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

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Safety of skating lakes poses problem

Sunday's tragedy at Prudhomme Lake, which took the life of a young Hungarian immigrant, brings to the fore a question often asked by the public. That question is: Who should warn people when lakes or ponds on provincial government land, are safe for skating? or boating, or swimming? The young man in question drowned when he broke through the ice of a lake where there were a lot of people skating. The tragedy could have been worse, if others who went to his rescue had also broken through and been swept under the ice. Luckily no such thing happened and the young immigrant's death will serve as a warning that Prudhomme Lake, a large expanse of water, takes a great deal longer to freeze properly than the smaller more compact lakes. There are streams running into Prudhomme Lake which result in currents that prevent the quick freezing of stiller bodies of water.

From time to time over the years during cold snaps The Daily News has telephoned the RCMP at Port Edward asking the constables there to check the ice at Oliver Lake as to its safety. The policemen have, on their next patrol, tested the ice themselves and reported back to us so that we could put a notice in the paper. But many times, the public, anxious to get in some skating before the weather grows mild again, has already tried the ice and while there hasn't been a fatal accident for many, many years, there is no guarantee that there could not be another.

Now we admit we don't know whether it is a government responsibility to the public to have the lakes checked for skating safety and have signs posted and, if it is, under which department such action would come. The lakes used for skating are not parks land and yet are used for recreation. It could be the business of the Department of Recreation and Conservation. The RCMP is dedicated to the protection of the public safety and when traffic is congested near a lake being used for skating the police are usually there to ensure no laws regarding parking are broken. Whether posting warning signs in such cases comes under the jurisdiction of the RCMP, we do not know but we suspect that the public would be told that the RCMP is busy enough as it is without having to make lake skating surveys.

Nevertheless, we feel that a ruling of some sort should be given on the matter, even though it might result in "No Skating" signs being posted on a large number of lakes. It is a question of which is more important, depriving the public of a means of recreation or preventing one or more individuals from losing their life or lives because no set policy is laid down.

Dear Dolly . . .

In one of those U.S. magazines which are destroying Canadian culture, we read about a best-selling toy: "Chatty Cathy", a 20-inch blue-eyed, freckle-faced doll which, or who, talks. Pull a string on Cathy's back and she will say, "Will you please play with me," "Tell me a story", "Please brush my hair", "I love you", or any of eleven different sentences in random sequence.

Harmless enough, no doubt, but if dolls are supposed to assist a girl child in her transition from fantasy to the weird world of reality, then her vocabulary is rather limited. The obvious answer to that proposition is that dolls are not assigned any such sombre function, they are to be cuddled and enjoyed — but all the same it would be more realistic to thrust on the toy market a married "Gossipy Gertie" doll who could say in rapid succession: "Put on your rubbers", "There's a blond hair on your lapel", "Don't be late for dinner", "I need twice the housekeeping money you're giving me", "Don't forget to pick up the cold cuts", and perhaps a parting and withering shot: "Get lost, big boy".

Agreed, that would be carrying truthfulness too far in the toy department. The last thing we would want would be a doll purporting to read expurged extracts from the already overplayed "Lady Chatterley's Lover", or one which, or who, when a string is pulled on her back, would complain.

You dig, Cathy?

No?

Then we'll have to settle for, "I love you".

— The Hamilton Spectator

Policemen and courtesy

We cannot agree with a Calgary newspaper that a "charm school for our cops" is necessary. Courtesy is most important in the make-up of a policeman but to go so far as to require charm in an officer of the law is rather ridiculous.

Efficiency and courtesy are the prime requisites of policemen and are generally to be found. There is occasionally some rudeness by younger members of police forces but this is no reason to condemn all lawmen. Basic training of RCMP includes the stressing of courtesy in dealing with the public at all times. Mounties receive severe reprimands by superiors whenever a lack of courtesy is brought to their attention. Training in courtesy is doubtless also a part of the early training of city police forces.

The Calgary paper makes much of the rudeness of traffic policemen and says they often antagonize the public. There may be some truth in this but it is also true that those who break traffic rules are antagonizing the law itself.

The public is at times extremely rude to policemen. It is well to bear in mind that policemen are nothing more or less than average persons who have assumed the responsibility of enforcing the laws the public has made. There are occasional "misfits" in policemen just as there are in any business or profession.

— The Lethbridge Herald

Death of a skill

We discovered with annoyance the other day that some interfering busybody has devised a gadget for dispensing ketchup with the press of a plunger. Gone are the exhilarting battles with the reluctant bottle and wasted are the years we spent perfecting the art of depositing just the right amount on the plate.

