Cinderella's Wish and the Magic of Petrochemicals

Cinderella was upset. She so wanted to go to the Prince's Ball, but she didn't have a thing to wear. Suddenly, a voice behind her spoke: "What is your wish, my child? Name it and it shall be yours."

Cinderella jumped, and turned around. There stood a little round man smiling at her kindly. "I am your Uncle Petro Chemical", he said.

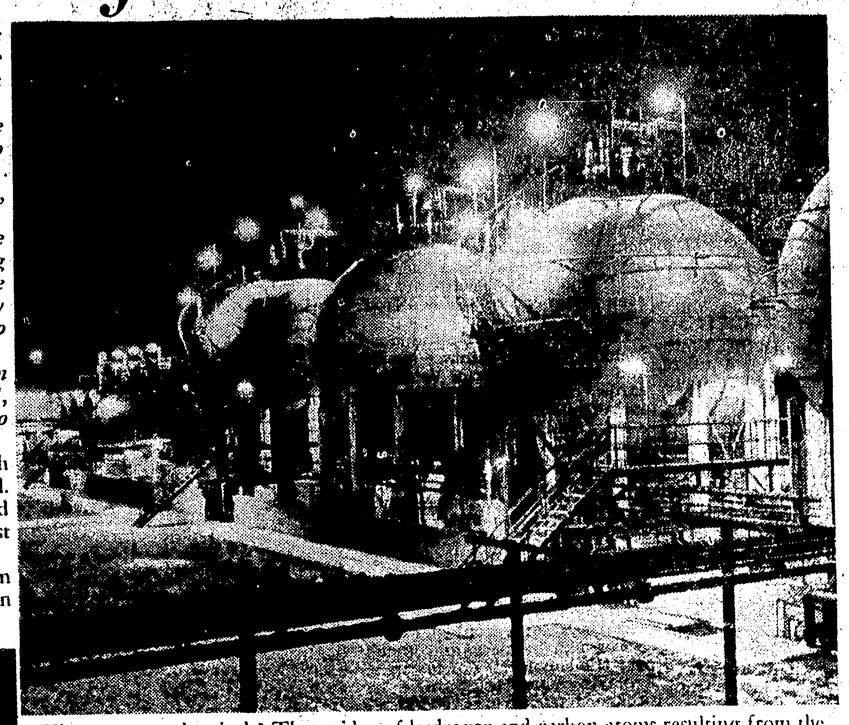
"O, Uncle", cried Cinderella, "I so want to go to the ball, but what will I wear?".

"This", said Uncle Petro, and waved his hand. And there before her appeared the daintiest lingerie, a shimmering white gown, stockings, shoes, shining jewelry, and, since Cinderella was a little peaked from sitting around chimney corners, a dazzling cosmetic case with all she needed to make her the belle of the ball.

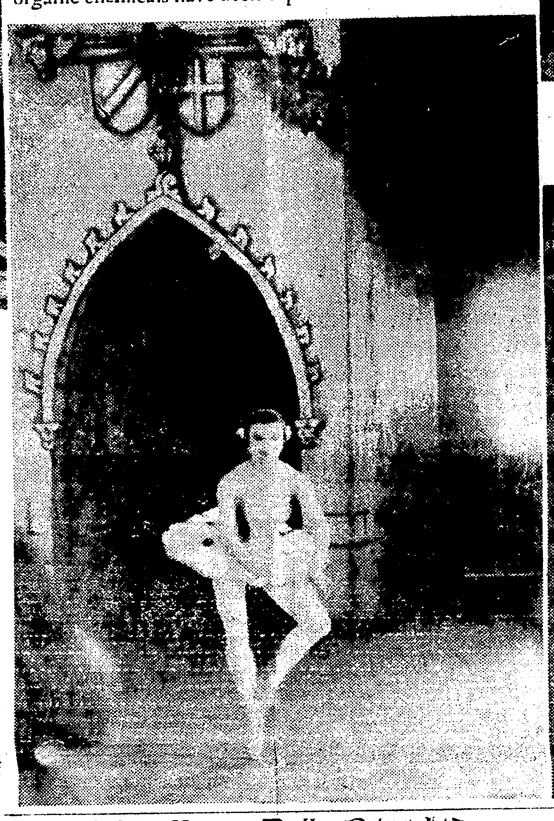
"O, thank you, Uncle Petro!" Cinderella cried, but even as she looked at him with shining, happy eyes, he vanished, and on the floor where he had stood remained only two tiny drops of oil.

