The Guardian

Covers Prince Edward Island Like the Dew
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Words To The Wise

Nothing is more to be dreaded at this season than the scourge of fire. From now until April and May the danger is great, because there are many who continue to wager their lives against the chance of fire breaking out. Through use of combustible building materials that should be replaced, through failure to provide proper protection where fire is supposed to be enclosed, and through careless disposal of paper and rubbish, householders live in continuous danger. And to the normal hazards are added at this season the accumulation of highly inflammable Christmas decorations.

We are all familiar with precautionary rules, but it does no harm to recall them again in connection with the main Yuletide hazards:

Trees should be left outdoors as long as possible and disposed of as soon as the festivities are over. When a Christmas tree is set up, the trunk should be freshly cut—at an angle—and placed in water. It should never be left near a fireplace, or where it could block an exit in case of fire.

Lighting constitutes a second major hazard for there is a tendency to overload circuits with strings of bulbs. The lighting strings should be checked to ascertain they are not frayed, and plugging too many cords into one outlet is to be avoided.

Decorations and wrapping are a constant source of danger. Wrappings should be disposed of carefully as soon as possible. Decorations of metal, glass and asbestos are preferred, and other material such as cotton should be used only if it has been flame-proofed.

There are toys, too, that can be dangerous. Those operated by alcohol, kerosene and gasoline should be used only by children old enough to realize the responsibility that must accompany them. This type of plaything should never be set up near a Christmas tree.

At this season in particular there is more than the normal danger from cigarets and smokers should exercise every precaution to avoid setting fires.

Christmas is a season of joy and happiness. Those who obey the common sense rules of fire safety will keep it so. Those who disregard them not only jeopardize their own happiness but that of other members of their families as well

The Liberal Convention

There is no doubt that with Messrs. Lester B. Pearson and Paul Martin in the field, the contest for the Liberal Party leadership at next month's convention will be a lively one. Other candidates may also come forward—including a former Islander, Rev. Lloyd Henderson, who has intimated as much in a recent statement from his home in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba—and this would add zest to the proceedings. But the candidacy of such eminent men as those already mentioned is enough to assure nation-wide interest.

Yet, as the Ottawa Citizen points out, the election of a leader will only be a part of the Liberal Party's business. Equally important will be the decisions that must be taken on a new program. For when the Liberals went to the country they were, in fact, a party without a program. The longterm program worked out in 1919 was completed, in principle, with the hospital insurance legislation enacted at the last session of Parliament. Consequently, the Liberals could do no more than go to the country on their record. Having had a period in opposition, they cannot even do that now. The need for a program is obvious.

A general, but vague, restatement of Liberal principles—freedom of trade and the protection of civil rights, for example—would not go nearly far enough. Neither would it be enough merely to criticize the Diefenbaker government on its performance. Something more specific, and more constructive, will be required.

"Great issues face Canada", says The Citizen. "Some are old, others are new. Each requires a fresh, specific policy; the development of the North, immigration, full employment, trade, the role Canada can play in maintaining peace in the world. A fresh look has to be taken at all these questions. The Liberal Party's attitude toward immigration, for instance, based on so-called ability to assimilate (which is a euphemism for racial discrimination) hasn't really changed in 40 years, though Canada and the world have. On other questions, too, there is need for a new look. It is for next month's convention to present this new face, along with a new leader, to the country."

Too Great A Risk

No wonder NATO has been ineffective. The marvel is that it has retained any life at all. That the reassertion of its essential functions was necessary at the Paris conference may be gathered from proposals emanating from diverse sources in recent weeks. George F. Kennan, for example, a former United States Ambassador to Moscow and a generally recognized authority on Russian affairs, had this to say in a lecture over the BBC. Mr. Kennan is now a visiting professor at Oxford University:

(1) "We should not look to the Council for basic strength on which the security of the world must rest;" (2) "It would be idle to suppose that the strengthening of NATO would provide the necessary climate and background for negotiations with the Soviet Union"; (3) "NATO must not be strengthened in such a way as to prejudice the chances for an eventual reduction of the danger of an all-out war"; (4) "Would not the West be safer and better off today if we could put our military fixations aside and stake our safety on the earnestness of our effort to do the constructive things?"

