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THE USE AND ABUSE OF DRUGS

The following is a partial text of a statement by the Minister of National Health and Welfare, Mr. J. Waldo Monteith, to the Special House of Commons Committee on Drugs and Chemical Food Contamination on January 29:

"You will all have read many press reports, and heard a great deal said in the Commons Chamber, on the death-dealing properties of certain drugs, and on the general pollution of his environment by man himself.

"In this Committee, which certainly has an immense task before it, you will have an opportunity to learn at first hand of the views of the experts in medical and scientific fields. You will, we trust, ultimately be able to put this whole picture into perspective, in your own minds and in the minds of all Canadians.

"The apparent effects of thalidomide will be with us through the lives of every man in this room, as its victims grow into the world. It is our job to ensure that these victims are cared for in the best possible manner, that their needs are met to the fullest extent we can devise, and to ensure, as much as is possible, that a similar tragedy will never occur again.

"But we must also bear in mind that thalidomide is still a good drug. It was its side effects, as later evidence indicated, that can be harmful. It induced sleep quickly and without ill effect - but we have learned that it should never be taken during pregnancy....

NO WHOLLY SAFE DRUGS

"There is no such thing as a completely safe drug. The safety factor must be weighed against the value of the drug in relation to its known dangers.

Penicillin is an example. It has saved millions of lives. But some people, sensitive to it, have died. Should we prevent the sale in Canada of penicillin?

"Canadians must be allowed to enjoy all the benefits of scientific discovery - and there have been many in recent years - but they must also be protected. When the risks cannot be avoided, they must be reduced as much as possible to the point where the balance will be on the side of promoting health and not compounding suffering.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

"This Committee was set up by the Government with twofold terms of reference. It is being asked to consider and report upon:

- (a) the law and practices relating to the control of the introduction, marketing and use of drugs;
- (b) the dangers arising from the contamination of food by the use of chemicals to kill weeds, insects and other pests.

"...The responsibility that every Canadian receive the utmost protection in the use of drugs is one that cannot be discharged by any one division of government. The burden must be shared by manufacturers of drugs, the medical profession, pharmacists and even individual Canadians.

"The role of the Government is not to delay or deny the benefits of science to Canadians, but to ensure that drugs reach the market only after all reasonable precautions have been taken to inform the medical profession of any risks and of any undesirable side effects....

DRUG-CONTROL LEGISLATION

"Our objective was increased safety for the public when we introduced in Parliament last October

(Over)

legislation reinforcing aspects of our drug-control provisions. The changes in our Food and Drugs Act provided authority to impose additional controls on the distribution of drug samples, authorized the prohibition of the sale of a drug, and emphasized that new drugs require special consideration.

"Our aim is also safety when we require that a manufacturer take every precaution possible in introducing a new drug. There must be quality control, exhaustive animal and clinical testing and the provision of detailed information to the medical profession.

"It is also the responsibility of government to maintain a staff competent to administer the food and drug legislation. The job of this staff is to provide adequate technical advice, conduct analyses and tests of drugs, do research and carry out field inspections....

MANUFACTURERS' RESPONSIBILITY

"Some seem to think that too much onus is placed on the companies and not enough collaborating research is performed by the policing agency. Our firm conviction is that we must insist a manufacturer accept full responsibility for something he puts his name on and sells to the general public. Any softening of this conviction could result in the weakening of one of the principal elements of our control programme for the protection of the public.

"This does not mean our responsibility is lessened or that we are relying on the companies to do everything. Our job is to see - to insist - that the companies do their job and, from time to time, to check on their work, and to carry on sufficient research and investigation in our own establishment to be able to not only check the work of the manufacturer but to form well-based opinion on the quality of the work being done with a special eye open to possible dangers to the consumer.

"Under the present system, manufacturers are required to submit detailed reports on the development and testing of drugs - tracing this process through laboratory and clinical stages. Our experts can - and do - detect shortcomings by scrutinizing these reports. They then require supplementary information.

