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A. HUNTER, Managing Editor. H. G. PERRY, Managing Director
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The Ottawa Session

PARLIAMENT at Ottawa is to meet again on January 30. It will be a gathering anxious to hear what guidance the government may be able to give to the nation on international affairs as well as on the important matters of domestic policy that touch the country's overseas relations.

Defence is right in front of the members' minds. They will expect to hear as soon as possible of the development of the defence program. And they will be concerned to know what changes the government conceives will be necessary and how soon they will be necessary in the balance of the economy as a whole. The government may reveal what scale the defence program can be expected to reach in a specific period and how much the process of getting to the maximum point can be speeded up.

Until the revised demands of the military, not only for Canada's needs but also for the equipment she is to provide for her partners in the North Atlantic Treaty organization, have been studied in the light of the economy to carry them, it will be speculative to try to put a monetary value on them. The approach indeed is not so much from the angle of how much money is to be spent but rather from the angle of what resources in materials and manpower out of the total available to the nation are needed to be devoted to defence.

There have been some minatory rumblings. The Opposition will no doubt fulfil its duty of challenging and testing the efficiency with which the government is setting about the business. Members of the Opposition, stressing the need for compulsory service for one thing, have already fired some warning shots. They contend that the country has very little to see on realistic defence measures.

In all political likelihood it will be for Mr. St. Laurent's government to continue with the new division of national resources between military and civil purposes, and with doing what it can to see that the needs of both are fed.

The Members of Parliament and the people will hope that such leaders as Mr. St. Laurent, Mr. Claxton, Mr. Pearson and Mr. Abbott will come early to speak in the Commons on the new situation and the dangers which may be ahead and what is being done to meet them.

Meanwhile, Members of Parliament should be busying themselves so as to be ready to spur and encourage the government, without too much deference to party considerations, in the vigor with which it pursues its tasks.

Wi' Stane and Besom

TONIGHT there will be a meeting of those interested in curling in Prince Rupert. The idea is to start raising funds for a curling rink behind the Civic Centre. On alternate nights the present idea is to have skating and hockey.

Although the whole idea is pretty much of a dream to date, there are a number of men in the city sufficiently interested in curling to bring the dream to reality. The idea of having skating every other night is an interesting one in a city where artificial ice is needed in order to give children an opportunity to indulge in one of winter's most fascinating sports.

The roarin' game is a popular one throughout Canada. Wherever one goes where there is ice he will see men and women of many lands, many of whom speak very broken English, dolled up in tams to put the best of Scotsmen on their mettle. The cry of "Sweep, sweep!" comes bounding down the ice and men whose wives would find it very hard to get a broom in their hands at home are seen sweeping like fury to bring the stone on another inch or two.

Aye, and it's a g-r-r-and game from the lead man to the skip. It is a game of skill that is hard to beat. And it is surprising the number of young men one sees wi' stane and besom.

Scripture Passage for Today

"We know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."—1 John 3:24.

LANGIBBY CASTLE, Wales to be pulled down. No one wants it. The castle built here in the home with 50 rooms and the days of the Normans, once used owner can no longer afford its as a stronghold by Cromwell, is upkeep.



As I See It

By ELMORE PHILPOTT BEER SEES NO WAR

Elmore Philpott is now enroute to Britain, Egypt and India, to write on-the-spot articles for this newspaper. The following was written just before his departure from Canada.

ONE OF THE thrills of going on a big newspaper trip is that you get a big outpouring of friendly wishes from friends you did not know you had.

There is the dear lady (bless her heart) who sends her father's surprise preventive for sea-sickness, which is to chew those gummy little candies.

There is the university professor, stationed in Egypt during the war, who gives an eye witness account of what's what in the night clubs of Cairo.

There is the Swedish lady who wonders how I can talk of going to Denmark, but not Sweden. There is the Norwegian friend who is sure I will get to Oslo, Norway, too.

