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Freedom not to print

A GOOD deal of misunderstanding appears to exist — sometimes among people who should know better — as to the meaning of "freedom of the press" with respect to letters addressed to the editor of a newspaper. Most daily papers and many of the magazines make space available for expressions of their readers' views on current topics.

Access to that section of the paper is a privilege extended freely; neither the editor nor the proprietors are under any obligation to turn their columns into a vehicle for the unsolicited opinions of others. But within certain necessary limitations they do so as an act of courtesy and also in the belief that a newspaper should as a public service and within reason assist in a free discussion of problems and events of the day.

There is, however, a deep gulf between privilege and right, and many of those who try to get letters into the press either fail or refuse to see it. It is by no means uncommon for a letter to the editor to be accompanied by a note "demanding" that it be published, in full, in the name of freedom of the press. If for some reason it is deemed unsuitable for publication (and the reason is rarely the one assumed by the writer of the letter) it may be followed up with a sneering comment containing such exclamations as "So much for freedom of the press!"

To those people it should be pointed out that freedom of the press includes freedom not to print as well as to print. No man has any color of right to space in a publication printed by someone else, any more than he has the right to display his wares in someone else's show window. What he has, subject to the laws respecting treason and libel, is the right to print and publish his opinions, but he may not demand that a newspaper publish them for him.

This is not to say that space for readers' letters is given grudgingly or withheld because they express views contrary to those of the newspaper itself. The opposite is the case, as regular readers of the "letters" columns must agree. This paper for one has printed innumerable letters severely taking it to task for this or that, because it is always a reader's privilege to disagree. There are several reasons for the rejection or abridging of letters, but all of them we believe to be fair and in conformity with accepted concepts of freedom of the press.

—The Victoria Colonist.

How about nickel coffee?

Coffee prices have reached the lowest level [illegible] nearly 20 years, as a result of the latest round of cuts, by 12 months, says the Associated Press. Coffee has been reduced by 10 cents a pound.

The housemaker is well aware of this reduction in the general upward march of food prices. It makes considerable difference in the grocery bill of a household which uses a couple of pounds of coffee each week. The housewife also finds that reduced coffee prices [illegible] prices shot far above $1 a pound [illegible] happy now, though the coffee countries of South and Central America, of course, are not.

Those who drink coffee in public places have not noticed any effect of the price cuts, however. Restaurants were quick to raise their prices to 10 and 15 cents a cup, when the cost of raw materials was shooting skyward. But any recent reductions have been so few as to be unnoticeable. A good 5-cent cup of coffee should be in the cards again. At least a restaurant should be able to serve coffee with a meal without charging a dime extra for it.

—The Portland Oregonian.

Slow boat to China

Under CCF sponsorship, the British Columbia legislature has passed a resolution declaring itself in favor of greater trade between B.C. and the Far East, specifically with China. Good. But if B.C. hopes to trade with China, it had better take a look at its own company.

Although heavily dependent upon export markets, British Columbia has allowed itself to get into a position where it has the highest cost of living, probably the highest in the world. China, on the other hand, is producing at the world's lowest costs, undercutting even the Japanese.

China needs a great many thing B.C. can produce. But she is neither willing nor able to buy them at the kind of prices B.C. is now asking. What is B.C. doing to bring those prices down? More particularly, what is the CCF doing to bring them down?

—The Toronto Globe and Mail.

Macmillan: phenomenon

Mr. Macmillan has been something of a phenomenon in post-war British politics. He was known to be able, he has proved himself the most resilient and popular in any [illegible] the rocking statesmen of the world have ever seen.

In a contemplation of contemporary politics, Britain and the United States are [illegible] alike. A split would be fatal, but [illegible] commonplace. There are important reasons for this, but it sometimes helps to see them personified. When a British statesman like Harold Macmillan comes to the United States one has a sense of comfort and satisfaction. Khrushchev talking to Grotewohl is, in effect, carrying on a monologue. President Eisenhower talking to Prime Minister Macmillan is having an exchange of information, ideas and policies. This is what Harold Macmillan has come for and it is why he has been eagerly awaited.

—New York Times.

INTERPRETING THE NEWS

African states differ on future independence

By JOSEPH MacSWEEN
Canadian Press Staff Writer

Two new developments in Africa south of the Sahara—one variant—and dangerous—are the different roads to independence in the vast region of the Sahara in the Central Federation. Native spokesmen have reacted with sharp anger to white Prime Minister Sir Roy Welensky's talk of a possible republican form of government in the future.

In Ghana native spokesmen for the government are unanimous predicting that the newly independent country will adopt a republican constitution.

Kofi Baako, information minister, has completed plans for making Ghana a republic soon. He roughly along the lines of India. Ghana would remain within the Commonwealth, recognizing the Queen as head of the Commonwealth, but Premier Kwame Nkrumah would become head of state as well as head of government.

◆ ◆ ◆

This prospect is apparently pleasing to the people of Ghana, under a native government, not talk of a republic in the Central African Federation, under white leadership, has heightened the already rebellious political temperature.

