

Independent daily newspaper devoted to the upbuilding of Prince Rupert and Northern and Central British Columbia.

As I See It



by Elmore Philbott

Inside Story

A GOOD friend wants to know the answer to this question: "How do you like being an MP?"

Well, I can give quite a different answer to that now than I would have given a few months ago.

When I first came down here I felt a bit of a freak. Here I was starting in as a freshman MP when sitting on the front benches were men whom I myself had helped to bring into public life some 20 to 25 years ago.

One morning while we were still living in the big hotel my wife and I both woke up down in the mouth and homesick for the west-coast. We looked at each other and said "we sure are the world's prize pair of fools. We had a perfectly nice home, and a perfectly good job. What did we ever come down here for all this 'work and grief'?"

But that was in the confusing, tiring stage, when we did not know our way around very well.

NOW THAT I am really into the swing of the job I am getting a real kick out of it.

Here is a simple example of what I mean. Up till this year the pensions act has never made adopted children eligible for veterans pensions, on the same basis as natural children. I took the matter up with the Minister, made a strong appeal for a change in the law—as I have no doubt others have done long before my time. But I had the good luck to be there just at the right time, or something, because a few days later the Minister introduced an amendment to the law, making adopted children equal in their rights with other children. You can imagine what a thrill I got when I wrote the personal letter to a family I know telling them the good news. For I knew that what was really at stake was not the money—though that is important too. What was really at stake in the mind of the father and mother with one child born to them, and two more that they had adopted, was that those three children should all grow up feeling equally loved and precious—even to the government.

YOU ALSO get a thrill when you, personally, put through an actual change in the law.

I put one through that I certainly never planned to put through. In fact I did not know that the old law was on the books, till I heard about it in debate. It had to do with campaign contributions. The old law said that anybody who had a contract with the government and who made a campaign contribution to any party was liable on conviction to five years imprisonment. That fool law had been on at least since 1892—and probably before that. Everybody in the House, who read it, knew it was sheer hypocrisy and a dead letter. But the government did not want to monkey with it—and all the political parties are nervous about any mention of campaign funds.

I took the bull by the horns and had the bill changed to make the crime the giving of money to obtain or retain a government contract. The thing went through without a single dissenting vote from anybody. Here's hoping we have as good luck when something really big is up, such as a boost in the War Veterans Allowance.

SO, TO DATE—the job suits me fine. I hope I am not here if we ever have to declare that world war three—but on the contrary that I am still here when all the world knows we have agreed on steps that will make that world war three impossible.



WITH EVEREST CONQUERED it remained for Fabio Peteriva (left) to set his sights on the walls of Rome's 2,000-year-old Colosseum.

CAPITAL COMMENTS

By A. BRUCE BROWN, MLA, Prince Rupert

Three weeks have passed since my last report. During that time the budget has been debated, estimates of some departments have been discussed, and important legislation has been introduced.

The budget provides for the expenditure of \$204,000,000 during the year April 1st, 1954, to March 31st, 1955. This is the most substantial budget in the history of the Province—nearly double the budget of only four years ago.

Falling evidence that construction south is justified, we of the Liberal group maintain that the whole of the \$30,000,000 proposed to be borrowed should be spent on extending into the Peace River—with Prince Rupert for a Pacific outlet.

The anticipated revenue for the same period is \$193,000,000. In other words, the Government is budgeting to spend nearly \$11,000,000 more than it expects to collect. However, the Government expects to end the year with a surplus of \$5,000,000.

I am particularly concerned that this Government is not making any provision to relieve the municipalities of their financial burden, particularly in view of the ever-rising cost of education. The so-called Rolston Formula has been shelved and there is nothing to take its place. No relief can be expected before 1955 or possibly 1956.

Not only are the municipalities not to be further assisted financially but as a result of certain policies of this Government they will receive even less than formerly. For instance, the exemption from sales tax on meals up to \$1.00 and the proposed exemption on children's clothing and footwear will be directly reflected in that portion of the sales tax distributed to municipalities.

