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JOHN F. MAGOR, President — J. R. AYRES, Managing Editor

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Pedestrian appraisal most timely

The British Columbia Automobile Association has asked Prince Rupert's Mayor P. J. Lester to join with mayors of other Canadian cities in the second annual pedestrian appraisal. The nation-wide program is conducted by the Canadian Automobile Association of which the BCAA is an affiliate. Cities of more than 10,000 persons are asked to fill out appraisal forms indicating the number of pedestrian deaths and accidents in recent years and steps taken to improve the situation.

A committee of safety, enforcement and traffic engineers evaluate the forms and award points for the best pedestrian safety record and campaign being conducted by committees. The CAA program is based on one started by the American Automobile Association in 1937. The AAA plan is credited with helping to reduce pedestrian deaths in the United States to 7,750 in 1959 from 15,000 in 1937, despite a great increase in population and the number of cars.

The B.C. Automobile Association appraisal is most timely so far as Prince Rupert is concerned as this city is less than a week away from two years without a traffic fatality. On January 16 the city will have gone 771 days in which no one was killed on our city streets. Practically all of Prince Rupert's traffic deaths have been pedestrians which makes the BCAA appraisal all that more important. It requires not only care and alertness on the part of both motorists and pedestrians but an active participation in traffic safety by the City Council and the RCMP.

Slower driving in the business sections by motorists and more thoughtfulness by pedestrians before entering crosswalks are only part of what should be a perpetual campaign for safety.

The City Council should speed its implementation of Phase 1 of the new street-lighting program. It could authorize adoption of the unmistakable large striped crosswalks already in force in Chilliwack and other communities. It could also survey its total of stop signs, replace those which are missing and install signs where they are needed.

Finally it rests on the shoulders of everyone, motorists, pedestrians, City Council and RCMP to ensure that the city not only gets through the next six days without a traffic fatality but gets a good start on its third death-free year.

Keeping the contract

The end of the football playing season at our colleges and universities frequently marks the beginning of the football coach firing season.

In some circles, notably where excited and loyal alumni gather, firing a coach because he loses games is natural and proper. College football is Big Business, they argue. It is simply a matter of principle, or getting a fair return on money invested in a huge stadium and sturdy halfbacks.

Altogether too often college presidents yield to the pressures and fire away. Year after year excessive emphasis on victory leading to the firing of coaches leaves a grubby smear of commercialism on the face of higher education.

Coach Richard Voris has been at the University of Virginia for three years and has lost his last 27 games. His contract has another year to run. In these circumstances it is not surprising to find Dr. Edgar F. Shannon, president of the institution founded by Thomas Jefferson, under considerable pressure to get rid of his coach. The pressure, as Dr. Shannon puts it, comes from "a group of alumni deeply interested in the University's athletic program".

"I have advised them . . . that the contract stands".

Dr. Shannon continued:

" . . . It is important and proper that our players, as part of their education here, know that honor and good conduct are not only taught but practiced. . . . The University of Virginia does not break its contracts."

Dr. Shannon, to his everlasting credit, is concerned with something more important than a return on financial investment or the illusive prestige of a winning season. His interest is in priciple, and by sticking to it he is winning for the University of Virginia an honor no criticism can tarnish.

— New York Herald Tribune

Slipping planets

Early in the Seventeenth Century the invention of the telescope gave the astronomers a tool which multiplied manyfold the vast area that was their workshop. Now, so rapid is the progress in exploration of outer space that the planets of the solar system appear to be slipping from the grasp of the astronomers and into the outstretched hands of the geophysicists.

This somewhat ominous hint that astronomy, oldest of the sciences, is likely to be taking a back seat soon, comes from Dr. Homer E. Newell, chairman of the American Geographical Union's planning committee on planetary science.

He writes in the current issue of Transactions that the great body of individuals with the techniques needed for manned and unmanned exploration of the solar system are not astronomers but geophysicists.