Mr. Kennan did not go so far as to suggest outright abandonment of NATO. But that is the only thing wanting in his speech to make it thoroughly agreeable to the Russians. It is possible, of course—anything is possible in this world—that if the West were to scrap its defences, or leave them in their present semisecure state, the Russians would reciprocate by agreeing to an effective disarmament program. But what a risk that would be! Yet, Mr. Kennan's argument very nearly runs in that direction. Luckily, he is not in a position to influence NATO decisions.

EDITORIAL NOTES

A major takes precedence over a lieutenant. It would seem logical, therefore, for a major-general to be ahead of a lieutenant-general. Strangely, it's the other way around.

* * *

A popular view is that even if big doses of vitamins do no good they cannot do any harm. This is not so, according to an expert in dermatology at Northwestern University in Chicago. Dr. Paul Lazar reports that too much Vitamin A can cause intoxication and poisoning and that there are dangers associated with excessive intake of other vitamins.

* * *

It is a sad commentary on our boasted civilization that few people—and fewer governments—take seriously the proposition that education is a matter of great national importance—as important, say, as social security. Indeed, at the present time there are widely divergent views on what education is. There are still a few who believe that it ought to be directed at development of the "whole man", a process which presupposes long and disciplined study of the "humanities". But the popular view is the utilitarian one, its relation to the acquiring of goods and chattels. And, of course, there is a growing view that the schools should concentrate almost solely on turning out technicians capable of assembling and firing hydrogen bombs, missiles and earth satellites, as if the chief end of man were to know these gadgets and enjoy them for ever!

WE ALWAYS PROMISE OURSELVES

UNITED KINGDOM OPINION

Pre-Christmas Thoughts

By "Onlooker"
Thomson Newspapers, London, England, Bureau

When Prime Minister Macmillan, Foreign Minister Selwyn Lloyd, and their respective hefty entourages left Britain for France they carried with them brief-cases full of good wishes. But most people here did not feel that Macmillan and Lloyd and Dulles and Eisenhower and the rest would pull anything startling out of the bag at the big Paris talks.

The British party crossed the Channel in the knowledge that they were going to attend the biggest meetings of their kind held in Paris since the Paris peace talks started close on 40 years ago. They may have plans for closer co-operation between the N.A.T.O. powers worked out, but the tension that has existed in Europe since 1945 and since that expression "cold war" came into being will not be lessened a whit by the discussions. That was the somewhat cynical assessment of the British as they watched the way the talks were going.

VIEWS ON GERMANY

It is known that, at the moment, the British government is reluctant to open negotiations with the U.S.S.R. on one of the key situations of the problem — the withdrawal of foreign troops from German soil.

Some want Germany "neutralised", with the withdrawal of foreign troops — America's force, Britain's four divisions, Canada's brigade and the French element — so that what is virtually a "no man's land" could be created. Russia wants to keep her chunk of Eastern Germany intact, knowing full well that if she pulled out now and free elections were held there the majority vote would be for a linking up and unification of Germany again.

That would mean that Russia would lose another satellite, another chunk of territory which could be used as a barrier against invading armies from the West.

PEACE AND GOODWILL?

There is not much talk, then, over here of increased "peace and goodwill towards men" being one of the results of the Paris talks. As a matter of fact Christmas over here is coming softly.

Shopkeepers start decorating up of course, in November. The odd Christmas cards and parcels are due to arrive — much to my surprise I got my annual consignment of buckwheat flour (you can't get it over here) from Vancouver three weeks before schedule — but it was not until a week before the 25th that the rash of parties and jollification started to break out.

True, the English do not celebrate Christmas as heartily as the Scots celebrate New Year but whereas twenty years ago the English did not celebrate New Year all that much — and the Scots did not indulge all that much in Christmas celebrations — both nationalities are taking over the other's territory to some extent. But the Scots are still ahead in celebratory powers of the English. I guess it must be something to do with native endurance.

