

The Traffic Toll

BRITISH COLUMBIA ACHIEVED great growth in almost every area last year including, unfortunately, the traffic accident toll which rose to a new record high. For the year ahead there is further growth predicted for the province, and if nothing is done to halt it, the traffic toll can also be expected to rise.

Despite what Highways Minister Gagliardi claims—that it is liquor and not speed which is the main culprit—it stands to reason that if more cars are put onto the roads and highways and they are encouraged to travel at ever-increasing speeds, there will be more maimings, deaths and property damage. Mr. George Lindsay, who recently retired as superintendent of the motor vehicles branch after 30 years, made this crystal clear in a statement summing up the need for more and better traffic law enforcement, and co-ordination of traffic safety efforts.

Traffic problems are increasing more rapidly in British Columbia than in any other province with an eight per cent annual growth in vehicle registrations. Mr. Lindsay noted. Accidents and injuries last year increased at an even more rapid rate, 25 per cent over 1963, and road deaths hit a new record of 390. The increase in accidents from 1962 to 1963 was only 6.3 per cent.

One of the by-products of the surge in accidents last year was an average 20 per cent rise in the cost of auto insurance and, ironically, it was over this facet of the situation that most anger has been expressed. There may be good reason for the motorist who has never had an accident to be annoyed by rising insurance premiums, but aren't demands for less expensive insurance

rather missing the point of the whole matter?

If British Columbians as a whole were better, more careful drivers, if they weren't encouraged to drive at speeds which many can't handle, and if there was a more unified and stronger form of traffic law enforcement there would have been no need or justification for higher insurance premiums.

Mr. Lindsay, who has always had the statistical evidence right at hand, has been a consistent foe of higher speeds on roads and highways and has just as consistently debunked Mr. Gagliardi's contention that alcohol is the main culprit in accidents. The official figures, he claims, show that drinking is a factor in only a small percentage of accidents and this leaves carelessness and speed as the main factors. For the first half of last year, for instance, alcohol was a factor in well under five per cent of the accidents reported and, although it can be argued that this is still too high a percentage and no thinking person will condone impaired driving, it does not bear out the contention of the minister of highways.

Mr. Gagliardi deserves credit for the vigorous manner in which he has directed the expansion and improvement of the province's highway system. But it is questionable whether the expansion and improvement of the highways are keeping up with the growing number of motor vehicles which use them, not only the domestic growth but the added burden of an increasing stream of tourist traffic.

Looking back on the black record of 1964, it seems evident that British Columbia's traffic accident problem needs a major effort this year by all levels of government in order to head off an even worse toll. Or, as Mr. Lindsay asked: "Are we just too prosperous to care?"

Let's Build to a Plan

THE SO-CALLED COURT house precinct was originally conceived as an area reserved for special purposes in parklike surroundings, to constitute a southern focal point for Blanshard Street and an appropriate environment for the proposed city hall.

That concept has undergone some alterations in the past four years. The city hall proposal—for the Hydro building on Cathedral Hill—has been abandoned in favor of the Centennial Square program, and interest has shifted for the time being to other areas of the downtown district. But much of the precinct idea may still be retained; this two-block area could yet become an attractive element in the city's new appreciation of malls and pedestrian amenities.

There still can be created an attractive landscaped approach to the west doors of the cathedral, and a green belt complementing the valuable retreat offered by Pioneer Square. For this reason, and because of the importance of the area, it is essential that any new proposal for building there, particularly a major project such as the suggested 140-foot high-rise apartment behind the Royal Theatre, should receive

the careful study of planning experts.

Such a building would be a dominant feature of the district. It might well prove on examination to be a valuable asset, or it might prove to be wrongly situated for the purposes of the precinct and of the residence itself. But the question cannot be decided by off-the-cuff opinions. It should be answered only after a full examination by qualified town-planning authorities on the basis of what is best for the precinct and for the city.

The community is growing so rapidly today that there can be no thought of permitting haphazard development. Each major addition to our city blocks and our skyline should be considered in the light of its effects on the existing environment: will it be an improvement or a detriment in that particular location as regards the neighboring structures, the district and the city as a whole?

Obviously this is the point at which professional advice must be sought. We must design our civic environment, not just let it happen. Only in this way will we get the capital city we should have.

