

Tories Cheap

Over the last week, the incredible pictures of the famine in Ethiopia have moved thousands of Canadians to contribute whatever they can to alleviate the suffering.

International organizations like OXFAM have been inundated with calls from Canadians offering help.

This makes the news that the new Conservative government intends to delay for five years the decision to boost aid to developing countries all the more distressing.

The former liberal government, in a move supported by then-opposition leader Brian Mulroney had moved to increase aid to developing countries to 0.7% of GNP by 1990.

And External Affairs Minister Joe Clark re-affirmed government's commitment at a September meeting of the UN General Assembly.

But Finance Minister Michael Wilson, in his economic statement last week, announced the government had delayed the decision for five years - a move that saves a "paltry" \$180 million next year.

In some respects, this move indicates the government - as is the case with most western democracies - is tragically out of step on this issue.

Certainly, the government increases its aid when the full scope of the suffering becomes evident via the television cameras.

But it is the last-minute response and the flimsy commitment of our government that is simply inadequate.

If world hunger is to be overcome, it will take a sincere commitment from the developed nations of the world.

These nations must commit themselves to a significant financial and logistical contribution that is not subject to the prevailing domestic political climate.

There is nothing trendy about world hunger. Yet our government - in its new-found passion for fiscal restraint - has chopped an aid budget when the problem is mounting.

The "wealthy" nations of the world must look beyond domestic economic problems - which pale in comparison to the issue in Ethiopia - and devote significant resources to this problem.

Instead of reacting to a virtual holocaust, we should take steps to prevent the next one.

Otherwise, the situation will remain the same until the next television crew brings the pictures home.

Neal Watson

Smoke screen

What is interesting now is something that was noticed only as a curiosity then - the vast pillars of smoke that rose over the burning cities and then diffused downwind, creating gorgeous sunsets for days thereafter. Color in the evening sky is a function of slanting sunlight shining through stuff in the air - clouds, dust, volcanic ash, the characteristic smoke and fumes of the cities.

The general phenomenon is well known. Smoke hangs well in the air, especially dark sooty smoke. The particles are small. They absorb sunlight and heat up the surrounding air, which tends to linger aloft in a thick layer. The smoke from the firestorm at Hiroshima, which burned five square miles of the city, was pushed high into the troposphere by the combined heat of the fires and the bomb's fireball. Survivors spoke of the awful darkness and of the chill in the August which accompanied the murk and gloom. Water vapor condensed and fell back to earth as rain, black with the soot it picked up on the way down. A Japanese novelist, Masuji Ibuse, later wrote a fine novel called the Black Rain about the bombing of Hiroshima. For him the black rain symbolized the ghastliness of what had happened.

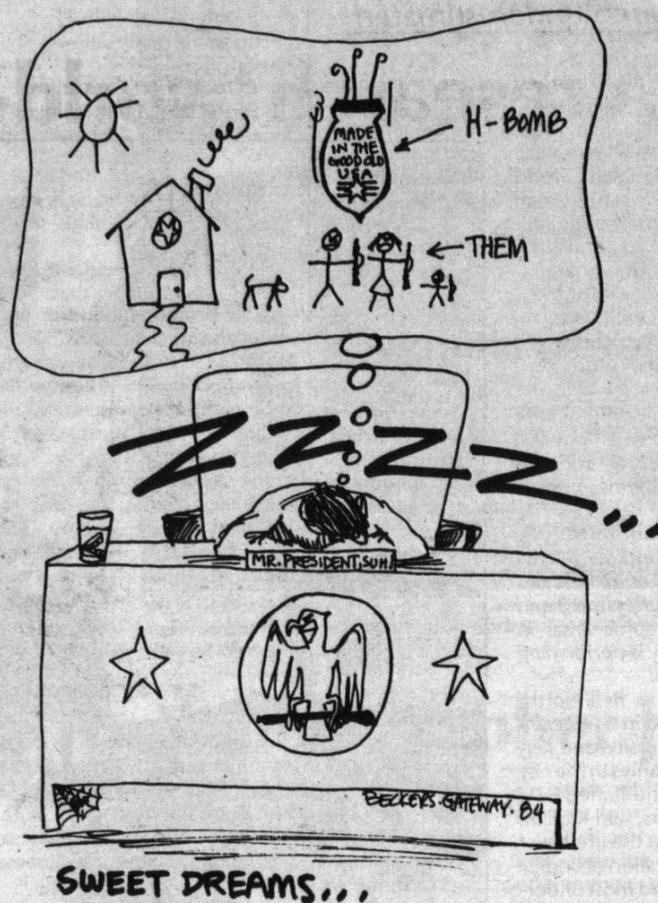
But to American officials who studied the bombing after the war, the black rain - an unexpected effect of the unique explosion - was nothing more than a curiosity. Scores of individuals contributed reports for the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey account of the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but the author of the account, Philip J. Farley, remembers no mention of smoke in the documents he collected. "I thought of the cloud in terms of the scenic effects", said Farley. "Nobody was thinking (of side effects) except in terms of radiation."

