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Moscow Conference

MUCH publicized conference at Moscow notwithstanding, there is, in fact, nothing in the world to prevent the Soviet government, if it so wishes, from placing all the orders it likes for British cotton and woollen goods tomorrow. But it does not do so. There is nothing in the world to prevent the Chinese government from doing so. But it prefers to make it impossible for British trading firms to do trade in China.

The Russian conference, propagandists shout, can sell Britain much-needed timber. But when a few years ago Britain sent a cabinet minister to Moscow to do a deal, he was told there was no timber available unless Britain could first provide cutting machinery and the light railways for transport from forests to ports.

Czechoslovakia, before the Communist coup, did a big trade with the west. It has, under Russian pressure, been cut to a minimum—to the great disadvantage of the Czechs.

There are today—and it is a great pity—many barriers to trade between the "Soviet world" and the outer world. But by far the greater part of these barriers has been erected by the Soviet government and its satellites. If they are genuinely anxious to restore such trade, they could do so. If the Moscow conference had been genuinely anxious to restore such trade, it should have addressed itself officially to the western governments.

The Liquor Ballot

M^{R.} WISMER says the wording of the liquor plebiscite ballot may not be announced for some time, says Victoria Times. From this it is to be hoped that the government will give the ballot adequate consideration and present the electors with a full opportunity to say precisely what liquor system they desire.

They cannot make a clear answer if they are confronted with two extreme alternatives, if the ballot merely asks them whether they prefer the existing system or a system of wide-open bars.

These are by no means the only available alternatives. The people should have the right to say whether they favor a compromise by which beer and perhaps wines should be sold with meals in licensed premises while spirituous liquors are still confined to government stores.

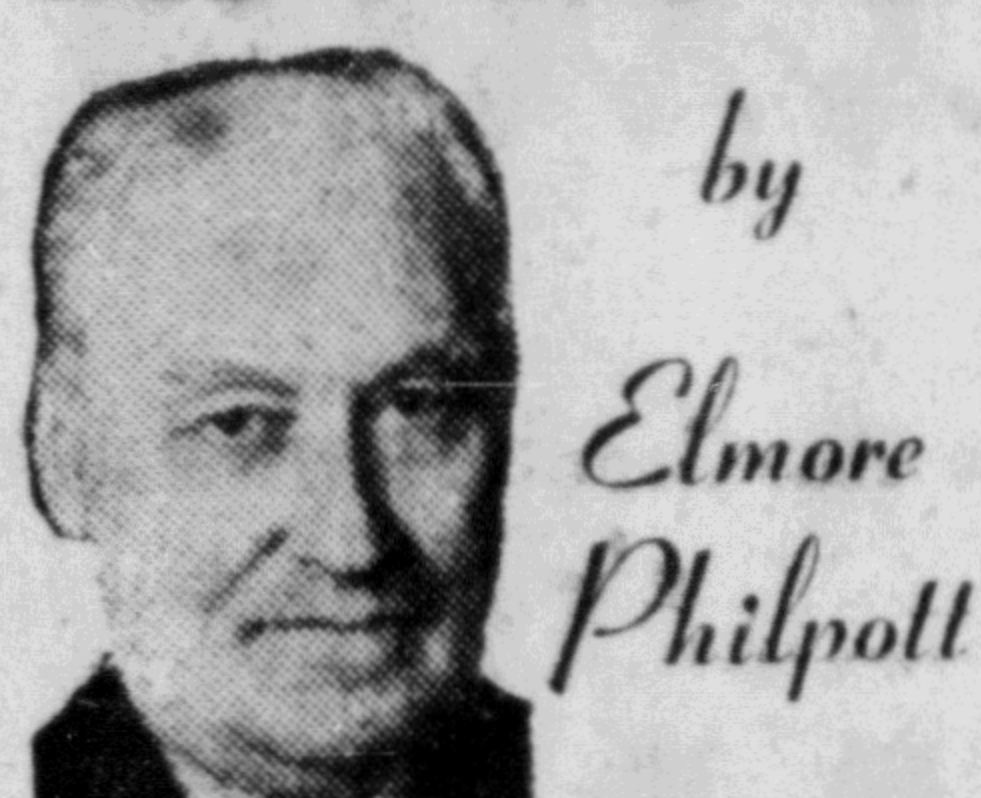
Three questions could properly be asked on the ballot under the preferential voting system which will be applied to candidates for the Legislature. The first option would be the open bar, on the Ontario model; the second the sale of beer and wine with meals; the third the continuation of the existing law.

