

THE NORFOLK Informer

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Christmas

A Challenge and Celebration

Christmas, 1975, comes to a world that wants "peace on earth, good will to men." But the desires of much of the world, including our own strife-torn and uncertain Canada, stem more from weariness than from love. This world expects more from the flights of Henry Kissinger and the manoeuvres of Pierre Trudeau than from the flights and singing of angels.

What then are we to make of Christmas this year? To many it is but a pleasant legend that takes us for a day or two from the daily drudgery of trying to make ends meet -- a chance to forget how powerless many of us have become. To others, who treasure the celebration of human experience, Christmas is a bonus -- an extra occasion, even an extra reason for celebration.

But Christmas, as Christians understand it, is neither an idle legend nor a happy plus. It is a challenge to our human existence. It is an uplifting of our human existence. It calls for celebration, not because we need a party but because Christmas in reality upsets the life we have designed and changes the reason for celebrating. Unlike most of the mystic religions that are flowering today in the midst of our disillusion, Christmas faith proves that God does act in human history in unexpected ways and calls on a community to join his action.

As realists we know that the home of a friend or relative is bricks and mortar, wood and nails. It is a functional place, ornamented and often filled with comfort, but still a functional place that has no real feeling. But all that is changed and takes on meaning when we realize that a loved one or an old friend lives there. The silent walls speak a language of love.

Something like that happens to human history when we remember that Jesus Christ lived here. The cosmos consists of matter and energy, as always. People and communities continue to act with mixed motives. Possibly peace among nations is a little more likely because of Christ, but we cannot be certain of that. Yet when we remember that Christ lived here, the walls and ramparts of the world speak a different language.

We can say and believe then that we are about to enter "the year of our Lord 1976."

Message

Once again we are fast approaching the most celebrated season of the year. Once again police departments throughout the country are issuing warnings to drivers of the consequences if caught driving while having consumed alcohol which would result in a blood alcohol reading over the legal limit ... and with good cause. The percentage of fatal accident involving alcohol is extremely high, prosecution of the drinking driver is on the increase throughout the nation. In the past year we have read in the local papers where whole families have been lost as a result of an automobile crash -- if the facts were known -- caused by someone's over-indulgence in alcohol.

Haldimand-Norfolk Police are also issuing the usual festive season warnings: If you have been drinking - don't plan on driving. Let's make the roads safe for everyone. Police officers throughout the region will be directing their attention towards apprehending the drinking driver this festive season, and anyone in violation will be processed through the courts and dealt with according to law. Remember - it's not only safe but much cheaper to arrange for a ride home, if you've been drinking.

On behalf of the officers and staff of Division 2.1 would like to take this opportunity to thank the citizens in this area for their co-operation during the past year, and wish everyone a safe, healthy and happy Christmas.

Sgt. R. Chandler

Risky future for tobacco industry

by L.S. Vickery

Projecting future developments in the Canadian tobacco industry is very risky. Price increases, changes in the national economy, world trade agreements, health pressures, mechanization and many other variables can influence the production of flue-cured tobacco in Canada. The co-operation of growers, buyers, manufacturers and various government sectors is probably even more essential today than in the past. This is apparent in changing market requirements, high costs, and the decrease in the preferential tariff between Canada and the United Kingdom.

There are several new developments that could be confusing to the grower. Usually changes have been minor with little cost involved. In the past 25 years, major changes have included irrigation, soil fumigation, tying machines, kiln loaders, harvesting aids and force-air curing. Recently, changes in the tobacco industry have been more rapid requiring more capital investment.

The above article is an excerpt taken from the 1975 spring issue of The Lighter, published by the Canadian Department of Agriculture. Mr. Vickery is director of the CDA Research Station, Delhi.

-Editor



REPORT FROM QUEEN'S PARK



by Gordon Miller MPP (Haldimand-Norfolk)

Provincial rent control proposals have been much discussed this past week, and a number of briefs have been submitted to the legislative committee considering these controls. Spokesmen for apartment owners have maintained that at least 10 per cent increases in rents are necessary to cover higher taxes, hydro and maintenance costs. On the other hand, others have maintained that many landlords will make windfall profits next year even if rent increases are limited to the 8 per cent proposed by the government. During consideration of the controls by a committee of the whole house, the legislation was amended to include rooming houses, as well as apartments, houses, non-profit, limited dividend and public housing units and accommodation costing more than \$500 a month. In effect, rental increases would be restricted to 8 per cent, retroactive to last July 30th, for "any premises used or intended to be used for residential purposes." The 8 per cent limit would apply also to rents increases after January 1st, but landlords

and tenants could appeal to review boards.

