



REPORT

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EDITORIAL

Enough is Enough

At the time of this writing, we are entering the fifth week of the postal strike. The hardships have become staggering. Across Canada, an estimated 200 businesses a day are closing down. Since the strike began, about 5,000 small businesses have closed, putting some 40,000 people out of work. Meanwhile, the post office rubs salt in the wounds of these people by agreeing to pick up the additional costs incurred by its larger customers as they switch to private courier services.

In our February HALT Report, we called for a halt to government monopolies, citing their

devastating strike power as the single most dangerous monopoly attribute. Would that the government had listened. However, there are signs that the time may come when they will have to. Other organizations are becoming equally intransigent and outspoken in their demands. The Alberta Chamber of Commerce, for example, wants Ottawa out of the postal service — entirely. No crown corporations, no half-baked compromises. Out! Their suggested alternative is to allow open competition, thus encouraging a takeover by private enterprise. (continued on page 2)

HALT ACROSS CANADA

by Elizabeth Bolstler

HALT Vancouver

HALT came before City Council in July to present its proposal that Council study the feasibility of privatizing garbage collection in Vancouver. The HALT brief was supported by Len Remple of Haul-Away, a private company that collects almost all of Surrey's garbage, and Frank Ogden, a waste management specialist. It was resoundingly opposed by a delegate from CUPE.

Reception was favourable, but cautious. Impressed by HALT's figures showing a saving in municipalities that made the change to private refuse collection companies, Council voted unanimously to have the Finance Committee evaluate discrepancies between HALT's figures and those of the Engineering Dept. If they decide substantial savings are in the cards, they will recommend a full study be undertaken.

HALT's 22-page report, *The Cost of*

Vancouver's Garbage Collection, is available from Head Office for \$1.50.

Supporters will have a chance to develop their skills in a professional atmosphere this September. HALT is starting its own Toastmasters' Club, sponsored by the local Evergreen Toastmasters' Club. Arrangements have been made with Ed Murphy — former Vancouver talk show host and owner of Murphy's Pub — to hold a weekly supper meeting in his restaurant. Anyone wishing to find out more should talk to Heather Engstrom at 688-2308.

HALT's fourth monthly public meeting was held July 28, with 22 attending. The format for the meeting remained approximately the same as for the previous month. Two newcomers signed up for the Canvassing Corps and five for the new Toastmasters' Club. Marco den Ouden supplied a book table; members obviously appreciated this uncommon

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Events

Public meetings will be held monthly in cities where there is an active HALT chapter. At that time, a competent spokesman will discuss HALT objectives and methods, its projects and progress. Everyone is welcome. A question and answer period will be part of the meeting format.

Edmonton: the last Monday of each month, 8:00 p.m. at the Edmonton Inn, 11830 Kingsway Avenue. Phone Bruce Vaughan at 462-0698 for further information.

Vancouver: the last Monday of each month, 7:30 p.m. at The Scottish Auditorium, 1605 West 12th Avenue. If you have any questions, phone 688-2308.

Copper Courses (1 hour training sessions for block reps) are held regularly. Call the above numbers for scheduled times.

REBELS IN ACTION

Long-time Trudeau antagonist and government critic Stan Burke recently picked up the gloves again in an article appearing in the Nanaimo Times and the newly established Saanich Tribune. In summarizing comments on the Canada Development Corp., the constitutional debate, the proposed government trading corporation and Trudeau in general, Mr. Burke says:

"In a wider sense, all of this means that a party which has virtually bankrupted one of the healthiest nations in the world now plans a vast expansion of its economic role. It also means that foreign investment, vital to western Canada in particular, is being frightened away and it is significant that *Fortune*, the most influential American business magazine, has already run a major article entitled *Trudeau's War on US Business*."

Solutions? According to Mr. Burke, "First, we should form an organization which might be called STOP which, in this age of acronyms, can stand for Stop Trudeau/Oppez Pierre. This organization must be well organized, well funded, and dedicated to one sole purpose — forcing the federal government to put a moratorium on plans which are contrary to everything we have known in Canada, contrary to trends elsewhere in the western world, and which if pursued, may make western secession inevitable.

