

Should Be Cleared Up

Mr. Stanley Knowles, NDP, North Winnipeg Centre, is one of the best-informed members of the Commons; and when he suggested, as he did on Wednesday, that the Supreme Court of Canada be asked to rule on the legality of last June's order-in-council imposing import charges of from 5 to 15 per cent, his proposal merited more consideration than it received at the hands of the government.

It was the constitutionality of the Government's procedure in imposing import duties as part of its austerity program that was the basis of the second Liberal want of confidence motion which the House defeated last Tuesday.

There remains much confusion as to the procedure that ought to be adopted by the government in introducing emergency measures, and it should be cleared up. It is not, as the Montreal Gazette points out, whether governments should take sudden action in such circumstances; it is, rather, that the methods employed be made clearly agreed upon, and formulated, by constitutional practice.

This difficulty is not new. It arose in 1947, when the St. Laurent Government imposed its restrictions on imports to counteract dollar difficulties. The measures were announced, not to Parliament, but in an address over the radio by Finance Minister Abbott. This was later defended by Mr. Abbott as coming within the provisions of the Foreign Exchange Control Act.

"It is such uncertainty about the basis for emergency powers," says The Gazette, "that should be cleared away. It has arisen again in the present dollar crisis. Certainly emergency action by the Government had to be taken. But was an order-in-council the right procedure? And should there not be some more precise understanding about the necessity of presenting such measures to Parliament, when it later met? It is scarcely by want of confidence motions that matters of this kind can be decided. The need, rather, is for some general agreement in Parliament for the basis of emergency powers, and for the procedures that must be followed when, and after, they are used.

The experiment, carried out by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, has not only provided an economical method of protecting crops but also of scaring birds away from buildings and from airfields where they present a danger to the safety of high-speed jet aircraft.

Birds are pretty shrewd creatures, however; and they may in time come to distinguish the phoney distress calls from the real ones, just as they got used to the scarecrow's presence and accepted him more as a joke than a source of danger. Anyone who has seen a real crow perched sedately on a scarecrow's outstretched arm will get what we mean.

Macmillan's Mandate

Prime Minister Harold Macmillan has received an overwhelming mandate from the British Conservative Party to pursue his policy of leading Britain into the European Common Market.

worded alternative resolution, emphasizing the importance of obtaining at Brussels safeguards which would not only be adequate in the British judgment, but satisfactory to all the countries concerned. The resolution also enjoined the government not to accept any European political union which would reduce the sovereignty of the British Parliament or damage the Commonwealth system.

This offered Mr. Macmillan a mandate to continue the Brussels talks, but with certain limitations. When the issue came to a vote, the rank-and-file Conservatives showed they wanted no part of any attempt to curtail Mr. Macmillan's freedom of policy. Only about 50 of the 4,500 delegates voted for the "rebel" resolution and the official motion was carried overwhelmingly by a show of hands.

There is a lesson in these events, suggests The Globe and Mail, for the Canadian government and the governments of other Commonwealth countries. Mr. Macmillan has overcome one major obstacle on the course which he is taking toward Europe and it should now be clear beyond all doubt that he is determined to lead Britain into the Common Market on the best terms available.

There is no sense in hoping that he can be deterred from his course, no point in arguing that the Brussels agreements do not fulfill his pledge to safeguard the vital interests of the Commonwealth. In the view of the British government, it can best help the Commonwealth in the long run by joining the Common Market, thereby improving its own market for Commonwealth goods and working for the opening of European markets to world trade.

The Commonwealth governments should, therefore, abandon negative criticisms of British policy which achieve nothing and place an unnecessary strain on Commonwealth relations. Instead they should work constructively to assist Britain to obtain the best terms available at Brussels.

We subscribe to these words of our Toronto contemporary, believing they represent what the Canadian people will expect the Diefenbaker government to do, and what its own common sense should suggest as the most practical course open to it.

Exit The Scarecrow

The scarecrow, with his battered old hat and ragged garments fluttering in the breeze, is not so common a sight as he used to be. Now he threatens to disappear altogether from the corn fields, at least in Australia where modern technology has reportedly discovered more efficient methods of protecting crops from raider birds.

