

Only 89 shopping days left till St. Andrews Day

By David Rollo

This is the First of two parts on Scotland. This part will deal with what Scotland is not, in order to dispel some commonly reinforced misconceptions about Scots and Scots in Canada.

In the current issue of MacLeans's Magazine (September 1976) Allan Fotheringham argues that tourism is a source of international friction and is destructive of culture, particularly in Southern Europe and the Third World. However, North American tourists seem to be more intelligently appreciative of Scotland than many of their radio and T.V. journalists. It should be noted in parenthesis that English people have a legitimate gripe since anyone who listens to **As It Happens** for long enough must inevitably conclude that England is made up entirely of Tom Errol (who seems to be under House arrest in London) and housewives in Stoke on Trent with talking parrots.

However, such grievances disappear in the mists of time when compared to the dreadful C.T.V. programme presented last fall. This widely publicised programme on 'The Scots' was introduced by Arnold Edinborough (sic). In the best tradition of Victorian insensitivity and late twentieth century commercialism, Edinborough depicted Scotland as a land of feuding Protestants and Catholics, Highlanders and Lowlanders, MacDonalds and Campbells. He overlooked more realistic divisions, which Scottish radicals would describe as being between the people of property and the people of no property. A Scottish traditionalist, on the other hand, would see the great division as being between those who see through a glass darkly and those who have no glass. Edinborough seemed totally unaware that such Canadian misconceptions about Scotland were marvellously parodied by Stephen Leacock in **Hannah of the Highlands** one of his short stories in **Nonsense Novels** featuring two warring Scottish clans who had long fought over the question of whether damnation could be achieved by faith alone or whether good works were also necessary. (Faith in what?)

This programme was as much a biography of a director of the MacDonald Tobacco Company, whose romantic Tory ideals were taken as being Scottish, and one would never have known that less than one quarter of Scottish voters favoured the Tories at the last General Election. But it was also interesting for what was omitted, in particular Scotland's largest city, Glasgow. To see Scotland without Glasgow is like seeing Chicago without Daley, Canada without Charex or Dalhousie without official secrets. The ultimate insult was delayed until the credits which told us that "Scotland was by courtesy of the MacDonald Tobacco Company" and "the Massacre of Glencoe was brought to you by the Rank Xerox Company". (Since the Massacre was during the reign of William of Orange, C.T.V. seem to be suggesting that the Dutch Royal Family was on the take from American multinationals years before the Lockheed deal).

Not to be outdone, the local media managed, within a month to compete with Upper Canadian buffoonery. Last November 29th, radio station C.F.D.R.'s dreaded Tartan Hour featured a special St. Andrews Day programme. The 'professionally' Scottish announcer paused in mid-programme to admit that he had just been informed that St. Andrew's Day was on November 30th. "Never mind". This must be the only occasion on record when local commercial radio was ahead of its time. However it is not surprising that such a philistine comment should be made on the Tartan Hour which seems to select its music according to two criteria: (1) it must not be so traditional that it might convey something worthwhile about Scotland's

pre-industrial past and, (2) it must not be so topical that it might say something realistic about the Scotland of today. In fact the whole programme makes one surmise that C.F.D.R. has received a batch of discarded programmes from B.B.C. Glasgow, Circa 1955.

Occasionally Scottish reality has been known to break in one the best organised North American lives. In October 1967, two thousand demonstrators, lead by a pipe band marched through Glasgow in protest against Wilson's support of America's War. As the pipe band rounded a corner, on which is situated one of Glasgow's more expensive hotels, a group of well heeled American tourists, attracted by the music appeared at the front door. They began to film the colourful scene as it unfolded before them. As the scene began to change and a variety of politically explicit banners made their unwelcome intrusion into the world of amateur movie making, filming ceased somewhat abruptly. A new Scottish art form, had just been discovered and was later to be called cinema interruptus.

Unfortunately, local media seems to be more open to such uniquely Maritime Scottish phenomena as Niven Miller-unconscious humourist religious huckster and possibly New Brunswick's answer to the late Florence Foster Jenkins. Scottish-New Brunswick relations in this context have seldom been fortunate. The greatest living Scottish journalist, James Cameron in his autobiography 'Point of Departure' (McGraw-Hill, 1967) described the difficulties of working with Lord Beaverbrook whose cherished themes were

"colonial paternalism, the conspiracies of the Papists, the inefficiency of the Civil Servants, and a reasonable implication that the whole thing was the fault of the British Labour Government".

Needless to say, by being the greatest living Scottish journalist Cameron was automatically disqualified from appearing on C.T.V.'s programme about Scotland. Such comments are made not as a mere catalogue of

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Whether or not the provinces accept any federal proposals at the following finance ministers' meeting in September, the federal government has made it clear it can

grievances but because they raise some quite important questions. Thus, an advertising promo for MacDonald Tobacco disguised as a programme about Scotland leads one to ask whether Scottish-Canadian commercialism is fundamentally different from its all-American counterpart. To put the question in another way; is commercializing one's roots, in a perversion of the multi-cultural ideal, any better than abandoning them altogether and becoming honestly North American? Do such television programmes as those described indicate that multiculturalism could become a mere plaything of the wealthy and a means of bolstering their economic position?

As well, C.T.V. missed a marvellous opportunity to ask some very interesting questions about the nature of Scottish and Canadian society. For example, why are Robert W. Service, soccer and socialism more popular in Scotland than in Canada and why do the latter two have stronger footholds in Ontario than in the Maritimes.

Alternatively one might ask why there are more Scottish Liberals in Canada than in Scotland? Does something happen to Scottish Socialists when they emigrate to Canada? Or is the hitherto strong Scottish commitment to the Labour Party a commitment to power and patronage rather than to socialism? Likewise could the same be said about commitment to the Liberal Party and Liberalism? Surely even C.T.V. wouldn't explain all this away by saying that it is mainly Scots with Tory or Liberal inclinations who emigrate to Canada.

Fortunately, Scotland is more politically interesting than some. Some would have us believe. Evidence of this will be forthcoming later this month when Donald Stewart, leader of the Scottish Nationalist Parliamentary group and Member of Parliament for the Western Isles will pay a 10 day visit to the Maritimes. This will be spent mainly with relatives in Cape Breton prior to a political visit to Ontario. 18

settle fiscal arrangements even if no agreement is reached.

The abolition of the current dollar-for-dollar cost sharing agreement removes provincial spending incentives in health and post-secondary education.



months ago, Canadian press and television rose to the occasion when Scottish Nationalist Chairperson, Billy Wolfe was here. There is a reason to believe that they can be encouraged to do so again. Mr. Stewart's visit is being sponsored by Scottish Nationalist groups in Canada.



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