

Another shake for Nestle's

Re: 'The Nestle Affair'
As my teaching and research interests embrace the topics of Infant Feeding, and Development, I would like to make a few comments about the Nestle controversy.

Both the company and its critics can be justifiably accused of sins of commission and of omission. Ever since the 'baby-killer' scandal first attracted international attention, Nestle has been a central target for protest groups, although other large companies - including Mead Johnson and John Wyeth have been involved in similar activities. Nestle may be the major offender, but are the critics concerned with a principle - or merely scale?

The Nestle company, of course, as per Mr. Peterson's letter, (I received a similar one) deny the offences, and eloquently advance their claim to be responsible marketers. Here lies one fundamental point: they are marketers, out to make a profit, and that is only accomplished by selling the product. Two questions may be posed: are the means employed ethical? and is the end-result morally acceptable?

Despite agreeing to a series of voluntary controls, the milk companies have consistently contravened limitations to advertising and other promotional activities, many instances being documented by INFAC (Infant Formula Action Coalition of Canada). The fact that Nestle's 'mothercraft nurses' are approved by local governments is neither here nor there: local elites in Developing Countries often have strong ties with multinational companies, and are as exploitative of their own people as are the foreign investors. Statements appearing on company products announcing that breast-feeding is best for an infant, are useless when illiteracy rates are high. Free samples may not be given directly to mothers - but if health workers can be convinced of the value of formulas, - a major marketing outlet is created.

With the introduction of the new W.H.O. code on marketing of breast-milk substitutes, which calls for *International* action in restricting promotion of these

products, the milk companies have, once again, promised full co-operation. It is largely because of their past record that misgivings are raised about their sincerity; but even multinationals can change, and they should not be condemned without trial. A number of Health, Welfare and Social agencies will be helping to monitor the new code, and it will soon be apparent if the new promises are as empty as the old.

The second question, of the *outcome* of promotional activity in Developing Countries, is probably the more important one. As Mr. Peterson says, "Efforts must address the problems of lack of food, poor housing, hygiene, education, medical care and poverty". These are basic development issues, whose continued neglect leaves the nations of the South in such a vulnerable position. In these circumstances, infant formulae are not an appropriate solution to malnutrition. No one would deny their value in emergency famine relief - where the critical need is an immediate source of calories and protein, but even then, care is needed to avoid creating subsequent dependence on formula milk.

Poverty means that the relative cost of formula milk is exorbitant; one package may cost a month's wages: such an expensive product must be made to last, so the formula is diluted until it is no longer nutritionally adequate. Lack of facilities, such as ready availability of hot water and/or knowledge of disease, leads to unhygienic preparation of bottles; the result is gastroenteritis in an underfed baby. Typically, the mother, deeming the milk to be the source of the problem, withdraws the bottle, offering the baby only water; malnutrition is thus exacerbated and ultimately, severe infection leads to death. Of course, there are many other factors contributing to malnutrition and infant mortality, but this should not detract from the tragedy of 'bottle-babies'.

Most women can breast-feed their infants, and should be given every encouragement to do so: the nutritional, immunological, psychological and economic benefits are legion. When women choose not to breast-feed it is usually for social rather than biological reasons. One of the motivations Third World women have to bottle feed, is their perception that it is "modern", and they want to be like their sophisticated Northern sisters. To deny these women access to a product which is widely used here could be seen to be patronising, at the least. If formula is a threat to health per se - why is it so freely available in North America? If, rather, it is the conditions of use that are the problem, why isn't more done to aid development?

My view is that we should be promoting breast-feeding in our own country, as the 'modern thing to do' - as well as continuing to discourage aggressive marketing abroad. Finally, I would comment that there are a hundred and one ways in which rich countries exploit the poor: by focusing exclusively on one issue, we run the risk of neglecting underlying problems. Certainly, continue to pressure the milk companies to be more responsible - but don't use the Nestle boycott as an easy way of salving your conscience without making a real commitment to Development issues.

Sincerely,
Paul Fieldhouse
Assistant Professor
Faculty of Home Economics
P.S. If anyone wants more information on the W.H.O. Code, or on the Canadian position, please contact me at 432-3829. Room 308F Home Economics Building.

CON by Ambrose Fierce

It is fitting that, hard upon the publication of her second great book, *Consequences* (McClelland & Stewart; \$14.95), Margaret Trudeau, during an interview at a recent publisher's party, announced her engagement to Clifford Olson, prominent B.C. population engineering consultant. Their many admirers and well-wishers find it peculiarly appropriate - as did this reviewer - that the two greatest living Canadian self-advertisers, the two individuals who characterize this country for so much of the rest of the world, should join egos, as it were, in the bonds of holy matrimony.

The wedding itself will be a quiet family affair at the groom's modest new concrete and steel hideaway. (The couple plan to tie the knot just as soon as Olson's divorce - he's suing; mental cruelty - comes through.) And, despite a brief stretch upcoming with the public sector, the groom plans to defer the myriad rigors and responsibilities of his new position long enough to take his new bride on a proper wedding tour - a whirlwind honeymoon!

London, Paris, Rome, Vienna - forget it!
"Oo ik," says the former first lady. "What a bore those places are!"

Margaret - "Pigmeat Maggie" to her friends - is always looking for new and different things to do, places to go.

