

# 60 cents worth casserole of civil rights

a supplement section  
of the gateway

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Since we are running two picture pages on Quebec City this week (the cover and C-3), and since we think our readers have enough intelligence to find their way through the magazine, we interviewed Neil Driscoll for some background on his trip to the Canadian Winter Games.

Speaking about French-Canada, Driscoll wastes no time hitting the nail on the head.

"It's full of frogs," he said, "and there are goddam statues on every corner."

One example of Quebec's marble history is on C-3.

"And there are cannons guarding the St. Lawrence, like they were expecting another attack from the British any minute," he says.

Driscoll was out for hard facts, and he got them. He got conflicting facts from every person he asked.

"Nobody seems to know the size of the place. It depends on who you're talking to—the first cab driver said the metropolitan area had 600,000 people, the next said 400,000."

"Everyone tells you food is expensive, but it isn't so. We found we get a really good meal for \$3 if we went to the right place—booze and everything."

But don't drink at the Chateau Frontenac, warns Driscoll, the prices are "unbelievable."

Fortunately for Driscoll, French-Canada isn't an armed camp.

"The non-separatist young people are really anxious to talk. They want to find out about the rest of the country—they are friendly," he said.

The only other thing Driscoll wanted to talk about was the airline stewardesses.

"The PWA stewardesses are still better than Air Canada's," Driscoll says.

"The ones on the Air Canada flight up from Calgary"—Driscoll makes sick noises—"and one was engaged. I don't know how."

## or, How I learned to stop worrying and carry a gun

By PAUL WHITE

It was twenty minutes to nine and I had to be at the corner of Fulton and Nostrand by five after. It was raining, the generator had fallen out of my car, and I was on

### background

Civil rights stuff is a little out of line for Casserole, but we thought this story was too good to miss. It is obviously written by a literate Negro named Paul White, but we have no more details. The story came to us from Canadian University Press, who must be in the black about Mr. White as well.

Foster Avenue, sort of in the heart of Flatbush. So I had to get a taxi.

I was therefore, according to an ageless tradition in New York, farther up that well-known creek than I could ever have imagined, for experience had long taught me that if you even looked dark-skinned you simply did not enter-

tain the idea of getting a taxi in Flatbush.

They locked all doors when they saw you coming, and if you got the opportunity to get around to the driver's side he told you he didn't "want to go over there". Then he would speed off before you had time to pull him out the window and beat your civil rights out of him.

Anyway, this night I really needed that taxi, and I decided that regardless of traditions and precedents, I would get one. I stood at the corner of Foster and New York Avenues in the pouring rain. I had prepared myself well for my venture before leaving home.

Two taxis flew by, and I went through the motions of hailing them; both slowed, scowled, and accelerated. Then, as I saw the traffic light turn red, I slinked behind a UPS van and waited as a taxi cruised to a stop at the light. Then I darted out and quickly pulled open the back door. But the light had turned green again, and as the driver took one look at me, he drove off at about 40 miles an hour with the door open, and I was sent reeling up against the curb. I was happy it was dark and

there were no passersby; it could have been embarrassing, even for me.

### THE LONG WAIT

I waited. Oh, we blacks never mind waiting!

The light was red and another taxi was coming to a halt. I eased out again, but this time the driver saw me and quickly reached over and locked the door. It was ten minutes to nine and the light was still red. I darted around to the driver's side and put my plan into action. I pulled the little revolver from my pocket and eased it up behind the left ear of the driver, and with the other hand I reached in and opened the back door.

"Dig it," I said, swinging quickly into a frightening vernacular. "You move this cab an inch before I get inside and I'll blow your goddam brains all over the street."

He froze, and I quickly climbed into the back seat. I put the thing back into my coat pocket. He waited.

"Fulton and Nostrand," I told him.

He had regained himself. "I don't go over there," he said. "I'm on my supper break, mister. I don't want no trouble. I gotta wife and three kids to support. Waddya wanta make trouble for? I don't go over there."

### PRESSURE POLITICS

In exasperation I brought out the silly thing again and touched his ear with it. Besides, there were cars lined up behind us, and they were honking horns and yelling.

"Fulton and Nostrand," I said, and glancing quickly at his identification card I added an extra "Guinea." He turned off Foster onto New York Avenue and we were on the way.

"You gonna get yourself into a lot of trouble, mister," he said. "You know that?"

I smiled and pocketed my gun. They would never believe this in Grants Town, Nassau, Bahamas, I thought. Just like in the movies. The big time. New York. Oops! We neared Empire Blvd. and 71st Precinct, and the driver was slow-

ing down, even though we had the green light.

The gun was out again and up behind his ears. It was the first time during the entire episode that I was really frightened. Anyway, he sped past the station, and I settled down again.

Then with childlike curiosity I said, "You prejudiced, bossman?" He grunted. "Just don't like being forced. You coulda asked me nice."

### LOCK OUT

"You locked your doors," I said wearily. "Mister, you realize how many taxi drivers lock their doors that way in New York City every day? You know how many black people in New York are waiting at this minute for taxis?"

"You don't force yourself . . ."

"The law says you have to take me where I want to go within the city limits."

"A guy can't make money off you people."

So, the shoe pinched there. I laughed. Who would ever think that prejudice could ever be an economic necessity. The poor guy—poor, stupid bastard who probably went diligently to Mass every Sunday, contributed to the Muscular Dystrophy fund, and had a daughter who was exorbitantly beautiful and loved him very much.

### ONE FOR THE ROAD

He pulled over at the corner of Fulton and Nostrand. The fare was 85 cents. I gave him the exact change and got out of the cab after easing an extra dollar on the seat next to him. He'd find it later, I thought.

I stood near the cab. He looked at me with all the blood and venom of his ancestors, and as he pulled away he shouted at the top of his lungs—"Nigger; Dirty, rotten niggers all!"

I smiled, and taking the gun from my pocket, dropped it into an ash can. I had paid 60 cents for it at Woolworth's, and had forgotten to give it to my nephew. I looked at all the beautiful black people scurrying about me in the rain. So many of them bought and used real guns. I assimilated.

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