— The St. Louis Post-Dispatch

INTERPRETING THE NEWS

U.S. backs revival of Laos truce commission

By HAROLD MORRISON
Canadian Press Staff Writer

The United States apparently has decided it should support the view that a truce commission for Laos should be revived, but on the condition such a commission deals directly with the newly-constituted Laotian regime under pro-Western Premier Boun Oum.

However, Russia rejects the legality of the right-wing Boun Oum government and maintains the old regime under neutralist Souvanna Phouma still exists, though Souvanna Phouma himself lives in exile in Cambodia.

The three-power international control commission which was set up by the 1954 Geneva Conference is composed of Canada, Poland and India. It operated until 1958 when Souvanna Phouma suggested it no longer was required.

Britain apparently has impressed on the U.S. the critical need of getting into Laos to prevent the local war from spreading into other parts of southeast Asia. But Boun Oum suggests it would be an embarrassment to him to let the members into the country if they don't recognize his government.

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India is reported to have no stomach for recognition of the Boun Oum government and it is a certainty that Poland would refuse such recognition as long as Russia supports Souvanna Phouma.

The U.S. now appears to be wooing India in the hope that India would shift its support in favor of American policy in Laos. Appearing before the Senate foreign relations committee in Washington, State Secretary Herter was reported as praising India and saying how important a role it could play if it went back as commission chairman.

The American position is complicated by the fact the U.S. seems to have made charges difficult to substantiate. It has suggested that large numbers of non-Laotian Communist troops have been rushed into Laos. No one seems to know where these troops are.

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American statements have in fact forced subtle reactions, with Senator J. William Fulbright, chairman of the Senate foreign relations committee, denying that the U.S. is "trigger-happy" and excusing any exaggeration of American statements by quoting Herter as saying information that the state department gets from Laos is "sketchy".

The U.S. continues to maintain it has evidence that Russian planes are being used to drop supplies to Laotian rebels, though evidence on the numbers of non-Laotians operating in that country "is largely circumstantial", Fulbright says.

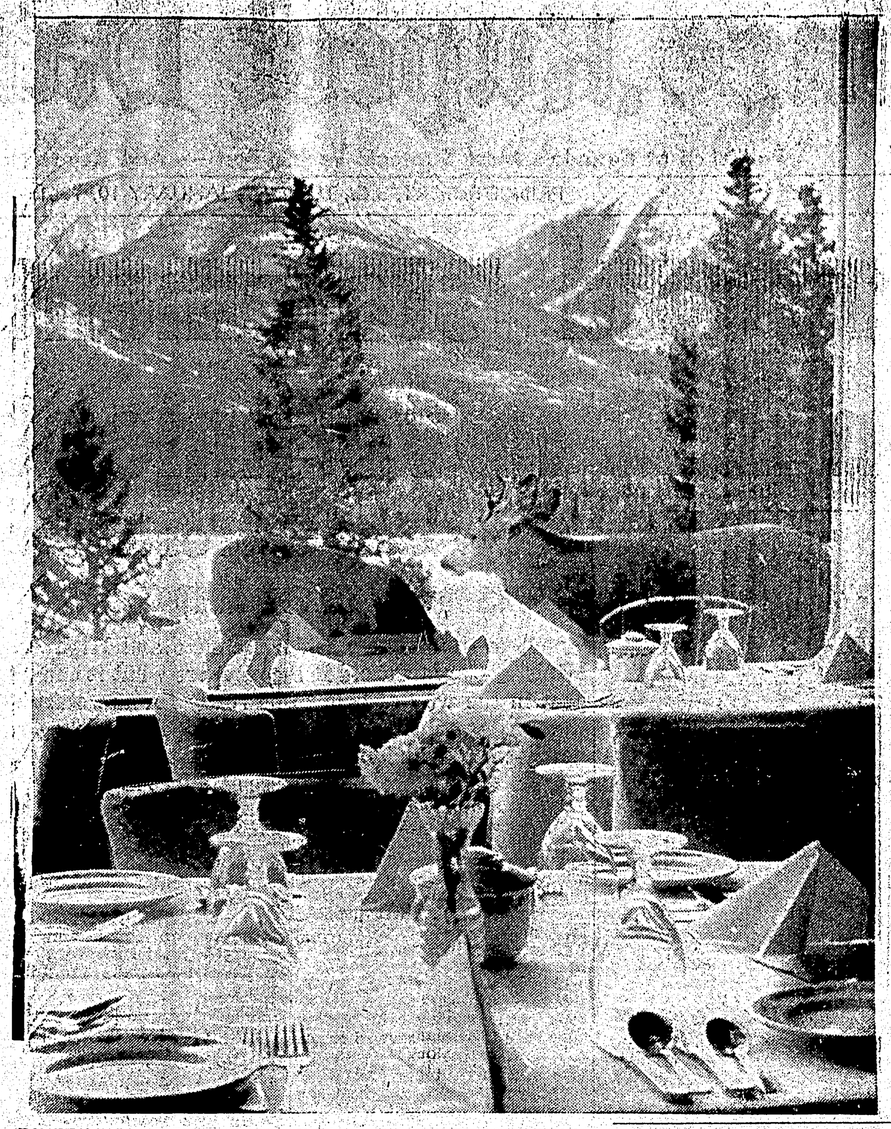
Amid all these difficulties, a hopeful note is raised by Cambodia which suggests that all those countries involved in the Laotian crisis meet in Cambodia to negotiate their differences.

