1910 — PRINCE RUPERT DAILY NEWS — 1961

An independent newspaper devoted to the upbuilding of Prince Rupert and Northern and Central British Columbia.
A member of the Canadian Press — Audit Bureau of Circulation
Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association
Published by The Prince Rupert Daily News Limited

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

Authorized as Second Class Mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa.

TUESDAY, MAY 16, 1961

Teaching of English

All those complaints about Johnny being unable to read — or spell — now have come to a head in a report by the National Council of Teachers of English. The nub of it is that Johnny really does have a shaky grip on what might be grouped under the heading of language skills, and that drastic action is recommended to correct the situation.

How American schools ever got into the fix where too many students fail to learn how to express themselves effectively we can only guess. Clear self-expression is, after all, the key to learning in all fields; even in mathematics, it is necessary for communication between the student and the teacher. When this principle has been lost sight of, there is reason to suspect the efficacy of education generally . . .

Students are still spending more time on English than on any other subject, but they are emerging with little to show for it. The report of the National Council of Teachers of English tells, among other things, that last year, of 600,000 students who took college entrance examinations, 150,000 flunked English, and that more than two-thirds of the country's colleges and universities now find it necessary to offer remedial courses in English to incoming freshmen.

The council's studies showed also that qualified teachers of English are in short supply, and as a consequence, many teachers handling classes in that subject are poorly prepared. About half of them do not have a college major in English.

English, as we have indicated, is not so much a subject as the key to all the others. It is easy to understand the attention given to the basic ability to read; it is the first skill of any consequence that the student acquires. But students are not being prepared to follow up on it. The object of reading is the ability to assimilate facts from the printed page, and present training does not equip students to comprehend what they read.

Reading intelligently and writing in such a way as to convey ideas clearly and meaningfully is hard work. In a permissive atmosphere, it is easy to slight such demanding disciplines. The price of this, however, is that the whole educational structure begins to crumble, for lack of a solid foundation.

The remedy proposed by the council is a comprehensive national program, like that incorporated in the National Defence Education Act, which was aimed at improving the teaching of science and mathematics.

—Pasadena, California Star-News.

NOT LIKE AUSTRIA

Instability of Laos may undo conference

By DAVE OANCIA
Canadian Press Staff Writer

While diplomats debate the terms for sitting down at the Geneva conference on Laos, observers are beginning to wonder what it can accomplish.

There appears to be general agreement on what should be done.

External Affairs Minister Green expressed this. He hoped the conference would enable an independent, unified and neutral Laos to live in peace with its neighbors.

He also wanted the landlocked kingdom to resolve its internal disputes within the framework of political institutions acceptable to all sections of the population.

To achieve this, a basic requirement is an agreement between the Communist and Western powers to maintain a hands-off policy.

A precedent offering some hope that this can be accomplished is Austria. East and West agreed to respect the European country's neutrality.

Austria, however, had a strong and stable government. Laos is divided into armed camps backed by major powers. Eastern and Western interpretations of neutrality also may differ.

If this happens, the conference may degenerate into interminable sessions of legalistic wrangling.

INTERPRETING THE NEWS

U.S. anti-Castro drive heading for failure

By HAROLD MORRISON
Canadian Press Staff Writer

WASHINGTON (CP) — The big United States drive to line up the Latin American countries against Fidel Castro's regime appears to be heading toward a bust. U.S. diplomats fear they may be in for a long period of spreading communism and Castroism on the Latin American continent.

While some small countries have sped to the support of the U.S., agreeing that Castro is a menace and breaking off diplomatic relations with Cuba, the big powers that count in South America are sitting on the fence, calmly suggesting the United States doesn't know what it is talking about.

With diplomatic desperation born of the Cuban invasion failure, the United States has given its judgment that Cuba is dominated by Communists linked with Moscow and has argued that 98 Latin Americans must band together to protect themselves for this Red menace is directed at the Latin heart.

* * *

As for the United States, it isn't worried about the Red military threat because it can defend iself, the American argument goes. It is for the sake of the Latin Americans that President Kennedy wants Castro overthrown.

What's more, the United States has a big ecoonomic aid program ready to help Latin America, with a $500,000,000 starter that would increase as the Latins themselves showed willingness to undergo land and tax reforms to ensure a secure and stable future.

Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina and Mexico are among the big countries reported to remain unconvinced — despite the attraction of the economic bait. Brazil's President Janio Quadros has indicated he doesn't agree with the United States that Cuba is in the Soviet bloc and has suggested the United States keep its hands off the Caribbean island.

Meanwhile, Castro is reported to be gaining popularity among the 200,000,000 Latin Americans as a real hero of the people while that of Kennedy has been muddied in the Cuban swamps where the April 17 invasion collapsed.

