



Kampus Koncern

by Joel Hansen

OH CANADA

Last week I mentioned, in my article on the "Bear Pit" with two M.P.'s from Ottawa, the idea of the possibility of the irrationality of the Canadian nation. The reaction I received from the article was 'AMAZING! Why? Most people, it seems, have never questioned the being of Canada.

Remembering that P.E.I. was maverick in 1867 concerning the idea of confederation, I was surprised by the dogmatic approach most people have here toward the Canadian nation. Is it that easy to forget that P.E.I. had a relatively better economic position in relation to North America then, than it does now? The leaders of P.E.I. knew what was happening back then better than the present leaders know what is happening now. The leaders then, knew for instance, that the leaders of Canada wanted the Maritime region as an economic buffer to hold things together while "forced growth" could be planned and executed on the St. Lawrence River Valley, (the Western valley). They knew what they were getting in exchange for this contract - a better integrated railway system.

In retrospect the Maritime region received the "screw"! The Maritimes' trade was based on shipping on the high seas. It is common knowledge that transport via high seas is marketly cheaper than any other form of transportation. The region did not need railways connecting it with Canada. The St. Lawrence River served as an excellent passageway to Canada if, in fact, there was need to export to Canada. The Maritimes had good trade with New England and the West Indies so that export to Canada was not an urgent necessity.

No - it was not the Maritimes who needed the railway network; it was Canada. It was the economy of cen-

tral North America that demanded railways; and if railways were to be financially successful they needed to include all possible regions of economic activity, including the maritimes.

So much for history, - what of today!

Similar arguments for staying out of Canada exist now as they did some one hundred years ago. For example, inflation is rampaging the Maritime economy - why? Not because we have over-developed and over-spent our area and resourc-

brings us to the crux of the argument supporting the irrationality of the Canadian nation as it now exists. Due to Canada's geographic expanse decisions concerning the future cannot be made to the satisfaction of the individual regions within the parameters of the nation.

But what of a more basic and important aspect of the Canadian approach to political decision-making namely citizen democracy? Is it possible to conduct citizen democracy on such mass terms as is entailed in the Canadian nation? I think not. In Canada the electorate is so diverse in region, culture and economy that they cannot be properly called a similar electorate or an electorate with common interests. Therefore, if the ideal of citizen-democracy is to have any meaning it cannot be conducted on the scale the Canadian nation attempts. Decision-making (political autonomy) needs to be placed in a more local arena if citizen-democracy is to be made tangible. Economic planning must be done on a more regional level; there cannot be a "national economic policy" for all of Canada for, in reality, there are several nations in this one country of Canada.

Is it necessary and right for Maritimers to pay TAX and HOMAGE to a central authority that does them more harm than good? - that is the question!

The next time some fast talking federal politicians come to U.P.E.I. let them answer the question, Is there a real Canadian nation? If they answer "Yes" they must be as stoned drunk as was the big man himself- John A. MacDonald.

I leave the correctness of my argument to your judgement - but for God's sake make a judgement; You may be surprised at your own conclusions.



She's Going Fast

es but because Ontario has over-developed and over-spent her area and resources. It is a fact that Maritimes are paying, through inflation, for something they have never received - namely big economic development. We are paying for mistakes made outside our decision-making reach; which