1910 — PRINCE RUPERT DAILY NEWS — 1959

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

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Authorized as second class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1959

No use crying over spoiled ballots

THERE is little point in crying over spilled milk and even less in shedding tears over spoiled ballots. However, it was the latter that prevented the water supply and distribution system bylaw from being approved in yesterday's byelection. Lack of a dozen votes kept the bylaw from receiving the 60 per cent majority required. There were 32 ballots on the water bylaw spoiled, a good many of which were in the "YES" vote square. We know. We saw them.

How a grown person can go into a polling booth, facing an eight-inch by 10-inch poster, which in large black print cautions the voter to mark the square of his or her choice with an "X" and to use the pencil provided in the booth and then proceed to mark the square with a tick, write in "Yes" or "No" or use a fountain pen, is beyond comprehension. But in the voting on the two bylaws nearly 86 persons managed to do it. The others didn't vote on one or the other bylaws at all. They left the squares blank.

Whatever the cause of the lost dozen votes, the fact remains that Prince Rupert is stuck with its current water system. As Mayor Lester pointed out last night after the election was over, the property owners of this city can take their choice between leaving the water system as it is or voting on a gravity system at the civic election in December. Six months must pass before they can vote on a similar bylaw to the one presented yesterday.

One bright ray of sunshine in yesterday's voting was the resounding approval given the proposed purchase of the federal building as a new city hall. Before long, we hope, the Dominion government will begin constructing a bigger and better federal building behind the present one. Besides giving the city an opportunity of having a new city hall, a new federal building will provide accommodation for all the different senior government offices now scattered in other premises throughout the city. In addition it will be an attractive asset to the business section, mean more revenue to the city and be more convenient for persons having business with federal government offices.

In the meantime, prayers for a mild winter are in order in the hope that our 45-year old water system will keep operating.

The Anglican prayer book

An historical achievement in the life of the Anglican Church of Canada and its communicants was recorded yesterday when the 20th General Synod of the Church approved revisions of the Book of Common Prayer.

This book is a treasure embodying the very life of the Anglican Church, prescribing and regulating its forms of worship since 1662. In 1918 there were some minor revisions, and now, after 16 years of study by a scholarly committee, further revisions have been made in conformity with the requirements of the Church and in harmony with changes that have occurred in language and in perspective.

Part of the preface to the revision of 1918 reads: "The Book of Common Prayer is a priceless possession of our Church . . . But through the lapse of some three hundred years many changes have taken place in the life of the Church and in its outlook upon the world. The present life and larger outlook of the Church are seeking more adequate expression than the Book of Common Prayer has hitherto afforded, and seem to require judicious adaptation and enrichment. . . "

With the same impulse and the same reverence, the Synod has now adapted the book in order that it may fulfill the needs and desires of the Church.—The Toronto Telegram.

Laos: no simple answers

To those who read beyond their preconceptions the present very uncomfortable situation in Laos is something more than a mere military problem.

It is a good thing that American military supplies—small arms, uniforms and tents—are being sent to permit an enlargement of the small Laotian Army. This will help prevent a Communist guerrilla force from making more dangerous gains.

But a special correspondent of this newspaper reports that a Laotian general admits that at least 40 per cent of the population in his area (possibly more) supports the Communists. This support for Pathet Lao is essentially passive. "But," says the correspondent, "that is enough for the Communists."

It is hard for Occidentals to conceive of people not being concerned to defend their freedom. But people who have lived for centuries under a feudal or war-lord regime have yet to find something to fight for.

Only long-term assistance in education, self-government and economic opportunity offers an adequate answer to Communist sophistry in a primitive land. That is the battle in which the United States and its allies essentially are engaged.

—The Christian Science Monitor.

Census nosey-parkers

A former woman member of parliament is leading a protest in her district against the type of additional questions which have been mooted for the 1961 federal census. Rightly enough she objects to the private nature of some of these queries, of a personal kind touching her sex which never before had a place in a census. Nor should questions embracing personal finances belong to the national count of heads; these concern the income tax department.

Mrs. Ann Shipley touches the core of census-taking when she points out that the questioners often are neighbors or friends, and inevitably certain embarrassments ensue. This is becoming a world in which one's personal affairs are becoming less private all the time, but there should be limits to nosey-parkering. Questions which probe the intimacy of families or inquire too closely into domestic secrets are apt to meet with the answers they deserve.

