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Perennial misunderstanding

FOR the umpteenth time, property owners who appeared before the assessment appeal board last week had to have explained to them the meaning of the term "improvements" as applied to property taxes. Where it is used in that connection it is probably the most misunderstood word in the language.

Every year, in all municipalities, homeowners go to the appeal boards to protest indignantly that they have not made any improvements recently to their properties—so why should there be an increase in the improvement assessment? With such patience as they can muster, members of the appeal boards then have to try to explain what the legislators had in mind when they passed the relevent statutes.

It is a poor choice of a word to cover the taxable items standing on land. Many of the things loosely catalogued as such for the purposes of raising taxes could not by the wildest stretch of the imagination be described as improvements in reality; they are in far too many instances blots on the landscape. But leaving that comment aside, the main objection lies in the fact that no word capable of misunderstanding—in this case inviting it—should be employed in the laws of the country.

Hundreds, possibly thousands, of small property owners are worried and upset every time there is an increase in assessments, in the belief that there has been some mistake, since they have not made any improvements. There must be a better word to cover what is intended. Why not "structures"?

—The Victoria Colonist.

The cannon-maker

Alfried Krupp has been granted another year to keep his promise to the Allies to dispose of his huge steel and coal interests. This news will be regarded with suspicion on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

Krupp is a convicted war criminal, freed after serving only three years of a 12-year term. He was allowed to return to head the vast industrial empire that has provided the sinews of German military might since the Franco-Prussian War.

Coming on the heels of the recent outbreak of swastika sickness in West Germany, the reprieve for the Krupp works provokes unwelcome memories. Shades of Big Bertha, of the U-boats, of the winged hordes of the Luftwaffe!

Is it any wonder that Germany's resurgence with its ugly overtones of Krupp's cannon works and swastika swabbing, is viewed with misgivings?

To many thoughtful people, present trends in Germany are grim reminders of 1932. Would a Germany beset with the economic difficulties of those dread days still hearken to the strident voice from the beer garden?

Krupp, born in 1907—he year the family firm built its 50,000th cannon and launched its first U-boat—has no intention of giving up his power voluntarily. But the breakup of his empire would go far to strengthen confidence in Germany both east and west of the Iron Curtain. —The Toronto Telegram.

A YEAR OF CASTRO

Plus and minus signs evident in Cuba

A year after the bearded forces of Fidel Castro swept triumphantly into Havana, his revolutionary government retains firm control of Cuba. Its leader appears to be fervently and emotionally supported by a majority of his countrymen.

In any summary of the first year of this turbulent revolution, you can find both plus and minus signs. Most observers agree the Castro regime has brought an unusual degree of honesty to the Cuban federal government. The old system of graft and pay-offs, long entrenched in Cuba and many other Latin American lands, seems to have been wiped out.

The Cuban people, by and large, also give the impression of being more content under Castro. Such a statement presumably would not apply to those whose property has been taken from them. But it would appear to cover millions of poorer individuals. . . .

Castro remains a dictator—in many ways as tyrannical as his predecessor. He rules absolutely, without a parliament and with no prospect of elections. Through the National Institute of Agrarian Reform, he exercises control over private property. Land or industries may be seized at will. . . .

The government vise slowly closing on private enterprise—plus Castro's constant anti-American propaganda—has shaken the Cuban economy. Unemployment has mounted to 700,000 in a nation of 6¼ million, despite an ambitious public works program. Tourist trade has declined to practically nothing; Caribbean cruise ships have abandoned Havana. The government now has to support luxury hotels once jammed with foreign visitors.

Two specters of the revolution particularly disturb Americans: the apparently important leftist influence and the resumption of military justice, with its quick executions. Cubans protest that the present swing to the left is not communistic, but simply "humanistic."

Direct Communist activities are hard to pin down. But at least strong Communist sympathies are attributed to some of the key people in the Castro regime. Step by step developments of the revolution have been ominously similar to the pattern followed by Communists in other countries.

Obsession with counterrevolutionists has become so extreme in Cuba that even mild expressions of disapproval of the government bring vitriolic denunciation. You might guess that some of the supposed "counterrevolutionists" executed or sentenced to lengthy prison terms have not been bona fide enemies of the government. A few newspapers that courageously speak against the Castro excesses have been castigated by the dictator and his associates. In some cases, bundles of papers have been burned, and government advertising canceled.