"To have our people retrace the experiments already conducted by the manufacturers would be cumbersome and unnecessary. It would mean a gigantic staff, needless repetition, huge cost, and, in effect, might lead to eventual subsidization of the industry. I don't think we could justify this to the taxpayer.

A GOOD SYSTEM

"The present system has worked well. Our Food and Drugs Act is second to none in the world. It has been used as a model by the World Health Organization. It sometimes takes years for drugs to win approval of the food and drug experts - some never do. Companies are repeatedly asked for additional information.

"In the last 11 years, the Food and Drug Directorate has passed some 2,000 new drugs through its

screening process with results that were not questioned until very recently. In other words, every possible care now is taken to ensure that Canadians are protected. And the system now used appears to be working.

"But there can be improvements in any undertaking. We are looking to this special committee to make valuable suggestions for such improvements....

"Last August, I announced to the provinces that the Government stood ready to share the cost of rehabilitation of thalidomide victims. Since then, a number of fact-finding groups have been working to add to federal and provincial knowledge of the problems in this sphere. The expert committee on habilitation reported last week....

"There is one point that should be stressed - the problem of drug controls, and the constant exchange of technical information that is needed to make such controls completely effective, is not Canada's alone. Nations in many parts of the world have turned their attention to it in recent months.

"Before the thalidomide stories had gained prominence in our newspapers, the Canadian Government took action that could have far-reaching results.

"It initiated and co-sponsored a special resolution on drugs at the World Health General Assembly in Geneva. It is hoped that the resolution will lead to an improvement in the exchange of drug information among nations of the world, and further the standardization of procedures regarding new drugs. Prompt, world-wide exchange of information of new drug developments would help to a great degree in preventing the recurrence of a thalidomide tragedy....

* * * *

THE BARD AND THE DUKE

Duke Ellington has agreed to compose the score for "Timon of Athens," one of the four plays that will be offered this summer during the Stratford Festival's eleventh season. Director Peter Coe, who recently confirmed this arrangement, also said that a contemporary setting, with modern clothes designed by Brian Jackson, would be given to the Shakespearean drama of greed and ingratitude in ancient Greece.

This will be the first time that a Shakespearean play has been given purely contemporary treatment in the Festival Theatre, though both "All's Well That Ends Well" (1953) and the first production of "The Taming of the Shrew" (1954) were staged in costumes dating from the turn of the century.

The participation of "The Duke" in the 1963 season is a further expression of the interest and affection he has held for the Festival since he first appeared in Stratford with his orchestra in the 1956 jazz concerts. The next year, he composed "Such Sweet Thunder," a suite dedicated to "the Shakespearean Festival, Stratford, Ontario," which was given its world première at a "Music for Moderns" concert in New York's Town Hall in April 1957. The following summer, on his return to Stratford for a special concert, Ellington introduced the suite, which takes its title from a line in "A Midsummer Night's Dream", into the Festival's music season.

CANADIAN ART IN OTTAWA

An exhibition of works by the Canadian Group of Painters opened on February 8, at the National Gallery of Canada where it will remain until March 3. The Group, the present membership of which is 73, was incorporated in 1933. Its creation was inspired by the spirit of the pioneering Group of Seven (1920). Members foster co-operation between younger and older artists and invite contributors to each exhibition, in addition to displaying their own works. The paintings of 40 members, as well as those of nine invited contributors, comprise the present exhibition. The guest contributors are Richard Ciccimarra, Pierre Gendron, Sherry Grauer, D. Mackay Houstoun, U.G. Maibauer, Gray J. Mills, Betty Mochizuki, Tony Onley and John Snow.

The 68 works in the current exhibition were independently chosen by each of the three main geographical regions - west, central, and east - into which the Group divides itself. The largest canvas in the exhibition is a triptych 72" high by 96" wide by Alexander Millar, entitled "Job".

The catalogue that accompanies the exhibition pays tribute to the late George Pepper, a founding member and past president (1959), who died in October, 1962.