ABOUT THAT CIGAR

But from Britain comes a warning. Think twice before you light that Christmas cigar. It might be radio-active.

This warning comes from the clergyman who is secretary here of the National Society of Non-Smokers, who has protested that research shows that tobacco is now radio-active that it comes under the provisions of the Radioactive Substances Act.

There is a remedy: if you wash the tobacco out, the radioactivity is lessened. But then what would the tobacco taste like?

WOOING THE WELSH

Last week I spoke about the militant Scots and how they are getting increasingly restive when it comes to having a lot of their legislation carried out from London's Whitehall. Now comes sign that the Government here is wooing another bunch of Celts — the Welsh. Already since the war Britain's Home Secretary is also titled as being reponsible for Welsh affairs. Now a Welshman called David Vivian Penrose Lewis has been given a barony and the title of Minister of State for Welsh Affairs. He will be in the House of Lords.

The appointment is one of those "wheels within wheels" affairs. At the moment most of Wales votes for the Government Conservative party; but it has years of Liberal traditions behind it .Now that Liberals over here are becoming more energetic the additional votes they may attract in the next general election in the Welsh constituencies might well unseat the existing Conservative members. Being able to boast that they have installed a special member of the Government to look after Welsh affairs will, hope the Conservatives, bring a few wavering voters back to the fold.

SIGN-OFF

But away with affairs of State. This is my last word before Christmas, so away for a while with Big-Power talks, Sputniks, guided missiles, cold war and the rest. And especially with financial troubles, of which the British have had quite a share in the past year but— as usual — have forgotten about them over Christmas. Those of you reading this who have folks over here can be sure that there will be many a glass raised to toast your health come 3 o'clock on Christmas Day when the head of the family relaxes to digest his turkey, when his spouse relaxes a while before the washing up, when the kids are whooping it up after an hour-long gorge.

And I'll raise a glass myself. . .

Or perhaps Cabinet Ministers may find their own solution to this daily farce of the frivolous, by refusing to answer oral questions which are of the less urgent type deserving treatment as written questions.

OTTAWA REPORT

Trivial Oral Questions

By Patrick Nicholson
Special Correspondent of The Guardian

Ottawa: Parliament has been in session here for nine weeks now. And the equivalent of no less than two whole weeks of Commons time has now frittered away on the improperly bloated daily "Question Period."

Every Member of the House of Commons has the right to ask questions of the Ministers in the Cabinet. The procedure in the House is governed by Standing Orders and by precedent. Standing Order number 44 specifically awards the right to question, in these words: "Questions may be placed on the Order Paper seeking information from the Ministers of the Crown relating to public Affairs."

Those questions must be submitted in writing, the replies are normally supplied likewise in writing. Thus this procedure takes up very little time of the House.

But, in a case of urgency, the slow method of written question and answer may be dispensed with, and the quicker system of the oral question may be used.

THE M.Ps' RULEBOOK

Dr. Arthur Beauchesne, longtime Clerk to the House of Commons and its guide on procedure and precedent, wrote a treasured treatise on this subject. That book, called "Rules and Forms of the House of Commons of Canada, with annotations, comments and precedents," is the almost inflexible rulebook; a copy is presented free to all new Members.

The tyrannical ghost of Parliament — Dr. Beauchesne is still alive, but retired — has a firm annotation on the subject of questions:

"A certain number of oral questions are permitted in practice by members, without notice, before the Orders of the Day are called; but these are merely allowed by courtesy in connection with the business of the House or with very urgent and important matters of public concern."

Believe it or not, courtesy is asked to permit urgent and important matters of public concern — so-called — for an average of at least one hour and ten minutes every parliamentary day. Few Canadians can have realised that their routine daily lives prompt so many "urgent and important" problems day by day!

The explanation of course is that the Opposition has been getting away with parliamentary murder.

NEW SPEAKER STRONG

There surely must be a happy mean between the farcially prolonged question period and the arrogantly disregarded question; a reasonable balance between the good-natured patience generally evidenced by the questions Ministers in the present Conservative Government, and the often surly grunts of refusal with which the appreciably fewer daily questions were treated by the previous Liberal Government.