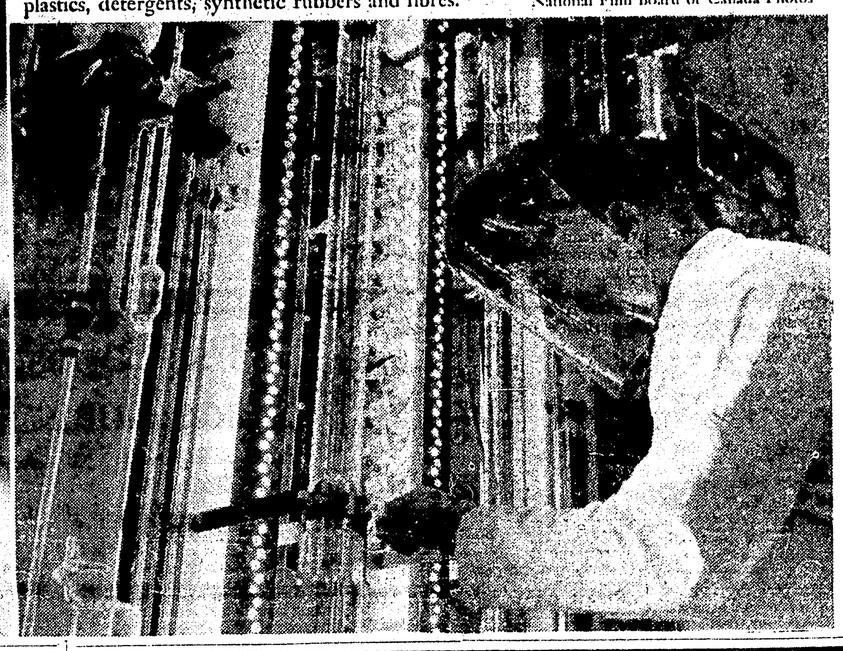
Yes, all the pretty things that Cinderella wore, and with which she won the Prince, came from tiny drops of oil. And they are only a few of the 300 products discovered yearly that are made with Petrochemicals — Science's latest and most-magic wand.

The future for petrochemicals is bigger and brighter than ever. Chemists say only 3% of the half-million known organic chemicals have been exploited.



What are petrochemicals? The residue of hydrogen and carbon atoms resulting from the refining and cracking of crude oil to make gasoline. This residue, further refined, produces chemicals such as ethylene, propylene, butadiene, which in turn become plastics, detergents, synthetic rubbers and fibres. National Film Board of Canada Photos





Brightly-painted pipes, tanks, catwalks, futuristic control houses, cracking towers reaching skyward like moon-rockets — these weird chemical labyrinths of a dozen magic-making companies sprawl for some thirty miles along the St. Clair river in southern Ontario. A 360-million-dollar enterprise, this is the heart of Canada's petrochemical industry. Sarnia, on the river just south of Lake Huron, first got started in the petroleum business in the 1850's when the first oil well in North America blew in at nearby Oil Springs. In 1897 the first company went into operation on the river bank. Refineries attract other industries and with the help of such essential endowments as water, electricity, salt, transportation and markets, Sarnia soon became the centre for a thriving oil industry. The big boom in petrochemicals came in 1942 when wartime shortages sparked the search for artificial rubber. Discoveries in plastics, synthetic fibres and detergents brought new plants clustering in the chain-reaction expansion that has marked all petrochemical boom centres. The petrochemical industry — fastest-growing in the world, increases at the rate of 19% a year. New processes produce new products and markets daily. Sarnia's population has doubled in the last 10 years as Chemical Valley provides the most stable labour force in the country with one of the highest average wages. The riverbank town with the weird chemical landscape has grown into a petroleum powerhouse. New uses for petrochemicals are being discovered at the rate of 300 a year. In construction, engineers predict an all-plastic house by 1968. A new plastic is hard enough to make into nails, beams, sheathing. New fabrics are strong, colourful, need no ironing. Tires are safer, wear longer. Toys are cheap, safe, indestructible. Petroleum — truly a magic river of riches, and it flows right down the middle of Sarnia's Chemical Valley.

SCHOOL BOARD BRIEFS

Kindergarten class badly needed at Port Edward asserts principal

Port Edward Elementary School is badly in need of a kindergarten or a pre-primary class, District 52 school board meeting was told Tuesday night.

In his report to superintendent of schools G. M. Paton, Port Edward school principal Ernest McKeown said that many children were not ready to start school.

He said that many of the children "don't even know their names for the first while" and felt that a kindergarten would "relieve us of this problem of taking half a year to sort out the beginners into the type of program they should be on and will warn us beforehand of those pupils who are not ready for school."

During a discussion of the problem, trustee L. O. Loucks said that the slower students hold up the faster ones and hamper things for the teachers.

It was decided that Mr. Paton should meet with Victor Janzen, district superintendent of Indian School to see if the Indian department would help in the establishment of a pre-primary school.

There is a private kindergarten at Port Edward which handles 20 children. Mrs. C. B. Marshall instructs the children and the fee is $6 per month per child.