Welensky raised the republican issue when he said the federation would go it alone if Britain's Labor party won the next general election and disavowed agreements made by its Conservative predecessors.

Protests were heard from the three parts of the federation—Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland—and one powerful native spokesman declared that a Negro republic, separate from the white, would be the immediate answer to any such move by Welensky.

There has been considerable tension during the years since the British government began efforts in 1953 to link the black Nyasaland protectorate with the Rhodesias.

Although Nyasaland could expect economic gains through closer association with its richer neighbors, the 95-per-cent-Negro population fears loss of land to the whites.

The people also fear a northward movement of restricted policies—the hated apartheid—enforced so strongly in South Africa. Recent violence testifies to the extent of these fears and the growing native determination not to be dominated by the whites—a pattern apparent practically everywhere south of the Sahara.

Native spokesmen point out that political lines were imposed mostly during the 19th century by European colonial powers during their scramble for African possessions, often cutting across natural geographic and tribal lines.

Doubtless there will be among subjects heard when a special four-man British commission arrives in Nyasaland later this month to look into the recent disturbances.

In the meantime, Welensky has been conducting talks with Lord Home, secretary of state for Commonwealth relations, on the possible status of the federation after the scheduled 1960 review of the constitution.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL MASSEY was made an honorary member of the sergeants' mess of the Governor-General's Foot Guards last Thursday night. He is the first governor-general to receive the honor. Mess President Sgt.-Maj. G. E. Alarie (left) took part in the ceremony. —CP photo.

All Aboard

By G.E. Mortimore

Ellen Neel, Kwakiutl Indian carver from Alert Bay, and her husband, Ted, have moved their craft studio and store from Kingsway in Vancouver to a place near White Rock, on a strategic highway location where they should be able to catch a stream of American tourists.

There has been a new upsurge of interest in marketing Indian handicrafts, and in traditional native lore. A museum of native ceremonial objects and art-objects is opening to Comox to house relics seized from some Island tribes in the days when the potlatch was illegal.

In spite of what you may read elsewhere there is no law against the potlatch now.

✦ ✦ ✦

Apparently a fair number of Indians have learned to reject the pressure from those ignorant whites who would like the Indians to be ashamed of their native culture.

But of course only a few Indians can make a living from handicrafts. Only a few Scots can make live from the manufacture and sale of kilts haggis bagpipes and copies of the works of Burns.

Yet the Scots are loyal to these things. The Scots are loyal to these things. The Scots are well able to make a living among Ukrainians Irishmen, Englishmen, Yankees and other rabble, while keeping their identity as Scots.

So should the Indians be able to keep their racial identity, with pride—unless they want to lose it, which they should also be free to do.

✦ ✦ ✦

People's ideas about Indian handicrafts are extremely vague. Visitors to Queen Charlotte City or Massett right near the remaining home villages of the famous Haidas, purchase cheap made - in-Japan plastic totem poles under the impression that they are getting souvenirs of the Cowichan tribe.

Genuine, well-made native handicraft objects are inclined to be expensive. So they should be. Skilled native artists and artisans deserve proper pay.

✦ ✦ ✦

There should be a market for the mass-produced souvenir as well. To suit the customers who dont' have the means to buy the finest.

However, I can see no reason why we should allow our souvenir market to be flooded by ersatz native handicrafts from foreign countries.

Priority in the manufacture of souvenirs should go to our own native people, who deserve encouragement of every kind; loans and expert advice.

In most circumstances, protective tariffs and import embargoes are of doubtful value. They raise the cost of living and protect the inefficient manufacturers.

✦ ✦ ✦

However, I believe native handicrafts deserve protection. We should have a strict law against the import of any object which purports to be a totem pole, Indian belt, or any other native handicraft object.

I believe our federal government would win applause from all sides by passing such a law at once.

Competition

From the Montreal Gazette

The world is changing. It is no longer possible for certain nations to consider that other nations will always provide them with markets. These nations, in a changing world, are not only meeting many of their own needs but are becoming competitors in supplying the trading needs of others.

If the United States has reason to be worried over what it is doing to itself with its rising costs, Canada has far more reason to be worried. All who have any part at all in producing goods in Canada should be more concerned with the selling of them. It is not possible any longer to raise the cost of production and to think that these costs will somehow be paid by somebody.

The foreign customer is under no obligation whatever to pay more than he has to in world markets, which are growing more many-sided in competition than they have ever before.

TIME and PLACE . . .

By Sperry "Dutch" Cline

TOWNSITES

When it was clearly established where he road would be, the townsites that had been started on the earlier survey were forgotten and a rush was on to locate cities on the permanent survey.

About seven miles down river from Hazelton, Ellison (named in honor of a former Minister of Finance) was located by Hank Mitchel. Farther up river, across the Bulkley from Hazelton, South Hazelton sprang into existence and about five miles east of the last named New Hazelton budded.