You can keep your Edisons, Marconis and Watson-Watts; show us a man who can uncap a ketchup bottle with a casual snap of the fingers and garnish his meal without spattering the ceiling and walls, and we will show you a man who has taken the trouble to study and conquer the basic needs of life and practical dynamics without resorting to gadgetry.

— Peterborough Examiner

INTERPRETING THE NEWS

Moderation to be theme on South Africa

By DAVE OANCIA,
Canadian Press Staff Writer

Little more than a month ago the belief was that the Commonwealth ties would be severely strained, if not snapped, when the prime ministers meet in London in March.

The rock on which some thought the Commonwealth might have floundered was the question of South Africa's continued membership in the club as a republic.

The word in official British and Commonwealth diplomatic circles now is that the South African question now will not erupt into a major issue.

Various leaders may make fiery speeches denouncing Prime Minister Verwoerd's policy of racial segregation.

♣ ♣ ♣

But influential African diplomats now are spreading the message that moderation will be the theme when the leaders gather.

They say this unusual family of nations hold out far too much hope for humanity's future to risk breakup through an intransigent stand on South Africa's readmission.

They're not happy with racial conditions in South Africa. But they're willing to allow South Africa to remain in the club, and are prepared, at the same time, to continue increasing pressures to achieve abolition of the policy of apartheid.

"The Commonwealth is one of our best hopes for the future," said a high-ranking African official who makes no secret of his antipathy towards the present South African government.

♣ ♣ ♣

He compared it to a League of Nations that actually works. The United Nations, as it now is, he felt was little more than a propaganda sounding-board used by all with this objective in view.

Expelling South Africa now would probably lead eventually to the dissolution of the only effective forum in which members participate voluntarily and achieve results, he said.

"We must work to strength and develop this association. We should strive to reach a point where we are an independent force in the world, free of the two power blocs."

HIGH SIGN — Perched above a snowbound and precipitous Rocky Mountain slope in western Alberta, this sign might be a warning to leg-weary climbers not to stumble inadvertently over the edge. Actually its intended purpose is to bar the way to a cosmic radiation laboratory, installed during the International Geophysical Year, a project of the Canada Research Council. From a height of 7,485 feet on Sulphur Mountain, the spot overlooks the Banff Valley and the resort town of Banff at lower left. — CP Photo

Victoria Report by J. K. Nesbitt

VICTORIA — Your MLA's are now engaged in debating the 1961 Speech from the Throne, delivered on opening day by Lieut.-governor George Pearkes, VC.

It's not really a debate in the strict sense of that word; it's a series of speeches. Seldom is a speaker in the Throne Speech debate interrupted, unless he be a fiery cabinet minister like Mr. Eric Martin, or a loud-voiced one like Mr. Phil Gaglardi. These two create uproar in their own quiet ways, and love it, but, generally MLA's listen politely to each other, or pretend they do.

Seldom in the Throne Speech debate does anyone mention the Throne Speech, except in an off-hand sort of way, dragging it in, as an excuse to make a long speech about everything and anything under the provincial sun.

We always know, from where we sit, and depending on who's going to make the speech, the re-action to the Throne Speech. Oppositionists never like anything in the Speech from the Throne. Most of what's said in the Speech from the Throne gives them a pain in their political necks. On the other hand, government supporters are always convinced the Throne Speech is wonderful, absolutely wonderful, telling all. So, you see, the Speech from the Throne is a matter of political opinion; your view of it depends on which side of the political fence you sit.

The 1961 Throne Speech was just about as usual. It was prepared by the Premier and government, and so it fell all over itself praising the government, for what it has done in the past, is doing in the present, will continue to do in the future — until the voters pitch it out, as will happen sooner or later.

The Throne Speech of 1961 didn't give much in the way of detail as to what the government will do this session, but, then a Throne Speech never does; no government shows all its cards on opening day. It likes to keep them well-hidden, popping them out, with startling suddenness as the session goes on. This technique is supposed to confuse the opposition, wear them down, and sometimes it does work that way, until, in the session's dying hours the government rushes in all sorts of important legislation, and the poor opposition's too addlepated to oppose.

However, it's a pretty formidable opposition this session — 16 CCF'ers and four Liberals, and they all look very determined indeed, convinced they have Mr. Bennett's Social Credit government on the run at last, which they haven't, not yet, anyway, though Social Credit did lose seats in last September's general election, and, in 1964 — well, who knows? Much water will roar through our legislative river before then.

