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## Freedom of the Press

FREEDOM of the press is one of the great bulwarks of liberty and therefore ought never to be restrained...

A press is free when it can inform, criticize, entertain and influence without fear of reprisal or retaliation; when those in authority welcome dissemination of truth and appeal to reason.

A newsman is free to inform only when he is given access to officials, records and meetings. When is he free to entertain? Only when he can write freely, without fear. What he writes may be humorous, or satirical—it may even expose the prominent to ridicule. Be that as it may, he must feel free to present his impressions and ideas.

And when a newsman feels he must influence, or criticize, in order to best serve the public, he must have the right—and accept the responsibility—to expose and oppose the government, the church, business or labor.

When we shackle the press, we shackle ourselves, for wherever people govern themselves they must have freedom of communication. We cannot limit or censor the press on one hand and still maintain our liberty or democracy on the other.

Who can strangle the press? This can be done internally and externally. From the outside, such forces as the government, churches, pressure groups and vested interests may attempt to tinker with the truth.

Any of these forces may say: "Don't print that"—which is censorship, or "Print that," which is propaganda. Officials may withhold information temporarily or even permanently. Certain groups may refuse to approve or support, thus also bludgeoning the press into silence.

Internally, by lack of coverage or a choice of headline, location in the paper and position on the page, news may be suppressed.

Our press, comparatively, is free today, but for how long? Only as long as we guard jealously our heritage which has commanded that we "hold the freedom of the press sacred;" only as long as we uphold the factors contributing to this freedom.

There still are people today who cannot distinguish between news and opinions in a newspaper. And such people will take a stand against the newspaper, often when it has served them best.

Only on the editorial page should there be expression of opinion, or policy, which has been laid down for the express benefit of the community served by the newspaper. A news story is an item of interest to the public which carries an unbiased report of events, interviews, public speeches or actions of those in public or private life which affect the lives of others, and thus becomes news.

Opinions, ideas, statements or facts in a news story are not opinions, ideas, statements or facts given by the newspaper, but by individuals or groups concerned. A reporter conveys to readers "what happened," as closely as possible covering the actual situation.

But a newsman is far from infallible, although his highest aim is toward truth and accuracy.

## Dry Dock Loss Is \$157,000

OTTAWA (Special to Daily News) — Included in further supplementary estimates for

the year ending March 31, 1951, is an item of \$157,000 to provide for operating losses and essential repairs at the Prince Rupert dry dock during the fiscal year 1950-51, in accordance with the terms of an order-in-council.

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## As I See It



by  
Elmore  
Philpott

### INDIA'S 'SECTION 98'

NEW DELHI, India.—For the past week and a half I have watched the parliament of the newest and, potentially, mightiest democracy in the world dealing with democracy's deepest dilemma.

I have watched India's parliament enact the new Preventive Detention Act, which to a Canadian is all-too-reminiscent of the Section 98 of our Criminal Code.

India's Preventive Detention Act gives the government power to arrest and imprison any persons carrying on activities which are held (by the government) to endanger the nation. Apart from the compulsory review of the documents of each case by an advisory board, the persons arrested have no right to trial, no right of habeas corpus—in fact, none of the rights which are supposed to be the very bedrock of Western-style democracy.

ALTHOUGH THE BILL HAD A rough ride, and although the debate on it was keen and long, it finally passed with only one audible "No."

One could not help but ask, in looking down at that Chamber, whether the members themselves realized the deep significance of what they were doing.

Many of them—I imagine most of them—had themselves been in prison, under a much similar act, in the last decades of British imperial rule here. Yet here they were calmly passing a law almost identical with the law which they themselves so loudly and properly denounced when they were its victims.

THERE ARE AT PRESENT between two thousand and three thousand persons held in detention under this act. Most of these detained persons are Communists. But there are some militant Sikh nationalists, also some extreme right wingers of the type implicated in the murder of Gandhi.

Yet in the course of the debate I heard one speaker say that no less than 889 Socialists had been imprisoned under this act at one time or another. Nobody denied that charge, and I myself have asked many MPs about it. They do not deny its truth, but they explain (and the Socialists themselves admit) that the arrests took place where organized Pay-Not-Rent campaigns were under way.

That is, the Socialists here in some parts, tangle with the law because they indulge in direct action tactics such as calling on peasants in such and such an area not to pay any rent to the landlords. The government itself is behind a very far-reaching scheme of land-ownership reform, which is not being challenged in the courts as "ultra vires."

