

EDITORIAL

Penguin pragmatism

It's 17 games into the NHL regular season. The Pittsburgh Penguins are played close to .500 hockey, their attendance is up and to behold, 16,000 plus L.A.'ers came out to watch the hometown Kings play the Pens last Saturday: L.A., where as a rule, the chairs outnumber the spectators.

The reason for the renaissance is personified in 19-year-old junior scoring phenomenon Mario Lemieux. But how the Pens got Lemieux is almost as interesting as the Lemieux story itself.

It was late in the 1983-84 season and the Penguins were in a hellish dogfight with the New Jersey Devils for the dubious distinction of the worst record in the league. (The team with the worst record, of course, gets first pick in next year Entry Draft, which in this case was Lemieux.) It was at this time that Penguin General Manager Eddie Johnston made a couple of questionable moves. The team's best defenseman, Randy Carlyle, was traded to the Winnipeg Jets for a player-to-be-named-later. That later became much later as the Pens picked up Moe Mantha in the off-season. Next, Roberto Romano, the team's best goalie in the latter part of the season, was mysteriously sent down to the team's minor league franchise in Baltimore. He was replaced by Vince Tremblay and his outrageous 6.00 goals against average. The Penguins quickly sank to rock bottom and stayed there. Lemieux was theirs.

Although Johnston will not admit he wanted his team to lose (and why should he?) the plan does not defy believability. From a business standpoint he has pulled a coup. A team with the worst home attendance in the league last year (an average of 6,839) now has a drawing card whose talents could rival even Wayne Gretzky. Johnston might have singlehandedly saved hockey in the Steel City.

In sports ethics though, these moves are considered despicable. Games are being purposely lost for future benefit. But this should not surprise us. People accept nefarious activities and underhanded dealings in almost every other part of society. We are not surprised at corrupt politicians and businesses are expected to place profit margins ahead of customer relations, but sports are somehow supposed to be different. They are to be pure and clean and idyllic. Players check your human failings at the door please. The "Johnston Gambit" is a shining example of how sports are first and foremost, a business - an entertainment business. And any other approach is to view the action through rose-coloured plexiglass.

Dean Bennett

Metri-Domme

Pass the smelling salts, please.

The federal Tory Government is taking a collective nap from modern reality. In a move containing all the insightful logic of a thumbtack, the government is reviewing the use of metric measurement in Canada. William Domm, the recently appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, is a man with a mission. He is fighting for the rights of the poor oppressed Canadians who yearn for the good ol' Imperial standard of measurement. The government has already announced that metric measurements will no longer be mandatory.

Not only is the Imperial system of measurement archaic; the metric system is infinitely more logical and practical. A move to re-establish the official use of Imperial measurement will hurl Canadian consumerism into chaos and impede the progress of the nation as a whole.

To hear William Domm talk, you'd think the people of this country are in a maniacal frenzy, unable to cope with the metric reality found in everyday life. The Honourable Mr. Domm is insulting the intelligence of every Canadian.

The metric system is relatively new in Canada. Everybody still employs the Imperial system in a pedestrian way. For example, we ask our hairdresser to "take a few inches off the top," as opposed to 20 or 30 centimeters. However, Canadians do know the difference between a millilitre and litre, and do not suffer nervous breakdowns every time we go grocery shopping or stop for gas.

Students and professionals use the metric system in everything from chemistry to engineering to graphic design. The education system does not teach metric because of government regulations but rather because it is a precise and scientific system.

Besides, people are used to road signs informing us that Two Hills, Alberta is only 20 kilometers down the highway. Why change back?