James K. Nesbitt Aboard

HONOLULU, Hawaii — I have never met anyone who has been to Hawaii who didn't like it.

I have, however, met many people who have never been there who can't stand it.

Don't ask me to explain this strange contradiction in human nature. Only a Dr. Brock Chisholm could tell us the reason why.

Of course Honolulu is crowded, the hotels now being cheek by jowl, so to speak.

Yes, Waikiki is cluttered with near naked bodies, and some of them are fat and out of shape. But there are also beautiful bodies, which ornament the beautiful scenery.

Why worry about the fat, unshapely bodies? You don't have to look at them. Anyway, the owners of those bodies are having a wonderful time and they imagine they're exotic and romantic and all that sort of thing, so if they feel that way, even though they're fooling themselves, we should be happy in their happiness.

Hawaii is a happy place. It's fun to be there. There's the white teeth of the hula girls and the beach boys, and the glorious blue and green and foam white of the warm sea, and the cauldron of the breakers, and the strumming of the guitars under the palm trees as the sun falls into the western Pacific, and the flaming torches that flutter along the beach in the dusk and the dark of the night.

Honolulu is a big American city, roaring and bustling. But it's Hawaii, too. It's wonderful to walk the streets in bare feet (make sure you toughen 'em first) and you feel so free and abandoned in shorts, and that's all. The ladies can make their own arrangements.

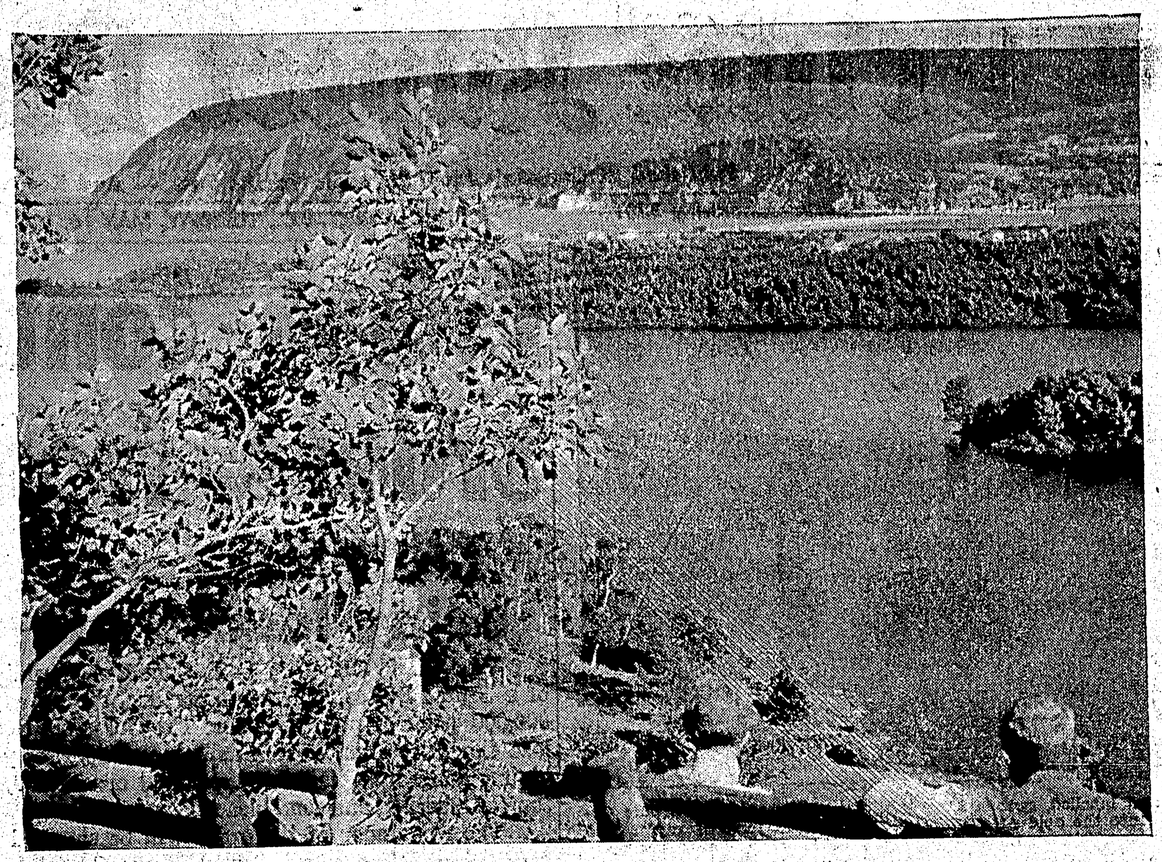
Tanned bodies, gleaming in the sun, make a symphony of athletic beauty as they ride their surfboards into the beach from the coral reef a mile away.

