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Political Mystery

ALTHOUGH his party would have been defeated in 1952 in its first serious bid for office had not the alternative system of voting been in vogue, Premier Bennett was quoted recently as intending to return B.C. to the straight type of balloting. A similar preference for the old system has been expressed by Arthur Laing, whose Liberal party would have been completely without representation had the voting in the June election stopped at the first count.

This opposition to preferential voting by those who have benefited from it is one of the current mysteries of provincial politics, ranking second only to the double-talk that is surrounding compulsory hospital insurance. The mystery deepens when account is taken of the fact that both parties concerned lost ground to the CCF in the non-preferential voting of the federal election. Since the Socialists also favor the single-choice ballot, it seems that the days of alternative voting in B.C. are definitely numbered.

If there were something basically wrong with the system, the situation might be understandable. As it is, however, the free enterprise parties appear anxious to hand over control to the CCF for no other reason than to simplify the work of the voters and election officials. If they do this, their gesture will go down as the weirdest and most self-effacing form of generosity in provincial political history.

Speed Essential in Searches

ALTHOUGH much has been made of the large reward offered, those who have taken part in the search for the Ellis Hall plane deserve credit far beyond all mercenary considerations. In the two weeks since the New Mexico oil man and his party disappeared, scores of planes have flown hundreds of hours over country which at any time could precipitate another disaster. On the ground and on water others have pressed the search over which the shadow of failure now throws a pall, though efforts continue undiminished.

While the occurrence has provided still another example of the human concern for the traveler in trouble, it also has served notice that locally we are poorly equipped to meet such emergency. In the absence of any established arrangement for handling rescue operations, precious time was lost until something was organized. Thanks to the initiative of the Aero Club, a system was quickly improvised by which air searchers coordinated their activities. Even so, there was little or no direction from Vancouver where RCAF operations are supervised.

In cases such as this, the first few hours can mean the difference between life and death. We should always be ready to go into action at once.

OTTAWA DIARY

By Norman M. MacLeod

A touring taxpayer from the Maritime Provinces got into a wrong corridor the other day in the course of his tour of the Parliament Buildings. As a result of his mistake, he sought out the authorities to ask a perfectly natural question.

He wanted to know the explanation of the boat that was being built in a ground-floor hallway of the Senate, just outside the door of the suite of offices that, for a scant three months every year, houses the inquiries of the Senate Divorce Committee into the seamy side of life.

When the authorities heard about the boat's existence, they too wanted an explanation. Their first idea was that the tourist had been the victim of hallucinations. But when they went down to investigate there the boat was—keel carefully laid, stoutly ribbed, and work proceeding apace on its hull. Busily wielding hammers were members of the Senate carpentry staff.

The authorities are still checking into the boat building that apparently has been going on under their very noses, but without their knowledge. The incident is likely to become the subject of an official investigation before the Senate Internal Economy Committee when Parliament meets. Meantime, the faces of the officials, revealed as ignorant of such goings-on under their very noses—are remain-

ing very red indeed.

The explanation of the episode so far is simply that a senior Senate official wanted a boat built and commissioned the Senate carpentry staff to build it. The purpose of the present investigation is to discover whether, in addition to using the Senate precincts as a make-shift drydock, the project also utilized government lumber and was being carried on by the use of labor time for which the government paid. Those points will remain officially without answer.

Some of the Senators who have heard about the business are quite disturbed. They're afraid it may tend to give the Senate a bad name—to publicize it nation-wide as a somewhat unbusinesslike institution. They are a bit sensitive on such a score, because they harbor the suspicion that already the Senate's reputation as a business-like institution isn't any too high. The idea of time hanging so heavily on the hands of its staff that they take in boat-building contracts as a sideline isn't the sort of advertising that most of the Senators want.

Meantime, a closer check is to be kept on the meanderings of tourists around the Buildings. That's for sure. There's no telling what other things they might discover if they got into other wrong corridors. No chances are to be taken.

All Aboard

By G. E. MORTIMORE

A San Francisco carpenter who calls himself "Canada Ernie" recently toured the United States from coast to coast preaching a "Crusade for Canada's Independence."

Canada Ernie, whose real name is Ernest Schallbaum, Jr., feels that Canada should throw off the chains of British rule and start her own government. As a further sign of independence, this country should then join the United States Ernie says.

Independence for Canada, eh? How is it that we Canadians never thought of an idea like that? All these years we have been mousing along in the same old subordinate way, sending a telegram to the King or the Queen to ask for new traffic lights, writing to the Colonial Office in London for permission to paint the back door of the post office.