Researchers there have been carried out on the significance of various bird calls, and recordings have been made of warning signals given by certain birds when danger threatens.

By amplifying a recording of these distress calls over loudspeakers placed strategically in the fields, birds have been very effectively scared away from the crops.

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EDITORIAL NOTE

For the first time, notes the Ottawa Journal, non-Catholic observers are present, by invitation, at a Vatican Council. "Their presence," it adds, "is not a sign of imminent union nor a sign they are wavering in their own beliefs. But their presence, like the holding of the Council itself, is a sign that Christianity can show the dynamism and desire for brotherhood which have enabled it to survive the persecutions of centuries, and against which the gates of hell cannot prevail."

VILLAGE OF SHERWOOD

OTTAWA REPORT by Patrick Nicholson

Seeking New Car Safety Design

An American Senator, appalled by the toll of accidents on the roads, has called for the design of a passenger "safety car" which would give the motorist the same kind of crash immunity enjoyed by an astronaut riding in a space capsule. Senator Edward J. Speno, chairman of N.Y. State joint legislative committee of Traffic Safety, has told me something of his demand for the design and construction of an automobile "completely designed for safety from bumper to bumper."

He believes that the research funds needed for the design of this safety automobile would properly be provided out of the public treasury of his country. And he suggests that, as aircraft are phased out as defence weapons, the surplus of engineering skill in the aviation industry to the manufacture of this automobile would create a happy marriage between known and unknown technology and public safety.

THOUGH REDESIGNING the current safety belts, devices, such as seat belts, collapsible steering shafts, padded dashboards and non-opening door locks. It would not be a production model with big gadgets fitted; it would be basically designed and built for safety.

For instance, its exterior would be constructed to cushion accident impact so that the driver and passengers would not be hurt. "This crash-decelerating trick might be achieved by light metal or even honeycomb plastic," he said, "which would be extremely cheap to replace."

The exterior would be stripped of pedestrian-killing protrusions such as bumpers, fenders, and hood ornaments. "It is exciting to know that my work might be of interest in areas as diverse as your newspapers," he told me.

"Fail-safe" engineering and long-life components would be incorporated. In controls, the emphasis would be on enabling the poorest driver to control the motor vehicle in all situations. "If the idea sounds far fetched, does it sound stranger than exploring outer space?"

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Interferon Said Diversified Agent Against Viruses

By Dr. Theodore R. Van Dellen, University of Toronto. Interferon is the all-purpose antiviral agent of the future. It is a substance manufactured by the cells of the body in response to infection by viruses. Once produced, it prevents other viruses from multiplying in the cells.

In this respect, it is a defence mechanism of cells to viruses. It increases the resistance of the cells to further infections and also hastens recovery. There is speculation that interferon might replace vaccines for certain viral diseases, where it is effective against all viruses, whereas vaccines protect against individual viruses.

Scientists have been able to isolate the substance, despite the infinitesimal amount each cell produces. It has been used in the laboratory and on humans. When applied to the eyes, it is injected into a fertilized hen's egg, the embryo dies. But this does not occur if the egg contains interferon.

It also is known that some viruses are more virulent than others. The more virulent strains give a poor yield, which may mean that why they are so overwhelming. Fever also appears to influence the amount of interferon produced. Weaker viruses, but not that of the stronger micro-organisms, when the cells are not interfered, they are better able to resist viral viruses — an important factor when the substance is considered as a remedy or an immunizing agent.

Scientists have demonstrated the protective effect of this product. In one experiment, patients agreed to be vaccinated at two sites on the arm. None had been vaccinated with the virus before, so that the chance was a good one of developing a take. One of the sites was vaccinated with the virus and the other with a control fluid. On the following day, the patient was vaccinated over both sites. Interferon prevented a take in 24 of the 30 sites. Another experiment in eight others. In this respect, interferon stopped the spread of virus and multiplying in the cells in this area.

The good prevent virus from multiplying via immunity or does it work like an anti-viral agent. The factors probably play a role. (Dr. Van Dellen will answer questions on these topics at a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Dr. Theodore R. Van Dellen, University of Toronto, 128 St. George Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.)