Meanwhile, it is a daily bonanza for the most humble backbench member who joins in the game and peppers Cabinet Ministers with questions.

The new Speaker of the Commons, Hon. Roland Michener of Toronto, is shaping up as a fair and firm arbiter over the proceedings of Parliament. One former Cabinet Minister, distinguished for his knowledge of procedure and the rules of parliament, told me that in his opinion the popular "Roly" Michener could develop into as good a Speaker as he has been. But of course he is new to the post.

/Perhaps it is only a matter of waiting until Mr. Speaker feels his new way better to clamp down on trivial oral questions.

PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open to the discussion by correspondents of questions of interest. The Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinion of correspondents

APPPRECIATION

Sir,—May I through your paper, on behalf of all the patients at the Sanatorium, take the opportunity to thank the Salvation Army for a fine deed performed. Their wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year will be heard in many countries around the globe. It seems only fair to extend them hearty thanks and best wishes in return.

I am, Sir, etc.,
A PATIENT.

MAXIMS

Manners are the shadows of virtues, the monetary display of those qualities which our leisure-crazed love and respect. If we strive to become, then, what we strive to appear, manners may often be rendered use ful guides to the performance of our duties.

POPULATION INCREASE

WASHINGTON (AP)—The nonwhite population of the United States increased by about 3,000,000, or nearly 10 per cent, between April, 1950, and July, 1957, the census bureau estimated. There have about 18,700,000 non-whites in the United States, compared with a white population of 152,604,000. The white population increased about 17,000,000, or 13 per cent, in the period

A Few Timely Safety Rules

By Norman N. Bundesen, M.D.

I don't like to discuss anything as tragic as fire at this time of the year. But with Christmas so close at hand, and with those dry trees we insist upon setting up in our living rooms presenting such a great potential danger, I've got to give you a few safety rules regarding fire.

LIKELY PLACES

Even without a Christmas tree in the house, the most likely place for a fire to start is in the living room or kitchen. Next in order are bedrooms and basements.

Keep plenty of safe ash trays about. These trays should be noncombustible, of course, and also non-spillable, non - tippable and large enough to hold plenty of ashes.

After holiday parties and every night before retiring, look beneath the sofa cushions and around stuffed chairs for accidentally dropped cigarettes.

Take a few minutes to plan emergency escape routes in your front or back doors, or both, decide now on the best way of getting outside safely.

NEAR THE FLOOR

If you have to dash through smoke and flames, hold your breath. Remember also that in a smoke-filled room the air is usually fresher near the floor.

Feel the door before opening it. If it is hot, block it with furniture and seal with wet towels and blankets. Try to get out another way.

The first thing to do when a fire breaks out, naturally, is to get everyone safely out of the building. But don't jump from upper stories except as a last resort. Wait as long as you can for firemen to help you.

SMOKE AND GASES

Once outside, never re-enter a burning building. The smoke and gases from even the smallest fire can be deadly. Since children very often try to go back into their homes, you had better keep them restrained.

Last year fires in North America took 11,100 lives and destroyed property $1,385,000,000.

Don't let our gay holiday season bring disaster to your home.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

A.D.: How high can the temperature go without endangering the life of the patient?

Answer: Some patients have survived although their temperatures rose as high as 113 degrees. However, a temperature past 107 degrees is extremely dangerous.

The Age Old Story

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

The Poet's Corner

MAN-OF-WAR-BIRD

Thou who has slept all night upon the storm,
Waking renew'd on thy prodigi pinions,
(Burst the wild storm? above it thou ascended'st,
And rested on the sky, thy slave that cradled thee,)
Now a blue point, far, far in heaven floating,
As to the light emerging here on deck I watch three,
(Myself a speck, a point on the world's floating vast.)

Thou born to match the gale,
(Though art all wings),
To cope with heaven and earth and sea and hurricane,
Thou ship of air that never furl'st thy sails,
Days, even weeks untired and onward, through spaces, realms gyrating,
At dusk that look'st on Senegal, at morn America,
That spot'st amid the lightning-flash and thunder-cloud,
In them, in thy experiences, had'st thou my soul,
What joys! what joys were thine!

—Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

OUR YESTERDAYS

(From The Guardian Files)

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO
(Dec. 21, 1932)

The opening of Milton's Old Spain last evening was a huge success. Judging from the large number who patronized the restaurant and the many favorable comments expressed, the opening received the approval of all. The proprietors were warmly congratulated by their friends, leaving no doubt that the renovated charm of this eating place will prove increasingly popular.

A disastrous fire occurred at Point Prim on Monday when the barns and all out buildings belonging to Messrs. William and Martin MacRae were completely destroyed. The fire was caused by the upsetting of a lantern while doing the evening chores All farm machinery and stock were saved but the season's crop of hay and grain was lost.

TEN YEARS AGO
(Dec. 21, 1947)

If weather permits it is hoped to have the formal opening of the outdoor rink constructed by the Kinsmen Club of Summerside on Monday evening. It is expected that Mayor Arnett will make the formal opening. A'dressing room has been constructed and the lighting arrangements have been completed.

Corporal D. J. Heath, who is in charge of the Summerside Detachment, R.C.M.P., has received word that he has been promoted to the rank of Sergeant. Sgt. Heath has just returned from Regina where he attended a course at the Police College there. He joined the R.C.M.P. in 1939 and came to this province in 1953.

NOTES BY THE WAY

Is this ingredient which makes ink flow freely a monopoly of the fountain pen industry, or could it be added to ketchup? — Hamilton Spectator

It's an interesting sidelight on world trade that British Columbia's Okanagan Valley, for the first time in 15 years, is making a shipment of apples to Iceland. A sizable shipment, too. It comprises 17 carloads.—Windsor Star

If you need serenity, it can be obtained without resorting to tranquilizer tablets. Just follow this recipe found among some old clippings: Take a pound of consideration for others as a base, mix in a bucketfull of kindness and generosity with a large helping of forgiveness, stir well with a Golden Rule and bake in an oven of warm affection. Take liberal doses and share with your friends.—Kitchener -Waterloo Record

Many common phrases have their origin in games and sports: "All at sixes and sevens," recalls dice throwing, and "I can't make head or tail of it," the similar pastime of tossing coins. To say a man is "game" recalls cock fighting; so does "to show the white feather," for cocks of an inferior strain, and unlikely to show good sport, were supposed to have a white feather in their tail. "Winning hands down" comes, of course, from racing, for a jockey who finishes with his hands down has had an easy ride.—Irish Digest, Dublin

Hotels in space for the accommodation of interplanetary travelers are predicted, we read. Our personal prediction is that they will have just as many rooms next to the elevators, and just as many people holding all - night parties as the earthbound kind.—Peterborough Examiner

There is no better place for a pleasant scenic meal than a dining car. But when the roadbed is rough the meal can become quite a balancing act, especially where liquids are concerned. France now believes it has licked that problem, with a self-tilting car that can take curves at 80 mph without spilling a spoonful or filling a saucer.—Winwsor Star.

A veterinary surgeon in England removed a pound and a half of rocks from a dog's stomach. When Jumbo, the elephant, was put on after being killed in St. Thomas, the local butcher, Peter Campbell, took out of his stomach — a pailful of pennies, a policeman's whistle, an umbrella handle and other assorted finds. —St. Thomas Times-Journal

Prime Minister Diefenbaker indicates that it is equally correct to address him as Premier Diefenbaker. But with 10 Provincial Premiers in the Dominion, it would seem preferable, for the sake of clarity, to reserve the designation "Premier" for the head of a province — particularly at Dominion-Provincial conferences. — Stratford Beacon-Herald

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throughout the Province and beyond, we extend the Season's Greetings and best of wishes for Happiness, Peace and Prosperity in the New Year.

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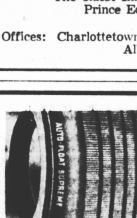

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Attention Men

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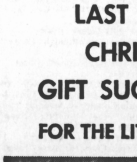

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