The year of liberation, as Cubans call 1959, has seen two presidents, cabinet shake-ups, minor counter-Castro plots and a report of an attempted invasion of Cuba from the Dominican Republic. Nor does Castro's position appear strong enough to defy all restraint. The Roman Catholic church remains a force that could turn against him, should Communist influence mount further. And labor, while supporting him, remains largely independent of the government and, as of now, if not anti-Communist, at least largely non-Communist.

In the year ahead, Cuba will probably see additional turmoil, more command shifts in personnel, further economic "reform" and continuing opposition. —The Kansas City Times.

INTERPRETING THE NEWS

Mr. K's India speeches aimed further afield

By JOSEPH MacSWEEN
Canadian Press Staff Writer

Nikita Khrushchev's performance in India indicates that he aims to bring the business of inter-continental table-hopping to a new artistry.

Khrushchev used the Indian Parliament as a platform to blast off about the plight of peoples—not in India—but in Africa and South America.

Ever since Khrushchev left Moscow the Communist propaganda machine has aimed its material not only at India and Indonesia—the area of the Russian premier's visit—but more significantly at Africa and Latin America.

The over-all plan is evident in Khrushchev's reference in his speech before the Indian Parliament to Cuba, where his lieutenant, Anastas Mikoyan, opened a Russian trade show.

Khrushchev apparently feels that his presence in the newly-independent Asiatic countries can be an opportunity for rallying-around by the peoples of seething Africa and Latin America. He pictures the Soviet Union as the liberator while Western nations seek to enslave underdeveloped countries.

Khrushchev is already armed with an invitation from Guinea, newly-independent from France, for a visit. Observers say they suspect he will not only be able to visit Guinea but will also manage to get to Ghana, newly-independence day celebrations July 1.

The Russian premier received a smaller welcome in India than that accorded President Eisenhower of the U.S. on his recent 11-country tour that took him deep into Asia.

But Khrushchev, not one to be abashed by comparison or analysis, has shown sharp savvy and a difference in technique from his previous visit to India less than five years ago.

