

CANADA

Bullying the boy next door

By Peter McFarlane

OTTAWA, CANADA

ON THE SURFACE, PRESIDENT Reagan's recent visit to Canada was typical of U.S.-Canadian summit diplomacy. It has long been the custom to hold get-acquainted meetings after any changes of leadership in either country. And Reagan's speech to both houses of the Canadian parliament continued a tradition begun by Franklin D. Roosevelt. The endless stream of "good friends and neighbors" epithets could have been lifted from any of a dozen similar meetings in the past.

What distinguished the Reagan-Trudeau get-together was a Gordian Knot of bilateral disputes that now face the two leaders. By far the most difficult of these involve energy issues. Topping President Reagan's agenda was concern over the national energy program announced last fall. In it, he proposed to "Canadianize" the more than 70 percent multinationally owned petroleum industry, using both public and private investment.

The new Trudeau policy requires all foreign-owned oil companies to sell off at least 60 percent of their Canadian subsidiaries to Canadian citizens or business interests. In addition, the new program mandates the state-owned Petro-Canada to speed up its purchases of foreign companies, and to expand its share of the retail gas market.

As might have been expected, the Seven Sisters cried "Rape!" More moderate spokesmen for the U.S. oil companies (which account for most of the foreign holdings in Canada) warned of "creeping socialism in Canada." The less-moderate spoke of "galloping communism." All the companies have participated in a capital strike that has seen dozens of drilling rigs shipped out of Canada and into the American West. One American oilman in Calgary even went as far as to join with the small Alabastrian secessionist movement calling for an independent western Canada.

The Washington response to the new Canadian program was delayed for a few months while power was transferred from Carter to Reagan. But when that response finally came, there was little doubt that the Reagan team was ready to support the multinational oil companies with the big stick of trade restrictions.

William Brock, the president's special trade representative, led the attack. In a news conference a few weeks ago, Brock warned that: "Americans have the right to expect free access to foreign markets if other countries expect free access to trade with the U.S."

During the private talks in Ottawa, President Reagan is believed to have warned of a serious trade retaliation if Trudeau pushed his Canadianization plan too far. There is even some speculation that Reagan's surprise withdrawal of support for the Canadian-American fisheries treaty in the Senate just days before his arrival, was linked to administration displeasure over Trudeau's energy move. Many Canadians believe that more threats of reprisal will follow.

Now that you mention it.

But President Reagan wasn't the only one to express concern about a neighbor's energy policy. Prime Minister Trudeau's lead item for the talks was concern about U.S. plans to step-up the conversion of oil-burning generators to coal. Burning more coal will drastically increase the already dangerous levels of U.S.-originated acid rain, which is killing Canadian lakes and damaging Canadian forests.

Acid rain is caused by the sulfur-dioxide and nitrogen oxide released into the atmosphere by the burning of fossil fuels, and coal is the worst culprit. An estimated 50 percent of Canadian acid rain originates in the U.S.

On this issue President Reagan was exposed to the genuine outrage of Canadians over the U.S.'s disregard for the environment. A demonstration on Parliament Hill just before Reagan's arrival was led by environmentalist critics from both the Progressive Conservative Party and New Democratic Party. And even the government's own environment minister said that he was with the demonstrators in spirit. He also expressed disappointment that the Reagan administration has failed to give any firm indication that they had even understood the scope of the problem.

One of the most sensitive issues during this visit was the "continental energy common market." The phrase, which describes an energy-sharing agreement between Mexico, the U.S., and Canada, was first introduced into the political vocabulary by Ted Kennedy in 1979 while he was campaigning for the Democratic nomination. It quickly became one of the favorite throwaways of the 1980 campaign, with Jerry Brown, President Carter, and finally Republicans like Reagan picking it up.

But in Canada the idea is looked on as a clumsy attempt by the U.S. to grab Canadian resources. There are even reports that the Canadian government asked Reagan not to mention the idea while he was in the country. Aware that the home audience was expecting it, however, the President slipped in as many references to "neighbors drawing closer together in times of need" as he dared.

Trudeau made one small concession on this point, saying that Canada would be willing to join into any discussions of regional problems with Mexico and the U.S.—a statement that loses much of its force when you consider that the Mexicans have already categorically refused to enter any such discussions.

Along with the major energy issues, there were a host of other bilateral disputes raised but left unresolved during the two-day meetings: the pollution of the Manitoba river system, the Garrison Dam project, joint oil and gas-line projects and the fisheries treaty, among others.

