



Aspidistra

by Alison Thomson

An aspect of the Hall report on Canadian health care that has been lost in the hue and cry over balance billing is the role of federal funding arrangements in provincial health care.

Hall concludes that the allegation of several groups that federal health dollars are being diverted by the provinces to other uses is unsubstantiated.

The more important issue raised, however, is whether federal funding arrangements allow the provinces to contribute less to health care than they would have had to under the previous cost-sharing arrangements.

This is clearly the case. Furthermore, Alberta is one of the culprits.

How is this occurring?

In 1977, the federal government passed the Established Programs Financing (EPF) Act, which was intended to allow the provinces more flexibility in programming. It removed the previous requirement that the federal and provincial governments' expenditures be equal.

Trudeau explained that EPF would mean that "the provinces" would not have to make matching expenditures of any kind from their own resources." At the time the bill was introduced, the NDP argued this would encourage the provinces to divert funds from health care to other programs.

In Alberta, this is precisely what has taken place. Until 1977, the Lougheed government contributed more money to medical care programs in Alberta than did the federal government. This began to change the year EPF was introduced. Two years later, the short fall in the Alberta contribution was \$117 million.

Between 1976 and now, the amount in dollars discounted for inflation the government has spent on health care has actually decreased.

Had the Alberta government matched federal funds, it could easily have eliminated medicare premiums, another of Justice Hall's recommendations. Further, the elimination of premiums would have resulted in a substantial saving in administration costs.

The Lougheed government now dedicates a lower percentage of total budgetary expenditures to health care than does any other province west of the Maritimes. This has been true of every year but one since 1975. Of course, it can be argued that a lower percentage is justified since the total budget is much higher. This would be flawlessly logical if health care in Alberta were funded sufficiently.

Unfortunately, as demonstrated by medicare premiums, the nurses' strike, hospital user fees, and crowded facilities, this is not the case.

The federal government committed the original error in allowing the province to avoid matching its contributions. But the provincial government must assume the blame for its irresponsible exploitation of the situation.

Critics miss poem's point

I did not request that my 'name' be withheld for personal reasons.

My name is Alexandra. And Sara Alexandra Greenland is my full name.

My friends (if I have any besides Jesus Christ who died for me) call me Sara, and Greenland is my Dad's name. I hesitate to use his name since I no longer answer to him.

O.F.G. Sitwell asks why I wrote in verse. I have better things to do than to concoct verses. What I wrote, wrote itself.

As for my being prejudiced — there is no evidence for this in "The Old School Tie."

I am, however, deeply sorry that Alexander was seduced and that he is dead, because he was my dear brother.

The title of Glenn Kowalsky's letter was 'God isn't anti-gay'. To understand God is to know Him as Love through the crucifixion and resurrection of His only Begotten Son Jesus Christ.

To be 'gay' is to know Lust at its hottest.

Love(God) is not Lust any more than a smile is a sneer. Joy is not gaiety, nor is Courage dignity.

And nor for that matter is the Resurrection an erection.

Glenn Kowalsky mentions the 'seduction of old-man-getting-young-boy-and-turning-him-into-a-homosexual' as being a myth. I have no evidence that my late brother ever practiced homosexuality (cock-sucking?) — I only know what I wrote and that he threw himself off a cliff to death.

Karen Stephanson did not

like the 'rather graphic piece of literature' that she found in "The Old School Tie". I do not like it either or any of what I have written. I have been told to burn it by my pastor up North, but on the other hand a number of people (including a U of A chaplain) have suggested that it might be genius.

At any rate it is no use to me.

When I saw an ad in the *Gateway* requesting material from readers I remembered that it is written in the New Testament "Ask and it shall be given" - so I gave you some of Alexander the Little.

Would anyone like the rest of it?

I have no use for poetry myself.

Alexandra

Nuclear roulette game

The United Nations has proclaimed October 24 - 30, 1980, as "Disarmament Week" around the world. To help to focus public attention on the dangers of the growing weapons race, the on-going suffering in wars, and the need for peace, a number of individuals and groups have invited William Epstein, a long-time Canadian and United Nations diplomat for disarmament, and author of numerous articles and books on nuclear proliferation and disarmament concerns, to visit Edmonton during that week.

He will speak on the theme "Nuclear Roulette: The Arms Race and Canada" at a public meeting on Tuesday, October 28 at 12:30 noon in Dinwoodie Hall of the Students' Union Building.

Plans are also underway for Mr. Epstein to be interviewed on Radio and T.V. during the day. In the evening of October 28, there will be a seminar with William Epstein on the theme "Disarmament: Opportunity and Responsibility in Canada", with coffee and discussion following, at 7:30 p.m. in the lounge of Knox-Metropolitan United Church (83rd Avenue entrance, off 109 Street).

We would be happy to share more resources with you. Please feel free to contact Eric Stephanson, Ecumenical Chaplain at the University of Alberta, for more information — or call any of the university chaplains.

Eric Stephanson
U of A Chaplain for the Anglican, Presbyterian, and United Churches

Hey look here after you've read the sports quiz

1. Milwaukee and Boston
2. Phil Esposito, Serge Savard, Guy Lapointe, Marcel Dionne, Gil Perrault, Rick Martin, Bobby Clarke, Pete Mahovolich
3. 82 by Montreal vs Hamilton in 1956
4. Bill Mosienko, 21 seconds

5. Calgary, 22 games (1948-49)
6. Boston and Chicago, 12 years
7. Arenas and St. Pats
8. a)13
9. d)11
10. Four. Blair MacDonald, Dave Lumley, Dave Hunter and Lee Fogolin.

LETTERS

Letters to the *Gateway* should be a maximum of 250 words on any subject. Letters must be signed and include faculty, year and phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. All letters must be typed, though we will reluctantly accept them if they are very neatly written. We reserve the right to edit for libel and length. Letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the *Gateway*.

The triumph of idiocy

The article concerning the *Tin Drum* (October 21) took me by surprise. I never realized that:

Censorship Board, the mass media and American Industry, the purpose being to promote fascism.

- 1) Gunter Grass is a neo-Nazi.
- 2) Some kind of conspiracy is going on between the Ontario

3) Idiomatic articles like that are actually printed.

Ted Skoczylas
Arts III

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