"Secondly, we should hit the federal government where it is vulnerable — in the pocketbook. Let us simply go slow in paying our taxes. A patriotic tax revolt. Pay as little as possible and spin it out as long as possible. Pay a few dollars at a time; engage the computer in dialogue; write letters; telephone; demand to speak to the supervisor; point out that such-and-such payments

EDITORIAL (continued)

We at HALT back this idea 100%. The time for half-way measures in such recurring problem areas is over. Let the Postmaster-General declare bankruptcy, sell the assets to the highest bidders, and use the proceeds to retire part of our national debt. Throwing good money at the post office won't help what ails it. Like all dinosaurs, it faces extinction. Let us not stand in its way. 

by Richard Bolstler

were made on so-and-so dates. Computerized systems are highly vulnerable and havoc would be wreaked by a few thousand people. If some are prepared to go to court and even risk jail, then, so much the better.

"These, however, are negative sides to the struggle. On the positive side, we should be looking ahead to the 21st century instead of back to the 19th as Trudeau is doing. We should ask what kind of lives we want for ourselves and our children and how, realistically, we might achieve them. We should realize that we are the most outrageously favoured nation on earth and that we have every material advantage in our struggle — but do we have the will, the imagination, and the courage?"

Petition power

Politics makes strange bedfellows. In Calgary, a group of apolitical free enterprisers have found themselves tucked in with City Council's left-wing faction. TAC (Taxpayers' Action Centre) was formed last June to petition against City Hall's proposed property tax hikes of 20%, 20% and 15% in each of the next 3 years. The petition would force a plebiscite limiting increases to a maximum of 10% yearly.

The TAC move has added fuel to an inferno that is threatening to destroy the Calgary Council. Even the projected increases will not cover the colossal debt that is developing: a recently-released special budget reveals that even holding tax increases to 20% annually for the next 5 years will require cutting \$300 million from the budget. In addition, Council is faced with either levying another special "transportation tax" of \$120 against each household, or requesting the equivalent from the provincial

HALT (continued)

source of free enterprise, libertarian and Austrian economics works.

HALT Edmonton

Bruce Vaughan credits some of HALT's public meeting success in July indirectly to the postal strike. Announcements were made by phone rather than mail. As a result, attendance doubled to 18. Steady application in canvassing the public and talking to businessmen is continuing over the summer; results are encouraging. 

government (who would have to create a new gasoline tax to cover the additional grants).

It is interesting to note that the debts that City Hall is desperately trying to wipe out have been accumulated in just 2 short years. In 1979, the Province of Alberta eliminated Calgary's municipal debt with monies from the Heritage Fund.

A tidal wave of public opinion has flooded TAC's project. Their number of petitioners increased from 3 to 65. They currently have 4,000 signatures and expect to reach the required 30,000 by the end of September.

Even governments do it

If you're at a loss as to how best to resist paying taxes, you might take a few tips from the big boys; none other than the provincial governments of Saskatchewan, Alberta and B.C.

All three provinces are currently involved in efforts to avoid paying the latest volley of energy taxes levied by Ottawa this year. Saskatchewan has launched a case in the Court of Appeals of that province challenging the validity of the taxes as applied to Crown corporations such as Saskatchewan Power and Saskoil. In Alberta, the Court of Appeals has already ruled in favor of a similar objection lodged by that province. The federal government has appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Meanwhile, British Columbia has been withholding the tax on natural gas despite a warning in December to begin paying or face interest charges. The tax is estimated to total \$158 million over the next three years. 

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Bill 32: What Price Protection?

There is a modern trend among governments to identify and diagnose "social illnesses," then whip in with the most drastic treatment possible. A recent piece of legislation has shown the B.C. government yet again unable to distinguish between a wonder drug and snake oil.

