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Time Out on Drydock

A TEMPORARY truce has been reached on the drydock and shipyard issue. That is all that is meant by the decision to postpone closure until the end of September. The federal government's decision to get rid of the structure in any way possible apparently remains unchanged, but the concession has been made that there is too much at stake to permit hasty action.

While no victory has been won, the importance of the concession should not be underestimated. Besides being a gesture of respect to those who battled with such force to protect this property, the postponement has the tangible benefit of assuring our fishing fleet that its maintenance and repair needs will be met for at least one more season.

If the annual loss to the government in operating the plant is placed at \$200,000, it means that Prince Rupert's protest which resulted in a six-month extension was worth \$100,000, plus the business created by continued operation of the shipyard. Although the long-term problem remains unsolved, it cannot be said that the time and effort spent in pressing the case have been in vain.

But the action at Ottawa also has its disappointing features. Not only does it fail to change the unconditional terms of sale, but it suggests that the government has no prospective buyer in sight. When the for-sale announcement was originally made at such short notice, there was hope amid the disappointment and shock that a buyer already had been located. Possibly this is indeed the case, but a delay in action hardly indicates it.

Pessimism at this point, however, must at all costs be averted. Prince Rupert has revealed to all that it has real faith in the potentialities of this waterfront property, and its fighting stand is certain to have created a wide impression. The course of action now is to keep this interest alive, and from it could easily emerge the very deal we want.

OTTAWA DIARY

By Norman M. MacLeod

No one on Parliament Hill reserves stand at a total of \$2,500,000,000. But a further currency convertibility would confer on the nation's export trade spelled out in words of one syllable. Everyone realizes that convertibility could be the ladder that would enable the whole Canadian economy to climb to new heights of long-term prosperity.

That is why there is so much interest in Capital circles these days in the rumors and portents which suggest that convertibility may be just around the corner—much closer than ever was believed possible even as recently as the first of the year.

The generally credited report which reaches government finance authorities here, via the diplomatic grapevine, is that the United Kingdom will proclaim convertibility of the pound sterling into United States and Canadian dollars as soon as Britain's dollar reserves reach a total of \$4,000,000,000. A reserve of this size, the British authorities are believed to believe, would make free convertibility of the pound sterling a safe venture.

At the moment British dollar

Opinions Vary On Soviet Bid

OTTAWA (CP) — Some federal officials suspect Russia's latest gestures toward trade negotiations are propaganda moves designed to break the western economic blockade.

However, the trade department has decided to consider all Soviet trade overtures as genuine until proved otherwise.

Suspensions were aroused here after it became known that, a few hours before a press conference, two well-known west coast left-wing unionists, William Stewart and Ed White, called on fisheries minister Sinclair. They are members of the Shipyard General Workers Federation of B.C.

Russia wants to start negotiations for trade involving ships, textiles and many other commodities.

Wants Lower Tariffs
LONDON (CP) — The British Commonwealth Producers' Association, claiming that heavy import duty is cutting consumption of wines, spirits and cigars, wants duties decreased "to encourage consumption by lower-income groups."

As I See It



by

Elmore Philboott

Agnes Macphail

IT COMES as a wrench to write of the passing of a great public figure, who was also a close family friend.

Yet I smile to think of Miss Macphail's characteristic answer to the doctor who told her how she could prolong her life after one of the heart attacks which finally took her life. By outliving just about all the activities dear to her, she could live to be a quiet old lady, said the specialist.

"But who WANTS to be a quiet old lady?" Agnes asked.

AS Canada's first woman MP Agnes Macphail has long since been written about and talked about as much as, or perhaps more, than any other Canadian woman.

Yet I venture to say that nothing written yet even begins to sum up the real picture of this good woman, noble soul and great Canadian.

In a way she personified the whole organized farm movement in Canada. Certainly she was the most vital daughter that the Ontario farm ever sent onto the public platform.

She told me once that when she was about 12 years of age she was sent to school, away from the farm home and into the nearby city. The city girls wore "store clothes" but Agnes was dressed in what had been home-made on the farm. The town kids poked cruel fun at the ruralites. She fiercely identified herself with the farm people, then and always.