In addition, one-half of the 10 percent tax on liquor allocated to municipalities at the Fall session will be lost as a result of the Government taking another of its now famous "second looks" and deciding to abolish the tax.

A further hardship will result from municipalities being obliged to pay the increased 5 percent sales tax on their purchases of equipment, supplies, etc.

The trend in B. C. appears to be the same as in Alberta—the provincial government prospering at the expense of the municipalities. It is of interest to note that provincial revenues have increased nearly 500 percent over the last fifteen years, whereas municipal revenue has increased just over 100 percent.

A great deal of debate has taken place with regard to the

Leaves Throttle

MOOSE JAW, Sask. (CP)—John Thompson, whose last run ended 48 years as a railroader with the CPR, was conductor of the royal train that carried the then Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh from Brandon to Moose Jaw during their Canadian tour in 1952.

Report From PARLIAMENT By E. J. Applin (MP for Skeena)

Considerable attention has been focused recently on the problem of providing adequate housing accommodation for Canadians. In order to provide facilities necessary to administer the National Housing Act, 1954, Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation are opening a number of new loans offices in all provinces. The manager of the branch office in Prince Rupert is Mr. L. D. Roberts. The manager for the new loans office at Kitimat is Mr. L. H. Gately.

I was most glad to read that Commander Tommy Johnstone and O/S Eric Brown would represent "Chatham" at the Queen's Naval Review in England this year. My congratulations to both of them, and my hope that they will be able to visit me in Ottawa on their way east.

And while we're getting personal, perhaps I should add my congratulations to Doug Stevenson on the handsome photograph which recently appeared in The Daily News.

I hope you all heard the speech on "The Nation's Business" made by Hon. Jean LeSage on March 16. He is the new minister of the newly constituted department which, under a bill introduced by Prime Minister St. Laurent some four months ago, is the successor to the Department of Resources and Development, now the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. And he said the immense extent of our country will be better realized if it is pointed out that, if one were to travel southward from Ottawa for the same distance as lies between our capital and our northernmost point, one would reach Central Venezuela. Coming from a member from a Quebec constituency there was real weight to his remarks when he said that for each of us Canadians, whatever his or her origin, the homeland is not merely the street or the municipality, the village or the town, the county or the province where each one lives; it is every part of Canada's three million, eight hundred and fifty

thousand square miles. Our leaders of 1867 could not foretell that the descendants of those French and English settlers who had found themselves compelled to live side by side on the banks of the St. Lawrence River, on the shores of the Great Lakes, in the Maritime Provinces and even in Manitoba, would be able under Laurier, King and St. Laurent to achieve jointly the unity and sovereignty of our far-flung territories and, in a combined effort, to create Canada, a world power.

Inspection of all imports of tuna from the Pacific area for radioactivity contamination is to be carried out, according to directions sent to the Coast from Ottawa last week. This inspection has been deemed necessary in the interests of protection of the consumer and follows evidence already widely publicized to the effect that radioactivity contamination has been found in certain catches of the tuna species purportedly as a result of the recent experimental atomic explosions in the southern Pacific. In order that these instructions may be carried out expeditiously, the following information is being requested from importers as far in advance as possible:

- (1) Name of ship carrying the import—date and time of arrival—name of the pier at which unloading will take place.
- (2) Description of the import.
- (3) Whether inspection can be carried out in the hold of the vessel.
- (4) If not, time of unloading.

Louder and more insistent grow the demands upon Ottawa for higher tariff protection. The main point emerging from the emanations of the textile industry is that the industry regards Bill 29 merely as a first instalment of government bounty. "Some indication," as bant-president Lawson of the Primary Textile Institute puts it, "that men in Ottawa... are beginning to understand what is wrong with the textile industry." A second exhibit is a recent

Additional Aid To Be Sought For Security Fund

OTTAWA (CP)—Parliament will be asked at this session to extend additional financial assistance to Canada's old age security fund.

A budget white paper, tabled today in the Commons, said Parliament will be asked to write off the fund's 1952-53 deficit of \$99,100,000. A year ago, a deficit of \$49,700,000 was written off.