We knew SOMETHING was amiss, but we couldn't tell what it was until Ernie spoke out loud and clear. Quick as a wink, a foreigner solved a problem which had baffled generations of Canadians. Independence! That was the answer. There is no doubt that Ernie is right. Canada should have her own parliament.

And if we proved after a period of probation that we could govern ourselves, we might be admitted to the union as the 49th or 50th state.

There is no telling how many American eyes Ernie opened during his cross-country tour. All kinds of people who used to think Canada was a Central American state have been set right. They now realize that we are a British colony dangling from the northern tip of the United States.

The people down there can tell that Ernie knows what he is talking about, because he went to school near Winnipeg for some time. Geography and history courses in Manitoba must be unique, to say the least.

Ernie should follow up his successful tour of the U.S.A. with a lecture tour of Canada. After that he might tour France, urging the people to rise in arms and overthrow Napoleon. Then he could carry on through Europe and Asia, exhorting the tribes to unite against the menace of Genghis Khan.

I can visualize Ernie making a triumphal return to the United States and embarking upon yet another patriotic journey: nothing less than a tour of the American colonies, during which he would stir the people to rebellion against the wicked rule of George III. He might take as his slogan "No Taxation Without Representation," or some such phrase to catch the fancy of the multitude.

Of course he wouldn't have to use exactly the words I have suggested. I'm sure a keen and original mind like Ernie's can create a better slogan than that.

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Ray REFLECTS and REMINISCES

A national library degrades or uplifts the soul of a nation the Canadian Library Association has been told. This is determined as the right or the wrong books are placed on the library shelves. One could mention new volumes of singular popularity.

No father objects to his children asking questions—provided he knows the answers.

The "good old days" were not so full of labor saving devices, people are saying. Neither were they so full of noise.

Your true optimist will tell hair-raising tales to bald-headed men. —Brandon Sun.

At least, the latest prime minister of France has a name everybody can pronounce and spell correctly.

A questionnaire at Leeds (England) showed that 25 per cent of 1,000 students did not know who was prime minister of Britain at the time of the Munich crisis. Guesses included Churchill, Ramsay MacDonald, and Lloyd George. There was another who also had a "C" in his name but there was no second "C" to keep it company. Who can it be?

Four cases of toothpaste are reported stolen from a British warehouse. This time no juvenile, no matter where, is suspected. It isn't considered possible.

Now that the State Liquor Control Board has repealed the regulation, Indians in the State of Washington are ordering their favorite brands. There are about 16,000 natives in Washington.

It is now more than 250 years since William Shakespeare struck the right vocal chord about women when he wrote "Her voice was ever soft, gentle and low, an excellent thing in women." Today it remains as excellent as it is rare.

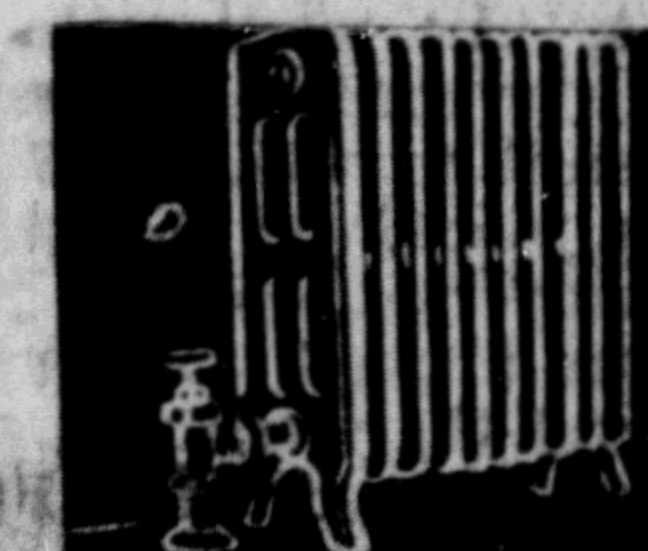
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Jasper Village Booms As Movie Folk Abound

JASPER, Alta (CP) — Jasper village has "movietitis."

Not in a bold, brash way, of course. Just a tinge at the sight of a famous face of the silver screen come to life on the village street. And a pleased smile at the tune the town's cash registers are playing.

Four full-length motion pictures are being made in Jasper National Park this summer. All the big movie companies have set up headquarters in Jasper village.

Three miles from Jasper, where some 500 American visitors daily enjoy the comforts of the new \$3,000,000 Jasper Park Lodge, the sophisticated guests also have contracted the disease. They don't quite gape, but they like to see the stars passing through the lounges and being ushered to their dining-room seats.

A movie company on location resembles a circus in its equipment and personnel. For every star and featured player shown on the silver screen, there are perhaps 15 behind-the-scenes workers — prop men; make-up men and women; dramatic coaches; wardrobe people; publicity and script writers; electrical and sound engineers; cameramen and assistants; carpenters; scene painters; protective officers and hordes of technicians.