It rathr looks as though those responsible for the census seek to build up their organization after the fashion of bureaus everywhere, which is to enlarge their status by adding extra and sometimes redundant work to warrant a growth in importance. This kind of proliferation should be halted before the 1961 census-takers get to work, however. The same questions as in the past are ample for the purpose.

—The Victoria Colonist.

INTERPRETING THE NEWS

U.S. voting discrimination gives Reds weapon

By HAROLD MORRISON
Canadian Press Staff Writer

"Many Americans even today are denied the franchise because of race."

With these words, enunciated by the federal commission on civil rights, the United States has handed Russia a powerful new propaganda weapon to aim at the uncommitted nations in Southeast Asia and elsewhere.

Each year the U.S. spends billions of dollars in various efforts to convince Asiatics and others that the Western way of life, the democratic way, is far better than anything the Communists can offer.

But the undeniable basic right of democracy is the right to vote. And yet in the U.S., the most powerful Western country, vast numbers of Negroes in the southern states are barred from the polls through various tricks imposed by the whites.

With damaging conviction, the Soviet propaganda machine might well repeat: How much friendship could the whites in the southern states have for Asiatics if they treat their own Negro citizens with such evident contempt and hatred?

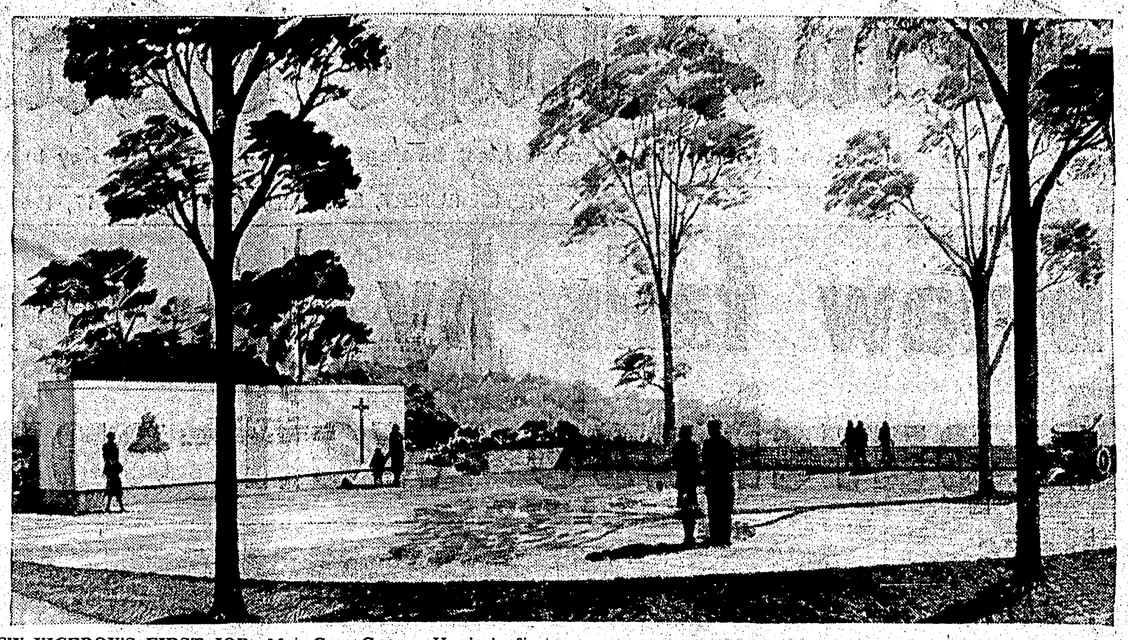
Of a total population of some 77,000,000 persons, the U.S. has about 10,000,000 Negroes. Over the years, progress has been made in various integration schemes, but great resistance against integration still prevails in the south.

The country's split on the problem is evident in the commission itself. The six-member body recommended federal officers be appointed to take the vote in states where the Negro voter is being blocked, but the commission split on the stronger proposed constitutional amendment to ensure all citizens have the right to vote providing only that they meet age and resident requirements.

The chance of such a constitutional change being approved is remote. The bickering that has already broken out in Congress because of the commission's recommendation is an indication of the tremendous battle the southern representatives and senators would put up.

Yet the commission's majority report says such an amendment is essential to eliminate "a striking gap between our principles and our everyday practices."