The beneficiaries of the existing law naturally will wish to see the ballot framed in extreme terms, without any possibility of compromise.

Neither the plebiscite nor any other experiment in human history offers a solution of the age-old problem of drink. The objective of a necessarily imperfect liquor policy should be to discourage the sale of intoxicants which is now excessive and is doing great damage, economic and human. The real question which the thoughtful voter has to consider is which system is most likely to promote temperance.

The huge and rising sale of liquor in British Columbia today does not suggest that the present system is promoting temperance. It is for the voters to decide whether any other system would do better. They should have the chance of voicing a free opinion. They should not be given a loaded ballot.

As I See It



Flight From U.S. \$?

IT TAKES me back to the "good old days" of 1927 and 1928 to see and hear that everybody and his brother is trying to get rich quick by betting on the stock market.

Back in the days of '27 you could not go into Childs restaurant in Montreal without over-hearing \$15 to \$20 per week stenographers and clerks talking about their amazing winnings. It was wonderful while the balloon was going up, but quite a nasty bump when the inevitable happened.

Come to think of it, my deep aversion to bridge parties dates from 1928 in Toronto when the whole conversation was always whether International Punk was going to hit 200 or only 180. Some of those talkers were the wives of the harassed husbands who tossed themselves out of brokers' windows next year when their paper profits hit the pavement with a sudden thud.

THE THING I don't like about the present picture is that the "hot money" is now pouring into Canada from U.S.A.

I am old enough to remember when the smart big money boys began to rush their money out to another in Europe. Collapse of Austria, and one country followed in one country after another—though you could only find the facts recorded in small print on the financial pages of our papers, and never on the front pages or editorial sections.

That smart money then all ended up in Britain or the U.S.A. for safe keeping.

Then, about three years ago, the smart money boys also shuffled their money from Britain to the U.S.A. by complicated transactions through South African stock markets and other disguised stepping stones.

IT LOOKS now as if what is really on is a flight from the U.S. dollar. The smart money operators figure that their money is safer in Canada than it is in U.S.A. and so are transferring huge chunks of it up here.

The first effect of that will be to create a temporary boom in parts of Canada. But the final effect of the process may be as dangerous to Canada as it has been to other countries.

For what comes in like a tidal wave can also be taken out the same way. And if it taken out under certain circumstances it can leave behind it the same kind of distress which Britain suffers from right now.

IT IS a wonderful thing that Canada's natural resources are

(Continued on Page 6)

Slide Threatens English Town

JACKFIELD, England (Reuters)—A slow but relentless landslide is threatening to drag this picturesque Shropshire village of 700 people into the nearby River Severn.

Stores and houses are cracked and leaning at all angles, the main highway has cracked down the middle and the gas-pipe-line has burst.

Abandoned clay mines under the village, which have filled with water, are causing the landslide.

A civic official said the landslide is slowly getting worse. We are patching up houses as they crack but do not know where it is all going to end," he said.

ray ...

Reflects and Reminisces

If there is to be a Canadian Bill of Rights it should include those of the pedestrians at street crossings — particularly at Second Avenue and Second Street.

SOME YEARS BACK

It makes a fellow feel old to mention the loss of the liner Titanic, 40 years ago yesterday, and hear somebody at your elbow murmur: "It was sure terrible. Happened before I was born."

Bakers say cream puffs aren't what they used to be. What is?

ALL ONE HOUSEHOLD

Brazil and South Africa are not dissimilar in scope, but in other ways contrasts are many and marked. Just now, the latter country is full of strife over the color question. It's been going on for years. But there is no such problem in Brazil, where the three basic races—Indians, Portuguese and Negroes—freely intermarry. Everybody alike is a Brazilian and all have a high national pride.

This is going to be the kind of a provincial election John Oliver would enjoy being mixed up in. For that matter, no election was ever dull if old white-bearded, quick-witted John was with-in hearing.

The United States election is full of major and minor problems, rather vague and perplexing to the average Canadian who does not make a careful study of American politics, but speaking generally we'll say it's much easier to write "Taft" than "Eisenhower."

NOT THEIR BUSINESS

A report from Ontario says 932 wives in that province are receiving mothers' allowances from the government because they have been deserted. Tax-payers can recite quite a list of obligations that should be cheerfully paid—but this loading on others' shoulders a duty that surely belongs elsewhere, is something else again.

THE LETTERBOX

WHY NO INTEREST?