But meanwhile, under the Emergency Detention Act, it steps in to halt activities of a direct-action pattern.

THE DILEMMA SO HIGHLIGHTED in India is obvious:

Can a democracy remain a democracy if it adopts police state methods which deny an accused person of fair trial in court?

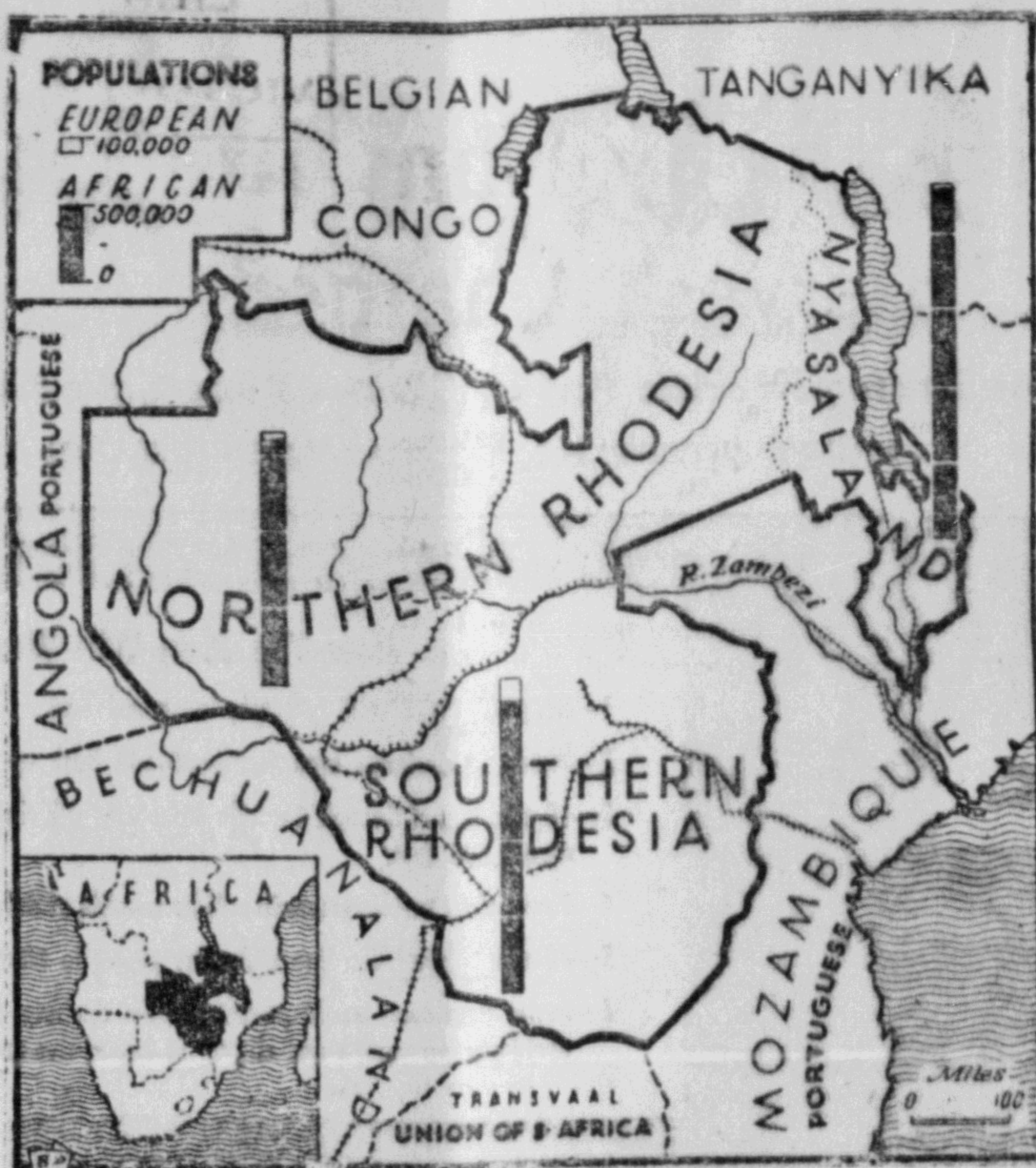
But on the other hand, can a democracy survive if it permits the extension of violent methods to the point where they, in fact, paralyze whole sections of the country or, in effect, over-ride the laws of the lands?

