

Of lawnchairs and nuclear war

St. Patrick's Day, 1985 was a Sunday in spring which hailed the rebirth of a long-frozen gardens and the resurrection of lawn-chairs. It was a beautiful day except that it was marred by absurdities.

Undisturbed by the night before, Brian Mulroney and Ron Reagan were happily meeting in Quebec to sing "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" and to pump litres of popularity out of two hours of discussion. On ITV Saturday night, the BBC production, "Threads," had aired and presented one of the most realistic portrayals of what is likely to happen in the event of a nuclear war. However, politicians, with the exception of New Zealand's Prime Minister Lange, have a grown numb to reality. The United States and the Soviet Union have been joined by other nations in their dead-heat race for nuclear arms. The Canadian government continues to believe that, as long as it sides with President Raygun, we shall be protected; and the people remain, for the most part, ignorant and silent. Should there be a nuclear war, there will be no protection from the absolute destruction of life on earth.

The world scientific community has denounced the possibility of a "limited" nuclear war. The spread of radiation and the blocking of the sun by atmospheric waste would spell the end of this planet and the human race. As for survivors of an initial blast, the ensuing burns, radiation poisoning and starvation would cause them to regret they had attained such a status. The governments have been told but are they listening?

I love old Irish songs, and I love my planet. Free from romantic delusions, however, I wonder how much longer I am going to be needing my lawnchairs.

P.A. Reichwein
Arts I

EYE SEA by Ook



Chuck (13) and Bob (13)'s beard growing contest. Day 212.

Papal visit challenged Canada's moral pluralism

analysis by John Rasmussen

The abortion issue is rapidly showing Canadians that a morally pluralistic society may not be possible.

In the fall federal election campaign the concept of moral pluralism became popular. When Liberal Party president Iona Campagnolo denounced Campaign Life for pushing its moral views in a pluralistic society, she was expressing an attitude common to most political candidates, including some that were personally pro-life.

"They do not have a right to ask other people to believe as they believe," she said in a St. Albert speech.

In contrast, when Pope John Paul II visited Canada two months later and praised Canada's tolerance and pluralism, he suggested this pluralism could only be founded on a certain degree of moral unity.

"To detach culture from its link to the Gospel commandment of love would be to make impossible the multicultural interplay which is characteristic of Canada," the pope said in Winnipeg Sept. 16.

The implication of his remarks have generally been ignored by the media.

However, his suggestion that moral pluralism is the enemy of our healthy diversity, not its strength, has been shown amply since by the events of Canada's abortion controversy.

When Cardinal G. Emmett Carter of Toronto circulated a pastoral letter to his archdiocese Nov. 25 urging Catholics to oppose "the killing of innocents." Dr. Henry Morgentaler responded by accusing the cardinal of "kindling the fires of violence, of hatred and suspicion."

Tension increased in February as Toronto Cathol-

ics, publicly encouraged by Cardinal Carter, joined existing pro-life demonstrations in front of the Morgentaler clinic, and in the ensuing week both sides of the controversy seemed to be vying to see who could mount the largest demonstration.

Supporters of Morgentaler are wondering whether the Catholic Church will soon be dictating morals to society as a whole, and Catholics, in turn, are wondering whether society will soon ask them to choose between their Christianity and their citizenship.

There can be no compromise on the abortion issue. Catholics believe that the obligation to recognize the right to life of minorities—whether Black, Jewish, handicapped, old, young or in the womb—must come first. And pro-choice groups believe free access to abortions is a fundamental woman's right.

Neither group can accept a society in which the other's views prevail.

The majority of Canadians must decide the issue—and soon. This issue, which Justice Minister John Crosbie recently called the "most divisive and dangerous issue" facing the country today, is only deepened and made worse by attempts at compromise.

Either the pro-choice viewpoint or the Christian viewpoint must be rejected completely by society as a whole in order to preserve that society.

In the context of that choice, Pope John Paul's words in Winnipeg have a special bearing:

"The pluralism of traditions, pluralism of cultures, pluralism of histories, pluralism of national identities—all of these are compatible with the unity of society."

"Today we pray for the moral unity of this society—since this unity is the foundation and common denominator of all "civil needs."

SECOND WIND

by Peter Smyth

Willie De Wit as the next Larry Holmes? This is the fantasy the local press appears to be building up for the Grande Prairie boxer.

It is, of course, extremely early in his career and the fights leading up to his 3-0 professional record have hardly been heart stoppers, but to be hailing him as the next heavyweight champion of the world definitely appears premature.

Even with the age of Larry Holmes, De Wit could scarcely expect to last more than a few rounds before being knocked heavily to the canvas. In all likelihood

De Wit will go down (so to speak) as a "good" fighter but we could be setting ourselves up for a big disappointment in expecting him to be among the "greats" such as Holmes, Ali, Sugar Ray Leonard, Joe Lewis...

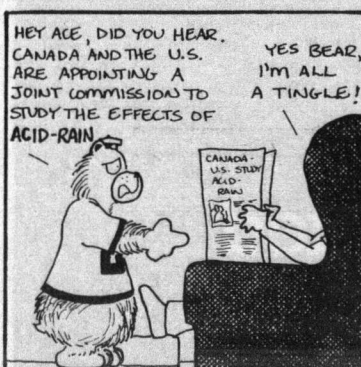
Many will argue he was robbed of the gold in Los Angeles last summer and that may be true. That fact doesn't guarantee he will be a champion, but only guarantees he will be a contender.

De Wit is a class fighter and a class person. He will obviously work like hell to go as far as he can but let's keep things in perspective.

Is this pessimistic or realistic?

Bear Country

by Shane Berg



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