The new nostrum is Bill 32, also known as the Civil Rights Protection Act. On the face of it, the Bill appears worth supporting. Specifically it outlaws conduct or communication with the purpose of "interference with the civil rights" of someone by "promoting (a) hatred or contempt . . . , or (b) the superiority or inferiority of a person or a class of persons . . . , on the basis of color, race, religion, ethnic origin or place of origin."

One cannot disagree with the spirit of this legislation. It was intended to offer support to minority groups who are the target of racist literature concocted by such obnoxious organizations as the Ku Klux Klan. The problem is the manner which has been chosen for implementing those objectives. The B.C. Civil Liberties Association states the issue succinctly: "... we have serious reservations both about the Act, and more generally,

about attempts to combat racism by striking at racist propaganda."

Attempting to stamp out racism by limiting the right to speak creates two fundamental problems, both of which act to defeat the original intent of the legislation.

Letting government make our decisions.

The first, and perhaps most serious in the long run, comes from giving government further power in controlling our lives. HALT's motto, "Freedom to choose," is relevant in all areas. One of the keystones of a free society is freedom of expression. That means free speech even for groups like the KKK which may express ideals and methods abhorrent to most of us.

Actions to control what may and may not be said have been part of the foundation of every totalitarian government in history. The intention is often noble. But we must never forget that once legislation is in place, it provides a gift-wrapped opportunity for control by those with less sterling motives. Power that can be abused will be abused. In Canada, we are clearly still a few steps removed from living in a dictatorship — why risk getting any closer?

The making of a martyr.

The second major problem created by restricting freedom of speech for certain groups is that it will make them feel persecuted. They can rightly argue that they are being denied a right which is protected for everyone else. Their credibility may blossom. Disputes involving censorship invariably hit the front pages of the newspapers, attracting a great deal of attention and increasing the suppressed group's feelings of indignation and importance. Forcible suppression of this type may well lead to a further hardening of racist attitudes and a strengthening of any tendencies towards violence.

For these reasons, the battle against racism is best fought in the open, with full freedom of expression for all, including bigots. There is only one way to decrease the power of inflammatory racist rhetoric, and it is a long and slow one — education. An open forum is the healthiest atmosphere for such an education.

We must reject any further encroachment on our liberties, no matter how well intended. Otherwise, the effects of the cure on the public will be more harmful than the disease.

HALT

MORE TAXES

A Slow and Ever-closing Vise by Paul Geddes

Government's rapacious appetite for our money is not abating. The following is a new-tax calendar gleaned from news stories surfacing in June and July.

June 4 — An author of a letter to the editor of the *Globe & Mail* is concerned about repeated rumors that Ottawa is planning to remove indexing from income tax. The letter points out that indexing has significantly increased the level of personal exemptions, and that once government learns to profit from inflation, it will have even less incentive to curb it.

June 19 — House of Commons passes an omnibus tax bill, including an 8% tax on revenue from all oil and natural gas production and 30¢ per thousand cubic feet on all gas sold.

These taxes are promptly opposed by the four western provinces and challenges are laid in court.

June 23 — Ontario Liberal Leader Stuart Smith declares that the Ontario government should redistribute more wealth. It should take from those who are gaining on inflation by hitting them with a higher capital gains tax. The theory is that in that way, there will be more to give to those falling behind.

June 25 — An economic report by Wood Gundy Ltd. of Toronto predicts that the government will raise personal income taxes substantially in its next attempt to bring inflation under control.

July 3 — The British Columbia government announces increased medicare premiums and hospital fees

to cover the cost of this year's settlement with the doctors. Plan participants pay only 35% of all medicare costs in B.C., so the other 65% of the settlement must come from taxpayers in other fashions.

July 12 — The Commons committee on health, welfare and social affairs releases a report urging that the federal child tax credit be expanded. This credit is paid to parents with children under 18, even to parents with no taxable income. Since the program is likely to become expensive, the committee suggests that it be financed by eliminating current tax exemptions for dependent children.

This calendar will be updated in forthcoming issues of the HALT Report.