EMPLOYMENT & WEEKLY EARNINGS

Canada's industrial composite index of employment (1949=100) declined 1.0 per cent in November last, to 124.2 from 125.4 in October. The November 1961 index was 121.6. Decreases from the preceding month were recorded in every industrial division except trade, and finance, insurance and real estate; the usual pre-Christmas rise occurred in trade, and the gain in finance, insurance and real estate was fractional.

The seasonally-adjusted composite index rose to 122.1 in November, from 121.7 in October. Some advances occurred in the adjusted indexes of nearly all industrial divisions, with most of the gain occurring in manufacturing and construction. The only significant decline was in mining.

MANUFACTURING

The increase in the seasonally-adjusted index for manufacturing reflected improvement in the durables division. Declines in iron and steel, non-ferrous metals and electrical apparatus and supplies were smaller than usual, and there was a contra-seasonal advance in non-metallic mineral products that reflected the termination of an industrial dispute.

Weekly wages and salaries in November averaged \$81.58, virtually unchanged from October but up \$2.76 from November 1961. The November payroll index declined to 238.0 from 240.1 in the preceding month, but at this level it was 5.7 per cent higher than a year earlier.

HANDY DISTRESS BEACON

A simple distress beacon developed by the Aids-to-Navigation Section of the Radio and Electrical Engineering Division, National Research Council, underwent its third and final trial in December 1962, and was acclaimed by officers of the Royal Canadian Air Force as "a potentially invaluable aid for searchers seeking distressed pilots, yachtsmen and hunters".

Waterproof and buoyant, the device is put in operation by breaking a seal and pulling out its aerial to its full length. The antenna is a quarter-wave dipole operating at 243 mc/s. The lower part is formed by a cylinder inside which are the transmitter and battery. The battery lasts 90 hours.

The complete unit weighs only three pounds, including the mercury battery supply, which weighs one pound: the unit is only 19 inches long and 2 1/4 inches in diameter.

Initial tests, conducted off Halifax, Nova Scotia, show that the maximum range of the beacon is between 30 and 34 miles. Subsequent trials were carried out over Lake Ontario. The signal from the distress beacon was operated on the M.V. "Radel II" and was picked up and identified within 35 minutes from a plane's take-off, at a distance of 27 miles. The final trials confirmed the 34-mile maximum range as well as the remarkable reliability of the device. Four times out of four tries, the distress beacon guided an RCAF "Albatross" over the Canadian Coast Guard vessel "Porte Dauphine" with pin-point accuracy.

NEW CANADIAN ENVOY TO POLAND

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Howard Green, announced on February 4 the appointment of Mr. John Arnold Irwin as Canadian Ambassador to Poland. Mr. Irwin succeeds Mr. G.H. Southam, who returned to Canada in August 1962.

Born in Watrous, Saskatchewan, in 1917, Mr. Irwin is a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan. He served overseas with the Royal Canadian Air Force during the war years, attaining the rank of squadron leader and being mentioned in despatches. Following his discharge in 1945, he joined the Department of External Affairs.

Mr. Irwin went to Dublin in 1945 as Third Secretary, and later to Prague, where he served as Chargé d'Affaires a.i. from October 1949 to June 1950. Following his return to Ottawa, Mr. Irwin was a member of various delegations to civil-aviation conferences, including the fifth and sixth sessions of the Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization in 1951-1952. He was posted overseas again in 1953, to Djakarta.

In December 1954, Mr. Irwin was seconded to the Air Transport Board to act as Canadian Representative to the International Civil Aviation Organization, an appointment which he held until August 1957. He then went to Cairo as Counsellor of the Embassy and, in 1962, attended the Imperial Defence College in London.

