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Look to The North

DISCUSSION of the most far-reaching importance is being heard in Parliament these days during debate on the bill to create a department of northern affairs and natural resources.

In some respects, it is almost as if the north were in the process of being discovered. This note was hit forcibly by the Prime Minister himself who, describing an occasion when he was consulting a large map of North America with a visiting delegation, said:

"I was looking at the map and it struck me that Alaska looked to be larger than Ontario. I said, 'I'm not saying that this map is not accurate but it must be drawn in such a way as to throw the northern portion out of perspective with the rest.' However, on checking it I found to my surprise that in fact Alaska is larger in area than the whole of Ontario. . . . It is just a trifle smaller than Quebec, which reaches almost to the north pole. . . ."

The Prime Minister went on to remark that the Northwest Territories and the Yukon Territory constitute almost 40 per cent of the total area of Canada.

To us who live on the fringe of the north and are quite aware of its size and possibilities, this approach to the question seems somewhat elementary. But the important thing is that attention is being turned in that direction, and members who thought Edmonton was the northwest corner of Canada are being jolted with a few astonishing facts.

An example of this arose when debate swung to the hydro-electric potential of northern B.C. and the Yukon. The House was told that by diversion of the Yukon River, more than five million horsepower could be developed, which would be greater than the productive capacity of the entire St. Lawrence seaway and the Niagara River together.

Since the industrial growth of cities like Toronto and Montreal was made possible by the primary power in eastern Canada, the members must have wondered what tremendous things might happen in the north.

So do we all. It is true that monumental problems exist. Transportation services must be developed somehow, despite the enormous cost. There is no established outlet to the sea for northern B.C. except via Alaska and, as a supplementary difficulty, there might then be a question of what international concessions should be made. Although the government's present policy is to make none, this is a matter which probably will need further thought.

But because the potentialities are truly there and can serve a purpose, these problems will be met and overcome. Within a few years the whole world will be taking notice.

Ray REFLECTS and REMINISCES

Then there is the fellow who said he intends to shop late to avoid the crowds who do their Christmas shopping early.

Some are saying there isn't a British Empire any longer. But by this time next May there will be a young woman called Elizabeth who will be quick to disagree with anyone who says it. Any time during the past few months she was weary enough to welcome sleep, but couldn't. Travel would not permit it.

Mankind is believed to be the most intelligent animal there is. He is the only being that does a lot of things he objects to, in order to obtain what he has no need for, whatever. But is this what you call intelligence?

AN EXCEPTION

There is a persistent rumor that nearly every member of the House of Commons favors limitation of the length of speeches. That is, limitation for all speeches, except his own.

There are about 60 children in the threadbare fishing village of Marias at Lake Manitoba. So far, it's been a lean year, with 1954 prospects not much better. One of the kiddies has only part of a doll, but is making the most of it.

Things are different today. The Winnipeg Tribune's bit of publicity had a whirlwind effect. A roaming member of the staff chanced to chat with the child who had been missing something. Next day the story

appeared, and over it the following notice: "All this little girl wants for Christmas is a head for her doll." Manitoba's heart has been touched as perhaps never before. For days, contributions kept being received. Beautiful dolls by the score, dozens of turkeys, cases of candy and scores of articles popular at this season found their way to Marias, as well as a couple of one hundred dollar bills.

SOMEHOW, THEY MANAGE!

One of the least remunerative of situations open to Canadian women is being the widow of a Dominion civil servant. Parliament today tells us 5,522 such widows—about half live in Ontario. Some draw less than \$20 a month, and others \$20 and \$30.

Already some men have figured out how much energy they have saved by not shovelling snow.

Hard work was never known to kill anybody. But frequent thoughts of toll have unquestionably shortened one's days.

PREFER EVENING

Another Canadian morning paper will publish no more. Le Canada of Montreal is a permanent casualty after half a century of life. There is regret but no surprise. High costs can go just so high. And for some reason not yet explained it seems more prefer to read the news at the end, instead of the beginning of the day.

As I See It



by
**Elmore
Philpott**

Three Free Votes Coming

IN THE last hour of the first term of the new parliament the minister of justice made a highly important announcement.

In the pending revision of the Criminal Code the government is calling off the party whips. Liberals will be free to vote as their consciences suggest. Other parties are invited to do likewise.

THE THREE main issues which will be decided in the coming free votes of 1954 are:

Should Canada keep the death penalty, or substitute life imprisonment for murder?