As these new cities began to attract attention, others were located. When the contract for the construction of the second 100 miles of railway east of Prince Rupert was let, contractors came to Hazelton to locate a distributing centre at or near the head of navigation. Several locations were examined, but as no satisfactory terms could be made with owners they purchased a piece of land between Ellison and South Hazelton. This land was purchased from the original owner Jack Sealey and a town started which they named Sealey. The real estate game now began to thrive and the land between South Hazelton and New Hazelton was acquired by Harold Price, a young surveyor, and Central Hazelton was on the map. During construction, New Hazelton began to boom and more of the surrounding country became cities and towns. The foothills between New Hazelton and Mount Rocher de Boule were surveyed and labeled Hazelton Heights. A Vancouver syndicate purchased several parcels of land joining New Hazelton on the east and a new New Hazelton was born. This was known at first as the Kelly townsite. Not to be outdone by these newcomers, Peavine Harvey and associates purchased a section of land from William Larkworthy, an old time Hazelton merchant, and created yet another townsite. This was still farther up the Bulkley River and joined the Kelly property on the east side. As names for the new cities were becoming hard to find, Harvey offered a prize to the person who could dream up the most suitable name. Arthur Skelhorn, a real estate agent in Hazelton, suggested Larkford and it was accepted by the owners.

While the foregoing potentials are in your mind, I wish to tell of an incident that may give you some idea how all this was received by many old time residents. One morning a benevolent looking old gentleman, who had arrived in Hazelton late the night before, went for an early morning walk. The street suddenly came to a dead end in the Indian reservation. He returned to the hotel and entered another street running at a different angle; the same result, another cul de sac. Again he returned to the hotel and seeing an old resident (who had been up late the night before) peacefully dozing against a veranda post, he approached him and asked, "Which street must I take to get out of town?" The sleeper awoke, thought a minute and replied, "You just can't do it, stranger, it's all town."

No matter what we though of this townsite boom, none of us seemed adverse to taking advantage of the situation. Many of us seized the opportunity to cash in on the good times. Our old friend, Wiggs O'Neil, contracted for the clearing of South Hazelton. Tommy Brewer, who died recently in Vancouver, did the same at New Hazelton, and the writer of this part of Hazelton's history also gleaned a few shekels by clearing a large portion of the Kelly townsite.

During the time that these activities were taking place, Hazelton was the hub of operations. The 10 or 12 acres of this town soon burst at the seams. Temporary shelters were erected in all vacant spots, the dead end streets being occupied by shacks and tents. Indians rented their houses and the whites got a special dispensation of Providence to occupy sections of the reservation. This helped to stir up hard feelings among the people of the new towns as they considered that the influx of population should be directed to them.

It would be difficult to estimate the population of Hazelton at the peak of the boom. River boats brought in loads of passengers almost daily. Many of these people remained in Hazelton, while many others scattered to points along the railway.

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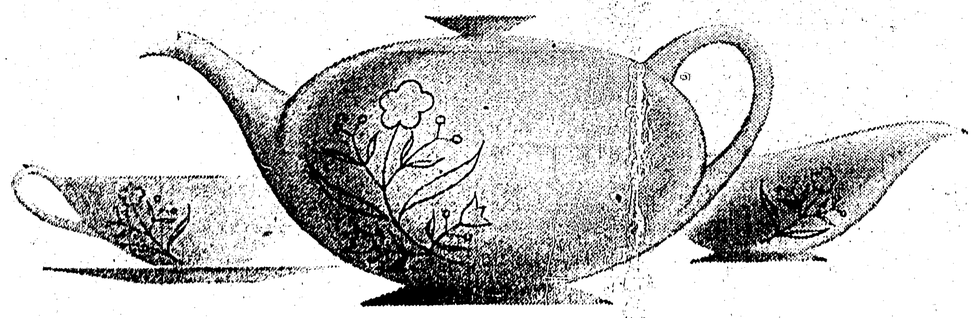

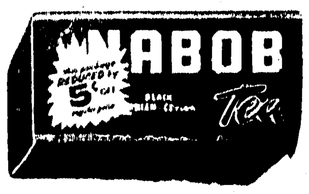

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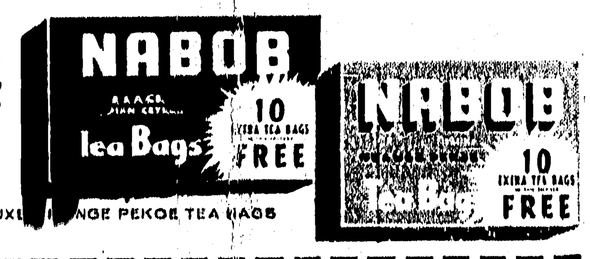

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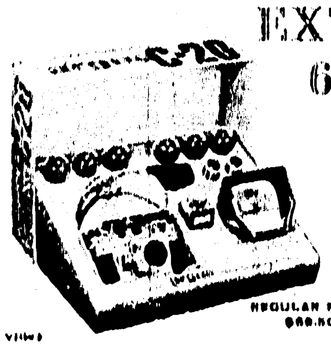

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