

They Should Be Heard

WHILE it would be presumptuous to try to pass judgment here on the merits or demerits of their case, it seems clear enough that B.C. government employees should at least be given a hearing in their appeal for the right to arbitrate.

Their position is an unusual one. Since the government is placed above the laws it legislates, none of the numerous provincial acts affecting the rights and working conditions of labor touches the government's own employees. Thus this group is beyond the authority of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act which establishes the type of labor relations that the B.C. government employees now seek.

Because of this there exists a situation which the government should observe with care. It is, namely, that the government workers have a right to walk off the job en masse whenever they so please. Although such a step is unlikely since government employees are not the kind of people disposed to sabotaging their own province, it is questionable justice to ignore them because of their loyalty.

There is another element in this which has a slightly unpleasant flavor. Prior to the last provincial election, the B.C. Government Employees Association contacted every candidate to ascertain his or her views on the government employees' right to arbitration. Possibly with a respectful look at the fact that there are 10,000 such employees in the province, not one candidate opposed it. Of the 131 who definitely favored such a right, six are now cabinet ministers.

With this in mind, it is disturbing to learn that association representatives cannot get beyond the front office at Victoria to discuss the subject. No one with any understanding of practical politics expects to see a follow-up to everything said at election time, but there is a serious principle involved here which cannot be treated in an offhand manner.

While taxpayers appreciate any effort by the government to economize, none but the most selfish will suggest it be done at the expense of a group which cannot speak for itself.

It is not for us to comment on the working conditions of B.C. government employees. Nor will we even pass judgment on their right to arbitration. But if they have something important to say—and it appears that they have—they should at least be heard. Anything less is undemocratic.

Scripture Passage for Today

Consider, and hear me, O Lord.—Psalm 13:3.

OTTAWA DIARY

By NORMAN M. MACLEOD

Government reaction to free speech and criticism depends a good deal—if not entirely—upon whose ox is being gored.

For example, two Sundays ago Ottawa press commentator Michael Barkway spoke on the CBC program Capital Report. He set out to do a real job of analyzing PC Leader George Drew's attitude towards the Currie report and succeeded moderately well. But the attack could hardly be regarded as in any sense unprejudiced or impartial.

Mr. Drew promptly protested on the floor of the House. He argued that it was entirely wrong in principle for CBC to sponsor such a broadcast.

But the government's ears were conveniently deaf. It couldn't hear Mr. Drew's argument. Instead it listened to comments from its own supporters who contended that the issue involved was the sacred one of freedom of speech. Even the Prime Minister joined in the sport of smacking

Drew down and pinning an oversized hero's medal on Barkway.

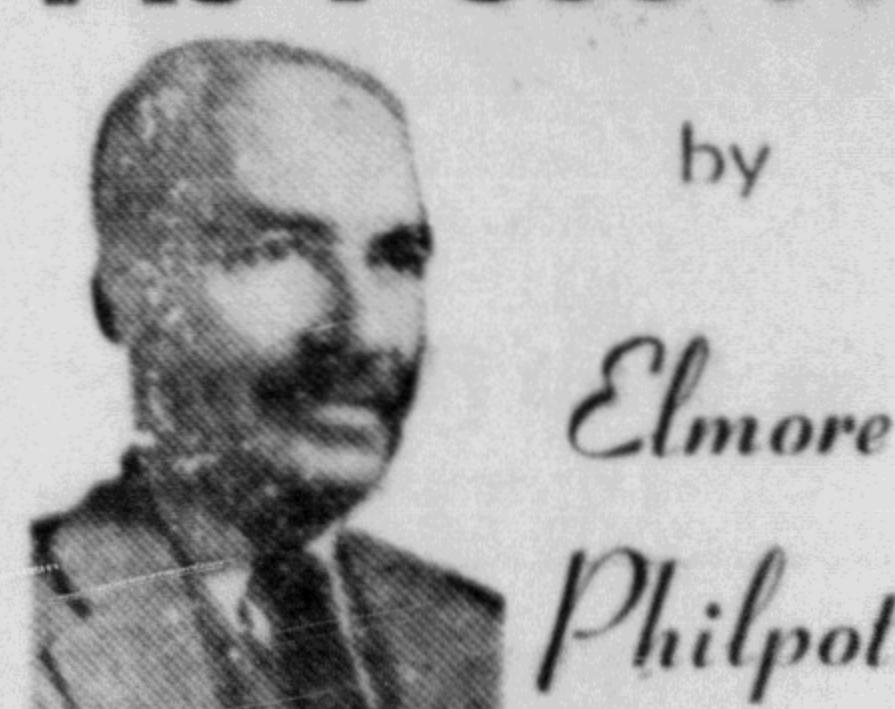
But last Sunday Ottawa Commentator Arthur Blakeley spoke over the same program. He chose a theme from the anti-government book and raked the defence department fore and aft for a catalogue of shortcomings that bordered on the sensational. Compared with Blakeley's attack the Currie report was almost a eulogy. Blakeley's was a blistering performance.