ABOUT THE MOST unusual message from a reader, whom I did not know I had till it came, was from Madame Lys, the famous clairvoyant. In private life the lady is Mrs. Hallett—wife of a likeable Devon-born chap.

Would my wife and I drop in for a friendly chat? There was something important that Madame Lys would like to tell me.

That put me on the spot—for unlike my wife and just about every other female I know—I do NOT like to have my fortune told.

The trouble is that mine always comes true, and I find that it influences my judgment to have been told in advance what is going to happen.

But I was curious to ask Madame Lys about some of the remarkable predictions she made—and about which I had newspaper clippings.

WE DRANK A COUPLE of cups of coffee with the interesting couple. Madame Lys wanted to tell me how to cure my rheumatism. The main idea was that I was to climb Mount Bandra, which is just outside Bombay, India; and atop of which is a famous Catholic shrine. The lady was insistent that I CLIMB the mountain, not ride up it in a car.

Well, who knows, I may climb it at that, that is, if I get to Bombay after visiting the Sikh temple and the Vedanta centre in Calcutta as well as some Protestant missions. But I didn't make any promises—figured I had better wait to see how high that mountain is.

THE RECORDS plainly show that Madame Lys, when in China and Burma, predicted well in advance the abdication of Edward VIII, the outbreak of the Hitler war, the fall of Hong Kong. Coming closer home, she also predicted exactly what is happening in Korea.

I queried her on her emphatic prediction that there will be no world war, at least till 1958. But she says there will be a sharp world crisis in 1953 when Russia's hand will be forced and a near war will result. However, this will be averted by sudden shake-up within Russia itself.

I REMINDED Madame Lys that she had predicted the death of Stalin to take place before 1950. Stalin is dead, she insists. They are using a "stand in" to impersonate him.

Madame Lys foresees the rise of a strong female influence, "a second Catherine The Great," she says. She thinks Molotov's daughter, or some female close to Molotov, is the "tough" element in Kremlin policies.

APART ALTOGETHER from any psychic gifts, she and her husband know China like a book. The irony of the Korean tragedy, she says, is that the Chinese armies now chasing the Americans south were in fact trained and outfitted by U.S.A., when they were Chiang's crack troops, before they switched over.

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VICTORIA REPORT

by J. K. Nesbitt

Why Esquimalt Vacancy—Government Afraid of Split

VICTORIA.—One can't help but wonder why the people allow so important a matter as a by-election to be left to the political whims of a government. Wouldn't it be a good idea if the Provincial Elections Act said a by-election must be held, say, three months to the day after a member resigned or died?

The way it is now, there's a lot of make-believe about a by-election.

Take Esquimalt. As this column pointed out last week, Charles T. Beard, a kindly and modest man, died in November, and so his legislative seat became vacant.

There were tributes to this man who'll be missed when the House opens next month. There were flowers from the government. There were stories in the papers. Cabinet ministers were pallbearers.

But, officially, no one in authority in the Legislative Buildings knows that Charles Beard is dead or that the Esquimalt seat is vacant.

How's that for fooling yourself?

The Legislature will meet February 20. The Esquimalt seat will be empty. There will be tributes to Charles Beard from the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition. The members will stand with bowed heads, in memory of this good citizen.

But still no one will know, officially that Charles Beard is dead, or that his seat is vacant. And, as long as no one knows officially, there'll be no by-election.

So, there'll be a full session, with Esquimalt unrepresented. It doesn't seem quite good enough—a government ignoring a House vacancy for political reasons.

Esquimalt, you see, is a thorn in the easily-bruised, not-too-quickly-healed flesh of the Coalition. 'Tis whispered Liberals and Conservatives out there are so sore at each other that they're thinking of fighting each other at the polls—which means, of course, the CCF is very likely to get in. All this is so embarrassing to the Coalition that Messrs. Johnson and Anson are going to ignore the Esquimalt vacancy as long as they possibly can.