Another suggestion is that the 1954 Geneva Conference on Indo-china be reconvened.

A Bible Thought for Today

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, There is neither male nor female, for we are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28.

We grow like those we love, and those who have Christ in the heart have found their very countenance change.



DINER'S SPECIAL — Banff's Timberline lodge Hotel had this prospect for its restaurant clientele early this winter — mountain backdrop, new-fallen snow and a pair of curious and hungry mule deer. A single sheet of glass separated the deer from the diners. — CP Photo

Victoria Report by J. K. Nesbitt

VICTORIA— The Premier's press conferences are always a highlight of the week in your Legislative Buildings.

In his first this year since New Year's, the Premier was in fine form. As usual he kept reporters cooling their heels for 10 minutes in an outer office; then the magic door to the inner sanctum was opened by the Premier's executive assistant, Mr. Dan Eckman, who said: "Come in, gentlemen."

So in we all trooped and sat, expectantly, around the Premier's desk. Mr. Bennett was all business at first; he talked oil pipelines from the Peace River to the coast, and all about the complicated Columbia River developments. He didn't bring in politics here, for a wonder, and he didn't take a smack at the Conservative government in Ottawa, and he didn't call Mr. Strachan a wild man, or say the Liberals are outmoded—all most unusual for our Premier.

We asked him about the session opening January 26. Now, the government, as everyone knows, runs the session, and so it should, but the Premier would never, never, never admit the fact. He said: "The session's always in the hands of the members," and then he mumbled something about this being a democracy.

"Any increase in indemnities for the members this session, Mr. Premier?" asked this column. The Premier shook his head, said no, but, really, he wasn't very definite about it. MLA's now receive $5,000 a year, but are of the considered persuasion they are entitled to more. If there's to be an increase, now's the time—far, far, far away from an election.

"I'm anxious to see all the members again, and meet the new ones," said the Premier.

"Even Mr. Gibson?" asked this column. Yes, said the Premier, even Mr. Gordon Gibson, the Liberal from North Vancouver, who was in the House before, and considerably riled the Premier. Yes, even Mr. Gibson, said the Premier, and then he proceeded to call Mr. Gibson a millionaire yachtsman, a playboy, a pineapple king—but he said, all that's in good fun. "It's great you can have some fun in politics," said the Premier beaming.

He noted that Mr. Gibson is going to open a subdivision, complete with swimming pools, bar and golf club, on his estate in the Hawaiian Islands, and will be selling lots. The Premier was asked if he'd buy one of those lots, since it's well-known he likes to sit in the winter sun, as who doesn't?

"All my investments are in British Columbia, thank you," said the Premier, in a sort of snappy way.

This column observed that if Mr. Gibson can make money out of a bar in Hawaii, how about the government opening cocktail lounges on its ferry boats.

"The answer is no," said the Premier, who drinks nothing stronger than apple juice.

