
Falcons gobble gulls, clear airports

Three Toronto fish and wildlife technicians have suggested a novel approach to ridding airports of bird strikes (collisions between birds and aircraft). According to *Globe and Mail* reporter Ron Truman, the men have trained falcons to hunt birds who rest and feed near airports.

Doug Wilson, one of the falconers, explained: "The falcons are effective on birds such as gulls who socialize. After gulls have been taken by a falcon, the rest of the flock soon learns the appearance of the falcon means danger.

"Attempts to scare the birds with noise, even to fool them with a model plane disguised as a falcon have failed. When none of the birds were taken, the flock ignored the devices," he said.

"Getting native birds of prey to stay in the area won't work either. These raptors will pursue easier game — blackbirds or pigeons. There's no reason for a small hawk to take on a three-pound herring gull. You have to use a raptor that is trained specifically to hunt gulls."

"Part of the myth about falcons is that they're 100 percent killers. The fact is that they miss their prey as often as they get it," conceded Mr. Wilson.

John FitzGibbon, manager of airfield operations for Transport Canada, commented on a demonstration of the birds' skill at Canadian Forces Base in Trenton, Ontario: "Falconry is expensive, but so are repairs to aircraft after a birdstrike. From what we've seen, the falcons are effective. There's been a 70 percent reduction in birdstrikes in some areas we've studied."

Federal funds for ice arenas

The Federal Government has offered a total of \$18.15 million to help Hamilton, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Quebec City pay for arenas the same size as used by the National Hockey League, in a move that Fitness and Amateur Sport Minister Iona Campagnolo said raises the possibility "of an all-Canadian division in the league".

Edmonton, similar to Winnipeg and Quebec City, a member of the World Hockey Association, already has a "big-league" arena with a seating capacity of over 15,000. Both Winnipeg (with 10,151

seats in the Arena) and Quebec City (10,004 seats in the Coliseum) have discussed plans to enlarge their buildings.

Under the federal proposal, Hamilton, Winnipeg and Quebec City would each get \$5 million and Edmonton would get \$3.15 million. That city received \$1.85 million earlier for the Edmonton Coliseum, as part of the financing for the Commonwealth Games.

Among the conditions attached to Mrs. Campagnolo's announcement was the requirement that in each case, the province must match the federal contribution.

The cities involved must also get an NHL franchise to qualify and the arenas must be made available to amateur groups.

Controversial bill proposed

The Government believes penalties for marijuana possession are too harsh, but Justice Minister Marc Lalonde said recently he did not expect Parliament to lighten the punishment before it dissolved for an election campaign.

"I am somewhat leery of bringing in a bill that would have no chance of being passed," Mr. Lalonde said in an interview. "I am not saying that it won't be brought in, but I don't want to raise expectations."

Although the Government's position is to oppose the "legalization" of marijuana, it would like to take cannabis-related offences out of the Criminal Code.

"The criminal character of the act of possession has led to tens of thousands of Canadians, young Canadians in particular, having criminal records for offences which have been in many instances mistakes which could be attributed to their young age," said Mr. Lalonde.

"We feel it is a matter which should be corrected. While keeping possession as an offence, we don't think a criminal record should be carried on by young people."

The Government has promised to remove marijuana and hashish offences from the Narcotics Control Act, which provides a maximum seven-year prison term for simple possession of cannabis, the generic term for hashish and marijuana.

So-called "soft" drugs would be brought under the Food and Drugs Act, which now covers amphetamines, commonly known as speed, and hallucinogenic drugs such as LSD.

Tourism publications tops

The *Travel Advisor*, based in Washington, D.C., has chosen Canada as the world's leading producer of tourism literature.

In announcing the winners, the magazine said, "Canada overwhelms you with beautiful, well-prepared materials — enough to plan a complete vacation almost anywhere in Canada".

Publications singled out for distinction were the Ontario-produced *Traveller's Encyclopaedia of Ontario/Canada, Heritage Highways, Tours of Ontario and Quebec* and the Canadian Government Office of Tourism's (CGOT) *Touring Canada*, which suggests 54 tours and supplies mileage figures. Other booklets produced by the CGOT which received honourable mention were *Canada Travel Information* and *Events and Attractions*.

"After digesting all the excellent travel literature, you really want to accept the invitation," said the *Travel Advisor's* editorial.

The Canadian literature was judged best in the world based on submissions from 140 sources of free travel information.

Ukrainian week at Archives

An exhibition, *Ukrainian Canadians, Reflections on the Formative Years*, opened at the Public Archives of Canada recently, in recognition of Ukrainian Week. It displays various documents held by the Public Archives and includes private manuscripts, photographs, maps, films, newspapers and government documents, dating from 1891 to 1926.

While the first generation of Ukrainian Canadians was concerned chiefly with becoming established on homesteads, the settlers also established churches, schools, social and cultural organizations and newspapers. Many entered politics and business at an early date. "Their industrious character, organizational ability and community spirit transformed the bleak prairie landscape into a granary which supplied the British and Allied armies during World War I," said Oksana Migus, archivist responsible for the exhibition.

Today, Canadians of Ukrainian background number about 600,000, of whom more than 500,000 are Canadian-born, many of them third or fourth generation.