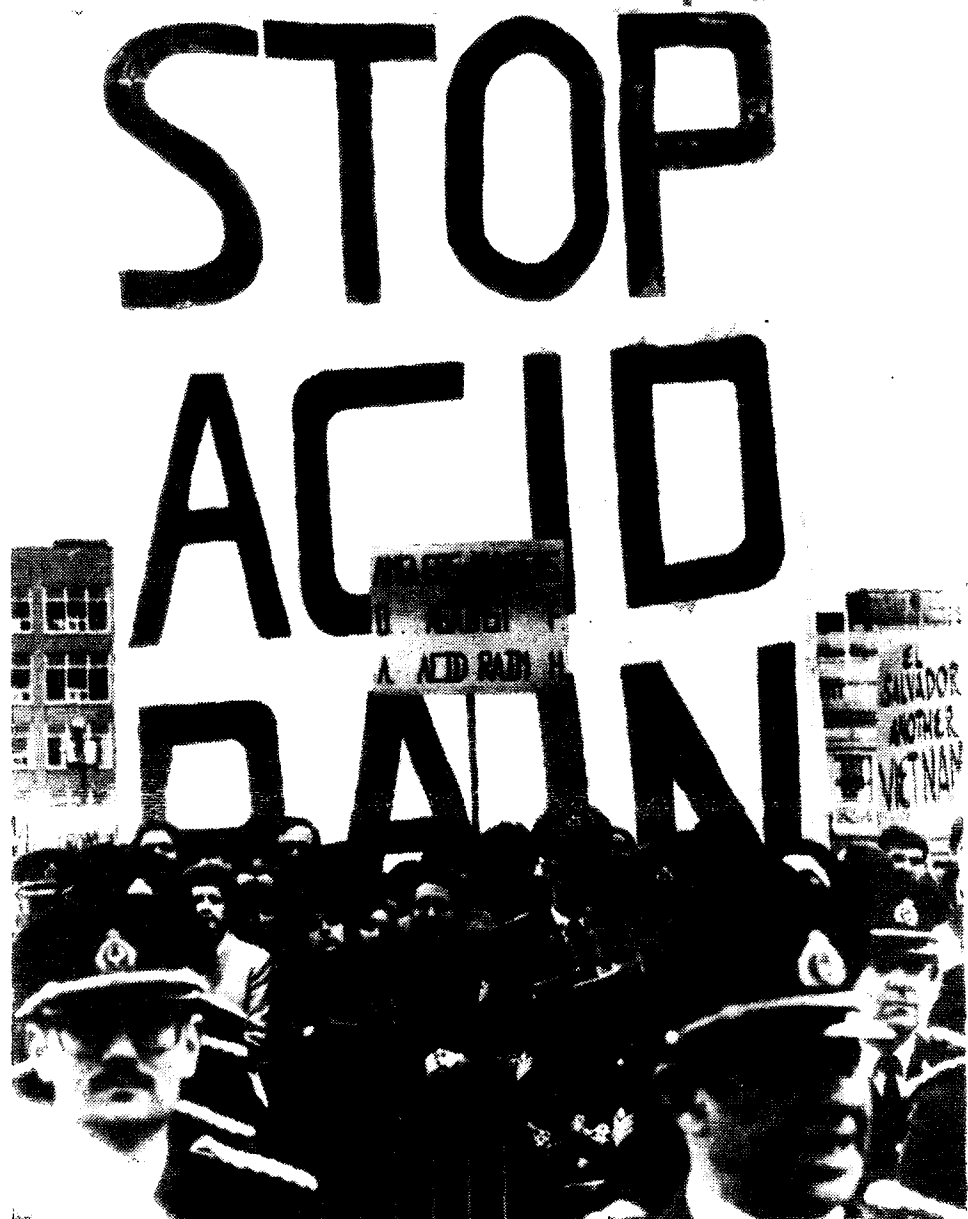
There was even one glaring foreign policy dispute. On the President's first official visit outside the U.S. he had his first taste of the growing worldwide condemnation of U.S. policy toward El Salvador. Thousands of people marched on U.S. consulates across the country, and more than 2,000 gathered on Parliament

Hill in Ottawa. The Ottawa demonstration, which included the burning of the American flag, was led by J. Edward Broadbent, leader of the New Democratic Party, who accused the Canadian government of "acquiescing in the face of the murders and in the face of the denials of democratic and human rights in El Salvador" to the aggressive U.S. policy in the region.

The fact that Canada has publicly criticized U.S. arms shipments to the country was downplayed by Prime Minister Trudeau during the talks.

When all is said and done, neither side can point to a single accomplishment of the Reagan visit. The faces of official optimism both leaders put on for the closing press conference couldn't hide the fact that all the major issues dividing the two countries remain unresolved. When, in the final minutes of the summit, a Canadian reporter asked Alexander Haig if U.S. policy had been altered or modified in any way during the two days of meetings, the secretary smiled and said: "No, not at all."