But now the question of smoke is very much on the minds of scientists and military men, for the simple reason that nuclear war would mean large numbers of burning cities, all pumping vast quantities of smoke into the air. Last December five scientists published a paper in *Science* magazine claiming that smoke from as few as a thousand fires in a hundred major cities could cast a sooty pall over the Northern Hemisphere thick and lingering enough to bring darkness at noon and radically cool the earth's surface for months, thereby triggering a climatic catastrophe - a nuclear winter - that would threaten many plant and animal species, including man, with extinction.

The invention of nuclear weapons has brought dire warnings aplenty in the past few decades, but this one is on an altogether different scale. It's one thing to say that the United States and the Soviet Union would suffer beyond precedent in a nuclear war, even that a nuclear war "would destroy civilization as we know it." It's our civilization, after all; we built it, and perhaps that gives us the right to destroy it. But we are not our own fathers; we did not create the human race, much less the other forms of life that share the planet with us. A defense policy that threatens life itself on such a scale is simply too crazy to stand.

Thomas Powers

Excerpted from *Atlantic Monthly*, November 1984



LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Democracy defined

On page 5 of the Nov. 1 issue of *The Gateway*, a letter from our Students' Union V.P. Internal, Gordon Stamp, was printed. In this letter he claimed that "The most blatant abuse of representation came from David Screen."

Now I don't know if Gordon Stamp is trying to make me look bad (or feel bad) or if he's just upset that the vote on this issue didn't fall in his favour. Anyways, I was very surprised that he would write this considering I have often supported his endeavors when I thought that they were worthwhile. Thank heavens, Gordon Stamp's reputation proceeds him and my fellow medical students' didn't take him seriously.

So I'm forced to defend myself. If there is anyone else out there who cares, the truth is: I set aside my personal opinions in order to best represent my faculty, and let me assure you, I'm fully aware of the meaning of democracy.

David Screen
Students' Union Medicine Rep.

Lest we forget

It happened Saturday morning while I was on the Greyhound bus to Calgary. I was listening to Arlo Guthrie's "Gabriel's Mother's Hiway Ballad #16 Blues", when the sun shone through the window, and God said to me, "Trent, look ahead of you."

About two rows up, an older man was reading *The Edmonton Journal*, and a large, black, full page ad faced me. Something about Zellers would be open for 10% off day on Sunday, November 11th. I later caught a glimpse of a Safeway ad stating they would be open too. A closer examination of the *Journal* found many similar ads, an on the back of section C, the *Journal* noted a list of stores that would be open Sunday, November 11th, "For Your Convenience."

I wondered if the store's intermittent public address system would pause its pleas about 'limited time offer between pillars 6 and 7' for something like 'the management and staff would ask you observe a moment of silence, on this, Remembrance Day.' Maybe the staff in the toy section would pause putting up Christmas things to fire a 21 cap gun salute. Maybe the early arriving Christmas carols or elevator music would be replaced by tapes of John Lennon's "Give Peace A Chance", or Bob Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind". Nah, I doubt that could happen.

It seems to me like the stores have put "Lest We Forget" out of sight and out of mind for the day. Oh sure, a wreath or two might be in a display window, and everyone wears poppies, but do we KNOW what it means?

Lest - in order not, for fear that
We - us, you, me, everyone
Forget - ...

For fear that we forget, we have this occasion, November 11th, not the second Sunday of the month, or the week before Grey Cup, but November 11th, the anniversary of peace in the First World War. It's not all about fallen soldiers and our 'freedom', no, it's all about US.

We have a day, Canada Day, where we celebrate how great our country is. We also have a day, Remembrance Day, where we reflect on how our mistakes have oft been repeated. We must never

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It's a little known-but true fact that Jens Andersen, Don Teplyske, Bernie Poitras, Tim Heidt and Hans Becker entered into a suicide pact earlier this year after Valerie Bertinelli married Eddie Van Halen; however, they found reason to live upon finding out that MacKenzie Phillips wasn't. Anna Borowiecki, Shona Welsh and Shane Berg just completed a new book; too bad they colored the grass red. It is not true that our intrepid photographers Kent Cochrane, Doug Olsen, Bruce Atlan, Tim Hellum and Bosco Chang are publishing a photo study on their favorite theme of "eight is too late". Finally, congrats to Bill Doskocich who was declared a sub species by the Anthro Department today.