Prince Rupert Senior High School principal L. G. Truscott reported that at a recent meeting between school officials and parents of Grade 12 students, it was decided that this year's Commencement Exercises plus a dance should be a "one - night stand."

Mr. Truscott's report also noted that an appeal to staff and custodians to economize on power resulted in a saving of just under $200 from September to December over the same period in 1960.

Wilfrid Lessard, principal of Seal Cove Elemonetary School said in his report that he enjoyed a luncheon with other principals and two members of the Columbia Cellulose Company, Limited. The topic discussed was: "How can the Columbia Cellulose Company help the elementary schools of Prince Rupert?"

Mr. Lessard said it was possible that Columbia Cellulose would make small displays and filmstrips available for school use.

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Attendance in Prince Rupert schools during January 1962 was notably increased over the attendance in January, 1961.

According to the superintendent's report, there were 2,714 pupils attending school last month compared with 2,484 in January last year.

The senior high school, with 339 present, had an attendance of 96 per cent while Port Edward reported 98 per cent attendance.

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The school board was told Tuesday night that the services of an adjudicator were being obtained by the Skeena District Drama Festival and that she would be able to visit Prince Rupert March 29.

A letter from James R. Scollon, regional vice-president of the Skeena District Drama Festival, advised that Mrs. Eileen Parker of South Burnaby would be in the area late in March.

Mr. Scollon requested permission to arrange an elementary school speech arts festival for the Prince Rupert schools March 29.

Mr. Scollon said that Mrs. Parker would be available to visit individual class rooms and adjudicate choral speech classes, individual spoken poetry and children's plays. She could also conduct a work shop for teachers.

The school board agreed to a festival pending approval of the school superintendent.

A bid of $5,056 to supply school stationery for School District 52 during 1962 by Crown Zellerbach Paper Co. Ltd. of Prince Rupert, was accepted by the school board Tuesday night.

Other bids were received from Smith, Davis and Leckie of Vancouver ($5,104) and Clarke & Stuart of Vancouver ($5,353).

A contract to service typewriters, adding machines and duplicator machines in School District 52 was awarded to Coast Business Machines Services for $802.50.

A bid of $900 was received from McLean & Rudderham Agencies.

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The board agreed to rent the senior high school gymnasium to the New Democratic Party-CCF March 22 when party leader T. C. Douglas will speak.

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Three students were granted permission to attend a swim meet later this month if their principals approve.

Sharon Pierce, Gordy Eby and Vito Dunford hope to compete in a meet at Portland, Ore., from February 22 to 27.

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School District 52's accounts payable for January, 1962 amounted to $61,245.63 while the building fund account amounted to $5,080.

CALGARY (CP) — Plans are being made to form an Alberta-wide club of former members of the RAF Pathfinder force. The Pathfinders, in operation from January, 1943, to 1945, flew ahead of massive bombing raids to mark targets with incendiary bombs.

MOVIE COLUMN

Hopalong finds peace after riding TV crest

By BOB THOMAS

PALM DESERT, Calif. (AP)—"Those were fantastic, unbelievable times," said Bill Boyd of his reign as TV's first great idol, Hopalong Cassidy. "But I knew they couldn't last."

This was a relaxed, contended Bill Boyd, living the quiet life with his beautiful wife, the former actress Grace Bradley. They spend half their year at a compact, comfortable home in this desert resort, the other half in a huge trailer by the ocean at Dana Point, Calif.

"We don't even have any help," Bill explained. "We found it bothered us to have other people around. After spending our lives in a crowd for so many years, we love just being alone."

The Boyd saga is one of the great stories of show business. He started in the movie business in 1919 by lying to Cecil B. DeMille's secretary that he had an appointment with the great man. He was a DeMille leading man in the 1920s, then in the 1930s starred in a routine series of horse operatics as Hopalong Cassidy.

Hoppy appeared to have faded in the 1940s, but Boyd quietly bought up TV rights to the series. He went on TV in 1948 and for six or seven years was a national sensation.

"There had been nothing like it," he recalled. "It got to the point that I called together all my people and said we had to cut down."

"I was on almost every TV channel. I had been on the cover of every magazine. I was in comic books and comic strips. I was on records. My merchandising was in all the stores. I told people we had 94 per cent saturation, and that was too much. When you get up that high, there's only one place you can go, and that's down."

It was Davy Crockett who brought the break. When the Hoppy merchandise started to slide, manufacturers got off the bandwagon and put their money into the coon-skin cap craze, said Boyd — "and they lost a fortune."

Boyd continued making appearances throughout the country and the world to huge audiences. But the life began to pale.

He made his decision three years ago, as he and Grace were returning from appearances in England.

48 per cent of Canadians spend all income on basic necessities claims NDP leader

HAMILTON (CP) — Canada is being rapidly left behind by most of the major industrial nations in growth and expansion, T. C. Douglas, national leader of the New Democratic Party, told supporters here Wednesday night.