Earning Goodwill

THE PUBLIC SUPPORT GIVEN to Goodwill Enterprises since its inception some years ago adds general interest to the start today on new, well-equipped quarters for handicapped workers at Bay and Wilson Streets.

The organization which helps to employ those who would find difficulty in holding a more competitive job has earned the respect of the community. Through its efforts many afflicted citizens have found not only a field for constructive work, but an opportunity to retain or regain their dignity as individuals. In the main, they take articles which need reconditioning and with a capacity which has surprised many, they turn out goods that find a ready market here.

Away from the Goldfish Bowl

DURING THE CHRISTMAS-NEW Year holiday season, Prince Charles and Princess Anne "escaped" through a side door to avoid newsmen and photographers assigned to their Liechtenstein skiing trip.

During the same period the first lady of the United States expressed delight, publicly, over birthday presents but declined to go into detail over their nature.

The members of the royal family, including Prince Charles and Princess Anne, were photographed during the holidays. So also was the wife of the American president. Their pictures and their comments make news.

But surely people of eminence,

including the popular royal family, should be allowed some seclusion for the private enjoyment of living, which is quite apart from their public duties.

It is generally recognized that the royal family owes a substantial part of its popularity to the fact that it is a family and has family occasions which should be reserved for members only. They are not on perpetual exhibition like fish in a glass bowl.

Public and press will have noted with gratification the action of the British Press Council in condemning the trespass by some photographers on royalty and will hope that this has its desired effect in curtailing unjustified intrusion.



Berman, Victoria Daily Times.

Letters

Good Training

The intended addition of two more councillors will be of definite advantage to the Municipality of Saanich. There will be more opportunity for interested ratepayers from every level of our community to directly participate in responsible local government; and further serve as a training ground and stepping stone for aspirants seeking entry into provincial and federal politics. In my opinion, men and women who commence their political rise within the grass roots of local government generally make the best legislators in a democratic society, and on such premise municipal councils, such as Saanich, should be encouraged to thrive.

DENIS H. BESLEY.

4360 Gordon Head Road.

'Each One Teach One'

A letter to the Editor of the London Daily Mirror under date November 13, 1964, reads as follows:

"My committee feels that our thanks should be conveyed to the person who took the trouble to write to you about our 'each one teach one' scheme—and to you for printing it. Through this we have received considerable support with letters pouring in from the United Kingdom—we thank them all and we hope to be able to answer in due time. The scheme began three months ago to teach illiterate women who have never had the opportunities their husbands had and are in need of at least a basic education. We have been able to provide the money to purchase material for the making of 38 blackboards for as many open-air schools. At these we run four shifts of classes of 40 women per class each day. There is a total of some 6,000 pupils and 162 teachers. Our course in English conversation begins in January. I would particularly thank your reader who was the anonymous donor of \$5 9s 3d which arrived in time to pay the installation on the blackboards."

The author of that letter is Mr. N. S. Mulenga, P.O. Box 280, Chingolo, Zambia, Methinks, maybe, some of our million-dollar educationalists could dig up some chalk for friend Mulenga.

W. D. JOHNSON.

1008 Falkland Road.

Inspiring Example

Last Sunday a memorial service for the late Miss Muriel C. Harman, Victoria missionary in the Congo, was held at the Church of Our Lord and widely attended. This gracious response by Miss Harman's many devoted friends, in recognition of her lifework in the modern mission field, is an inspiring example of the very real unity which exists among all Christian people—a unity of spirit. Drawing closer together in one faith, one love and understanding, shared by all, was Muriel Harman's deepest desire and constant aim.

To all who attended this memorial service, and to those who so kindly and ably assisted, the Church of Our Lord offers grateful, heartfelt thanks.

DENYS A. G. RANKILOR, DD.,
Bishop Primus; Canada,
The Reformed Episcopal Church.

No Socialist

As a Jenkins who is a Socialist I would like to take issue with your review of the book about Asquith by a Roy Jenkins who is presently minister of aviation in the current British Labor Government and who is allegedly also a Socialist.

He is no more Socialist than the man he wrote about.

Another notable Briton once claimed correctly, that in order to conserve one must reform. In the old days when there was some discernable difference between left, centre and right, a Liberal was really a far-sighted Conservative and a Laborite was merely a Liberal (far-sighted Conservative) in a hurry.