Should Canada prolong the practice of whipping and similar corporal punishments of prisoners?

Should Canada legalize sweepstakes, as they are legalized in Ireland, and some other countries?

THESE three questions are bound to create historic debates. As a matter of fact, the coming big debates have already "cast their shadows before." Harold Winch almost stalled the recessing of parliament by his determination to make sure that private MPs are going to get the chance to have their say. However, his ardour was somewhat unnecessary as the minister of justice had done his best to make it clear that the government wanted every MP to speak out freely and fully, especially on such things as capital punishment.

I KNOW how I will speak and vote on the question of capital punishment, and also on that of lashing prisoners. However, I am not saying yet.

Quite frankly, I don't know what to think about the question of legalized sweepstakes. I am aware that the history of most sweepstakes is that the countries that started them always ended by ruing the day they did. Some of the southern States made a lot of quick easy money in the beginning by sweepstakes. But their last condition was worse than their first. In the end, the government suffered financially, even more than the swarms of "poor suckers" each of whom had hoped to get rich by the sweep-stake route.

However, there is another side to the argument. Vast sums of money are drained out of Canada every year by sweepstakes run in Ireland. You can at least argue, with some force, that if everybody and his brother in Canada is going to buy sweepstakes tickets, Canadian hospitals, and not Irish hospitals, should get the benefit.

But as I say, this is a matter which does not seem of world-shaking importance to me and I would certainly like to hear what the ordinary reader thinks about it.

THAT flag question will also be up again in the new year. I am getting a good many letters giving people's ideas about the new flag.

Up till now those who are opposed to the inclusion of the Union Jack in the new flag have the lead over those who want to keep the Union Jack in. However, I hasten to add that when I ran a similar poll in 1946 the advocates of the included Union Jack were slower getting started but were in a clear majority in the end.

LONDON (CP)—Brides eager to look their best for registry office weddings in St. Pancras town hall have been given a boost. The borough council is installing a full-length mirror.

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Steve and Nancy Santa Claus



The story so far: Steve and Nancy have been taking Santa's place at the North Pole while he had a sleep. However, they have found the work more than they bargained for.

Chapter X

"I'm so unhappy," Nancy sighed. "We thought being Santa Claus would be such fun, and we haven't got to play at all."

Steve put his arm around her and said "Santa said his job was to give people what they wished for. I wish he would wake up and come in here. I'd like to give his job back to him."

At that moment a door opened and instead of it being a messenger with another problem, it was Santa Claus.

As he entered, he was yawning. "My, that was a fine sleep," he said. "I certainly feel fine now. I hope you children didn't have any trouble when I was gone."

"Santa Claus," both Steve and Nancy shouted. "How glad we are to see you!"

"Why, Nancy, you've been crying," Santa said. "What is the trouble?"

"It seems we've had nothing but trouble since you left," Nancy said.

"It can't be as bad as all that," Santa said. "Steve, slide out of that chair and let me at that old telephone tree. I'll soon have all this trouble put to right."

"You say the racing cars have flat tires?" said Santa, grabbing a phone. "We'll put a little tire repair kit in with each car. I'll bet the kids will have loads of fun fixing those toy tires. And you'd better put in some extra tanks. It may be so much fun they'll want to do it over again."

"Now what's the next problem? Typewriters are ready for Albany, N.Y. and they only write Spanish? Send the Spanish typewriters to some high school boys that are learning to write Spanish. I imagine they'll come in handy."

Nancy interrupted to say "Thirty of the dolls are sick. Hadn't you better do something about that?"

"I should say I must," Santa replied. "I'll just send thirty little doctor's kits over there right away."

"The colors on the polka dot horses are running," Nancy said. "Fine," Santa replied. "We'll call them Zebras. We've been

needing more Zebras anyway."

Steve said "Did you know that the soap bubble pipes are blowing square soap bubbles?"

"Hmmm, that's interesting," Santa said. Picking up a phone he continued "About those square soap bubbles. Keep those bubble pipes here, and paint the bubbles before they burst and we'll use them for building blocks."

"That's so simple, why didn't I think of that?" Steve said. "I bet the Junior Chemistry sets would fix up fine smoke for the electric trains, too."

"That's a fine idea," Santa said.

Nancy suddenly remembered the machine gun. "Santa," she said quickly, "there's a toy machine gun that's running wild, shooting bullets all over. What are you going to do about that?"