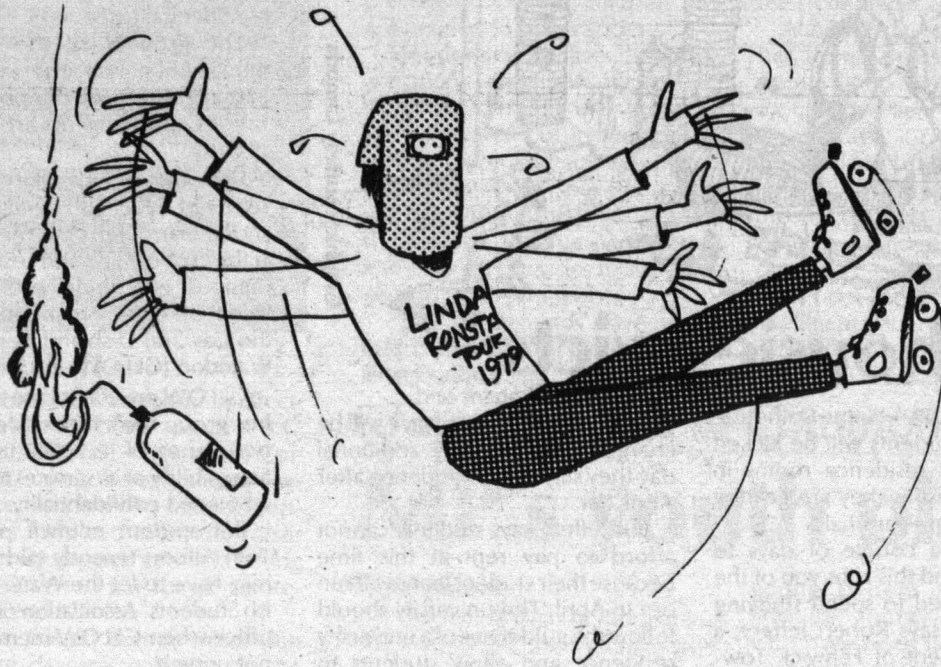
The Metric system, along with such modern devices as computers, supersonic jets and Cyndi Lauper, is here to stay. Any move to convert back to the Imperial system is a colossal leap back into the Dark Ages.

M.C.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...

Jerry Brown

controversial ex-governor of California



He was last seen working as a transient welder in beautiful downtown Fort McMurray.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Speakup! I can't hear you!

Re: Gateway Jane Siberry — NEO A4 Review

The Surgeon General has determined that standing three inches away from the P.A. can cause excessive volume.

How can you possibly "slag-off" the sound quality of NEO A-4's set when your right ear was juxtaposed to eight mondo speakers all evening?

In the future we recommend you allow for a bit of distance between yourself and the band you are reviewing.

P.S. — Suzette, you have quite the trendy hairstyle, does this cause you to become bored or nervous?

Simon LeBon
Roger Taylor
Nick Rhodes
and the rest of the Duran Sisters
Arts IV

Editor's note: The writer of the review was standing outside the lounge for most of the NEO A-4 set.

Holey letter Batman!

When I wrote my letter to the Gateway (Nov. 14) I was hoping that I would get an intelligent written response to it. Well, I suppose 2 out of 3 isn't bad; there was a response and it was written. As to intelligent, do be serious. Evidently the only thing exceeding the number of holes in Shona Welsh's head is the number of holes in her letter.

Let's start at the beginning.

First of all, I am chastised for my failure to provide an alternative to demonstrating against nuclear war. If Miss Welsh had read my letter (yes, you know, read: words, sentences — stuff like that), she would have noticed that nowhere in it did I imply or state that I

had an alternative to demonstrating against nuclear war. My letter stated that, among other things, demonstrations against nuclear war are pointless and futile. However, if you do want an alternative to demonstrating against nuclear war, Miss Welsh, I suggest that you stand on your head in a bucket of lime yellow and yodel. While this will not get you as much publicity as a mass demonstration would, it will have the same effect on nuclear issues as your demonstration and, what is more, it will more accurately portray the intelligence of most participants in anti-nuclear war demonstrations.

Next, Miss Welsh wants me to share with her my examples of the half-truths, inaccurate statistics, and downright falsities that are inherent in most public discussion of nuclear issues. Ordinarily, I wouldn't share my dirty socks, let alone my proof, with a person such as Miss Welsh. However, due to her inability to see the obvious, I'll be glad to help.

Two weeks ago, as I was riding home on the bus, I couldn't help but overhear two people discussing nuclear war. During the discussion, such interesting fact emerged as "the comparatively small size of Soviet fighter aircraft as compared to American fighter aircraft," "the greater number of warheads in the possession of the U.S. as compared to the Soviet Union," "the impossibility of Libya ever getting the bomb," "it is the quality of NATO's troops that keeps the Soviets out of Western Europe, not NATO policy of flexible response," "nuclear missiles cannot be launched by accident because of extensive safeguards," and my personal favorite "New Zealand will survive a nuclear war because it is a nuclear free zone."

The rank stupidity of this discussion made me conclude that it was just an isolated incident. But, lo and behold, the next day while I was studying in Rutherford, another discussion started about nuclear war and it, too, was filled with the same misinformation and garbage as the first. To Miss Welsh, I say find

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Thirty days hath September, and no wonder we are all here enjoying the ribald humor of Shane Berg, the trivia of Don Teplyske, and the aural resonances of Warren Opheim. Dave Boyd bounced by, Ken Maynard and Bill Doskoch duelled with their layout knives, Kent Cochrane answered the phones, and Hans Becker laid down the line. Audrey Djuwita and Jim Herbert went fishing for stories. Mike Evans and Greg Owens took fearless Brougham for a wee yard of ale.