"Our honeymoon is going to be special. First we're going to visit all those historic places in Europe and California where I fulfilled myself as a woman with all those virile but sensitive and intellectual rock stars, thereby realizing my human potential and achieving multiple cosmic orgasms the following day when I read about it in the paper. Then Clifford and I will visit all the sites in British Columbia where those tiresome children tried so hard to sabotage his population engineering research."

And then?
"And then, well, we plan to continue our tour as long as Clifford's Mountie-money holds out. It was \$100,000 in consulting fees, and we laundered it through three countries then got it back into my Bay travel account all safe and sound. Anyway, our honeymoon'll be total fun, constantly, and we'll have a Mountie honor guard the whole time."

But honeymoons don't last forever, and Cliff and Maggie know it. So what will they do when they get home?

"We're working on a book!" bubbles Maggie. "Together! A beautiful and moving human document about our trials and suffering, the terrible media slander and abuse and even indifference, Clifford's great work, our love for each other."

The title?
"Beyond Belief."

And beyond the book? What will the married life of these super-celebs be like? And how will they support themselves in the manner to which they have become so well accustomed, once Clifford's little stint with the public sector is over, and once the Mountie-money and book money are gone?

"Retainers," says Maggie, effervescent still, but now maturely serious. "Most of our income will derive from Mountie-retainers."

Mountie-retainers?
"Yes. The criminal classes have come a long way in this country.

They cost about a million and a half federal bucks a year each - to put and keep them behind bars. So all right, but the first problem is this: like the War on Poverty, the criminals themselves actually receive very little of this money. And the second problem is this: prison is a pleasant place to be, I'm not denying that, but I am saying that some criminals would rather be elsewhere - out in the world, like my Clifford. They need to be active. They don't want to stagnate.

"Can you blame them? Not me. I'm not about to sit in judgment on my fellow human beings when really it's all society's fault anyway. So here's Clifford's plan - really, it's just a little refinement on the original plan of getting paid to produce the bodies of so-called victims. Are you ready? Here's the plan: *criminals would get paid to refrain from devivifying people in the first place!*"

"This way is much more sensible, and all of society benefits. The advantage to the would-be victims is obvious. So are the advantages to the population engineer: he retains his good name and professional standing, his cash flow is protected, and the small element of personal risk and inconvenience is negated completely. He merely devivifies a half dozen or so people to establish his good faith and professional credibility, then everafterward presents his local mountie detachment with a weekly or monthly list of individuals whom he did *not* devivify. At a thousand dollars per non victim and a maximum of a thousand non-victims per year - a clear annual gain to society of five hundred thousand dollars per population engineer.

"Can you beat that? Clifford's a genius. He's the Martin Luther King of homicides, and this plan is his dream. Did you ever hear his I have a dream speech?...No? Well, he gave it once in California, and they just roared. And a wonderful man whose name escapes me called it 'a thundering affirmation of life - to death's vile nay a resounding and triumphant yeah!'"

Maggie's head is bowed now. A blush mantles her lovely cheeks. She speaks softly, almost whispers.

"My husband-to-be is a great humanitarian."
And...
"He loves me."
And...
"He says he'll probably never-ever kill me."

Editor's note: Ambrose Fierce is the pseudonym of a local agent provocateur who had a regular column in the Gateway a few years ago when our journalistic standards were temporarily on the Fritz. Mr. Fierce didn't say if the above submission would be the first of a renewed series, but we thought we would put his old column head over it anyway, just for auld lang syne and all that.

the Gateway

NOTICE

to all Gateway Staff

One more lucky person will win an all expense paid trip (food and drink excluded) to see Ronnie and Ralphie in Washington. Your travel hosts: Peter and Phil. ARgue your way to the front lines.

Wednesday, March 3 at 12 noon
Gateway office.

DIE Board decisions

Re: Gordon Stamp's Complaints Against *The Gateway*.
During the meeting of the Discipline, Interpretation and Enforcement (D.I.E.) Board on 15 February 1982, Gordon Stamp's complaints against *the Gateway* were discussed. The D.I.E. Board's decisions are as follows:

(1) In a 4-1 vote, the Discipline, Interpretation and Enforcement Board feels that *the Gateway* committed no error in publishing the split pictures of the two presidential candidates, who were members of slates, on the front page of the 4 February 1982 edition of *the Gateway*.

(2) The Discipline, Interpretation and Enforcement Board unanimously feels that *the Gateway* committed no error in its coverage of the election rally, in a story carried on page 1 of the 4 February 1982 edition of *the Gateway*.

(3) The Discipline, Interpretation and Enforcement Board unanimously agrees that there was a violation with respect to the one hundred fifty word spiel specified in the *Instructions to the Candidates* and therefore recommends that in the future, a minimum of one hundred fifty word spiel be published in the "campaigning issue" of *the Gateway*. The length of the spiel shall be determined, jointly, by the Editor of *the Gateway* and the Students' Union Chief Returning Officer. It shall be the duty of the Students' Union Chief Returning Officer to approve the spiel.

and more...

Re: Don Millar's request that Philip Soper be absented as a member of the Discipline, Interpretation and Enforcement (DIE) Board.
During the meeting of the DIE Board on 15 February 1982, Don Millar's "request that Philip Soper be absented as a member of the DIE Board..." was discussed. The DIE Board unanimously agreed to deny this request pursuant to Section 4 (c) of Bylaw 3500 and section 31, Part IV of Bylaw 3500.

Discipline, Interpretation and Enforcement Board
Hall Zalmanowitz,
Chairperson (1981-82)



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