"That is serious," Santa said, his face growing stern. Grabbing a phone in each hand he started barking orders. "Call out the toy soldiers! Unlimber the heavy toy tanks! Warm up the engines of the toy fighter planes! Move in cautiously. There's a machine gun running wild. Your orders are to put it out of action at any cost. Report back to me."

Steve and Nancy waited with Santa Claus for word of the battle. In a few minutes over the loudspeaker came the All-Clear signal, meaning the danger was past, and shortly thereafter a dwarf in a soldier's uniform came into the room, drew himself up to attention and saluted. "Well," said Santa, "was there anyone hurt?"

"No," said the soldier, "as a matter of fact the machine gun ran out of bullets long before we got there. What a shame. We never get to shoot anything." With that, he left.

"Now, are there any more problems?" Santa asked.

"Not a one," the children replied. "You surely cleared those up in a hurry."

"It was nothing," said Santa, "but we must be getting you home, children, or your mother will miss you. But first we'll have a big good-bye party."

(Tomorrow: Santa's party)

OTTAWA DIARY

By Norman M. MacLeod

OTTAWA.—If anything can be said with any fair degree of accuracy about this capital city with all its comings and goings in the field of politics and government, it is that the lobby of the swank Chateau Laurier Hotel is a pretty dull place. It has been so for quite some time—until last Friday night.

Then those who were sitting quietly in Peacock Alley reading their newspapers were suddenly brought to their feet by the sight, and no less by the sound, of the Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa in full regalia parading through the Chateau main floor corridors play a Scottish air with the full power and majesty of bagpipes and drum.

It was the night of the Garrison Ball. The corridors and the usually subdued Jasper Lounge of the Chateau swarmed with military officers in their full dress uniforms, and their ladies in evening dress. Let it be said for the purpose of this dispatch that the men stole the show from the ladies.

It's not often that army, air force and navy officers don their full dress uniforms, complete with bright scarlet mess jackets with black lapels, brilliant gold and silver braided trousers, and all the medals and other regalia which is beyond the ken of laymen.

But a report circulating the city Friday night at the time of the ball indicated that all this color is due to be hauled out of

the mothballs a good deal more frequently in future.

A provisional dress regulation has been passed by defence headquarters, with the objective of going into effect next June, requiring all officers to have dress uniforms. And the money to pay for the dress uniform comes out of the pockets of each individual officer. It is not issued by the army, navy or air force.

The thinking back of the defence headquarters move is that despite the size of the forces and the fact that they are spread from Western Germany to Korea, conditions generally have got back to something like a peacetime establishment. The men are on active service abroad, but they aren't fighting, at the moment. And part of the tradition of a peacetime establishment is a dress uniform for each officer.

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VICTORIA REPORT By J. K. Nesbitt

Premier Bennett has been chosen by the editors of a Canadian news gathering organization as second newsmen of the year in Canada. No. 1 is External Affairs Minister Lester Pearson.

The premier, of course, must be delighted to hear this news. Mr. Bennett is not exactly a modest man; he dearly loves the full glare of the spotlight shining on him. When it veers away from him, cleverly he shifts it back on himself.

This art of keeping in the news, no matter the methods used to accomplish it, is one of the gifts a politician must have in order to remain in office. Franklin Roosevelt developed this art to a high degree; Churchill doesn't hate the limelight, nor does Senator McCarthy. Publicity is the very lifeblood of politicians—and they court it.

Politicians frequently fly into great temper because of what is said about them in the public prints. They would fly into greater temper if nothing was said about them. Mr. Pattullo (who could fly into fine rage at the newspapers, too) used to say to irritated politicians: "Don't worry as long as they keep talking about you—the

NORTHERN CAPITAL
The name of the capital of Norway was changed from Christiania to Oslo in 1925.

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time to worry is when you're not talked about."
In this province the last year or so, we've heard so much about politics and Bennettism and Social Credit, and what is Social Credit?—we've become a little fed up, somewhat bored by it all. It comes, therefore, somewhat of a surprise to learn that our political turmoil has captured the imagination of the rest of Canada, that Mr. Bennett has done a fine publicity job, not only for himself and Social Credit, but also for British Columbia.

Whether you like him or not,

and few premiers have been more personally and bitterly hated, one must admit that Mr. Bennett's political career has been, and is, spectacular. Two years ago he was nothing, a Coalition rebel, grabbing the headlines. Now he's B.C.'s elected man.

Fred E. Dowdie

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