

Texte du sujet de Bac

(*St Cloud's is an orphanage in Maine.*)

Homer and Candy shared the opinion that Wally watched too much television, which was a bad influence on Angel, who liked to watch it with him.

Wally was so fond of television that he had even given a TV to Homer to take to St Cloud's. Of course the reception was very poor up there, which had perhaps improved the McCarthy hearings, which had been Wilbur Larch's first, sustained experience with television.

"Thank God it didn't come in clearly," he wrote to Homer.

Nurse Caroline had been in a bad mood all that year. If the U.S. Army really was "coddling Communists," as Senator McCarthy claimed, Nurse Caroline said that she'd consider joining up.

Wilbur Larch, straining to see Senator McCarthy through the television's snow and zigzagging lines, said, "He looks like a drunk to me. I'll bet he dies young."

"Not young enough to suit me," Nurse Caroline said.

Finally they gave the television away. Nurse Edna and Mrs Grogan were becoming addicted to it, and Larch considered that it was worse for the orphans than organised religion. He gave the thing to the stationmaster, who (in Larch's opinion) was the perfect sort of moron for the invention; it was just the right thing to occupy the mind of someone who waited all day for trains. It was Wilbur Larch who was the first man in Maine to call a television what it was: "an idiot box". Maine, of course – and St Cloud's, especially – seemed to get everything more slowly than the rest of the country.

But Wally loved to watch it, and Angel watched it with him whenever Candy and Homer didn't object. Wally argued, for example, that such televised events as the McCarthy hearings were educational for Angel. "He ought to know," Wally said, "that the country is always in danger of right-wing nut cases."

Although Senator McCarthy lost the support of millions of people as a result of the hearings – and although the Senate condemned him for his "contemptuous" conduct toward a subcommittee that had investigated his finances and for his abuse of a committee that recommended he be censured, the board of trustees of St Cloud's had been favourably impressed by Senator McCarthy. Mrs Goodhall and Dr. Gingrich, especially, were encouraged to complain about Nurse Caroline's socialist views and involvements, which they considered tinged the orphanage a shade of pink.

Nurse Caroline's arrival had been *welcome*. If Mrs Goodhall was at first relieved to learn that someone "new" had invaded St Cloud's, she was later irritated to discover that Nurse Caroline approved of Dr. Larch. This led Mrs Goodhall to investigate Nurse Caroline, whose nursing credentials were perfect but whose political activities gave Mrs Goodhall a glow of hope.

Many times had Mrs Goodhall advanced her thesis to the board that Dr. Larch
40 was not only ninety-something, he has also hired a young Red.
“They’re all too old, they’ll be easily brainwashed,” Mrs Goodhall said. (...)
“She’s a socialist, not a Communist!” Dr. Larch protested to the board.
“Same difference,” as they say in Maine – about so many things.
45 “The next thing you know,” Larch complained to his nurses, “they’ll be asking
us to denounce things.”
“What would we denounce?” Nurse Edna asked worriedly.
“Let’s make a list,” Larch said.
“The abortion laws,” Nurse Angela said.
“Republicans,” said Wilbur Larch. “And the board of trustees,” he added.
50 “Oh dear,” Nurse Edna said.
“Capitalism,” Nurse Caroline said.
“There’s never been any capital around here,” Dr. Larch said.

Adapted from *The Cider House Rules*, John IRVING (1985)