Editor,

In answer to Mayor Whalen's appeal a few days ago for more public interest in civic affairs, I feel that I should, through the medium of your paper, explain in part some of the reasons for this lack of interest.

First, it appears to me that he and the city council (not his city council) are straying away more and more from the fundamental problems that face this city's citizens. For instance, housing.

Now I know that they have been talking about a housing project for this city for some time and I do know also that this is about to become a reality, in part at least. We are going to get housing to some extent but is it going to be for the best interests of all of us or just a lucky few? Is the investment by the city of thousands of dollars for a few homes renting at \$75 a good investment? Does the city actually think that they are going to be able to rent these houses long enough to realize the return of their investment in full?

Let us take into consideration the following facts before proceeding further:

First, the people of this city are already sick and tired of paying ridiculously high rents for shacks, run-down apartment houses with inadequate plumbing facilities and little, if any, fire protection or fire prevention equipment.

Secondly, the complete lack of any form of rent control or fair basis for computing rental charges is disheartening and maddening to the average householder. Does the city think for one minute that they can successfully put over a housing project that will not tend to lower the already too high rents in this city?

Must rents in Rupert spiral to the point where people are forced to bring their children up in trailer camps or outside the city limits in one and two room shacks without benefit of plumbing, electricity or half decent transportation facilities? Even without the benefit of the latter comforts, trailer camps would be more desirable than some of the accommodation that is already provided within the city's limits.

The first of many things that should be taken into consideration before such a housing plan is adopted by the council is that, by building these units, the people as a whole shall benefit by them. If these units cannot help to force the existing rent scale down then they are of no benefit to the people but only to the contractor who builds them. He gets his money just the same.

Other cities are building homes for their people at less rents than you describe for us in Rupert. Why can't we do the same? Is it because of the lack of proper leadership on the part of the council and the mayor? Or is it because that everything else in Rupert is high in price so must our accommodation be too?

Now we all know the old story of freight rates being high and,

consequently, building materials are high too. But do we in this district have to import lumber to build our homes when we can get it as near as Terrace for \$50 a thousand rough? Another six or seven dollars will get it planed. Must we pay \$90 and \$100 for it here? And to rent a box car only costs \$85 (you can get a lot of lumber in a box car).

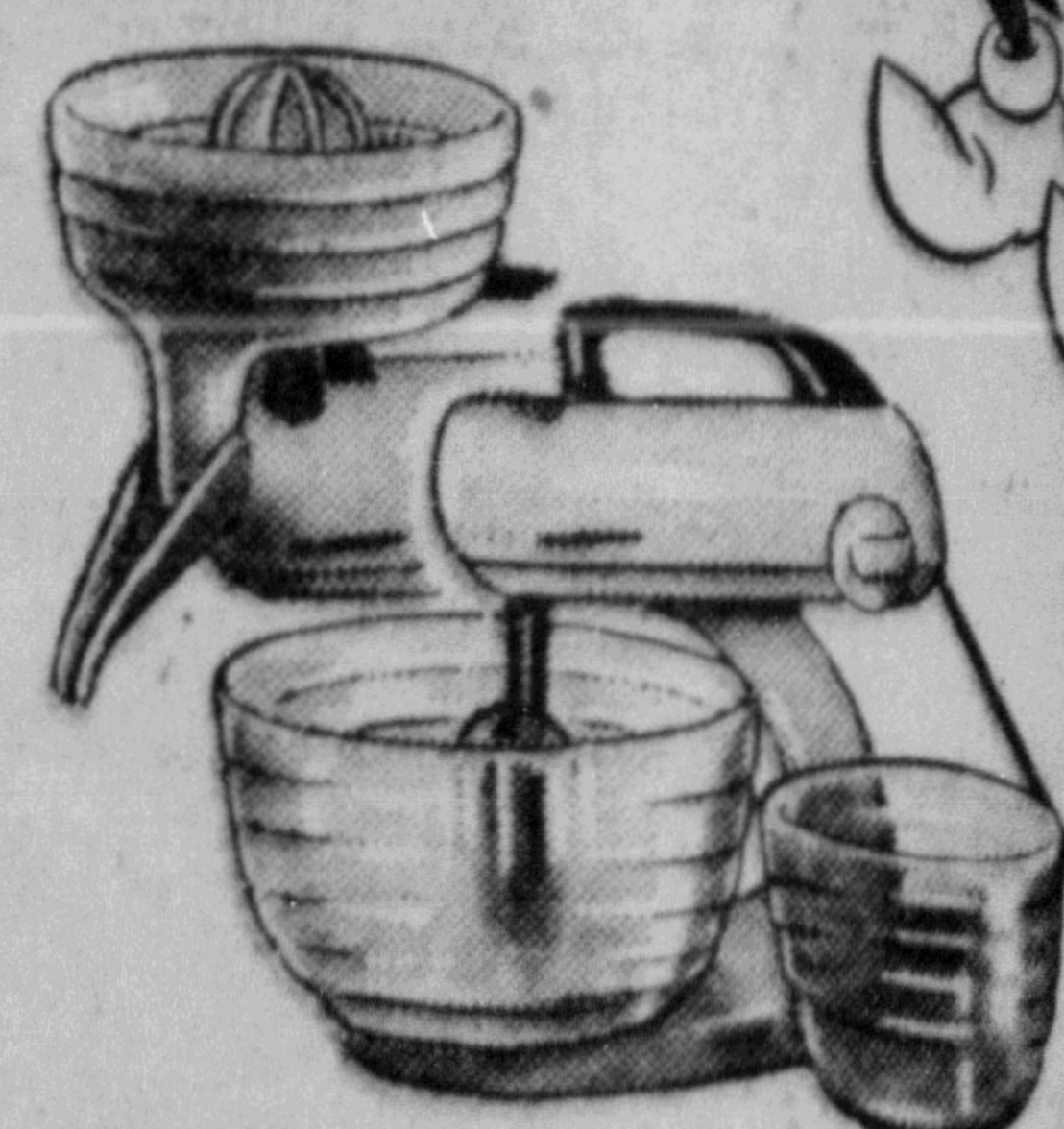
Is it any wonder that the people here have little or any interest in civic affairs when our own mayor and council cannot provide at reasonable cost the first requirements of living for their citizens?