Roy Jenkins admits that Lloyd George's "13 pounds per year for a rigidly circumscribed half a million of the aged poor was hardly the beginning of the social millennium," but then how could it be? Maintaining worn out proletarians in work houses was costly, to the tune of 13 shillings, six pence weekly.

The Labor party, advocating a bigger dose, superseded the Liberals as the major crusade for reform (not revolution) and preservation of the master-servant relationship in England.

Although he may mean well, Roy Jenkins' jottings are an insult to the several Jenkins who support the Socialist Party of Canada's program of common ownership and democratic control of the means of production and distribution by and in the interests of society as a whole.

J. G. JENKINS.

859 Darwin Avenue.

Fort Steele

The news in the press recently that "most of the land needed" for restoration of historic Fort Steele, near Cranbrook, B.C., "had been acquired" is most welcome to all those interested in the history of the province, and who firmly believe in preserving some, at least, of our traditions.

C. HOLMES.

Past President,
B.C. Historical Society.

DENNIS THE MENACE



From Our Files

Jan. 8, 1905—Nagasaki: About 1,000 wounded Russian prisoners of war from Port Arthur arrived at Dalre Hospital today.

Jan. 8, 1925—Montreal: While Eugene Prieux was walking along Des Encours Street with his wife yesterday, three men jumped out of an automobile and while threatening them with revolvers, forced Mrs. Prieux to remove her clothes, with which they made off.

Jan. 8, 1945—An Indian, Ernest Jack, asleep on the railroad track was struck and killed instantly at 4 a.m. by a southbound E and N freight train.

FROM WASHINGTON

Costs of "Going Back to Waikiki"

By JOSEPH ALSOP

UNLESS President Lyndon Johnson takes rather prompt preventive action, 1965 is pretty likely to be remembered as the year when the proud, ever-rising curve of American power and greatness at length turned sharply downward—perhaps finally and fatally.

This would have happened in 1962 if President John Kennedy had ducked the challenge of the Soviet missiles in Cuba. Barring a miracle, this is due to happen in 1965 if President Johnson ducks the challenge in South Viet Nam, as he seems to be getting ready to do.

To be sure, the White House has been passing the word that we can safely go on as we are going in Viet Nam. To be sure, others have suggested that we can safely forget about the Vietnamese war and negotiate larger diplomatic arrangements which will guarantee a bearable future for Asia.

On Verge of Defeat

But it is ludicrous to talk about negotiating when you are on the naked verge of total, final defeat—unless you merely wish the negotiations to register the defeat. And in this same situation it is also self-deceiving to say you can safely go on as you are going—unless your concealed intention is to accept the coming defeat and then to try to throw the blame on all sorts of other people.

The truth, if it is faced, is meanwhile quite simple. The United States is very near to defeat in Viet Nam. It may come militarily, or it may come politically; but either way there is not much time left

to avert it. Furthermore, the United States has the power to avert this defeat—unless it is argued we are too weak to win a war against the North Vietnamese aggressors. Hence, it is well now to count what this defeat can be expected to cost.

"The question is whether you want to go right back to Waikiki." In these words, the first part of the cost of defeat in Viet Nam was summarized by one of the leading participants in the White House conference with Gen. Maxwell Taylor early in December, when the challenge ought to have been met, but was instead ducked for the second or third time during 1964.

Losing Pacific Status

"Going back to Waikiki," of course, means losing the American position as a great power in the Pacific. Gaining and holding that position in the Second World War and the Korean War cost us hundreds of thousands of dead and wounded and hundreds of billions of dollars. Its loss after a defeat in Viet Nam is foreseen by all qualified judges, including the President's own policymakers.

The Hong Kong analysts, the best in Asia, say that Formosa will hardly last six months after the United States concedes victory to the Communists in Southeast Asia. It will take longer than that for the Philippines to reach the stage of Indonesia and longer still for all that we fought for in South Korea to go down the drain. Japan's movement to a neutralist position and the consequent loss of Okinawa may even require a good many years.

But as nothing fails like failure, especially in Asia, the whole grim chain reaction is easily predictable. In Southeast Asia, meanwhile, United States defeat in Viet Nam may perhaps briefly install an allegedly neutralist government in Saigon. But such a government will represent no more than a brief transition.

