's face it, we want for nothing.

Many of the cutbacks which appear to be in the offing may actually help us rather than hinder us. Maybe it will become apparent that we've gone too far, too fast.

One result that just might be a blessing will be that a great many people will be forced to stay home, something they haven't done for years. Family life could be in for a revival.

### Tax long overdue

In a world in which the ordinary citizen believes he is already burdened down with taxes, to say that a new tax is overdue, may seem strange. However, the new tax to be imposed by the federal government for the use of airports is just that. To those of us who have used many airports outside this country, such a tax is nothing new. The majority have been making such a levy for years.

It's the old case of the users having to pay, at least some portion of the cost, more than the non-users. It might be placed in the same

class as toll bridges. While both are public services which must be provided by the public at large, it is only fair and equitable that those who make the most use of the service, should pay a little more for its upkeep.

The amount is minimal to the individual user and will have no effect on the numbers of persons using the service, but to the government which must come up with the millions required to provide these large complexes, the benefit can be substantial.

## Editor's Mail

### Channelization challenged

Dear Sir: We are the solicitors for Woodbine Realty Limited and Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Felson. Woodbine Realty Limited is a corporation owned by Mrs. Felson. All three parties are the registered owners of real property in your town and as such are taxpayers. It was with concern that Mr. Felson learned of the proposed channelization project reported in The Tribune, Thursday, Nov. 1, 1973.

Mr. Felson's concern stems from his feeling that the money being spent on the project could be better applied to more urgent projects and if an allocation of this magnitude is being made at the apparent sacrifice of other projects the allocation should not be made without at least public hearings being held and at best a referendum.

Projects of greater community urgency include the need for a water tower, additional sewage plant facilities, new library facilities, new park and recreation facilities to com-

pliment existing facilities and improved roads.

The report in The Tribune makes no reference to any studies indicating a need for the project nor the technical basis upon which a decision of council will be based. If studies have been carried out they should be made available to the public and the public should have an opportunity to make comments. If a study has not been carried out then surely such a study should be undertaken before an allocation of funds of this magnitude is made.

It is Mr. Felson's intention to oppose the spending of such a large sum without the taxpayer public having a reasonable opportunity to study and make comments on the proposal. Mr. Felson has instructed us to engage counsel to take such steps as may be necessary to ensure such an opportunity.

L. Milton Hess  
390 Bay St.  
Toronto.

### Teachers should unionize

It would seem as if the school teachers who are preparing to use resignation as a bargaining weapon, would find more public support if they became an out and out union. The guise of a federation backed by exclamations of professionalism, to use a man-in-the-street term, simply "turns people off."

#### CROWD CATCHER

As a crowd-catcher, the Santa Clause Parade on Saturday was tops. Those in charge must be congratulated for the abundance of

musical units provided in the long procession.

#### CREDIT CARD WORLD

We live in a credit card world, but a chap made the following comment to me the other day: "How can all these people enjoy their Christmas trips when they know they'll have to spend months paying for it? I think you should save for it - you should let the reward come after, in payment for the effort, rather than have the effort come after, in punishment for the reward."



Winter settles over creek and woods

Winter came with stunning reality Sunday and the small creek west of Ringwood shows itself to be in between the two seasons. The

blanket of snow does much to turn a small creek into a wonderland of white.

— Don Bernard

BY DON BERNARD

## Death of an airport?

Recent developments in the "Pickering Airport Saga" leave one very much uncertain as to the future of that project, which has brought loud protest from the people that are to be displaced by it.

Many things have changed since the project was announced almost two years ago. Subsequent events have shown that the airport may not be quite as necessary as the Federal Government assured us was the case even last year.

The appointment of an independent board of inquiry was a small victory for the anti-airport people, in that the final irrevocable decision to build the thing is postponed until the inquiry has done its work.

Well what about the inquiry? The inquiry under Justice Hugh F. Gibson has yet to start hearings or even set up offices. The judge was named Sept. 4 to head the board. Even the judge himself refused to comment when asked about it by the Globe and Mail last week.

Strange behaviour indeed considering the timetable must be rather tight for the work on the airport to begin. At least a final decision must be made soon. Still no inquiry!

But there are some other factors that indicate that the call for an airport will peter out.

The assumption that Toronto will need an

airport to serve super-sonic airliners is plainly non-existent. In fact the demise of the U.S. project and the trouble the British and French are having selling their Concorde, shows that quite clearly.

That is further inforced by the energy crisis. That kind of airplane would not be economical and in all likelihood will never enter commercial service.

The energy crisis makes another strong argument against the airport. Air travel uses more fuel per passenger than any other form of travel. Trains, buses and cars are better on our depleting energy supplies.

A proper rail service between Toronto and Montreal for instance would all but eliminate the busiest air-route in Canada: A fast electric train, built along European models, could compete easily with the present air service between those two cities.

The airlines are finally learning to conserve energy. They are not scheduling as many flights and thus carrying more passengers on each trip. Fewer flights tends to diminish the need for a new airport. Expansion of terminal facilities at Malton would probably be sufficient.

The old phrase that any development is good development is starting to sound hollow

## On election situation

It would now appear that there is little chance of a winter federal election being forced on the Canadian people. While some may believe the Liberals are floundering, there is little sign that the leadership in the other parties would be any better able to cope with present problems. On the other hand an election would delay positive action by the government. It would cost a tremendous amount of money, use up a great deal of hard-to-get fuel, and possibly end up as it started with another minority government.

tender age, to know enough to SAVE SOME MONEY FOR BUS FARE HOME!

But that other kid. She's a different matter. She's almost a mother. And she pulled a swiftie on us this week. Another collect call, on Sunday. Nice to hear her. Asked how big the tummy was. All very matey and maternal.

Then came the punch. Don, her husband was on the way up from the city with their cat, to put in our care. He had to hitchhike because he couldn't bring the cat on a bus. Her mother nearly blew a cork. The danged cat isn't trained.

So we have two additions to the household this week. Two fat cats. One in the backyard, yowling to get in. The other watching TV, sleeping till noon, and waiting to put the bite on me for more bus fare back to his job in Quebec.

I shoulda been a cranky old bachelor.

There is also a persuasive argument that valuable farmland will be destroyed if the airport is built. In the overall scheme that may be the most significant fact in future considerations.

The fact is that farmland is notorious short supply for a world of 4 billion people. Countries like India are actually falling behind in being able to feed their rapidly increasing population.

The time will come when farmland and food will be more important than oil or gold. Value always increases on a scarce commodity.

What is he getting at you might ask? Taking all things into consideration, the Federal Government will abandon plans to build the Pickering Airport, or at least scale it down beyond recognition. That airport will likely never see the light of day.

It is ironic that events beyond the control of either the Federal government or the displaced airport people have brought this about. Citizen protest has stalled final approval.

If it is only a partial victory for democracy, then that is better than nothing.

Editors Note: Jim Thomas and "Roaming Around" return in next week's Tribune.