M.S. writes: Would forgetfulness be the first sign of insanity? REPLY: Perhaps, but so many of us are forgetful that it is not regarded as an early sign of disease. In addition, there are many types of insanity and its first symptoms are so vague it is difficult to single out the cause. Furthermore, there is no sharp line between insanity and the normal mind.

MILK AND ARTHRITIS P.H. writes: A party recently told me that arthritis is caused by drinking milk. This is a ridiculous statement. Milk is a nutritious food. It should continue doing so.

POUCH OR GULLET G.L. writes: Would surgery for a diverticulum of the esophagus consist of: 1. The pouch or pocket (diverticulum) is tied off and removed. 2. The procedure is done because of the location of the diverticulum in the center of the chest.

TODAY'S HEALTH NEWS—Natural vitamins come in tiny amounts. OUR YESTERDAYS (From the Guardian Files) TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO (The October 13, 1937) The Granda Club started its fall season with a banquet at the lovely new home of the president Miss Lillian Duchemin.

THE CANADIAN INDUSTRIALS OF AMERICAN INDUSTRIALS Opponents of Canadian membership in OAS say there are three examples of problems the country would face increasingly by joining up.

U.S. RELATIONS Not an OAS member this country would have been in an intolerable position at the inter-continental conference meeting last winter in Punta Del Este, Uruguay, they said.

RELATIONS With Cuba, or less friendly terms, would be a serious problem. OAS countries—a decision taken by majority vote of the ministers. Yet by refusing to take a stand against Cuba it would surely have offended the U.S.

However, proponents of membership advance a counter-argument to all this. They say that Canada is being dragged into the Cuban dispute anyway, whether it joins or not. It would be made OAS and have a proper say in a matter affecting its interests.

NOTES BY THE WAY

Wives are sometimes peculiar people. They demand to know why and then proceed to give their own answers. St. Catherine's Standard.

The woods might be a little bit safer in Fall if tenderfoot sportsmen could learn that the red deer is not precisely the same shade as a red hunting jacket.—Ottawa Journal.

Bats From The Belfry

Having bats in the belfry is bad enough, but when a church has a large number of bats as get down into the nave, it is the congregation that is likely to be batty.

For most people, even good churchmen, the sight of bats in houses and animals, have a certain antipathy to flying mammals. They are not so much afraid of bats as they are of mice. This may be due to ancient, unlearned superstitions, through which the mouse has become given a nasty name, as in the "Draculi" story. Or it may be due to the fact that mice in mice-in-airplanes always seem about to get into the cockpit, thus causing one to duck instinctively.

It is true that a bat will rarely strike anyone, much less get tangled in one's hair. If left alone, it will fly out of the room. Its natural radar system (studied to advantage by scientists for practical applications) is so good that if a person flails his arms about he can catch a bat in his hand without sending the invaders back to their common home.

Generally, bats, especially the brown bats common in England and in this part of North America, are not harmful to humans, but economically helpful to them. They destroy insects.

A sinister note really has crept in late. In some parts of the world, about the appointment of a central commission. One of these years, however, the United States is to be urgent—even in the Commons.—Ottawa Journal.

Meanwhile, at Colehill, England, the bats are being bled and the flock are being kept by bats from the belfry who seemingly take a double delight in being taken the wits out of the worshippers at matins and evensong.

The parson and his people are distractedly asking what they can do about it. All we can do is to hope that the mechanically minded parishioner just an important factor when the substance is considered as a remedy or an immunizing agent.

English is well on the way to becoming the world's common language. It is already the second language in many countries and is being taught to young children in many countries. As Sir David Eccles told in an Anglo-American Exchange in London, it is already reaching a stage where it is being taught in many countries. It is also a problem of the language of the future. We do not speak quite as the first Elizabethans did. It is a double delight in being taken the wits out of the worshippers at matins and evensong.

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Some girls get their ears pierced and lots get their noses pierced.—Stratford Beacon-Herald.

The Speaker of the Commons ruled that there was no immediate urgency for answers to questions about the appointment of a central commission. One of these years, however, the United States is to be urgent—even in the Commons.—Ottawa Journal.

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