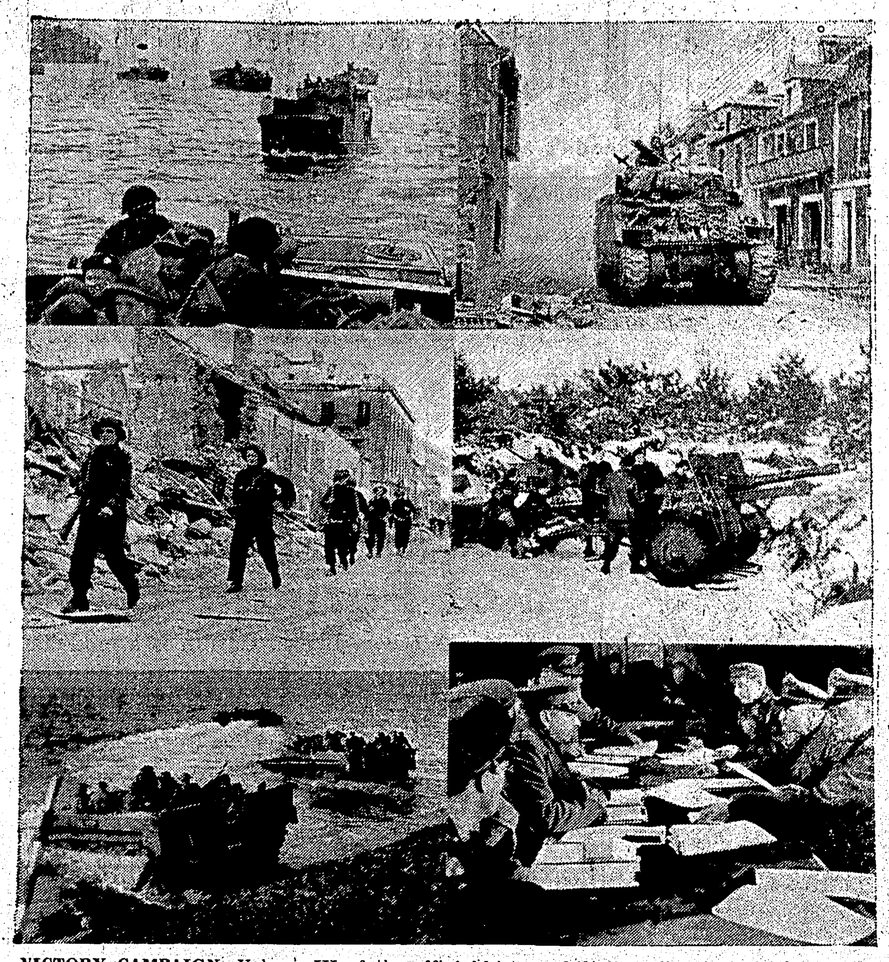
✦ ✦ ✦

Then, accompanied by former premier Bulganin, he played at times almost a buffoon part. Those were the days when people referred to the Khrushy-Bulgy team.

Dynamite is imbedded in the statements of the new Khrushchev. The Communist chief was looking far over the heads of his Indian hearers when he declared:

"It has to be borne in mind that it is precisely through oppressing and robbing colonial peoples that the economic prosperity and high living standards have been achieved by some of the advanced nations.

"Some of the Western countries are advanced just because those of Asia, Africa and Latin America are underdeveloped. It would be only fair for the Western nations to repay at least a portion of the looted wealth."



VICTORY CAMPAIGN—Volume III of the official history of the Canadian Army in the Second World War called "The Victory Campaign" has been placed on sale to the public by The Queen's Printer. This volume depicts the fighting in North West Europe from June 6, 1944 until the end of the war. It covers the invasion of France, top left, the advance to Caen, top right, the break-out from Falaise, centre left, the winter fighting, centre right, the crossing of the Scheldt, bottom left, and the German surrender to Canadian forces, bottom right. —National Defence photo.

OTTAWA REPORT

By FRANK HOWARD, M.P.

External Affairs is usually considered to be a field in which secrecy and confidentialness abound. Documents in the External Affairs Department are mostly classified as secret. Notes, memos and draft letters of a preliminary nature are all destroyed so that no inkling of the nature of the draft material gets into unknown hands. The doors to offices of the various external affairs officers are kept closed so that no visitor walking along the corridor may peek into the offices.

This air of secrecy filters into the House of Commons during debates on external affairs also. Ministers in the past have invariably read their statements about foreign policy from texts carefully prepared by officials within the Department.

We had a so-called foreign affairs debate this week with one of the main topics being disarmament. The minister, Howard Green, was careful to point out that it would not be wise for Canada, as a member of the disarmament commission, to disclose what our true feelings are. We should do nothing which could possibly be construed by the U.S.S.R. as representing a difference of opinion among the Western Nations. This attitude was, of course, criticized by opposition speakers.

Our attitude was that Canada should show the lead in this regard.

Canada is not a major power. Canada is looked upon by many other countries with respect and regard. We should exploit this respect for altruistic purposes by indicating to the world that we are truly interested in disarmament and by taking unilateral action if necessary.

Howard Green stuck by his guns throughout the debate by continuing to maintain that Canada's role should be a silent on insofar as public announcements were concerned.

But then came Prime Minister Diefenbaker's comments. He virtually cut the feet out from under Mr. Green by making announcements about the very things which Mr. Green said should not be made public. Practically every newspaperman to whom I have spoken since that debate has said practically the same.

This isn't the first time the Prime Minister has openly disagreed with his ministry. It occurred when Sydney Smith was secretary of state for external affairs. It has occurred also in the field of the Defence Department. It is a most unwise practice. It leaves the impression that ministers are not speaking government policy, or that there is no government policy.

Headline grabbing is incompatible with statesmanship and leadership. We cannot develop the latter by following the former. A diet of newspaper articles will lead to indigestion not to disarmament.

gems of thought

If we did but know how little some enjoy of the great things that they possess, there would not be much envy in the world.—Edward Young.

The most common disguise of envy is in the praise of what is subordinate.
—Washington Allston.

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance.
—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

If you wish to travel far and fast, travel light. Take off all your envies, jealousies, unforgiveness, selfishness and fears.—Glenn Clark.

Envy always implies conscious inferiority wherever it resides.—Pliny.

