The
PRESS and JOURNAL
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THURSDAY, MAY 10, 1973.

CLEANER AIR

SMOKING on Aberdeen Corporation single-decker buses may have to go. Following a plea from an old age pensioner the city's transport committee agreed, by a majority, to impose such a ban. The matter will come up for final decision when the town council meet at the end of the month.

To the non-smoker this may not seem much of a hardship, but one side to this argument can never be the perfect judge of how it appears to the other. At least it is ever difficult to convince the inveterate smoker that he is doing any harm to anyone other than himself and even the latter he (or she) sometimes fails to admit, despite all the evidence that has been compiled on the subject.

In the single-decker buses the matter of ventilation comes into the reckoning and it can hardly be claimed that the puffing of many cigarettes helps to clear the air. The trouble with smoking is that it is not a self-contained indulgence. You just cannot keep its effects to yourself.

Opportunity

It could be argued that there are 24 hours in a day. that a normal bus journey occupies but a small part of these and that to refrain for that short period could surely not be a hardship of the magnitude that some smokers would make it out to be. The trouble, from their point of view, is that there are other restrictive influences at work in the course of a day, whether they should be in the course of normal duties or even in places of entertainment.

Such arguments are, of course, not very convincing to the non-smoker who prefers fresh to polluted air and is not anxious, in any case, to share the risks attached to smoking. The matter of clothes as well as lungs comes into the reckoning. Freshness is not exactly imparted by cigarette ash and smoke, and relics of both are apt to hang around in the absence of immediate corrective measures.

Like everything connected with smoking, this is a controversial subject in which the chances of unanimity of opinion are anything but high. Perhaps a financial factor might be introduced. They do say that money talks. Cigarettes cost money. Perhaps a temporary restriction of use, such as is being suggested would help to offset the higher fares which are on the way. It seems to be a simple matter of economics.

Text for today

Not one stone will be left upon another. Matthew 24., 2.

Every empire that man builds one day falls. Every system crumbles. Every school of thought is superseded. Sad — but wholesome. If nothing changed we'd go mad. Only God remains God, and Man his child.—G.

Horoscopes

Taurus (April 20-May 20): Love could be rocky. Disputes are on agenda. But you do find out where you stand. Your individuality comes through — you are better for it.

Gemini (May 21-June 20): Your hunches are apt to be on target. You learn by preparing to teach. Give full play to intellectual curiosity. Older woman may confide problem.

Cancer (June 21-July 22): Postpone journey, if practical. Some messages, calls, directions and reservations are subject to change and confusion. Relative is in mood to argue.

Leo (July 23 - August 22): Check apparent minor matters. Be a shrewd observer. Don't be in too much of a hurry to sign. Money is involved and there are aspects which need caution.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Cycle is such that you want to take initiative. But there is angle here which indicates aggressive action aimed at you. Be aware of alternatives.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Study Aries message. Your health needs attention. Family member is willing to make concession. Be diplomatic.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Perceive subtle nuances. Pisces could be involved. Friends may disagree among each other. Strive to maintain neutral stance without appearing uninterested.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Accept overtime or special assignment. If you take on more responsibility, you enhance chances for financial gain. Travel arrangements could be delayed.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Lunar aspect is such that your philosophical concepts are due to be shaken. Individual who seemed to lack intellectual capacity issues challenge.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Money that had been "tied up" is released. Means funds can flow. Take initiative. Be original, independent, creative.

Pisces (Feb. 19 - March 20): Take special care in traffic. If in doubt, do nothing. Slow pace. Avoid taking unnecessary chances around machinery, electricity.

Aries (March 21-April 19): You may be visiting individual who is confined to home or hospital. You may also be making decision about club, special group or organisation.

Iain Cuthbertson (left) and Bill Simpson (right) take part in BBC Scotland's controversial new serial thriller, the first episode of which is screened tomorrow night. It depicts a Scottish nationalist revolution — and the SNP have already protested.

'Scotch' is served without the water

by
Frances Horsburgh

ABERDEEN - born television director Bob Hird and BBC Scotland's senior drama producer, Pharic Maclaren have created the most controversial slice of fiction ever produced in BBC's Glasgow studios.

It's "Scotch on the Rocks," a five-part thriller serial which depicts the events of a violent Scottish nationalist revolution and episode one is on BBC 1 tomorrow night.

Already the Scottish National Party have protested about the showing of a story which features the violent activities of a Scottish liberation army.

Vice-chairman of the party, Gordon Wilson, says: "This programme is directed towards firing the ambition of lawless elements. This might lead to outbreaks of antisocial behaviour."