I would suggest that the gentleman spend less time at lunch- (Continued on page 3)

Don't forget, folks!

It's electrical housewares week!

A big week at your electric dealer's... a week to see what's what in the newest electrical equipment. For yourself, for your home, for the gift you have in mind—a line-up that gives you more value per dollar, more beauty, more convenience. Plan to see them some day this week... Electrical Housewares—First Choice for Every Occasion.

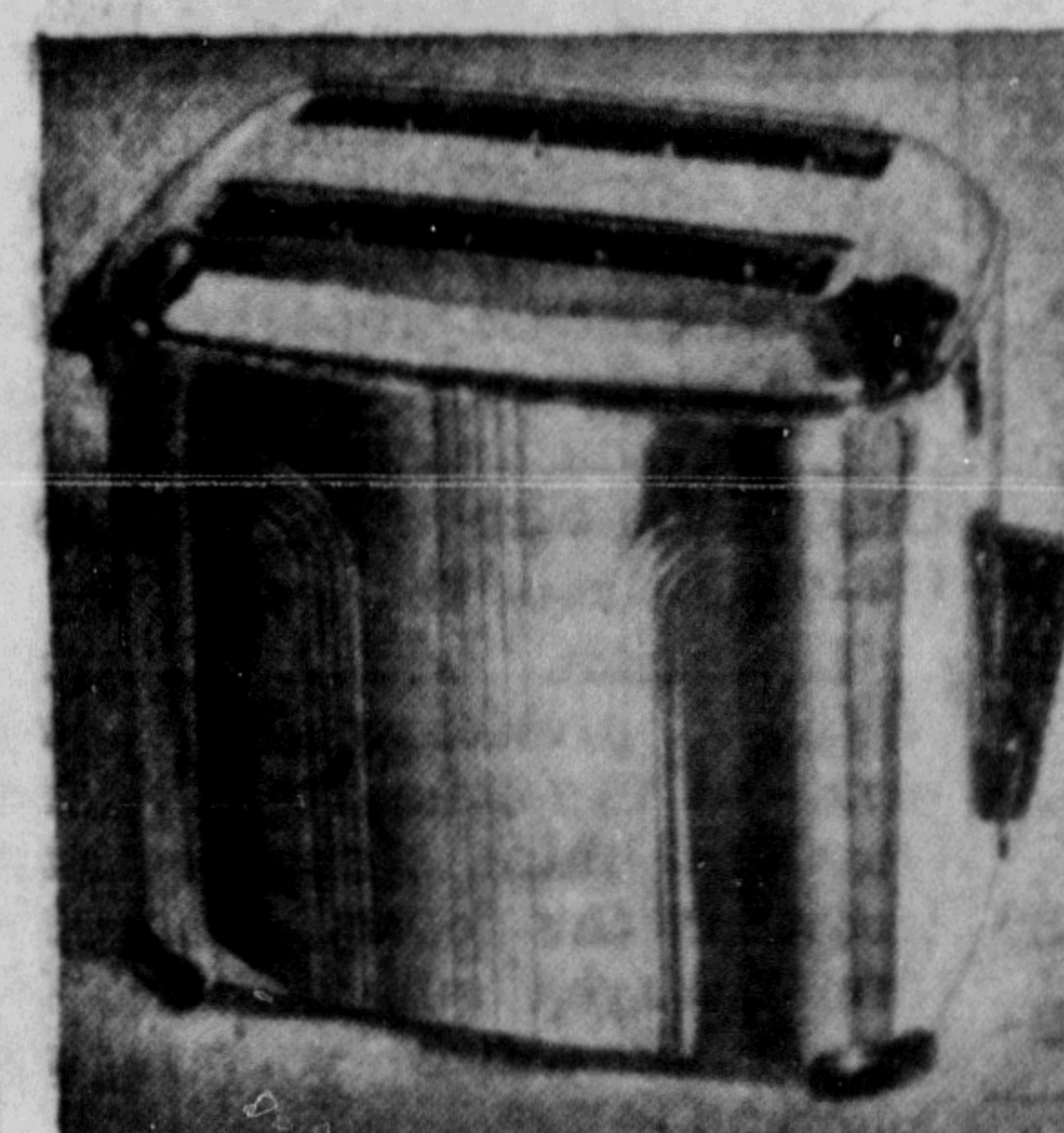


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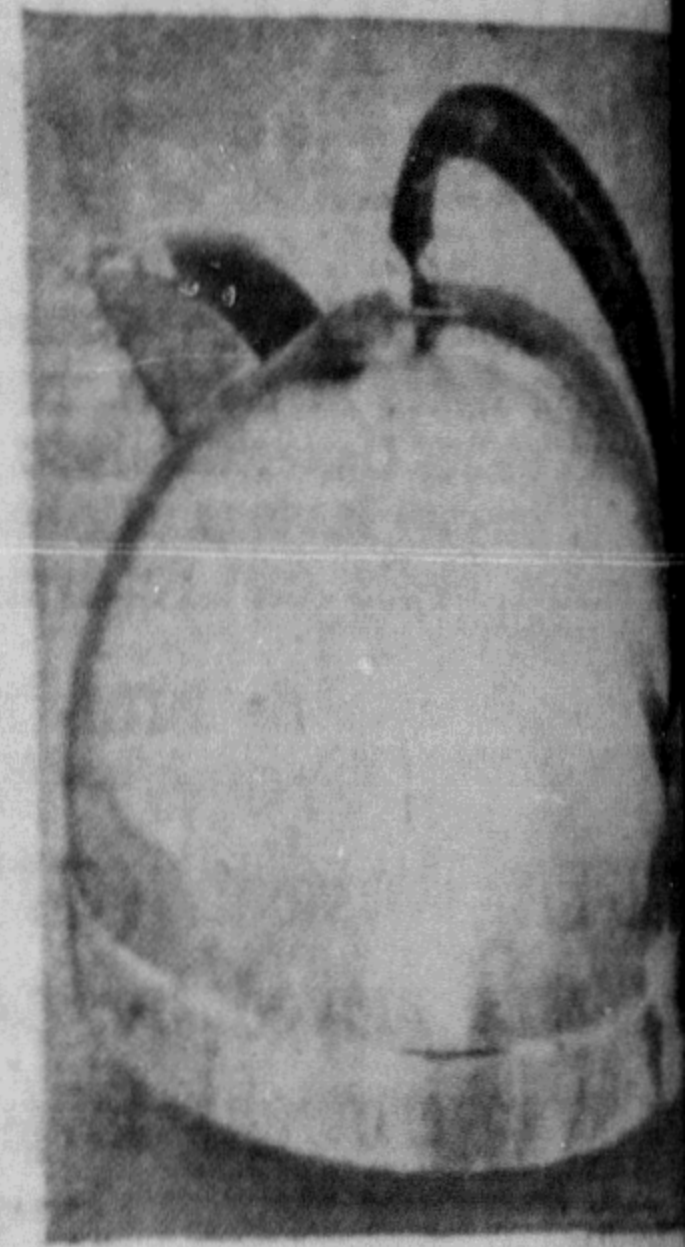
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