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More About PGE

SINCE we spoke yesterday in these columns against the provincial government's plans for the PGE, a brief has arrived from West Vancouver which offers further arguments that are of interest here.

It is understandable that, in a very local way, West Vancouver should be opposed to an extension of the PGE into North Vancouver. Such a project would bring a serious decrease in real estate values along the right-of-way and prove generally undesirable for many residents.

At the same time, West Vancouver's arguments cannot be dismissed for this reason. The municipality has taken a long look at the whole proposal and has emerged with some arguments which should stir uneasiness in any taxpayer who will bear part of the \$30,000,000 load needed for the undertaking.

Pointing to how much closer Prince George is to eastern points by direct route than by way of Vancouver, the brief asks:

"Is it reasonable to suggest that the primary products, mostly lumber, that move out of the Prince George and Quesnel areas destined to any point in Canada or the U.S.A. east of Calgary or Edmonton, which is the logical and in some cases the only market, should be hauled these many miles further over the PGE's mountainous heavy grades and curves to sea level to turn the traffic over to other railways to haul over three mountain ranges to get it to its eastern destination; when it could move over a much shorter and level route?"

"Regarding freight such as grain, minerals and lumber destined for export by water, none of this requires processing or storage in Vancouver and rail extension to move it from one port to another on the same seaboard is unsupportable. These commodities must, of necessity, travel the very shortest distance and must terminate at the nearest tidewater for export. Therefore Squamish or Prince Rupert is their logical export terminus and not Vancouver."

A somewhat sinister note of mystery is struck when the brief remarks on the report that Premier Bennett instructed the PGE management "to release no statistics or information whatsoever."

"What has happened recently must be of vast import as the Premier last September told the Legislature that \$17,225,000 was needed to make the PGE safe; that 325 miles of tracks are 'so out-worn as to be dangerous,'" the brief continues. "He said at the same time that the 83-mile extension from Quesnel to Prince George had not made the PGE pay its way and that the long-sought Squamish-North Vancouver would not make the PGE pay either. The Legislature and the public have a right to know the reason for such a change of opinion that justification is claimed for a further expenditure of \$30,000,000."

In West Vancouver, we have an ally. If both of our communities appear to have selfish reasons in opposing PGE extension, it is because we are so obviously being slapped. When the rest of the taxpayers are required to produce millions of dollars to support a bad investment, they will feel selfish, too.

Viscountess Plans Camp In Canada, U.S.

LONDON (CP) — Viscountess Allenby of Meggido and Felixstowe is planning eight weeks of "rough living" in Canada and the United States, starting late in May.

The viscountess wants to visit three Canadian and three U.S. youth camps to absorb up-to-date North American ideas for a similar camp here.

As vice-president of the 3,000-strong Kent St. John Ambulance Association Cadets, Lady Allenby heads a committee planning the first post-war youth camp for Kent. She will "live in" with campers in Ontario, Quebec and camps in the Adirondacks, finding out from personal contact just what makes North American camps so popular.

"I think Canadian and American camps are about the best in the world, and I want our Kent youngsters to have the best."

Lady Allenby has not yet chosen the camps she will visit.

As I See It



by Elmore Philboott

Buy British

A GROUP of Toronto business men heads up a new Canadian national organization designed to buy more British goods.

These men were no doubt strongly influenced by the success of the B.C. salmon deal.

Britain has shown that she will buy more from those who buy from her. What she has already done in regard to B.C. salmon she could well do for B.C. lumber and for B.C. apples as well as for the products of other parts of this country.

IT IS NOW CLEAR that the present government of Canada will not simply "accept sterling" on the over-simplified basis that has sometimes been suggested, inside and outside the parliament of Canada.

The main reason for this refusal to accept sterling is that Mr. Abbott is betting on complete convertibility, fairly soon, as between the dollar countries and the sterling area. His optimism may or may not be justified. But meantime the Canadian government is as anxious as the British government to facilitate trade deals which have the effect of increasing two-way trade.

The word "barter" is in very bad odor with this government. But the government of Canada is all for arranged deals, which have all of the advantages of large scale barter, but without the disadvantages of that old fashioned form of international trade.

NOW THAT B.C. SALMON is back on the supper tables of Britain, surely it is time to get Okanagan apples there too.

Organization of exactly the same kind of a trade mission as arranged the big salmon deal could easily divert to Britain enough extra money to finance the sale of a million or more boxes of B.C. apples—with a like amount from Nova Scotia.