Bars are money - makers, someone noted, but the Premier said the ferries are for service to all the people, not to make money for the government.

The first conference of 1961 ended by the Premier proudly showing off two new acquisitions to his desk—handsome cigar and cigarette boxes, presented to him by his sons. They're for visitors, since the Premier never smokes.

Then the Premier showed us a picture, in color, of himself, and his four grandsons clinging to his knee, and he all smiles. It was taken last summer. Now there are five grandsons.

"I'll just have to get a bigger lap," grinned the Premier, as we trooped out of his office.

With the classics

I remember the gleams and
glooms that dart
Across the school-boy's brain;
The song and silence in the
heart,
That in part are prophecies,
and in part
Are longings wild and vain.
And the voice of that fitful
song
Sings on, and is never still:
'A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth
are long, long thoughts."
—Longfellow.

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Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odors, when sweet violets
sicken,
Live within the sense they
quicken.
Rose leaves when the rose is
dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's
bed;
And so they thoughts, when
thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.
—Shelley.

The lighter side

A man attending the movies was amazed to find himself sitting behind a woman and a large collie dog.

Even more amazing was the fact that the dog laughed in the right places throughout the movie.

Finally, the man could stand it no longer. Leaning over, he told the woman:

"Excuse me, Madame, but I think it is simply astounding that your dog enjoys the movies so much."

"I'm surprised myself," the woman said. "He hated the book."

The Packsack of Gregory Clark

Copyright: Canada Wide

A highway collision held up traffic for over two hours. The police routed most of the passenger cars around a detour on a secondary road, but would not allow trucks and heavy transport to use the detour because of the condition of the snowy and icy gravel. So it was largely a congregation of trucks that lined up at the obstruction. One of the transport drivers had a portable gasoline stove in his outfit and brewed up a succession of pots of coffee for the gathering, and I was kindly invited to partake. It was interesting to have a symposium of truck drivers.

"What's this," I inquired, "about always being able to tell the good restaurants along the highways by the number of trucks pulled up in front of it.

"It may only mean," suggested one driver, "that there is a pretty waitress there."

"Mostly," decided the majority, "it means that the restaurant with the most trucks pulled up in front of it is the one handiest to the largest number of trucks when it is 8 a.m., noon or 6 p.m."

When you're hungry, you pull in and eat.

All Aboard

with G. E. MORTIMORE

Every few months I go through the farce of tidying my desk. I stagger over to a large table with one armful after another of papers, and dump them there, in mounds.

Then I dig into each mound like an archaeologist exploring a midden, and I sort the contents into categories: "Notes for stories," "Things that might come in useful," "Letters and bills" and "miscellaneous.'

By the time the sorting is finished, there are half a dozen mounds, each representing a category.

Then I carefully replace these mounds on my desk. I dont know how it happens, but after this process is complete, my desk looks even more cluttered than it did before.

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The waste basket is brimming with stuff I have thrown away—publicity releases, pamphlets, newspapers, scribbled notes that I can't read. I suppose it represents many trees, reduced to paper.

The mind rebels at the thought of the effort that has gone into making these documents—all to be thrown away.

But in spite of all that I have discarded, the total of paper seems to have grown—just as though it were living tissue that had the power to reproduce itself.

Anyway, some order has been brought to the desk. Although there seems to be even more paper than before, the features of the landscape have been re-arranged.

Sad to say, this state of affairs doesn't last.

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Someone brings papers for me to read, and dumps them on the mountain range of documents, knocking the tops off the peaks and causing landslides.

Someone else borrows a magazine from the magazine pile and dumps it back in the wrong place.

Pretty soon all the landmarks have been wiped out, the separate peaks eroded, and the whole thing is the same amorphous mass it was before.

There are times when I get fed up with the futility of this kind of tidying. I resolve to make a clean sweep. This usually happens at New Year.

So I get a couple of big cardboard cartons, dump everything in there, and take the cartons home to sort. I have quite a collection of them now.

My resolution for 1961 is to get them cleared before they crowd me out of the house.

Short sermons

Oldtimers can remember when babysitters were called mother.

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