The souvenir shops are filled with shopping movie people. If the shoppers include a cinema personality come to town from the lodge — perhaps Marilyn Monroe—it doesn't take long to attract a crowd.

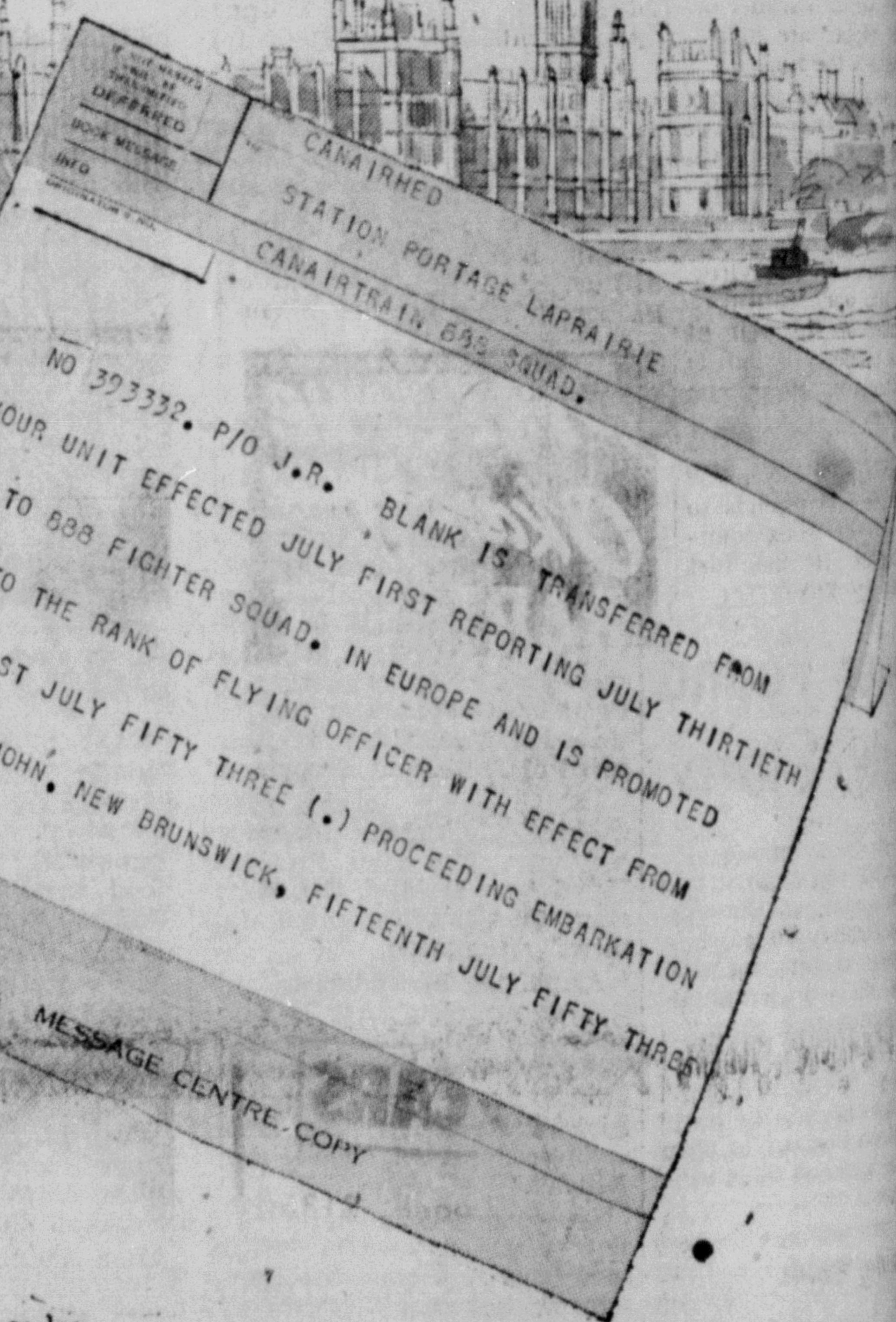
Taverns are filled to overflowing by movie folk who have worked a full 12 hours in sun and wind. Cowboys, some with Texas and Oklahoma draws, tread the main street. Adding color to the scene are the Indians standing silently on street corners or sitting on benches at the railway station.

Austrian-born director Otto Preminger is held spell-bound by majestic Mount Edith Cavell. "I love that mountain," he says. Preminger had part of the script of "River of No Return" rewritten to include a shot of the mountain.

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