The older, and softer, take outrigger rides, and what hilarity and exercise these provide. The seas break over you as you paddle furiously, and you shout with the sheer joy and freshness of speeding in on a wave, with a song in your heart.

What impresses me tremendously about Honolulu is that the grim and granite faces of so many of us in North America relax the minute we arrive.

I have seen forbidding-looking individuals, completely smileless on a week's voyage to the Islands, suddenly soften and laugh when the hula girls come aboard ship, and the songs and dances get under way.

Yes, Hawaii is a great tonic, even if the people who have never been there can't abide it.



THE MAJESTIC SPLENDOR of picturesque Cape Breton is shown above in a view from the National Highlands Park looking towards Cape Smokey. This site is located on the Cabot Trail, one of the most beautiful scenic drives in Canada. The route is 185 miles long and winds through highlands and valleys. — Nova Scotia Information Service Photo

TIME AND PLACE . . . .

By WIGGS O'NEILL

PREMIER DICK McBRIDE VISITS HAZELTON

The summer of 1912 was a boom year along the Skeena and back into the hinterland. The railway had reached Sealy Gulch and they just had to jump the gulch, where they were bothered with sliding gumbo mud, then the wheels would be heard swirling into Hazelton. Then her great hour would strike, and a funeral march would be held for Old Hazelton, which was prophesied by Chuck Sawle, bowler-hatted editor of the Omineca Herald. Among the announcements in Sawle's "Herald" was a notice that Premier Richard McBride and his Attorney General W. J. Bowser, would pay a visit and hold a public meeting in the Town Hall.

The day arrived when the Premier was to arrive. What flags we had in Hazelton were all hoisted, and what few bits of bunting could be found in old trunks and boxes were all dug out and put around town.

The steamboat could be heard puffing away down the river and every man, woman and child, both whites and Indian people, had on their best glad rags and were preparing to meet the "Inlander" and her prominent guests. All the numerous dogs of Hazelton smelled a rat too that something was happening, and began to gather near the river bank. Everybody moved down to the shore to get a good view point, where they could get a good look at Premier McBride.

When the "Inlander" came abreast of the big cottonwood tree, where she always blew her whistle, a wild cheer broke loose from us all and all the dogs sat on their rear ends and howled long and loud. This was the Premier's wonderful welcome to Hazelton.

I had just brought in a brand new big Packard truck, very modern at the time, with solid rubber block tires and chain drive. She was equipped with a combination freight and passenger body and on its sides was painted in big bold letters "Hazelton-Telkwa Daily." All the young people the truck would hold were piled into the big box, ready to cheer the Premier, and the Packard was parked near the river bank.

When the boat landed at Cunninghams warehouse and the gangplank was put ashore, the Premier led the parade down the plank, with his hat in his hand waving and his curly white locks waving in the breeze, followed by Attorney-General Bowser, with his famous protruding lower jaw sticking out and his satchel in his hand.

When the distinguished visitors were passing our truck, on the way to Peavine Harvey's hotel, McBride stopped and waved his hat and bowed to the young ladies, and they were thrilled. Our guests were shown around the town by Dick Sargent, Hazelton's foremost citizen. Dr. Wrinch had them visit his hospital and Mrs. Wrinch gave them a cup of tea, and Mrs. Sargent served them more tea. Johnny Body, manager of the Hudson Bay Company, finally rescued them off the tea wagon and had them visit the Hudson Bay's famous "Stone Cellar," where they could drink what they wanted, turn the spiggot in the oak casks and help themselves to their own choice.

That evening everyone and his dog got ready for the big meeting, to hear the Premier of B.C. in action.

There were not many misguided people at that time in our country who called themselves Liberals, just about two who tried to make themselves heard; a telegraph operator and a land speculator named John Dorsy. These two gentlemen got together with the idea of framing up some questions to ask to try and embarrass the Premier. Both counted on getting on the platform and delivering a broadcast. They got together to prepare their questions but between each brain wave they had to have a shot of Hudson's Bay overproof rum.

When they got their chance, as the Premier graciously invited them up on the platform, people were beginning to see that we were going to get some real entertainment as both the gentlemen were plastered.

Usually the telegraph fellow could speak very well. He was first to speak but was unable to get past "Ladies and Gentlemen" a few times, then gave up and turned to old Dorsy and said, "Hell John, you take over and give em hell." Dorsy took over and as bad luck would have it, he got a bad seige of his stuttering habit and he couldn't get past, "You, You, You," about 50 times, and that finished his speech also.

I felt that Dorsy was really disappointed that his speaking ability had failed him at such an important moment. I know he would have liked to tell the Premier of his trials and tribulations of coming into the country. How he had to come over the top of Hudson's Bay mountain on snowshoes, and got caught in a blizzard away above timber line. How a thing like that never bothered a real frontier's man. He just built a fire at the foot of a spruce tree, curled up and was snug as a bug in a rug. If he had had a chance to tell his pet story to the Premier he would perhaps have been asked how he found the big spruce tree away above timber line, as Dick McBride did not miss much.