The day after the opening all was quiet, everyone exhausted from the social activities of the day before — the Premier's reception at the Empress Hotel, where more than 2,000 people showed up, and the State Ball at Government House, where His Honor and Mrs. Pearkes received nearly 800 of the elect. Chosen by the Premier for the time-honored honor of moving and seconding the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne were two enthusiastic young SC'ers. — Herbert Bruch of Esquimalt ad Cyril Shelford of Omineca. Mr. Bruch, thinks Social Credit's the most wonderful thing in all get out; Mr. Shelford sometimes complains about SC in a loud, whiny voice. He likes to show his independence, and the Premier beams on him, as much to say — "Well, there you see it — the fact there's no regimentation in Social Credit — there are no strings — no one's muzzled — government members can say what they want to say, anywhere, anytime — we're democratic in Social Credit".

LETTERBOX

THANKS FROM PO

The Editor,
The Daily News:

I wish to thank you, and your organization, for the splendid assistance you have given us during the Christmas season. With my thanks come those of all postal employees and, I am sure, those of the people of Canada.

The response to the Post Office Department's request to "Mail Early for Christmas" has again been most successful. A great deal of this success is due to the fine public service work of Canada's press, radio and television industries. Without this help, we could not hope to obtain the co-operation of the public during this peak season of the year.

For our own part, faced with winter weather conditions, transportation problems and a greatly increased volume of mail, the co-operation of the public in mailing early is essential if we are to do the task that has been entrusted to us. We are pleased and grateful to have had your help during the Christmas season.

G. A. Boyle,
Deputy Postmaster General,
Ottawa.

gems of thought

One marvels that a friend can ever seem less than beautiful.—Mary Baker Eddy.

♣ ♣ ♣

Friendship is like money, easier made than kept.—Samuel Butler.

♣ ♣ ♣

Instead of loving your enemies, treat your friends a little better.—E. W. Howe.

♣ ♣ ♣

It is more shameful to distrust our friends than to be deceived by them. — La Rouchefoucauld.

♣ ♣ ♣

A man's growth is seen in the successive choirs of his friends.—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

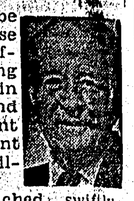
♣ ♣ ♣

Friendship cannot live with ceremony, nor without civility. —Lord Halifax.

The Packsack of Gregory Clark

Copyright: Canada Wide

At the bus stop the other day I noticed an elderly and rather poorly dressed man walking carefully through the slush towards me carrying a good sized package by the string.



He had to be careful because the passing traffic was flinging slush liberally in all directions and it was apparent he didn't want the package soiled.

A car approached swiftly. To my consternation, it deliberately swerved as close as possible to the curb as it passed the old man, and a great fountain of slush drenched him and his precious package. When the car flashed past me I caught a glimpse in it of a grinning youth and two girls laughing hilariously.

Two ladies at the bus stop produced some facial tissues from their purses to help the old man tidy up his coat and his package.

Maybe we have come some way on the road to human decency in the past few thousand years. But we have a long way to go yet. What we have to do, it seems to me, is work on the idea of kindness. Just ordinary simple kindness wakened in the minds and hearts of all mankind.

Four hundred years? Can we make it by then?

Smoky advertising

From The California Farmer

Just recently we watched our TV set in horror as one of the tobacco companies tried to capitalize upon the Olympic games. They rounded up some of the former gold medal winners in the Olympics and had them tell impressionable youth of this country the advantages of smoking.

There is a small segment of the advertising industry that apparently will go to any depth to make a sale. Some of the cigarette companies have been the worst offenders. They started a long advertising campaign showing rugged-type men smoking. Then a pretty woman was put in the picture. Then, very gradually, they moved the cigarette over into the hand of the woman.

Now the next problem was how to "hook" another big segment of the population. So they took another step down and started getting every "buyable" athlete in the country to endorse their products. But when they planted the inference that to win a gold medal in the Olympics you had to smoke, they really reached a new low.

Short sermons

We like a man whose aims are high, and who is completely unashamed of them.

✣ ✣ ✣

We welcome new ideas, but can't even make some of the old ones work.

✣ ✣ ✣

You are better off than your great-great grandfather would have dreamed.

✣ ✣ ✣

What passes for loyalty is often only habit, and none the worse for it.

✣ ✣ ✣

The greatest work-saver is a good sense of timing.

So much for Hoffa

From The Financial Post

James Hoffa, the Fueher of the giant Teamsters Union, had 56 congressmen on his purge list in the recent U.S. elections. With all the resources at his command Hoffa tried to get the 56 defeated.

The result: 55 were re-elected, only one defeated.

EDITOR'S NOTE—Signed articles and editorials credited to other newspapers do not necessarily reflect the views of The Daily News.

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PRINCE RUPERT DAILY NEWS

— TERMS CAN BE ARRANGED —