Replying to a question from Remo Mancini (Liberal, Essex South) the minister of consumer and commercial relations told the legislature that the government's proposed home warranty programme will not be introduced this session. However, if the federal government could not bring in legislation on such warranties, Ontario will do so before the spring construction season begins.

James Bullbrook (Liberal, Sarnia) and David Peterson (Liberal, London Centre) members of the legislative select committee on the proposed 25 per cent Hydro increase refused to sign the committee's report, because they feel the proposed trimming of the increase to 22 per cent is not sufficient reduction. The report recommended a further reduction in the rate should the province decide to trim Hydro's proposed 1976 borrowing programme, and a \$400 million cut in Hydro's share of the Government's \$2.2 billion borrowing programme would permit a reduction in the increase to about 20 per cent. A 22 per cent increase will translate into an increased cost to municipal utilities of about 16.5 per cent and a jump of 13.9 per cent in a "typical residential power bill if other utility costs remain constant."

The report recommended that the Committee's term be extended from December 31 to March 31, 1976, "to allow the committee to fulfil its terms of reference in a responsible manner." The 22 per cent increase in rates to the utilities and large industries served directly by Hydro is described as an "interim" measure. The statement by the Liberal Members, disassociating themselves from the Committee's report, argued that the impact on retail sales should be held to 12 per cent in the spirit of battling inflation, and suggested that Hydro's financial position could be maintained by the federal and provincial governments agreeing to forgo payback due on their investment in the Pickering Nuclear Station and the province's non-collection of \$16 million in rentals.

The Ministry of Health has ordered all hospitals in the province to freeze salaries of senior employees, the number of full-time and part-time staff and any planned expansion in programmes and services for 1976. Hospitals have also been directed not to submit budgets for 1976 pending further directives from the ministry dealing with areas where government policy has not yet been established. The salary freeze will not apply to middle management, such as head nurses and nursing supervisors, or anyone below that level. It is directed at senior management, because these categories have received average increases of between 20 per cent and 40 per cent in the past two years.

Health minister, Frank Miller has indicated that some 24 provincial hospitals are to be closed down in order to cut health costs, although he has not specified which hospitals will be affected. He has stated that in areas where the government closes hospitals, workers will be assisted to find alternative employment. There have been charges that some hospitals in Ontario are unsafe, and the minister has admitted that this is so. One obvious criterion which will be used in deciding whether hospitals should be closed or not is the safety factor, but poor conditions alone would not be considered sufficient reason to close a facility, according to the minister. The mediators in the Toronto school teachers' strike have been working around the clock in an effort to reconcile the two dissenting parties, and William Dickie, Ontario's assistant deputy minister of labour, has said "There comes a time in negotiations when the parties become very serious about getting a settlement when they know they have to make concessions. We're reaching that point now." However, the federal anti-inflation board has ruled that teachers have already been offered too much money. Some metro students have been attempting to be accepted at schools in their parents' cottage areas. However, on November 12th, the first day of the strike, the Simcoe County Board of Education banned such attendance, in order to protect Simcoe schools against an influx of metro students. Education Minister Tom Wells has indicated that he feels such a ban cannot be justified under the terms of the Education Act, and the Simcoe County Board has now agreed to allow metro students to attend classes in Simcoe "if we get an order from the minister". See you next week.

Christmas

by Ruth Morgret

Fake stockings hang.
By a make-believe fireplace casting a red glow
From two 20-watt bulbs
Hidden beneath the artificial coals.

In a corner,
A frosty plastic tree stands
By itself, lonely.

Underneath
In a plastic stall
Lies a plaster baby
In plaster hay
Somewhere
Beneath the foil boxes.

Someone dusted off the Bible
And put it on the coffee table.

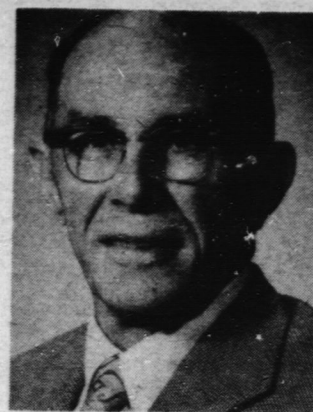
But what is Christmas?

The cards strung across the ceiling
Of
The felt stockings
Or
The Babe in the manger bed
Or
My father's tales of years gone by?

It's the baby in the hay
That haunts my mind;
Its face though cherub round and fair
Because the painter goofed
The smile that should be
Full of angelic grace
Seems to proclaim:
"I told you that you would not hear!"

Or did the painter goof?
And down the street,
The church bell tolls as if to punctuate
My thought.