CHEMICALS FOR SOUTH AMERICA

"There is a rapidly-growing market in South America for industrial chemicals," Mr. George Hees, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, stated recently, "and there are definite opportunities throughout the area for Canadian chemical manufacturers, particularly in the organic specialties field." Mr. Hees was commenting on the preliminary findings of the Organic Chemicals Trade Mission to South America, which recently met in Ottawa to discuss with officers of the Department of Trade and Commerce the results of its fact-finding visit in November, to Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela. The purpose of the Mission was to explore the possibilities of increasing immediate and long-term sales in South America of the more than 500 types of organic chemicals produced in Canada.

SALES EFFORT NEEDED

"The Trade Mission found a tremendous amount of goodwill towards Canada and a genuine desire to do business with us," Mr. Hees said. "However, Canadian companies wishing to enter and maintain themselves in the lucrative South American market for industrial chemicals must be prepared to embark on a comprehensive and sustained sales effort. South Americans are not generally aware of the range and volume of chemicals available in this country today, and few Canadian chemical firms are known there. As a matter of fact, the Mission found that few South American chemical importers were aware of the recent devaluation of the Canadian dollar, which has made Canada more competitive in the export field generally."

DECEMBER STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS

There was a substantial decrease in the number of work stoppages in December compared with the previous month, and both the number of workers involved and the number of man-days lost were also considerably reduced, according to a preliminary summary of strikes and lockouts recently released by Labour Minister Michael Starr.

There were 29 stoppages in December, involving 3,641 workers with a time loss of 56,660 man-days. In November there were 49 stoppages, involving 9,565 workers and a time loss of 76,740 man-days. More than 76 per cent of the December time loss was accounted for by two disputes, one involving chemical workers at Shawinigan, Quebec, and the other primary-metals workers at Tracy, Quebec.

PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

All the work stoppages were in industries under provincial jurisdiction. Of these, 14 were in Ontario, seven were in British Columbia, six were in Quebec and one each in Nova Scotia and Alberta.

Six of the December stoppages involved 100 or more workers. Of these, four were terminated by the end of the month.

BY INDUSTRY

A breakdown by industry of the month's stoppages shows 16 in manufacturing, four in construction, four in trade, two in transportation and utilities, two in public administration and one in forestry.

Based on the number of non-agricultural wage and salary workers in Canada, the number of man-days lost represented 0.05 per cent of the estimated working time. In November, the percentage was 0.07. The corresponding figure for December 1961 was 0.13.

CF-100 SQUADRONS DISBAND

The Air Division of the Royal Canadian Air Force has begun flying its CF-100 aircraft to the United Kingdom for disposal. This month's disbandment of four CF-100 squadrons is the end of an era for the RCAF in Europe that reaches back to November 1956. It was during that month that the first CF-100 squadron assigned to NATO, 445 "Wolverine" Squadron, flew its aircraft across the Atlantic to its new base at Marville, France, site of No. 1 Wing.

The following year, the remaining three squadrons chosen for European service took their places at each of the fighter wings, replacing an F-86 "Sabre" day-fighter unit. In February, 423 Squadron arrived at No. 2 Wing, Grostenquin, France, and was followed in May 1957 by 440 Squadron, which was positioned at No. 3 Wing, Zweibrucken, Germany. The programme was completed in August, with the arrival of 419 Squadron at No. 4 Wing, Baden-Soellingen, Germany.

FIRST CANADIAN MILITARY JET

Designed and built by the A.V. Roe Company of Malton, Ontario, the CF-100 "Canuck" was the first military jet completely designed and built in Canada. Designated an "all-weather interceptor", the 17-ton, twin-engine craft gave the RCAF in Europe round-the-clock interception capability.

By means of sophisticated airborne radar, coupled to an advanced fire-control system, the CF-100 and its crew of pilot and navigator could be guided by controllers on the ground to seek out unseen targets in cloud or darkness.

As the RCAF's Air Division in Europe assumes a new "strike-reconnaissance" role after its original job of air defence, the CF-100s and their veteran colleagues, the F-86 "Sabre" jets, are being replaced by supersonic CF-104 "Super Starfighters". Most of the squadron personnel, both aircrew and ground-crew, are being repatriated to Canada, to assume similar air force duties.