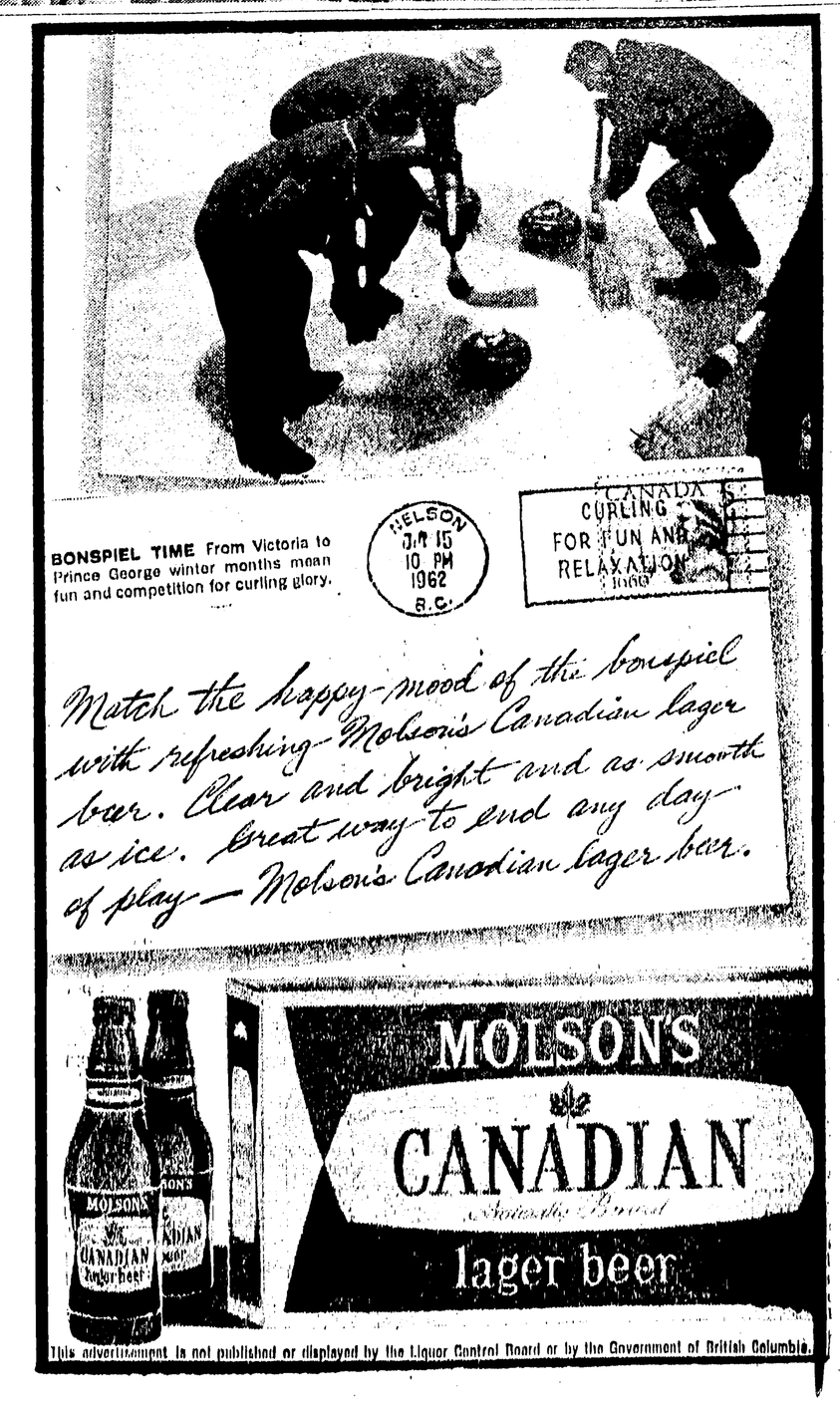
Mr. Douglas, making his first official appearance here as NDP leader, said his party would form a government and introduce legislation in the interests of those who produce the wealth of the nation — "and I'm not indulging in any idle promises."

"In spite of all our natural advantages we have been bogged down for almost a decade in a mire of frustration and drift."

He said Sweden has ousted Canada from second place in terms of per-capita production and income. With other Scandinavian nations, Sweden had been applying the principles of democratic economic planning, proving the welfare state was a postive means of bringing about faster economic growth.

Canada's economy, he said, had stopped expanding after 1953 except for a short-lived investment boom in 1956.

CAN'T BUY FRILLS

He said a recent study by the Economic Research Corporation of Montreal showed that 48 per cent of Canadian families spent the whole of their incomes on basic necessities.

"These people would be buying new appliances and homes if they had adequate purchasing power and unless we take steps to remedy this the plants will continue to have unemployment."