



SO, WHERE'S THE DAMN F.L.Q. WHEN YOU REALLY NEED THEM?

'ELLO, MORGENTALER?



"THE OLYMPICS CAN NO MORE HAVE A DEFICIT THAN A MAN CAN HAVE A BABY."

JEAN DRAPEAU - JAN. 29, 1973.

These are just two of the 150 samples of political wit by AISLIN, a cartoonist for "The Montreal Gazette". Collected under the title "Ello, Morgentaler?", the book is available around town.

Wit and how to find it

Colombo's Little Book, compiled by John Colombo. Hurtig Publishers, \$3.95 144 pp.

You can stop searching washroom walls, stop examining the backs of bus seats, and stop squinting at those messages scrawled in book margins. The truth has arrived - all conveniently categorized, classified, and Canadianized.

From the man who brought you Colombo's Canadian Quotations in 1974, that complete book of quotable Canadian quotes, comes the definitive collection of Canadian wit and humour called (drum roll, please) Colombo's Little Book - of Canadian Proverbs, Graffiti, Limericks, and other Vital Matters. Compiled by John Robert Colombo, of course.

This is the ideal book for relief from the tedium of the winter doldrums. If you're melting in the bathtub or just dozing off after supper Colombo's Little Book will provide you with one last shot of wit or sideways humour to carry you through, or, as the case may be, carry you off.

To wit:

"There was a young man of Eau Claire

Who had an affair with a bear.

But the surly old brute

With a snap of her snout

Left him only one ball and some hair."

Or, if you prefer the more urbane wit of the washroom:

"PLEASE DO NOT THROW CIGARETTE BUTS INTO THE URINAL"

...to which someone added: "IT MAKES THEM SOGGY AND HARD TO LIGHT"

You want more, you say? How about a good ole' Newfie joke (Note: 'Engineer' may be substituted for 'Newfie' if desired):

"A Newfie phoned Air Canada and asked the girl how long it took for a jet to go from Newfoundland to Toronto. The girl, being very busy at the time, replied, "One second, sir." The Newfie replied, "Thank you."

The examples go on and on but this article can't so buy the book instead. We all need to chuckle once in a while.

John Kenney

Kevin Gillese

Dinner theatre bad for digestion

Stage West's theatre being destined as it is to follow a buffet dinner, must be both designed and produced so as not to give anyone stomach upset. Unfortunately, the opening night production of Jack Popplewell's *Busybody*, failed and, as it turned out, was enough to give anybody acid indigestion.

And yet the star of the show was great. Elsa Houba played Mrs. Piper, British cleaning woman *extraordinaire*. She discovers a body in an office and, when the body disappears, plays busybody detective and solves two murders. This performance, of course, was particularly rewarding in view of the fact that Houba is a long-time Edmonton resident who has been involved in both amateur and professional theatre on the Edmonton scene for 25 years.

But faced as she was by a second lead who, despite offering professional credentials, demonstrated his disorganization and amateur status in each act of the play, one left feeling more than a little sympathy for Ms. Houba.

Colin Miller plays the role of Detective Superintendent Baxter, who is plagued, hounded, and exasperated by Mrs. Piper, who eventually out-sleuths him at the end of the murder case. He effectively destroys much of the comedy of the role, partly by over-shouting many of his lines, leaving himself conspicuously monotonous and over-extended, and partly through making fourteen prominent line

blunders in the opening performance!

While this might be acceptable in a high school production, in professional theatre one expects more than mere memorization; when even that is lacking, the show must obviously suffer a great deal.

At times Miller played the role well, but his jumping off-cue and obvious flusterings on stage just made a botch of the role. Add to this some stumbles and an unrelaxed role from Alex Moir, who plays Mrs. Piper's boss, Richard Marshall and a sometimes stiff and artificial manner from Judy Cooke (Marshall's wife, Claire) and you are left with a production which tarnishes what would otherwise be a very superior performance from a leading actress.

Houba receives strong support from only two of the back-up actors: Jonathan Harrison,

who plays the villain, and Lee Royce, who plays Marshall's private (and pining away) spinster secretary. In the two minor roles, Rick Stojan, as Baxter's assistant, Constable Goddard, is acceptable but Heather McCallum as the young, flirty office typist is just a bit *too* much - both her manner and make-up need toning down.

As alight situation comedy, *Busybody* has good comic potential and, perhaps by this time - nearly a full week into production, director William Fisher can have implemented the changes needed to make the production go. As it stood last Wednesday, without Houba there to carry the show *Busybody* would have been a complete flop.

Perhaps the best example of what happened at the play

occurred when Houba was presented with the traditional bouquet of roses. Some 40-50 members of the audience rose to give her a standing ovation. When the rest of the cast stepped forward for the cast bow, these people sat down... and that says it all.

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