Naturally, you will say, the government took the same lofty attitude towards Blakeley's right to freedom of speech that it took only a week earlier in the Barkway case.

Oh yeh? If you think that for one minute you just don't know your governments. True, nothing was said about the broadcast on the floor of the House. Even Mr. Drew forebore from asking the government how it felt about the matter now that the tables were turned—a question that he could have asked very naturally. But there was plenty said about the broadcast by the Cabinet Ministers in successive private huddles. And it's a very safe wager that the government's august displeasure over the talk has been communicated from top cabinet level to CBC Chairman Davidson Dunton.

There'll be no outward reprisals against Correspondent Blakeley. The government recognizes that it tied its hands effectively against such action in the Barkway case. But the reprisals will take place just the same. You're probably going to need an awfully good pair of ears to hear Commentator Blakeley on the Ottawa Report program ever again—at least while the present Liberal Government is in power.

As I See It



Socred's Ideal State

ON TUESDAY night, February 17, Mr. J. Perdue, president of the Social Credit League of B.C., spoke in a meeting in the Legion Hall, Nelson.

The meeting is fully reported in the Nelson Daily News for February 19. Four citizens who were in the audience wrote me volunteering to make affidavits that the Nelson News report is completely accurate. It states:

"Mr. Perdue, who recently left Venezuela after serving seven years as an engineer, said they had the most advanced Social Credit Government in the world today, because they had no taxes, and the government did not believe in first giving you money and then turning around and taking it back."

Mr. Perdue described the present military government as "the finest government he had seen." "They built one of the finest of universities and staffed it with some of the best teachers in the world. Education was 100 per cent free. A good many schools and hospitals were built and the fight against malaria was so successful that today it did not exist."

"The difference between the B.C. economy and theirs was that their government was 'for the people and ours was on the people.'"

ANY WELL informed Canadian can find out from any standard reference book in the nearest library that Venezuela is a harsh, tyrannical military dictatorship which is for the common people far from a dream state or imaginary earthly paradise lauded by "Socred's president."

The Atlantic Monthly for February 1953 has a full report on Venezuela which begins:

"In the national election of November 30, Venezuela's voters ran up an overwhelming majority against the military junta government." The magazine then describes how the dictatorship cheated the people, clamping down an iron clad censorship, and brazenly faking the election result. It explains:

"The big anti-government vote on November 30 strongly indicates that Venezuela, like half a dozen other republics from Argentina to Central America, is deeply launched on a long term revolt. It is a revolt by a fast growing class of low paid, impoverished city and town workers against the control of the state and country's resources by an immensely rich aristocracy." The article mentions the close tie-up between the local aristocracy and foreign oil interests.

TIME MAGAZINE for February 2 describes how "after a thundering fusillade" the "political police" of Venezuela captured the underground leader of "the outlawed majority party."

The Encyclopedia Britannica Year Book for 1952 throws a very different light on Venezuela than does the Socred President. Instead of education being "free it says, page 721: 'The universities were closed in consequence of continued controversy between the ministry of education and the faculties on the subject of official intervention.'"