He had been questioned about our roads, spoken of as just cow trails. In his speech he said, "Now Ladies and Gentlemen, a lot has been said about your roads, and not very flattering to our government, in not giving you much money for their improvement. I would like you to realize that we have a very large province and our revenues are small, but we try and see that every place gets a little attention, no matter how small. Please be fair and try and give us a little credit. Someone spoke of our roads here being only 'cow trails.' I can't help feeling that is a gross misstatement and our roads just can't be too bad because when we arrived in Hazelton today one of the first things that met my eye was a beautiful new Packard truck making daily trips between Hazelton and Telkwa and it seems to be patronized by the ladies."

That one brought the house down as the truck had not been able to get out of town yet on account of mud. It showed the Premier's quick eye and powers of observation. I think he really enjoyed his visit to Hazelton. He told us he liked our people, we were so free and easy. He even liked our dogs, they were so different from the types seen around Victoria. He was warm in his praise of Johnny Boyd's old stone cellar at the Hudson's Bay and found the contents of the big kegs superb. So ended the visit from our Premier. He was a great mixer and vote-getter.

NEW PARTY-NOUVEAU PARTI

NEW PARTY, scheduled to be launched at a founding convention July 31 to August 5, already boasts a new emblem. A merger of the CCF party and Canadian trade unionists; the New Party still seeks a leader. Premier T. C. Douglas of Saskatchewan has been mentioned prominently.

Advertising in The Daily News Brings Results

The Packsack of Gregory Clark

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Do chefs get tired of food? How about those countermen in restaurants, dressed in white with tall white hats, bent over great steaming trays and cauldrons of food for hours at a time, day in, day out?

I was late for lunch yesterday, and by the time I got to a table, the chef and several of the countermen were seated nearby having their lunch. I was interested in the fine heaping plates that were spread before them. The gusto with which they dug into their food impressed me, so that I took my coffee over to their table and joined them.

"When you are young," reflected the chef, in response to my inquiry, "the smell of food is always agreeable, especially when you are not allowed to eat it. Thus, when you start your restaurant career as a young man, you become accustomed to the smell and sight of food painlessly."

"Think," said one of the countermen, "of guys who work all their lives in tanneries, or in fish markets. I got an uncle worked 60 years in a tannery."

The chef was indignant.

"Do you suggest," he demanded, "my food SMELLS!"

You see? They love it.

With the classics

On the wide level of a mountain's head,
(I knew not where, but 'twas some faery place)
Their pinions, ostrich-like, for sails out-spread,
Two lovely children run an endless race,
A sister and a brother!
This far outstripp'd the other;
Yet ever runs she with reverted face,
And looks and listens for the boy behind:
For he, alas! is blind!
O'er rough and smooth with even step he passed,
And knows not whether he be first or last.

—Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

gems of thought

Gratitude is not only the greatest virture, but even the mother of all the rest—Cicero.

Nothing is more honorable than a grateful heart.
—Seneca

Gratitude is much more than a verbal expression of thanks. Action expresses more gratitude than speech.
Mary Baker Eddy.

Two kinds of gratitude: The sudden kind we feel for what we take; the larger kind we feel for what we give.
—E. A. Robinson.

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Welcome your Census Taker

In June, Census Takers will ask questions of you and all other residents of Canada. Your answers, combined with those of others, will produce facts vitally important in guiding the development of Canada's future—in planning schools, hospitals, public utilities, farm and industrial production.

The Census is an enormous task undertaken once every ten years. Only with the co-operation of every Canadian can it be done quickly and accurately.

All information you give is kept in strict confidence. By law, every person must answer the Census questions but the answers can be used only by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics for the preparation of statistics. Information about individuals cannot be disclosed to any other government department or agency, private organization or individual.

An accurate Census benefits us all. When the Census Taker calls at your home, please welcome him and HELP CANADA COUNT!

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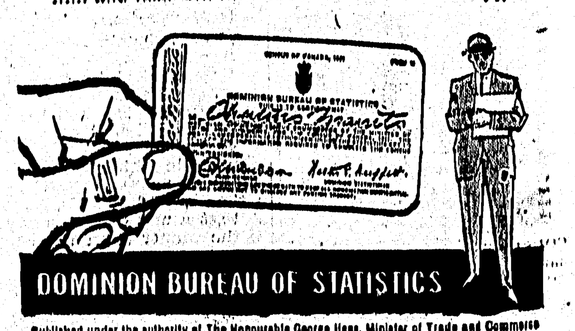

DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS

Published under the authority of The Honourable George Hees, Minister of Trade and Commerce