HALT

A Little Close to Home

by Gary Ouellett

Let me refer you, specifically, to an amendment under the Medical Devices Regulations adopted pursuant to the *Food and Drug Act* (P.C. 1977-1092, April 21, 1977), published in the *Canada Gazette*, Part II, Vol. III, No. 9, namely, SOR/77-352, "Contraceptive Devices", which concerns condom standards. This, please remember, is the law of the land, issued under the signature of a "pleased" Governor General.

You will, no doubt, be enthralled to know that:

"5. Every condom shall

a. have an integral rim located at the open end of the condom in the form of a smooth, uniformly narrow, thickened ring constructed of the same material as the condom;

b. have a length of not less than 16.0 centimeters;

c. have a width of not less than 4.5 centimeters and not more than 5.5 centimeters in the region from the rim to the measuring point;

d. have a width of not more than 7.0 centimeters in the region from the measuring point to the closed end of the condom, including the reservoir;

e. not show evidence of leakage when tested according to the method set out in Part II;

f. have a bursting volume of not less than 25 litres;

g. have a bursting pressure of not less than one kilopascal.

Now all this important information may not be of too much practical importance to the consumer. Indeed, a special gadget seems necessary, defined by regulation as the "Testing Apparatus", namely, "a cylindrical form, 20.0 centimeters + or - 2 centimeters long, 3.0 centimeters + or - 0.2 centimeter in diameter with one end rounded to a hemispherical shape." I am

not sure how many readers qualify.

One must remember that someone in authority not only thought this type of control was necessary, he convinced the Minister — and, therefore, the cabinet — that it was necessary as well. And, of course, someone had to sit down and actually *write* this little legal gem. As a budding writer, the fellow shows creativity. Consider these golden words on what the order terms "The Leakage Apparatus," and what insiders have come fondly to regard as the Wet Blotter Test:

"3. To test the leakage of a condom the following apparatuses (sic) are required:

a. a funnel, suitable for filling the condom with water; and

b. coloured blotting paper;

4. (1) Unroll the condom . . .

(2) Dry the outside surface of the condom;

(3) Attach the condom to the funnel and allow it to hang freely;

(4) Pour water into the funnel to fill the condom with 300 millilitres of water;

(5) Examine the condom for any

visible leakage;

(6) Close the condom by twisting at a point not more than a distance of 2 centimeters from the rim;

(7) Remove the condom from the funnel;

(8) Roll the condom over the blotting paper so that the entire surface of the condom, except the twisted part, is brought into contact with the blotting paper;

(9) Examine the blotting paper for wet spots.

(Ah — you recognized it: the old wet spot on the blotter trick!)

I refer you to the amendment for further details on the bursting tests and the accelerated aging apparatus (an oven).

Justice Minister Jacques Flynn recently addressed the Canadian Bar Association on the jungle of laws and regulations. We have come, he observed, a long way from 10 laws on two tablets of stone. I submit that the matter should be left to the invisible hand. HALT
(Mr. Ouellett practices law in Quebec City)

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PRINTED MATTER



**EASY COME,
EASY GO**

Army intelligence

Senator William Proxmire took aim at the U.S. Army today for spending \$6,000 to prepare 17 pages of instructions on how to buy a bottle of Worcestershire sauce.

"That's right: 17 eye-glazing pages of single-spaced type on how to buy a

15-ounce bottle of Worcestershire sauce that retails for about \$1.50," Proxmire, a Wisconsin Democrat, said as he singled out the project for his "Golden Fleece of the Month Award."

The document was drafted by the army for use by its food buyers.

"Only the federal government could devote a seven-line paragraph to show someone how to check if the bottle cap . . . is screwed on tightly," Proxmire said.

The document also includes detailed instructions to dip a test bottle in water to make sure the label stays on.

Savez-vous?

Will the last person leaving France please turn out the lights?

The newly-elected Socialist government has just inaugurated the first batch of tax increases, which were subsequently approved by parliament. Along with death duties, company expense taxes, increased value-added tax and the like was an increase in the income tax of 25% to be applied when the tax already due is higher than 100,000 francs (\$20,000). The measures appear expressly designed to snuff out the few remaining flames of enterprise in the country. HALT