It's all fiction, of course, from a best-selling political thriller, one of whose authors is the Prime Minister's private secretary but parallels are already being drawn between the bloodshed and fanatical patriotism which will be seen on the screen and the real-life situation in Ulster.

Even more topical is the fact that "Scotch on the Rocks" is being screened the very week when it is predicted that Mr Heath will announce Government support for some form of Scottish Assembly.

In view of the stir already caused by the programme the BBC's Glasgow Press officers will be standing by on Friday night in anticipation of immediate viewer reaction and "Scotch on the Rocks" producer Pharic Maclaren has already gone on television himself to comment on the Scottish Nationalists' attack on the serial.

Talking to me in his office at Broadcasting House in Glasgow, Pharic agreed that "Scotch on the Rocks" is treading on moderately dangerous ground. So authentic and well researched is the action and the settings, that the story approaches the borderline between drama and documentary.

"The question is of course," says Pharic, "do you make it as it is written or do you cop out?

"We have tried to reproduce the story faithfully, changing the method of presentation when necessary, but always returning to the truth of the original."

It's exactly a year since Pharic lit the long fuse on this combustible package and began filming the serial on locations all over Scotland — including the Forth Bridge, Glencoe where the famous massacre of the Macdonald clan took place, and Glenfinnan where Bonnie Prince Charlie raised his standard before the 1745 rebellion.

If ever there is another Scottish uprising it may take some doing to wake up the population to the fact. When Pharic and director Bob Hird "blew up" the statue of Queen Victoria in the centre of Glasgow early one morning only one light in a hotel window went on!

The cast of "Scotch on the Rocks" is packed with well-known faces and viewers will be particularly surprised to see Dr Finlay, alias actor Bill Simpson, almost unrecognisable as a tough undercover agent.

Also playing important parts are John Cairney, Maurice Roeves and Iain Cuthbertson, who became such a cult figure as Budgie's gangster boss Charlie Endell.

All in all "Scotch on the Rocks" has been a costly production, dogged by difficulties—one of the stars fell ill during production and thousands of feet of film proved faulty and had to be reshot.

Pharic Maclaren, however, did manage to save some money on one scene at least. In a particularly exciting sequence a police Jaguar is machine-gunned and crashes full tilt into a shop front before it explodes.

"We found a place in Fort-William that was going to be demolished anyway," Pharic explains. "Then one of my production team sat in a Glasgow car mart until the price of an old Jaguar came down to £18. We resprayed it and put on new tyres and the special effects boys put bullet holes along the side. Then a stunt man drove it right through the plate glass for us."

Tomorrow Pharic will be watching "Scotch on the Rocks," trying as he always does, to put himself in the place of an ordinary viewer. Until then he's maintaining his customary cool at the centre of the controversy.

"Our job," he says, "is to entertain, not to moralise. But if people who watch also stop and think about their own attitudes to the validity of violence and whether any means do justify an end — that's surely not a bad by-product."

...and Pharic stirs it with a violent tale

Letters

Politics in the councils: an 'aye' and a 'no'

SIR,— There must be many who will support Mr Maitland Mackie's plea for non-party politics in local government contained in his letter in your issue (May 1).

In the run-up to recent pollings in many of our cities and burghs, irrevelevant matters pertaining to national politics frequently took precedence over practical issues of local importance. If this does not make nonsense of local government, what does? No wonder the percentage of those bothering to turn out to vote is so pitiful.

How much worse will this become when the structure of local government changes?

New pressures will manifest themselves and old ones will be intensified. There will be more specialisation, more professionalism. The work of elected representatives will become increasingly whole-time. Elections at local level will resemble mini general elections.

So, unless we can secure the exclusion of national party politics from all elections at lower levels, local government could become almost a farce.

There is another danger. The whole thing could become a mere school for apprentices — those who aspire to party selection at general elections. What price good local government when the eye is firmly focused on Westminster? The temptation for those standing for local election to flaunt party labels will increase rather than diminish.

Perhaps those who share my dislike of national politics spilling into local issues may care to give their opinions on how this grave development can be tackled.

It is a subject vital to the future government of our areas and regions. Is it not, therefore, one to which all of us should give much thought?

J. W. Philip, Mill of Lumphart, Oldmeldrum.

SIR, — While I respect the views of Mr Maitland Mackie and others who view with dismay the introduction of party politics into the forthcoming reorganised structure of local government in Scotland, I believe that the Scottish Liberal Party are correct in their decision to participate at regional level.