I HEARD ONE SOCIALIST MP snap at an interrupter: "Your turn will come, under this very law." He went on to say that when the parties now victimized by the law came into parliamentary power they themselves could use the very law of detention-without-trial to work revenge.

It must be a sobering truth for all democrats to ponder the fact that the very law now used to combat the Communists could be used, without changing a single letter, to legalize and justify detaining the vast numbers held in forced labor camps in Communist countries.

UNDER THE PRESENT CONGRESS Party leadership, there is no more question of the abuse of this law than under our own very similar wartime statutes. Yet, even the friendliest and most hopeful outside observer, such as myself, cannot help but ask what would happen in a country like India if the political pendulum swung either to the far left or far right.

Of course, I have no patience with the argument that demo-



### PLANNING A NEW DOMINION

NEW DOMINION—Proposals to establish a new British Dominion in Central Africa are being explored. The problems and advantages of closer association between Southern and Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland are being investigated. The total area of the three territories is 472,000 square miles—five times as big as the United Kingdom. The total population is under 2,000,000 of whom only 163,000 are Europeans. These two facts provide the main problems the experts will have to consider. Because of the vastness of the territory and its under-population the cost of central services is likely to be high. The desire of the tiny white minority to assert political domination over the African majority—as in Southern Rhodesia, the most constitutionally advanced of the three territories—creates a serious, if not insuperable, obstacle.

## Report from Parliament

By E. T. APPLEWHITE, M.P.

### Would Help Gold Industry—New Form of Estimates—Migratory Birds

Hon. Douglas Abbott, minister of finance, with, as he said, the concurrence of Hon. George Prudham, minister of mines and technical surveys, recently made a statement regarding gold. He said that representations had been made relating to the prevailing difficult conditions in the industry resulting

from the increasing cost of production in the face of a fixed price for the industry's product, and including recommendations for various changes in legislation or policy designed to assist the industry in meeting conditions and to avoid the closing down of mines with the hardship this would cause to a number of small northern communities largely or wholly dependent upon such mines. The Canadian government had been informed by the International Monetary Fund that its staff was currently studying the situation arising out of the recent sharp increase in sales of gold in hoarding markets and had already decided to request the board to give urgent consideration to the whole question. He then quoted the board's resolution which in effect admitted at least partial failure. Therefore for the present at any rate—the Emergency Gold Mining Assistance Act will be continued with modifications which it is hoped will more effectively assist the industry. Full details will be given us by Mr. Prudham later.

Mr. Abbott has also tabled the main estimates for the coming fiscal year. These are in a new form which is supposed to assist one in finding a particular item. I confess I did better with the old form. This year the Treasury Board has followed the suggestion of the Public Accounts Committee that it avoid, so far as possible, votes having a legislative purpose instead of an appropriation purpose—this really is an improvement. The suggestion that various departments

(Continued on page 6)

crats in India or elsewhere should sit passive while the whole basis of operating democracy is undermined by those who admit that they intend to abolish democracy at the earliest opportunity.

## ray..

### Reflects and Reminisces

Members of the High School band from Oregon, here March 16, played a delightful program—even if it did manage to keep away from the "Wearin' o' the Green." But lots of others in Prince Rupert didn't.

### SPRINGTIME NEAR THE ROCKIES

Several score north bound swans, true harbingers of spring, paused at Niagara. A man was also found frozen to death behind a Calgary board fence.

### A LITTLE RESTRAINT NOT AMISS

Visitors new to the north, coming even this far in March like to comment on the scenery. Later, of course—say in July or August—the risks of emotional pressure should not be disregarded. We cannot permit anything like that to overtake our tourists.

### SEA DOGS

Nova Scotia calls attention to what it terms the historic fact that its greatest export has been natural ability. Next on the list of provinces comes British Columbia. In each case, the distinction is explained by the fact that the people live so largely on sea products. They fortify themselves with sea foods, sea weeds, dulce, liver fats and have their being within the element which scientists tell us is the source of all life.

Fear of war is subsiding, says Dr. Brock Chisholm, Canadian



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health authority, now visiting the coast. He is stationed in Geneva and is in daily touch with Russia. He says he believes the Soviets will never start because they know full well they would never win. Fear of war has dropped tremendously in Europe.

### HERE AND NOW!

It is not too early for some use to be made of the elevator other than pour wheat aboard steamers. For example the plant has a drying capacity of 48,000 bushels per every 24 hours. There is today need for storage, to take care of stocks not suitable for early shipping because of dampness. With the food problem felt everywhere, there should be no

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