Instead of being a country with "no taxes" the 4,926,000 Venezuelans, mostly desperately poor paid 2,112,000,000 bolivars taxes—the bolivar being worth \$0.2985 in U.S. money.

THE SOCIAL CREDIT president underestimates the intelligence of Canadian people. They are not all hicks, or boobs who swallow all tall tales no matter how fantastic.

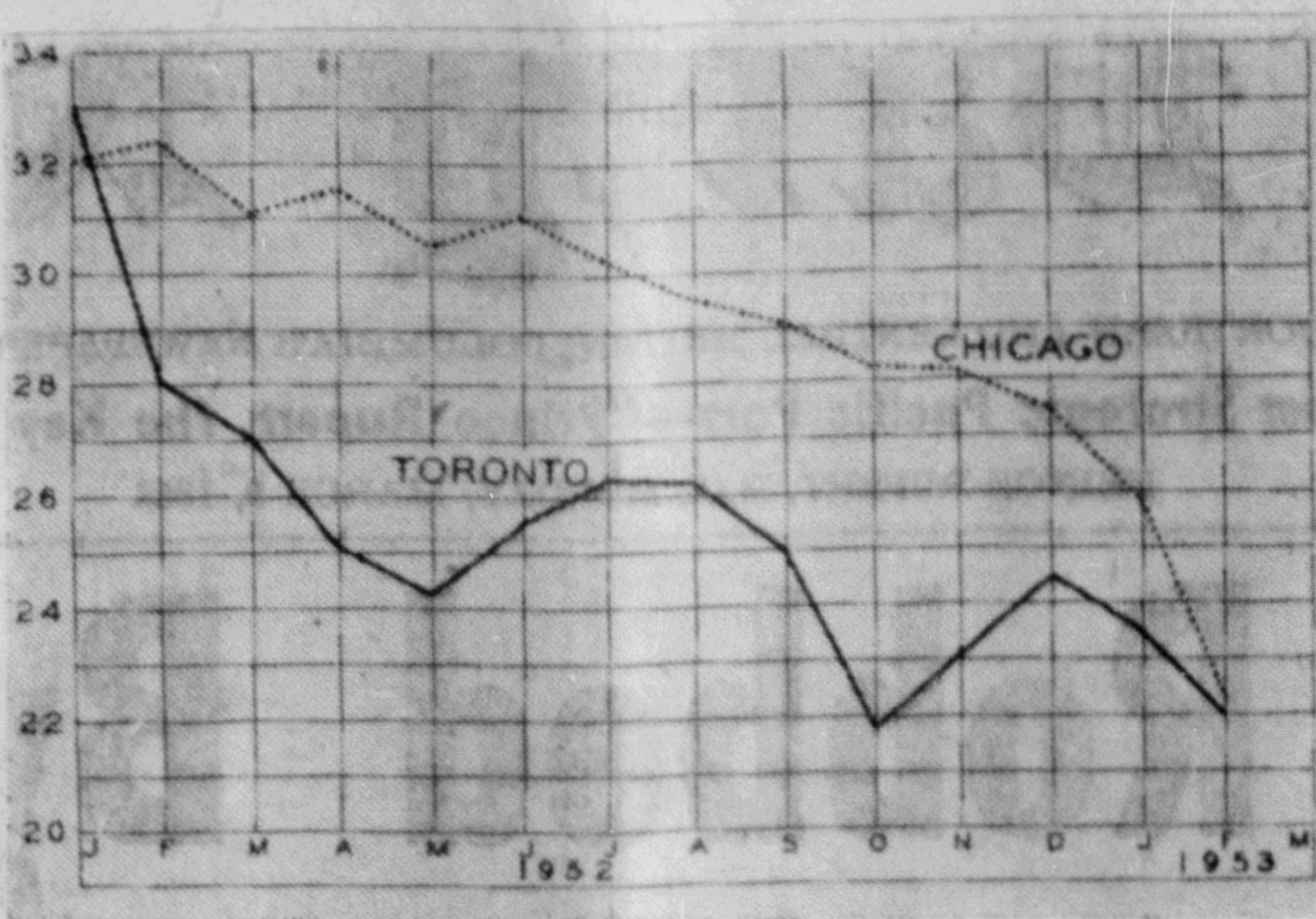
The episode is significant as showing what the top Socred considers the ideal state.