"This is a moral gap. It spills over into and vitiates other areas of our society. It runs counter to our traditional concepts of fair play. It is a partial repudiation of our faith in the democratic system."



NEW VICEROY'S FIRST JOB—Maj.-Gen. George Vanier's first act after he becomes Governor-General next Tuesday will be to unveil this artillery memorial in Major's Hill Park near Parliament Hill. The memorial, to be unveiled September 21, is to honor officers and men of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery who lost their lives in service.

—CP from National Defence.

All Aboard with G. E. Mortimore

DIARY OF A VISIT TO BRITAIN—The taxi-driver told me about his early days with cabs and buses in London, half a century ago, when horse-drawn vehicles ruled the streets and motor cars were treated as intruders.

"Any trouble with an 'orse, and it was 'Fined five pound.' Allus said the same thing. 'Fined five pound.' "

He spoke of steam buses, gas-electric buses, and certain vehicles that were known to the trade as "baked 'tater tins."

Now he was driving a taxicab in Cheltenham. I extracted those memories from him as he drove me to visit some people whose address had been given me by a friend in Victoria.

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He deposited me at the door of Leckhampton Court, a big stone house of considerable age. There I met Mr. and Mrs. Paul Saunders, who run a boys' school.

Mr. Saunders told me that he had spent his life partly in Boston (where his father had had business interests) and partly in England. He got along with Americans, but felt more at home in England.

I think the world would benefit if there were a large group of international people, able to interpret the feelings of one country to another. Sending people abroad when they are grown up just isn't good enough. Their ideas are set by then. A way should be found to exchange numbers of school children and theri families for two or three years at a time.

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Leckhampton Court was built by the Gifford family in the 14th century. It passed through a daughter to the Norwoods, who had it for 300 years; and at last was bought by the Hargreaves. Successive owners made repairs and additions to it.

In 1914-18 the big house was a hospital, and in 1939-45 it housed prisoners of war. Mr. and Mrs. Saunders found it in a derelict condition, riddled with leaks. They camped in various rooms while repairing the house for use as a school.

I looked at the lofty ceilings, the panelled walls, the stone stairs and stone floors with hollow places worn by the tread of armored and leatherclad feet for 500 years.

"Any ghosts?" I asked.

He said, with almost an air of apology, that there were. Footsteps were often heard. Doors which had clicked firmly shut sometimes flew oepn mysteriously. A guest in the house had once seen a pair of disembodied legs, wearing boots, going up the stairs.

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"I didn't believe in ghosts when I came here," he said. "But I tried all sorts of explanations, and none of them seemed to fit."

Sometimes when Mr. Saunders is working in his study (a 14th-century room) he hears footsteps overhead in the room that used to be Lady Gilford's. There is never anyone in the room. An officer who slept in Lady Gifford's old room during the 1914-18 war was said to have found that all his clothes had been removed in the night and scattered in the room below.

He blamed his batman. But next night he bolted all his doors on the inside, and again his clothes were removed in the night and scattered below—as if there were somone or something there that resented his presence.

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Sounds of laughter and music are sometimes heard through the panelling in the direction of the banqueting hall. Mr. and Mrs. Saunders have never seen the two most famous apparitions that are reputed to be seen at Leckhampton Court: A spectral pack of hounds which comes racing up the private road from the parish church on midsummer night; and the coach which follows the same route on New Year's Eve.

The Saunders feel that the ghosts of Leckhampton—if they really exist—are mild-tempered ghosts which mean no harm.

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Taxes never temporary

From The Windsor Star

Once a tax is levied, it is pretty certain to stay there. No matter how great the promise may be that the impost is temporary, a tax is seldom removed.

Senator Harold Connolly of Halifax has referred to the imposition of income taxation in Canada in 1917. When that method of taking money from the people was first introduced in this country, it was done reluctantly and only because of the war emergency.

That was 42 years ago and income tax is still with the Canadian people. In fact, it has been going up and up.

Beware of new taxes. They may be described as temporary, but they always become so permanent.

No place here

From the Calgary Herald

In Toronto squads of police had to quell an ugly stone-throwing mob, in a (soccer) match between Italia and Hungaria. In Winnipeg a minor riot the same weekend featured a game between Winnipeg Scottish and Hungaria. We have had incidents, minor but potentially serious, in Calgary but there have been some nasty instances of poor sportsmanship.

