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## PLAIN ENGLISH

### Canada's Commonwealth Lead

THE result of the Canadian elections seems to have been somewhat of a shock, even to Canadians who expected the Diefenbaker Government to win but not to inflict so complete a defeat on all its opponents.

At last week's election the Liberals under Mr. Lester Pearson, External Affairs Minister for many years in Liberal Administrations, president of the United Nations Assembly and a Nobel Peace Prize-winner, was reduced to a remnant of 47. The Socialists emerged with only eight seats and without a leader, against the 25 with which they went to the poll. Social Credit, which in 1957 won 19 seats, was wiped-out. Diefenbaker has 209 seats.

These results are all the more remarkable since the Socialists in the Saskatchewan Provincial Government have held an absolute majority; Alberta is governed by Social Creditors, as is British Columbia.

The emotions of the Canadian people rather than the actual issues were the deciding factors. The ostensible main domestic issues were the rival methods of dealing with growing unemployment, Mr. Pearson advocating a tax-holiday and other similar measures, and Mr. Diefenbaker a programme of necessary public and chiefly developmental works.

In the background there loomed the issue of British Commonwealth co-operation and of the increasing attempts of Washington to assume the right to direct Canadian international policy, which recently led the Canadian Minister for External Affairs to warn the Americans that Canada was not a small South American State but a great independent nation.

Resentment at the Liberal party's desertion of the U.K. and alignment with the U.S.A. during the Suez incident, and the constant aloofness of the Liberal Government from Commonwealth politics increased the general feeling. The votes of the Middle West oil and wheat States, normally Socialist or Social Credit, were lost on the issue of wheat and grain-dumping by Uncle Sam to the detriment of Canadian trade and by the restrictions imposed in the U.S. on the import of Canadian oil and on Mr. Diefenbaker's localised development plans.

Moreover, the overinvestment of American capital in Canada has led to a proprietorial attitude by American business which has become a national patriotic issue with Canadians, who are ready to forget that it is this same American overinvestment in their industry which is mainly responsible for the unique position of the Canadian dollar.

With a firm adherence to a policy of Commonwealth co-operation and a young and dynamic leader—he has been so little known internationally that his

name did not appear in English *Who's Who* in 1957—it is conceivable that the era of Canadian government to come should have historic effects, not only on Canadian but on world history, by cementing the ties between the U.K., Australia, Canada and New Zealand along lines of united policy and a united front.

### The Hursey Story

THE story of Frank Hursey and his son Dennis gives a clear picture of the morals of the Communist party and of the A.L.P., not to mention unionism in general and its defiance of the law in Australia. It also in some aspects gives a not-very-prepossessing picture of the law as administered in Tasmania.

The Hurseys are members of the Democratic Labor party. They also have been members of the Waterside Workers' Federation. The W.W.F. made a levy of 10s. a member for the campaign funds of the Australian Labor party led by Dr. Evatt. The Democratic Labor party is a party which came into existence mainly because Dr. Evatt is leader of the A.L.P. It hates and opposes politically everything he and his party stand for, especially the adherence to Moscow principles adopted at the Hobart conference.

Yet the Communists, whom they and every decent Australian loathe, and A.L.P. members control the union which they must join to gain their bread and butter, and they declare that these have illegally levied on them to support the men to whom they are opposed.

This levy is entirely illegal. Because they will not pay it, as is their legal right, they have been ousted from the union and their lawful right to work has been taken from them.

The father, at an uproarious meeting in Sydney at which the followers of Communism tried to silence him, declared that he had been submitted to every kind of threat and physical intimidation. He had offered to pay his union-dues without the levy, he said, but was told that he was "finished," and his offer refused.

In Sydney, when Frank Hursey spoke, he attracted a crowd, and howling representatives of the W.W.F. and the Communist party assailed him with epithets such as "scab" and "traitor."

Mr. Jim Healy, the Federal Secretary of the W.W.F., spoke on another platform, and made a brazen "explanation" which was loudly and obediently cheered by hundreds of his obedient yahoos—they had been told to come and cheer, and as "free" men they obediently came.

If the only kind of unionism available on the waterfront is that run by these Communist tyrants, with no regard for the normal rights of Australians and an arrogant determination to make their own laws, it would seem that non-unionism might be better. The country has put up too long with thug-government in the unions and it is about time that the Governments concerned enforced the law—and used reprisals against unions that break it—

and did not leave the matter to the victims to be dealt with by civil action.

### The Miles Franklin Prize

By some utterly mysterious means Miles Franklin, who never seemed to have two-shillings to bless herself with, accumulated enough money to bless Australian literature with a prize of £500, which has just been awarded to Patrick White's *Voss*.

The money, so the Permanent Trustee Co. announced at the prize-giving ceremony, is enough to pay-out £500 annually for a few years to come; perhaps indefinitely if certain investments can be rearranged.

The prize is a handsome one; and if, like the Archibald Prize, the S. H. Prior Prize and the Baylebridge Prize for poetry (£50), it seems to prove once again that the only people in Australia who really care for the arts are those who practise or publish them, nobody who wins it is going to worry very much about that; but will, on the contrary, be very pleased to see Miles Franklin's brilliant career thus brilliantly continuing.

The occasion was considered important enough to draw both Mr. Menzies and Dr. Evatt along; the Prime Minister to present the award and talk about the maturing of Australian culture; Dr. Evatt to say he had read *Voss* (and enjoyed it) in a plane flying to Perth; and both of them, on one of the stickiest days Sydney has ever produced, to sit cooking under the glaring lights for TV—in less robust countries this is recognised as a form of torture, but here politicians are presumed to enjoy it.

*Voss*, controversial though it may be, was an excellent choice for the award; it was unquestionably the book of the year.

And the method of making the award is also excellent, and very different from all these humiliating art-competitions in which painters are expected to tout their works all over the country. The publishers submit published books; the judges pick the best; and if no novel is suitable the prize may go to a play.

### Uniformity on Uniforms

FOR years the word "uniform" in relation to taxation has automatically been taken to refer to the Commonwealth-States agreement for a single income-tax. All of a sudden its significance has changed; for the moment "uniform" refers to a relatively minor item of taxation procedure, but one which in election year could swell into quite a major issue.

Broadly the point at issue is whether the cost of uniforms for children attending State schools should be an allowable deduction for income-tax purposes. Until a week ago it was deductible under the amendment brought in five years ago by the Menzies Government which allows a taxpayer to claim as deductions amounts expended in connection with the