Still outstanding will be the fund's deficit of \$44,800,000 for 1953-54. The fund was established in 1952 to provide pensions of \$40 a month to all persons 70 and over regardless of means. It was to operate on revenues from a two-per-cent sales tax, a two-per-cent tax on personal incomes and a two-per-cent tax on corporation profits.

The taxes have yet to yield enough to cover the pension payments.

Busy in Commons

LONDON (CP)—Herbert Morrison, deputy leader of the Labor party, arrived late at an art exhibition. He explained he had been detained in the House of Commons, saying "It is far easier to get into that place than it is to get out."

National Wildlife Week

BRITISH Columbians should have a special interest in National Wildlife Week which started yesterday. Few people in the world live in a region with such variety of wild animals and birds, and any occasion which draws attention to this natural resources is all to the benefit of the province.

Not only does B.C. play host to magnificent stands of big game animals such as moose, caribou, elk and deer but also holds healthy populations of species such as grizzly bear which have dwindled elsewhere.

The province has within its borders the last appreciable heads of California bighorn mountain sheep, and right in our own local area is an animal that is found nowhere else in the world. It is the diminutive Kermode's bear that lives on surrounding islands.

As a tourist attraction, our wildlife is of tremendous importance. Approximately 4,000 hunters and 28,000 anglers come to B.C. each year to enjoy their sport. This is about three times the number in each category that visited the province 20 years ago. Hunting and fishing in B.C. mean an annual revenue of more than a million dollars in the sale of licences alone.

Yet many are inclined to take our wildlife heritage for granted, even though it is only through constant care and wise management that we can continue to enjoy our present wildlife abundance. There are some species which, unless their numbers are controlled, will quickly exceed the available range. When this occurs there is nothing but misery and a wastage of a valuable, harvestable resource which is renewable each year. Other species have to be rigidly protected so that their numbers will be maintained.

An interested public is one sure method of perpetuating our wildlife resources. National Wildlife Week serves a valuable purpose by attracting wide public attention to this great heritage.

Stop and Look

THERE is a venerable sub-section in London's new traffic bylaw which makes it an offence for a pedestrian to leave the curb without first looking both ways. The penalty is \$50, but Chief Constable Knight says the section has never been enforced.

There is another law, however, which comes into play in cases of violation. The pedestrian pays a penalty of death or injury.

Despite man-made rules the individual has some obligation to protect himself in such an intricate undertaking as crossing a street filled with highspeed automobiles jockeyed here and there by speed fiends seemingly allergic to pedestrians.

Ray REFLECTS and REMINISCES

Mounties appear unable to praise the new film play called "Saskatchewan." The production was actually filmed in the Canadian Rockies, and presumably tells the story of the founding of the police, back in the "seventies." If there is a Hollywood background, it will have a colorful plot all right. One has a hunch, somehow, all is not well.

Below zero weather was common enough in Alberta early this month but that's nothing to become concerned over. More or less of this sort of thing is expected annually, and disappointments are few.

ONE AFTER ANOTHER The threat of nitrogen bomb was first heard of this week, so far as the general newspaper reading public is concerned. But everyone is remaining calm. Suppose the old NB is worse than the ones before?

It isn't just the high prices that hurt: It's the upcreep.

GO AFTER BUSINESS President Gordon says the Canadian National Railway is in for a deficit this year unless more traffic develops. In Ottawa he expressed the hope before the Commons railway committee that "sanity and reason will prevail" in the demands received. The CNR is a great system and entitled to fulfillment of what the chief hopes for. And that

Drinks Taxed Five Per Cent

VICTORIA (CP)—British Columbia drinkers didn't get off as easy as they think under amendments to the Sales Tax Act. The amendments which increased the tax from three to five per cent also abolished the 10 per cent drinks-by-the-glass tax, but left provision for drinks to be taxed at the regular five per cent, the same as any other taxable purchase. The act became law Thursday.

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Sunshine Record Set Here A sunshine record was set here last month. The weatherman gleefully announced this morning that Rupert was blessed with 110.4 hours of sunny weather during March. It was the most sunshine received in March by the city since March, 1943, when the total was 122.

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