Letterbox

NO CRITICISM

The Editor,
The Daily News:

When the missed sewer connection was discussed in City Council I stated that some of the inspection work was done by Mr. Henry Arney, then in charge of city sewer maintenance and part of it by Mr. Don Stewart who was Superintendent of Works and who did the final inspection for the city.

I was associated with Mr. Arney, both on the contract mentioned and as a member of the Board of Works of the City Council and was familiar with much of his work.

There was no thought on my part of criticizing Mr. Arney, whose ability and devotion to duty was always above criticism.

Much of the work done by Mr. Arney is still serving the city and will continue to do so long after many of the rest of us are forgotten.

I trust that the foregoing will make clear that I always had the greatest of respect and liking for Mr. Arney.

T. Norton Youngs,
(Alderman)
Prince Rupert.

HOLLYWOOD CAFE

Our Dining Room will be closed temporarily for repairs, watch for our re-opening advertisement. We will continue to take orders to go out at the rear entrance from 5:30 p.m. to 3:30 a.m. daily except Sunday. Free Delivery on orders of three dollars or more.

Phone 6226

The Packsack of Gregory Clark

In several of the states to the south, it is illegal for two large trucks or heavy vehicles to travel at the same rate of speed one behind the other on ordinary double lane highways. In such procession, they form too difficult an obstacle for other vehicles to pass safely.

In many parts of Canada, it is not at all infrequent to come upon as many as three or four of these whopper tractor trailers travelling at high speed, one on the tail of the other. It may be they are travelling at the full legal speed limit, and therefore feel justified in that no one can legally pass them. But as a rule, much of the traffic is travelling slightly, and often more than slightly in excess of the legal limit. And these trains, as they might be called, of two or three giants result in a long back-up of traffic behind them, with impatient souls weaving in and out hoping for a break. This is the makings of disaster.

Canada is in the throes of physical expansion. Not only heavy transport vehicles but all sorts of structural and engineering equipment is availing itself of highways that were designed and constructed several years ago before the present era of hectic expansion.

The price of adjustment to changing conditions appears to be so many dead bodies, so many cripples, and so many million dollars of wreckage in the ditches.

A British haberdashery magazine suggests that movie audiences should dress according to the period and mood of the picture being shown. A Brigitte Bardot film on a cold night could be a problem.

School days are the happiest days of your life—if your children are old enough to attend.

Baby's Colds

While Baby's Own Tablets are not a cold remedy, they can be most helpful in clearing little constipated bowels of the wastes that often cause fretfulness and feverishness during this period. Sweet-tasting, little tablets, Baby's Own act gently . . . act promptly to regulate baby's bowels, as thousands and thousands of mothers can testify. So why let constipation add to your baby's discomfort during colds, or, at any time? Effective, too, for quick relief of upset tummies, feverishness, restlessness, colic pains, and other minor troubles due to need of a corrective at teething time. Clinically and time-tested for efficacy and safety. Ask your doctor about Baby's Own Tablets. Get a package today at your druggist.

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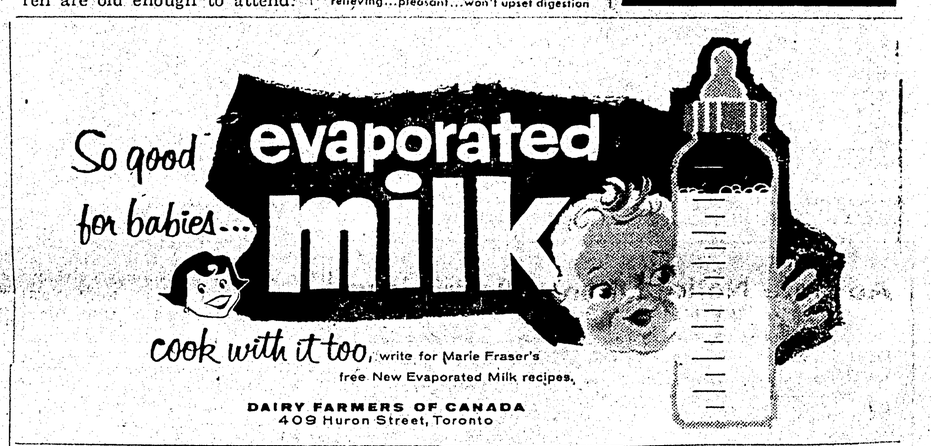

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