The Scottish Liberal Party have until now confined their local government efforts to a very narrow front and we have not in any year fielded more than 25-40 candidates throughout Scotland and none at all in areas like the Highlands, the North-east and the Borders where we have displayed considerable parliamentary success in recent years.

I share Mr Mackie's view that there was no requirement in areas like the Highlands and North-east for party labels but I believe that the reorganised structure requires reorganised thinking in the Liberal ranks.

I accept that the performance of the Labour Party and the various right wing labels, particularly in the cities and large burghs, have been little short of abysmal in many cases but given that both the Labour and Tory Parties will shortly be extending their activities into regions it is not acceptable to me as a Liberal to let them stage a "takeover" bid unchallenged.

Neither do I accept that the existing "Independent" style of local government has been without fault. It has produced a stifling apathy in many areas as a lack of contests in many county councils and the lack of proper contact between the candidates and the electors at both county and burgh level is shown in the very poor turnout figures each year at election time.

I can assure Mr Mackie that Liberal candidates and councillors will, like their parliamentary counterparts, enjoy the fullest freedom to exercise their own views without fear of any rigid party whip system being imposed upon them. Indeed I would say that those who wish to see a meaningful independence continued in the new structure should seek that position under the Liberal label, given that they feel able to subscribe to the basic outlook of Liberalism in the day-to-day decisions which they will face.

William MacKenzie, Political Director, Scottish Liberal Party, 42 High Street, Inverness.

Government bias against the Pill?

SIR,—In the light of "Population Day," it is timely to review Aberdeen's unique position as regards birth control. Our system which provides free contraception in Aberdeen has been endangered by the Government's decision not to make the Pill available free.

It will be possible to receive a free abortion on NHS but not free contraception. Will the Government rectify this illogical bias towards abortion or do they really believe that prevention is less important than "cure"? Ante and post-natal care is free yet the Pill which plays an important and cost-saving role is discriminated against.

Not only do they disregard medical opinion, but they are flaunting local support for a service which was instituted in 1966 by a democratically elected body — Aberdeen Town Council. The present policy of free contraception saves more money than it costs by reducing the rise in expenditure of health, social and welfare services.

But perhaps the fundamental charge which can be brought against the decision is that the possibility of unwanted babies will be increased. Taking this last point alone, I feel is sufficient reason for opposing the introduction of prescription charges.

Malcolm Smith, 70 Prospect Terrace, Aberdeen.

People first

SIR,—We have been listening to a radio programme about the new traffic free scheme in Nottingham, and we thought what a pleasant place Aberdeen could be with fewer cars.

It would be so nice to be able to hold a conversation at normal volume in, say, George Street. Coming in once a week to shop, I notice the awful noise and the smell of traffic in the city centre.

Having a small child, I find it difficult to get about with a pushchair without having a minor heart attack at each road junction. We have carefully timed the traffic lights — they are suitable for a nerve-racked runner but deadly for old people or for those who prefer to walk at less than 20 mph!

Come on, councillors, give us a bit of pleasure! People are more important than machines.

Roger and Judy Everard, 2 Meikle Haddo Cottages, Newburgh.

Lay staff's pay

SIR,—In accordance with the instruction of the General Assembly of 1972, the Home Board of the Church of Scotland have raised the salary of lay missionaries and deaconesses to an approximate equality with the minimum wage of an agricultural worker.

The lay staff of the Kirk, unlike the farm servants, cannot augment this modest income with any payment for the overtime which they often work but we are assured that they do have certain "fringe benefits."

The first of these is a seniority bonus. This is at present £100 to be earned by eight years' service including a probationary year. In the same space of time, a non-graduate teacher receives periodic awards totalling about £400.

The second is an expense account which is normally limited to £100 per annum. This is supposed to be paid by the congregation in which they serve — an impossibility in some cases. The allowance may be increased by £50 if the missionary or deaconess provides his or her own car.

Against these modest benefits must be set the fact that when any of the lay staff are stationed in the special areas — such as the cities or the islands — they do not receive any percentage of the extra payments given to the ministers in these areas.

Thus we have a great gulf that grows wider every year between the ordained and the un-ordained servants of the Kirk. For example, a minister in Orkney will receive this year a stipend of £1824 with a car fully maintained while the missionary on a neighbouring island will be paid £1172 with a maximum allowance of £50 for the insurance, maintenance and replacement of a car.

As I am not a Commissioner to the Assembly this year, I ask that those who are so appointed will press the Home Board to do much more for the men and women who, in the words of the report of 1972, are "giving an invaluable service" to the Kirk.