Soccer is a game with a fine tradition of sportsmanship. If those who have adopted the game in other lands aren't capable of accepting the traditions then, in their own country, that is their business.

In Canada, it is a Canadian problem and it is time that Canadian laws were enforced. Unruly soccer "patriots" have no right here.

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Phone the doctor

From The Milwaukee Journal

The recently publicized practice among some doctors in the U.S. of making a charge for telephone calls has aroused some shallow criticism.

Such a charge should discourage a great many nuisance calls with which most physicians in private practice are bothered, including repeated calls from patients who really don't need medical advice, but feel better after they have had a talk—sometimes prolonged with their doctor.

If the patient who travels to the doctor's office and waits there must pay for medical advice, why not the patient who gets advice by phone, with minimum inconvenience to himself?

Sordid mess

From The Ladysmith Chronicle

There is hardly a road in the wooded areas around Ladysmith which has not been defiled with heaps of tin cans, old cartons, old car bodies and the other unwholesome artifacts of our allegedly enlightened age. Surely some government agency will be moved to clean up this sordid mess and enact laws with sufficient teeth in them to prevent any more informal garbage heaps from becoming established.

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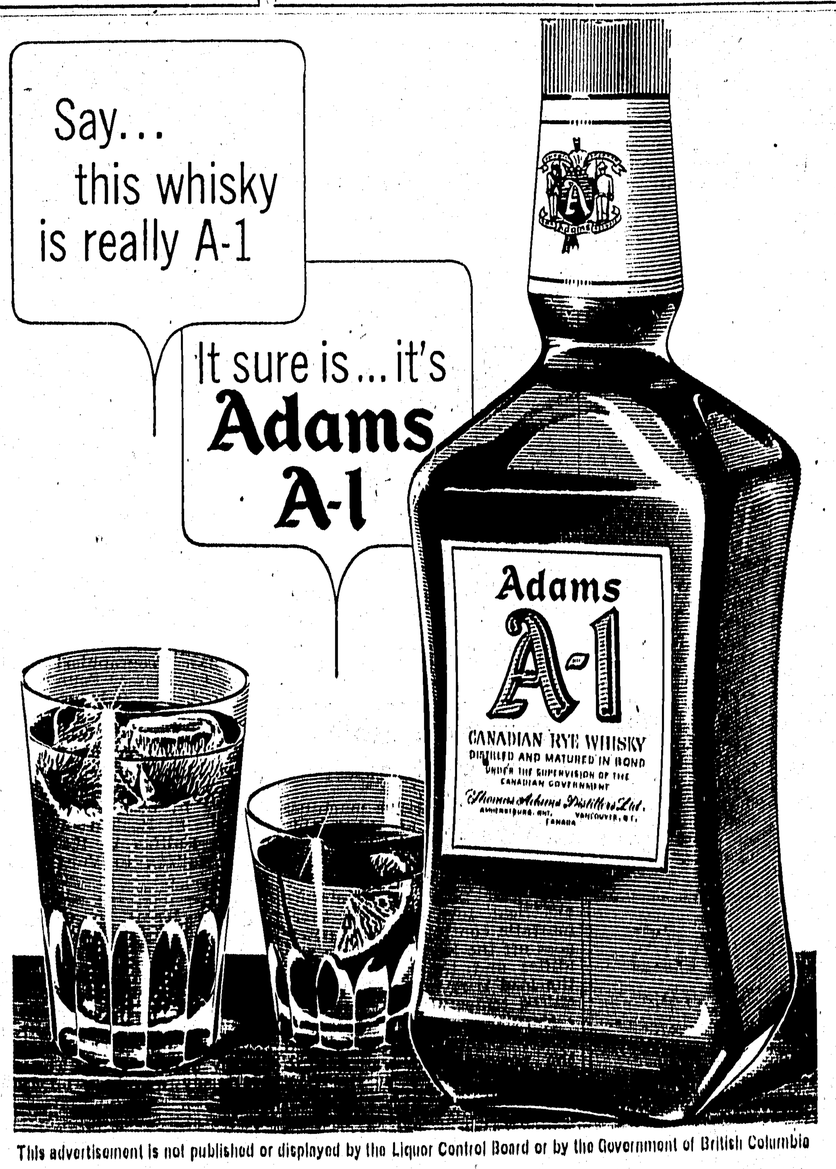

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