In very short order the Laotian and South Vietnamese peoples, who have relied upon the United States, will be subjected to the bleak tyranny now prevailing in Communist North Viet Nam—because the United States has proven unreliable. But that will be no more than the first phase; for the American defeat will be far more a Chinese triumph than a North Vietnamese triumph.

All of Southeast Asia, emphatically including Viet Nam, will be China's to deal with as the Chinese Communist leaders may please, just as soon as we are defeated and our forces withdrawn. In Southeast Asia, China will gain the margin of resources to achieve what China cannot possibly achieve today—the status of a military-industrial giant power. And this third giant power will be led, remember, by the bloody-minded men who now rule in Peking.

As for Europe, there are good reasons for believing that the intelligence reports from Saigon are the real source of Gen. de Gaulle's vastly more aggressive recent policy. U.S. humiliation in the Pacific will certainly not increase U.S. influence in the Atlantic, as De Gaulle well knows. And to this dreadful bill that will have to be paid if we accept defeat, one must add the inevitable feedback into Latin America and the Middle East.

Decisive Test

It may seem ridiculous that so much should depend upon the obscure conflict in Viet Nam. But this conflict, for good or evil, has now become a decisive test of U.S. power and resoluteness. That is the basic reason why Mr. Johnson's choice in Viet Nam in 1965 so closely resembles Mr. Kennedy's choice in Cuba in 1962. One must pray he does not fall where his predecessor succeeded.

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IN THE TIMES OF LONDON

By MARTIN DEWEY

The Stories the Personal Columns Tell

THE Duke and Duchess of Bedford didn't send any greeting cards at Christmas time. Nor did Baron and Baroness Stackelberg, Sir John and Lady Hutchison, Lady Wilson or Air Vice-Marshal and Mrs. Gerard Combe.

They and dozens upon dozens of the illustrious and not so illustrious appear to have chucked the Christmas card habit.

Yet perhaps there is method in this apparent madness. Often, as it turns out, The Times' best reading is still to be found on the front page. For sheer poignancy, the news columns would have to go a long way to match the following: "Mother, impecunious, requires for Christmas a skeleton for medical student son. Good home."

Or another item in the personal column: "No joke. Shaving rash, sore skin, etc. Can anyone suggest method of lathering or shaving which does not scrape sensitive skin but which removes tough beard?"

Romance, Mystery For the romantic, there are titillating items such as this one: "Shelley—you can come home. Version 7 is working correctly. Tom." Sometimes there is mystery: "For the owner of the BMW Isotta 300 licence number VLE 619 in London or Essex, the best of good wishes from Gallus Hafner, Zurich, Switzerland."

Occasionally, the personal columns offer an entree into the glittering world of titles and country houses: "Young female executive secretary required at once... must be able to mix socially with top people including royalty." Or "Lord Gifford's party still has vacancies for you... Or Princess Ruspoli invites you to join her party at the New Year's Eve Carnival Ball at..."

Alternatively, for the reader who might want a title of his own: "Lordship of Manor. Ancient documents and right to use the title 'Lord of the Manor'; 13th century origin; will only be sold to British resident with good references."

Animal-lovers communicate with one another in a special, sugary language: "I am a black Peking—who are you? If confirmed, energetic, loving, offer 40 guineas (\$126) for six-month-old, male, mischievous mear."

Then there are the frequent reminders that, Labor government or no, there are still many Britons for whom money is no object: "Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Mullion would be glad to hear of a furnished house to rent in the vicinity of Ascot racecourse for the month of June, 1965; must have minimum of five bedrooms and two bath-

rooms; would prefer to bring own servants but some daily help an advantage."

In the same issue, a Park Lane flat is offered at the equivalent of \$650 a month and a smallish Augustus John pencil drawing has been opened for bids starting at \$2,400.

Refreshingly, there are no love-love notices. But there are endless appeals for donations from everything from missions to deep sea fisherfolk and societies for "gentlewomen in reduced circumstances" to leagues for vegetarians and foundations for the conversion of the Jews.

Where Does It End? In Britain, every disease known to man has a society working to cure it, and all of them—the societies, that is—find their way into the personal columns of The Times. We know that charity begins at home. But where, one might ask, does it end?

All of which seems to provide some clues about the fabled unflappability of readers of The Times: After they have chuckled, wondered and wett their way through the front-page small ads, news of bombs going off in China and earthquakes in Peru must seem bland fare indeed.