Rev. A. C. Dow, The Manse, Westray, Orkney.

Elgin plea

SIR,—It is a pity that the representatives of the people of Elgin on the town council—as well as Moray County Council—do not feel it is time to consider giving reduced fares to OAPs on local transport.

I trust they will give consideration to this long overdue concession and so fall into line with the majority of the town and county councils in Scotland.

Harold D. Williamson, The Wards, Kingston, Garmouth.

Spanish flu epidemic

SIR,—I have been commissioned by my publishers, MacMillan and Co., to prepare a narrative account of the great Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918/19.

Research to date has shown that your area was very hard hit, the fatalities being numbered in hundreds, and for the historical record I am anxious to establish contact with anyone who has memories of this time: doctors, nurses, health visitors, sufferers or their descendants — whether they have a tale to tell or have preserved letters, diaries, documents or photographs of the period.

Readers may contact me at the address below. All contributions will be acknowledged and returned under registered cover.

Richard Collier, None-Go-By, Burgh Heath, Surrey.

May snowstorms

SIR,—I noticed in your issue (May 2) that Dyce Met Office said there were 14 recorded May snow falls between 1946 and 1968.

I recall a snow blizzard one Sunday evening in May about 1919 when sheep were lost. I know—because I was out in it.

Mary Ritchie, 61 Albert Street, Fraserburgh.

GOOD NEWS FOR LOVERS OF SUMPTUOUS STEAKS

Murtle Mill is opening soon!

Television & Radio programme guide

BBC1

- 9.42—Schools, Colleges: Watch!; Countdown; Television Club; Merry-go Round.
- 11.20—Interval.
- 12.55—News.
- 1.0—Pebble Mill; followed by Weather. 1.30 Mr Benn. 1.45 Fanny Cradock Invites.
- 2.5—Tennis and Racing.
- 4.10—Play School. 4.35 Jackanory. 4.50 Blue Peter.
- 5.15—Robinson Crusoe. 5.40 Hector's House. 5.45 News and Weather.
- 6.0—Reporting Scotland and Nationwide. 6.45 The Virginian.
- 8.0—Chaplin Superclown: "The Cure." 8.30 That Monday Morning Feeling: The undertakers.
- 9.0—News and Weather. 9.25 Menace: "Boys and Girls Come Out to Play."
- 10.40—Open to Question: New series of discussions.
- 11.30—News. 11.35 Before the Ark.
- 12.5—Scottish News and Weather.

BBC2

- 11.0—Play School. 11.25 Interval.
- 5.25—Open University.
- 6.40—Working with Youth.
- 7.5—Open University. 7.30 News and Weather. 7.35 Their World: The social cat.
- 8.0—Europa. 8.30 Cheri.
- 9.15—Schooldays: Peter Cook. 9.25 Horizon: Parasites.
- 10.10—Up Country Festival. 10.40 Play: "About a Bout," with Peter Schofield, Hilary Mason.
- 11.10—News and Weather. 11.40 Real Time.

GRAMPIAN

- 10.58—Schools: Our Future; Seeing and Doing; How We Used to Live.
- 12.0—Interval. 12.5 Rainbow. 12.25 Magic Fountain. 12.40 First Report.
- 1.5—Harriet's Back in Town. 1.32 Interval. 1.38 Schools: Stop, Look, Listen; Rules, Rules, Rules; Picture Box; My World — Stories.
- 2.40—Cartoon Time. 2.55 Grampian News.
- 3.0—Showing Jumping from the Royal Windsor Horse Show.
- 4.25—Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea.
- 5.20—General Hospital. 5.50 News. 6.0 Grampian News and Weather. 6.5 Try for Ten. 6.35 Crossroads.
- 7.0—Thursday Film: "The Old Dark House," thriller starring Tom Poston, Janette Scott.
- 8.30—This Week.
- 9.0—James Paul McCartney in his own show.
- 10.0—News at Ten and Weather. 10.30 A European Journey: The Adriatic.
- 11.0—Conference Report. 11.15 Police News. 11.25 The Name of the Game.
- 12.30—Meditation.