Shoreworkers Seek Increase

VANCOUVER (CP) — Shoreworkers of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union (UFAWU) will seek 1953 wage increases ranging from 10 to 30 cents.

[The Daily News reported two weeks ago this raise was being sought by the UFAWU.]

Talks between the union and cannery operators are expected to begin this week. Negotiations involve about 2,600 workers in Vancouver, Steveston, Prince Rupert, Namu and other cannery centres.



CATTLE PRICES in the United States and Canada took a beating during 1952. The nosedive in Canada, as shown in the above chart, was one of the repercussions of the outbreak of the foot-and-mouth disease in Canada. The figures on the left are cents-a-pound, basis good steers sold on the Chicago and Toronto livestock markets.

LETTERBOX

The following open letter is addressed to George Hills, MLA for Prince Rupert.

SEEK ARBITRATION RIGHTS

The Editor,
The Daily News
Sir:

We, the employees of the Provincial Government, are the only group of employees in B.C. who are denied the right to Conciliation and Arbitration. This right of the worker—to bargain with his employer over working conditions—is guaranteed as a civil right to all other workers under Provincial Law except us. For several months we have appealed to the Government to grant us this right which we have been seeking from previous Governments for over five years.

Our efforts on behalf of some 10,000 Provincial Government employees have met with refusal. The present Cabinet's only action has been to suggest hoisting our request for a further six months "to study the principle." We rejected this on the ground that we are only requesting recognition of a civil right which already is a matter of principle established by law years ago.

On February 5 last we wired the Hon. The Premier expressing our disappointment of his Government's lack of recognition of this principle. We also stated that we were prepared to participate in a study of the application of the principle—if our civil right was recognized. To date we have not even had the courtesy of a reply from the Premier.

Having thus had our rightful request ignored, we are now placing our case before the highest authority—the people. We

believe that the people of British Columbia support us wholeheartedly in this demand.

The Industrial and Conciliation Act was passed by our Provincial Governments in the interests of all employees in this province—yet the Government refuses to be bound by its own laws in dealing with its own employees. This is a complete negation of democratic principles, and is discriminatory to say the least. It places us, who serve the public, in the category of second-class citizenship. Is this democracy? Is this justice? Is this Canadianism? We do not think so. Do you?

We don't think you do because when you were a candidate in the last election you expressed yourself in favor of the principle of Arbitration for Government employees in answer to direct questions from representatives of our Association. We would also point out that 31 of the present government's candidates so expressed themselves. Eleven of these were elected, and of this number six are now Cabinet ministers.

The time is long since passed when this injustice should be righted without further delay. We therefore publicly and respectfully appeal to you to exert the influence of your Legislative office to this end.

E. P. O'Connor,
General Secretary,
B. C. Government
Employees' Association.

LIKED STORY

The Editor,
The Daily News:
Just a little note to say I liked the article about my grandfather, John Bulger, sr. Good luck with your paper, and you deserve it.

I am 9 years old and in 4th Grade, at Dunrae Gardens School.

JOHN BULGER,
470 Monmouth,
Town of Mt. Royal, Que.

One of the world's largest volcanoes, Mount St. Helens, erupted on the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands.

MILESTONES

From the Files of The Daily News

40 Years Ago Today

The fitting up of the interior of the new Canadian Bank of Commerce has now been completed.

An elevator will be installed in the Connaught wing of the hospital at a total cost of \$2,600.

30 Years Ago Today

With the Swanson Bay ferry and the snagboat Bobolink at the CN drydock and the Prince George coming in for immediate overhaul, the drydock will be busy for several weeks.

20 Years Ago Today

At a meeting of the library board, S. J. Jabour outlined a plan on behalf of the Gryo Club for making a collection of books to be donated to the library.

President Wilkinson has appointed H. F. Pullen, T. Black and Frank Dibb to the book committee of the library board.