News from Knowles



Dear Friends:

The prolonged mail strike and the uncertainties which it created have somewhat changed the pattern of my monthly newsletter. In the first place I have been unable to mail a letter for October and November, and second I did not get my usual Christmas letter prepared.

Accordingly, the December mailing will be a combination of a report of my activities for three months plus a seasonal message.

Vera joins me in wishing everyone the warmest Christmas Greeting. May you have a happy holiday with your families and friends. We sincerely trust that the New Year will bring you good health, much joy and a full measure of prosperity.

Your Member Inter-
venes in the House Debates

These months have been especially busy ones for me in the House of Commons. I took advantage of several opportunities to enter debates on a variety of topics of interest to our constituency and of which I had some personal knowledge.

(1) An Act to Increase Interest Rates on Government Annuities. This bill will increase this interest rate from 4% to 7%. Certainly I supported this long overdue legislation and expressed the views of many of my people who have written or phoned me complaining of the totally inadequate returns on this investment, in the light of extraordinary increases in the cost of living.

(2) Motion to Compensate Property Owner along North

Shore of Lake Erie. I moved a motion to this effect in the House of Commons and later was granted time for a special debate with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment on this topic. The reply given was to the effect that any claim for compensation must be channelled through the Provincial government. The total damage must be eight million dollars before the Federal Government will contribute. In this instance the total is estimated at \$800,000, far short of the eight million required.

(3) Veterans' Affairs. As the caucus chairman of this committee, I presented a special motion instructing the government to introduce forthwith legislation to implement the unanimous recommendation of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs. The main thrust of the recommendations was to provide disability pensions, of from ten to twenty per cent for all Prisoners of War, depending on the length of their incarceration. The government refused to allow debate. However, Stanley Knowles and myself intend to introduce the matter again this Thursday, December 11th, in an effort to force the government's hand.

(4) Proposed Investigation of Buying Practices on the tobacco Auction Exchanges. Once again I raised this

particular question by means of a motion before the House of Commons. This was prompted by a motion passed by a public meeting of angry farmers who were frustrated by the low and erratic prices being offered for their tobacco. I also asked for a special debate on the subject but have since decided to postpone such action because prices have improved and it seemed unwise to unduly antagonize the buying companies.

(5) An Act to Amend the Citizenship Act. Your Member participated in the debate on second reading commencing certain excellent provisions of the bill such as lowering the eligible age for citizenship for twenty one to eighteen years. However, I was critical of the lowering of the period of residence in Canada from five to three years, before applying for citizenship, with the exception of British subjects. It is my view that three years is not sufficient time for an immigrant to become acquainted with the ways of Canadian society, our culture and our system of government.

Constituency Office

On Thursday, December 4th, I opened a constituency office in the Town of Simcoe at 61 Kent St. N. The phone number is 519-426-3062.

BEST WISHES

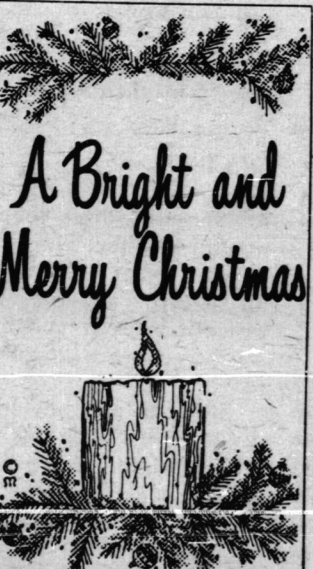
for
Christmas

Merrily, we chime in
with Santa to send greetings
and thanks to our loyal friends.

BROWNLEE

Bulldozing-Backhoeing

586-3102



With every good
wish for the
holidays. Thanks
for your loyal
support.

LIERMAN'S
General Store
South Middleton
875-4515



May your hearth and home be blessed
this Christmas. Thanks to our
loyal friends and patrons for putting
your confidence in our hands.

Bill Dobbs Insurance
Langton 875-4442



Pick a card... any card, and send with it your best personal wishes. Enclose a snapshot with your holiday greetings this year, and share happy memories with friends and relatives. Your thoughtfulness will be appreciated long after the festive season.

you know, not what you think."

"Well, I am not a lawyer", the witness shot back. "I can't talk without thinking".

Compliments of the Season,
Bill Knowles

Merry Christmas

With most sincere hopes that peace and happiness be with us all. Many thanks.

Hazlewood Pharmacy
Port Rowan 586-3983

SILENT NIGHT

To all our friends: Have the very Merriest Christmas. Many thanks.

DEEG'S
Lucky Dollar Store
875-4881



Christmas Joy

The most precious gifts of the Holy Season are those of the heart. To friends and neighbors ... our gratitude for your loyal support.

RAM FERTILIZER
Courtland 842-5986