Peter McFarlane is a freelance writer in Montreal.



Demonstrators on Parliament Hill in Ottawa let Reagan know their feelings about El Salvador as well as the environment.

SPAIN

Spain's democracy is still not secure

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

AS THE EXTENT OF THE MILITARY plotting begins to emerge, the reprieve won by King Juan Carlos for Spain's democracy looks more and more fragile and temporary.

The intention to overthrow the elected parliamentary regime seems to have been an open secret shared by virtually the entire officer corps of the Spanish armed forces. A purge of anti-democratic officers is thus impossible (it would involve dismantling the armed forces, and the armed forces would not allow themselves to be dismantled), and Spain remains hostage to military men who consider normal democratic debate to be "politicians' quarrels" that undermine the unity and besmirch the honor of the nation. The restraint this imposes on the left in particular is largely responsible for the *desencado*, the disenchantment and depoliticization that leaves left leaders unprotected by mobilized mass movements.

Sources say February's putsch failed because there were too many, not too few, plotters.

This dilemma may prove tragic.

According to the newspaper *El Pais*, the Feb. 23 putsch failed not because there were too few but rather because there were too many plotters, and two different plots. The larger, more important plot had been being almost openly prepared for March 21 in the columns of the ultra-right military newspaper *El Alcazar* (the only paper allowed on some military bases) in articles signed by an anonymous group of officers using the joint pen name Almendros. The key figure in this plot was apparently the King's former tutor, the "moderate" General Alfonso Armada. Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez got wind of this plot, which explains why he suddenly resigned to make way for a more right-wing government that might be able to assuage the wrath of the

military.

To appease the ultra-right officers, Suarez's party, the Union of the Democratic Center (UCD), got rid of two key figures who had enraged Franco's men by trying to democratize the armed forces through selective promotions. Defense Minister Agustino Rodriguez Sahagun was transferred to the head of the UCD. The post of deputy premier in charge of security and defense, held by 68-year-old general Manuel Gutierrez Mellado, was simply abolished. Gutierrez Mellado distinguished himself by personally trying to bar Colonel Tejero from seizing Congress on the night of Feb. 23. He was roughed up by Guardia Civil soldiers.

Perhaps to prevent these changes from stopping the coup, a smaller group of more extremist officers around Gen. Milans del Bosch jumped the gun. The visible part of this iceberg was Col. Tejero's performance in Congress. The military also took over the national radio and television, and it took six hours for Juan Carlos to assert his authority over his generals. Apparently, the confusion over timing helped the King save democracy this time. But next time...?

Only the dying need



According to HEW figures, 28 percent of all black men in the U.S. suffer from hypertension—a major cause of kidney disease. Here a patient undergoes dialysis at Cook County Hospital in Chicago.

This is the first article in a five-part series on health care in America funded by the IN THESE TIMES Medical Investigative Fund. In future articles, Ellen Cantarow will discuss alternative health care delivery, the crisis of public hospitals, the politics of cancer and a legislative agenda for health care in the '80s.