THE TORONTO business men who are behind the new "Buy More in Britain" drive are not flag-wavers or mere sentimentalists.

They are well aware that Canadian trade with our two best customers is so lopsided as to constitute an outright menace. We are buying far too much from the U.S.A. in relation to what we are selling her. We are buying far too little from Britain, in relation to what she is buying from us.

So far we have been able to keep our total international trade on even keel only because U.S. investors are pouring into Canada an immense flood of investment money. Our Canadian dollar stands at a slight premium over the American dollar for no other reason than that the American investor thinks his dollar is safer or more profitable in Canada than it would be in his own country.

But this is a happy condition for Canada which could literally change overnight. If for any reason the flood of American investment money was cut off, or even cut down, the whole Canadian economy would suffer, disastrously.

IT IS ONLY elementary prudence to wipe out the lop-sided feature of our main trade.

We should be buying less from the U.S.A. and we should be buying much more from Britain. We may disagree as to how best to attain those ends—but there is no room for disagreement as to the ends themselves.



COFFEE AND MINK are travelling in the same circles these days as the price of the popular beverage zooms out of the average household budget. Audrey Adams sips her coffee from a mink-covered cup in the swank Pump Room of Chicago's Ambassador Hotel.

OTTAWA DIARY

By Norman M. MacLeod

It is an old government adage that a drop of more than ten per cent from the peak level of business is an economic danger signal. For the decline never stops there. The people who lose their purchasing power in the ten per cent group affect those dependent on them. The downturn becomes cumulative.

In the immediate economic situation now before Parliament, one of the difficulties has been to measure the extent of the present down-swing. Car-loading figures and department store sales, which used to be accepted as standard economic yardsticks, have been contradicting one another now for a matter of months. At the moment, for example, car-loadings are showing a drop of more than 15 per cent, while department store sales actually are running about the same as a year ago and, in some weeks, even a little better.

But the drop in car loadings obviously has to be discounted by the increased volume of freight being moved by highway transport since higher freight rates priced the railways out of a substantial slice of the nation's carrying trade.

At the same time, department store sales are equally open to objection as an economic indicator. For the department stores have been moving goods by sacrifice methods consisting of slaughter prices abetted by the inducement of maximum credit terms—no cash payment at all, in many cases, and as long as 30 months to complete the transaction. Turnover secured by these means clearly reflects a situation of distress rather than of well-being.

In contrast with the car-loading and department store yardsticks, there is one indicator which government authorities still accept at its face value. That is the unemployment figure. And it definitely has passed the warning signal level—and still is heading upwards.

Why, then, did acting prime minister C. D. Howe tell the Commons that the government wasn't unduly alarmed?

The answer is that the unemployment figure, despite its bulk at the moment, is still well below the level which an active construction or engineering industry can cure. These industries are largely seasonal. They will not become fully effective in mopping up unemployment until spring weather enables them to resume maximum activity. But all prospects point to a record year in construction and devel-

opment projects of all kinds.

The real truth of the matter, as Parliament Hill economists see it, is that if consumer goods only were involved, the nation would have a real-scale depression on its lap right now. But happily the cure of present conditions is no farther away than the few short weeks to spring and the resumption of building, highway, and engineering construction. Wishful thinking may be an element in this view of the Parliament Hill economists. But it's hard to pick any flaw in the reasoning behind it.

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Ray Reflects and Reminisces

Premier St. Laurent in India has made it plain that before leaving the Far East that the attitude of the United States and Canada must be clearly understood. Nothing can be left to lingering doubt or question. This is the time when, if there is a thing to be more fully, or in a more comprehensive way explained it is today and not tomorrow.

More men wearing cowboy hats live in Calgary, but this does not mean they are cowboys. Somehow it's necessary to keep the stampede idea permanent. The nearest Prince Rupert ever came to seeing anything like a rodeo years ago, was when the city staged a hornless runaround. The cowboy experts making the one hand, but had to usefulness with under...
For Sale—House for bedrooms. Near station. Ideal for large Minneapolis Tribune.

ANYWAY A BALANCE

Cost of coffee is reported to be going up, though it isn't yet noticed. It was not that way yesterday. As for sugar, that pleasant and useful article of food is believed today to be going down. This is known as striking a balance, although we do not presume to know all the ins and outs.

It seems a horsemeat sandwich dinner was given somewhere or other the other evening, and when a man was responding to a toast, a listener shouted "Whoa". The poor chap choked to death right there.



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