The Elections Act says that the powers that-be in this capital may ignore a House vacancy until two members, in writing, or one member, standing in his place on the floor of the House, inform the Speaker that there is a vacancy. Then the Speaker must get going—informed the deputy provincial secretary to get moving—and the by-election must be in six months.

No private government M.L.A. of course, is going to jump into hot water with the government by getting up and drawing at-

tention to a House vacancy. The Opposition, too, usually plays ball with the government in this regard. Unless oppositions are very sure of themselves (and the CCF isn't), they don't like by-elections, any more than governments.

And so it is that a House vacancy could go unnoticed, for years.

This reporter is inclined to wonder if any government should be allowed in this manner to thumb its nose at the people—for political reasons, don't forget.

Surely there has been plenty of time to fill the Esquimalt seat. The delaying action in this case, for political reasons, doesn't increase confidence of the public in government. It adds up to contempt for government and legislators. That's too bad—for our system is a good system, if only those in authority don't take advantage of it—in order to gain political advantage.

POW's Protest Jap Students

A proposal by the British Council to invite Japanese students to complete their education in the United Kingdom, has aroused indignation protests from the Far East Prisoners of War Association. The plan calls for a contribution of £25 (\$75) a month from the council's funds to every student accepting.

The organization represents thousands of former servicemen, captured by the Japanese in the last war, mainly at Singapore and Hong Kong.

"We have been fighting to obtain some sort of compensation for the intolerable conditions we had to endure in the hands of the Japs," said Ronald Hastain, chairman of the association. "So far the government has been unsympathetic. Now we are told it actually wants to help the Japanese. In the circumstances it seems strange that our claims should go unheeded."

A spokesman for the British Council said the financial outlay involved would be small as only a few students were being invited.

RAY... Reflects and Reminisces

Economists at Ottawa are saying Canadians will find it necessary to tighten their belts some time this year. A rather raw way of putting it. There would be more diplomacy in warning against the dangers of over-consumption of food and drink, and preaching the priceless advantages of reducing now and then.

Historians have never been able to tell, in full, events in Canada between 1754 and the year of the fall of Quebec. But they will now. Letters and documents have been presented to the public archives. They are from descendants of General Montcalm's second in command, Chevalier de Levis. The battle that cost the lives of Wolfe and Montcalm was, in some respects the most important ever fought on the continent. Suppose it had never been won, unless by the United States some years later. Or imagine George Washington soundly beaten by British troops. Or had Wolfe never scaled the cliffs to the Plains of Abraham, occasions that became history might never have been heard of.

A shipload of sulphur from Los Angeles and logs from the Skeena River are about to be delivered at Watson Island for use in the early commencement of the Columbia Cellulose plant. This is the first of six such vessels to come to Skeena within the month. The round-the-year big payrolls, often dreamed of here are changing from visions to realities.

Alexander Muir, who composed "The Maple Leaf Forever," has been dead this many a year and Toronto's Memorial Park, named for him, is to be moved, in order to provide space for a subway. It is not out of place to inquire today, how often "The Maple Leaf" is heard.

Llangibby Castle in Wales, once a Cromwell Army stronghold,

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hold, is to be torn down. It turn with profitable cash might have been all right once They returned, perhaps to live in, but not today. The or dangerously ill. Borden only thing to do with a fifty school became a hospital room house in this age would be to convert it into a lodging Prince Rupert can remember house or hotel in Prince Rupert. The seventeenth century however, was also a time of wars and the Lord Protector evidently needed a fastness over in Wales.

Comparisons between the flu outbreak in England today and the epidemic as it was in the late autumn of 1918 continue to be made. While the former is severe it can hardly be said to have the world-wide scope of the latter. It was a deadly plague. No matter where one might go, or do, the menace was an ever present threat.

Rugged looking fishermen sailed for the deep sea expecting to re-

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