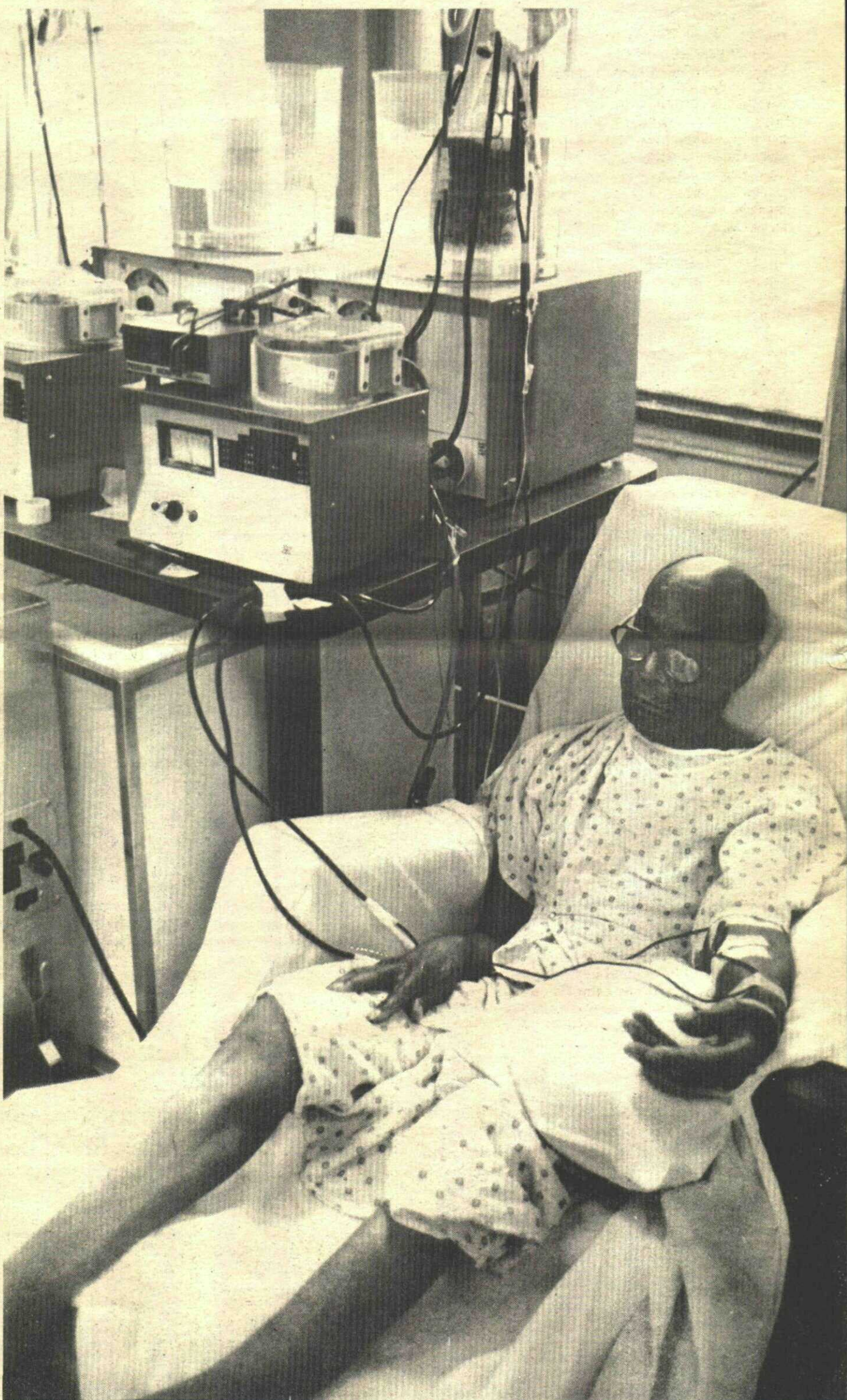
By Ellen Cantarow

THE FIRST PERSON I EVER SAW ON KIDNEY dialysis was a black man about 45 years of age. He was in a wing of a Boston clinic, lying on his back staring at the ceiling, while a machine about the size of a small automatic washer pumped all the blood from his body. I could see the blood looping up through a tube that led to a small oblong box, which the nephrologist next to me kept calling "the kidney." The blood went from there into another tube, and then back into the body on the bed.

To get my mind off this unnerving sight, I asked to see one of the "kidneys." There are several kinds, each enclosed in its box. The one that really captivated me looked like a thick hank of pale blonde hair around eight inches long—thousands of hair-width cellulose fibers, each one of which was hollow. The blood passes through these fibers, which get bathed in a fluid inside the box. The process is the simple one you learned in high school. One passage of the blood through the hank of hair and presto! the toxins diffuse out into the fluid.

At first sight there is a terrible beauty here—the simple pump-and-filter principle coupled with the filagree delicacy of engineering. But there is also terror: without his machine this man would have been dead, unless, of course, he had been in the tiny minority of kidney patients who can make it through the risky business of kidney transplantation. As it is, he is doomed to 15 years or more of dependency on a machine—three days a week, five hours a day. Some people adjust. Some get depressed. Some commit suicide.

Kidney dialysis is a little cameo of American medicine. If the most breath-taking feats of American health care are in its technological advances (rather than, say, mass public education programs about lead poisoning or prenatal nutrition), then kidney dialysis is surely among its greater successes. If American medicine is skewed to cure, rather than to prevention, kidney dialysis is at the extreme of the skew to pathology. The machine simply maintains the patient in the toils of the disease, among whose major causes are high blood pressure, chronic urinary infections, diabetes, exposure to industrial chemicals like lead, or to over-



doses of aspirin and other analgesics.

I don't know who the man I saw that morning was. Because he was in an in-patient ward at the Joslin Diabetes Clinic, rather than in an outpatient room at Boston's major "kidney center," or on dialysis at home, we know he

was an "acute care" case. (Nephrology lingo distinguishes between people who "only" have blown kidneys, and others, who also have terminal cancer, heart disease, senility, diabetes, and so on.) If he was depressed in his sinkhole of health troubles, he was no doubt wanly comforted to

*The government
billion dollars to
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