STV

- 9.30—Schools.
- 12.0—Interval. 12.5 Rainbow. 12.25 Magic Fountain. 12.40 First Report.
- 1.0—Indoor League. 1.30 Crown Court.
- 2.0—General Hospital. 2.30 Dateline.
- 3.0—Show Jumping from the Royal Windsor Horse Show.
- 4.25—Land of the Giants.
- 5.25—Crossroads. 5.50 News.
- 6.0—Scotland Today. 6.30 The Partners.
- 7.0—Thursday Film: "Don't Panic Chaps," comedy starring Dennis Price.
- 8.30—This Week.
- 9.0—James Paul McCartney.
- 10.0—News at Ten. 10.30 A European Journey.
- 11.0—Angling Today. 11.30 Late Call. 11.35 Edgar Wallace: "Locker 69."

Radio 1

- 5.0—As Radio 2.
- 7.0—Tony Blackburn.
- 9.0—Jimmy Young.
- 11.0—Dave Lee Travis.
- 1.0—Noel Edmonds.
- 3.0—Alan Freeman.
- 5.0—Radio 1 Club.
- 7.0—As Radio 2.
- 10.0—Sounds of the 70s.
- 12.0—As Radio 2.

Radio 2

- 5.0—News. Weather. 5.2 Pete Brady.
- 7.2—Terry Wogan.
- 9.2—Pete Murray's Open House.
- 12.2—Tony Myatt.
- 2.2—Woman's Hour.
- 3.2—John Dunn.
- 5.2—Teddy Johnson.
- 6.45—Sports Desk.
- 7.2—After Seven.
- 8.2—The Worst Show on the Wireless. 8.30 Peter Morrison.
- 9.15—Brass and Strings.
- 10.2—Late Night Extra.
- 12.0—Midnight Newsroom. 12.5 Night Ride.
- 2.0—News. Weather.

Radio 3

- 7.0—News. Weather. 7.5 Overture.
- 8.0—News. Weather. 8.5 Morning Concert.
- 9.0—News. Weather. 9.5 This Week's Composer: Nielsen. 9.45 Haydn Quartets.
- 10.40—Vocal Music by Bernard Naylor.
- 11.30—Violin and Piano: Recital.
- 12.15—Midday Concert.
- 1.0—News. Weather. 1.5 Midday Concert continued. 1.40 Schubert and Schumann: Piano recital.
- 2.30—The French Opera: "Les Huguenots."
- 3.50—Meyerbeer—Another Look: Talk.
- 4.5—Les Huguenots continued.
- 5.25—Pied Piper. 5.45 Homeward Bound.
- 6.5—News. Weather. 6.10 Homeward Bound continued. 6.30 Study on 3.
- 7.30 — Alfred Brendel: Piano recital.
- 8.0—Royal Festival Hall Concert. 8.30 Memories of Gustav Mahler: Talk. 8.50 Concert continued.
- 10.25—China. 10.55 Italian String Trio.
- 11.55—News. Weather.

Radio 4

- 6.25—News Summary. 6.27 Farming Today. 6.45 Prayer for the Day. 6.50 Weather and Preview. 6.55 Scottish News.
- 7.0—News and Today. 7.25 Today in Scotland. 7.45 Weather and Preview. 7.50 Thought for the Day 7.55 Scottish News.
- 8.0—News and Today. 8.25 Today in Scotland. 8.45 Yesterday in Parliament.
- 9.0—News. 9.5 For Schools. 9.35 The Explorers. 9.55 For Schools.
- 10.15—Daily Service. 10.30 For Schools.
- 12.0—Twelve Noon. 12.45 Farm Journal. 12.55 Scottish News and Weather.
- 1.0—The World at One. 1.30 Gaelic Songs. 1.40 News in Gaelic. 1.45 Listen With Mother.
- 2.0—For Schools.
- 3.0—Afternoon Theatre: "Without Benefit of Clergy". 3.45 Jack de Manio Precisely.
- 4.30—Story Time: "The Grapes of Wrath".
- 5.0—PM Report. 5.30 North Beat. 5.53 Scottish Weather, News and Stock Exchange Report.
- 6.0—News. 6.15 Marine Fish Farming. 6.45 The Archers.
- 7.0—News Desk. 7.30 Any Answers?
- 8.0—The Man Who Wrote 3000 Songs: Irving Berlin. 8.45 Analysis.
- 9.29—Weather. 9.30 The World Tonight.
- 10.15—A Book at Bedtime. 10.30 Kaleidoscope.
- 11.0—Today in Parliament. 11.15 Ere I Sleep. 11.20 Scottish News, Fishing News and Inshore Forecast. 11.31 Market Trends. 11.36 The Weekend Angler.

Luxemburg

- 7.45—Tony Prince.
- 9.30—Paul Burnett.
- 11.30—Bob Stewart.
- 1.30—Kid Jensen.

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