10 Years Ago Today

G. W. Nickerson has been appointed a member of the International Fisheries Commission succeeding L. W. Patmore, K.C.

Permission has been granted to the armed forces to clear a sports field on McBride between 9th Avenue and Hays Creek.



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Reflects and Reminisces

George Malenkov, successor to Joseph Stalin is described as a bit swarthy, of somewhat short build and an individual with a dislike of the United Nations. Someone who means what he says—which may be plenty.

SPEAKING OF TAXES

From Arkansas comes a story that the legislature of that state plan a tax of \$750 on every bachelor, notwithstanding what private obligations he may, or may not be faithfully recognizing. But perhaps Arkansas is unaware that no tax exists in plenty parts of the world. The average bach is footless, and likes an occasional change. Also, travelling today is done comfortably.

Jarvis H. MacLod, Prince Rupert's first Collector of Customs continues to find the Imperial Valley of Mexico a pleasant part of the west, particularly in winter. Weather is a delight. He recommends a visit by Canadians way up in British Columbia. Well, any number of Mexicans and Californians ramble through Skeena, Yukon and Alaska every year—particularly in summer. So these outings can work both ways.

A prefabricated three bedroom house with bathroom, costing \$5,000 has arrived in Calgary from Holland. Sometimes there can be such a thing as too much water. It's been seen in Calgary and has not gone unnoticed in Prince Rupert. Yet, after reading the overseas dispatches we think it's safer on this side.

A fourteen foot snake stole a three-months old baby from its mother's arms in Northern Australia the other night. The child was rescued when dropped after being released from where it lay gripped between the python's fangs. Queen Elizabeth is touring Australia next autumn. She may not hear this little yarn, but it's more than enough to "kill the blood of anyone—queer, and mother, or any mortal anywhere."

For the first time in memory, Canada will stage a state ball to celebrate the coronation, June 2. It will take place in Rideau Hall, Ottawa. Only the top bracket of society will be invited. So, if you cannot manage to score a seat at Westminster, you can take a chance at Ottawa—and perhaps put to one side a few good sound dollars at the same time.

Record Freight Shipments Carried Over CNR Western Lines in 1952

WINNIPEG—A combined daily total of more than 93,000 miles was travelled by Canadian National Railways' locomotives in the western region in 1952, Frank H. Keefe, general manager for the region, told the annual meeting of the CNR Union-Management Co-operative Movement.

"This means that a considerable amount of railway equipment has been employed over this territory under heavy loads and with greater speed than ever before."

For the first time in the railway's history the gross ton miles on the western region exceeded all other regions of the CNR system, Mr. Keefe said.

The railways' car repair forces also established a record on the western region by reducing the number of unserviceable freight and passenger cars to three per cent of the total roster, which was the lowest regional percentage of unserviceable cars on the system.

"Had it not been for the shopmen in Western Canada turning out a high standard of repair work, I am certain these records would not have been possible," he said.

E. Wynne, general superintendent of motive power and car equipment for the CNR western region, who presided, reviewed the work of the 20 divisional committees, and then read a message from J. R. McMillan, vice-president, western region.

Mr. McMillan's message said that he placed much value in what was being accomplished by these co-operative meetings. He hoped the number of personal injuries would continue to decrease.

line, that the good was turned out by the motive power and car equipment departments would continue that the meeting had been most successful.

C. P. Patterson, general superintendent of electricians, "wishes the union delegates."

He said it was with a deal of satisfaction that he observed the employment in CNR repair tracks, running the main shops across the region had been making a satisfactory record.

acknowledged the maintenance work that was being done by the electricians and general carmen.

Patterson said he was pleased to see the railway would grant the wages which were discussed at the meeting and which the union considered "our fellow employees."

The CNR representatives included E. H. Jenkins, general superintendent of equipment; A. McMillan, general superintendent of motive power and car equipment; and C. E. Stewart, general superintendent of freight and passenger cars.

The Federation was led by the following chairman: F. B. metal workers; G. T. chineists; J. Horne, blacksmiths; D. Capri, moulders; D. blacksmiths, and F. carmen.

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