IN HER prime Agnes was a dynamic speaker, with a genius for moving crowds, especially farm crowds. Her quick wit and her quick temper were both proverbial. Once when a long-winded chairman took almost an hour to get the meeting going, and before he could finish his lengthy, boring introduction Agnes' patience snapped. She leaped to her feet, shouted at the flabbergasted chairman: "You sit down, this crowd came here to hear me." The crowd roared with laughter and approval, into which the chairman himself joined after recovery.

OF ALL the public I have met Agnes Macphail seemed to me the most conscientious about matters of principle, about the right and wrong of things. She almost literally sweated blood, trying to figure out what was the right course of action for the people of Canada. She was, in some ways, a tortured soul for her conscience was such that she felt she had to "spirit wrestle" with great problems before she could make up her mind about them.

Agnes and some of her farm-er friends walked the corridors of the Regina hotel almost all night long when the CCF manifesto was written in July, 1933. As a practical politician, Miss Macphail was well aware that the document was too far to the left to carry Canada in that day and age.

But what really worried her was: Is this right for our people?

In a sense the last years of Miss Macphail's life were very sad.

When the Hitler war came on, people remembered only that Agnes Macphail had been the M.P. to vote against army expenditures. They did not bother to read back to see that that was only half of what Miss Macphail had really said.

The forgotten half of her words were those which dealt with the necessity for building up true world brotherhood, and a world peace-making body, which would have substituted spending on warfare for spending on welfare.

Canada's first woman M.P. was like a doctor who prescribes two bottles of medicine. But the head-strong patient will only consent to try tiny doses of only one bottle—but then blames the doctor when there was no cure.



HERE ARE Brownell, Dulles, Twining, and Gruenther. Their names are all familiar, but their faces are not so well-known as their brothers', although all are government workers in the Eisenhower administration. At upper left is Dr. Samuel Brownell, Federal Commissioner of Education, and brother of Herbert, the Attorney-General. Allen Dulles, upper right, who is head of the Central Intelligence Agency, bears a slight resemblance to his brother, John Foster, who is Secretary of State. Maj.-Gen. Merrill Twining, lower left, a deputy Chief of Staff of the Marine Corps, is a military man like brother General Nathan, who is Chief of Staff of the Air Force. And at lower right is Homer Gruenther of the White House staff, brother of General Alfred, of NATO.

Ray REFLECTS and REMINISCES

Publishers appear much the same everywhere. The arrival of the Prime Minister of Canada in Karachi is a big story, but this need not be emphasized. The St. Laurent party will be photographed, interviewed, quizzed and questioned. In many important respects Karachi will differ from Montreal or Victoria, but when it's news there isn't any.

Defeating the proposal to force all dogs to appear on streets only on leashes, the Prince George council will enforce the existing bylaw. Licensed pups can ramble the streets as usual. This means a resemblance to Prince Rupert, where dogs are numerous and getting more so, of all sizes, shapes and colors.

THE LETTERBOX

CLASSICS VS POPULAR

The Editor,
The Daily News:
In answer to the letter signed "Appreciative" in Saturday's Letterbox.

May I say a few words: You and maybe a few others enjoy your so-called "good music," but think of the hundreds of other people who don't like that kind of music.

They, and myself, like to sit and visualize a person singing a popular song, and only opening his mouth to expose his teeth and tongue, not his tonsils and breakers.

You also mentioned restaurants. If people really enjoyed that music, don't you think that classics would be put in juke boxes?

And another thing: Have you ever noticed during the request program there are always three to five commercials during the half hour it is on?

If the greater majority enjoy the classics, why don't they have commercials during "that" music? I'll tell you why... because no one of importance listens to the "long-haired" music. By people of importance I mean the mothers and housewives and people that are home all day long to hear CFPR.

And as for the CFPR manager, if he wishes to find out how many enjoy that music, let him get some people to call at homes and apartments, to get signatures on petitions on what kind of music they enjoy.

I'm sure the per cent of those wanting classics would be very small compared to those enjoying popular and western music.

DISGUSTED THE THIRD

Try Daily News Classified

Report From PARLIAMENT

By E. T. APPLEWHAITE, MP Skeena

By now you will have heard the news about the Prince Rupert Drydock and Shipyard. Unfortunately, at this writing, I have nothing further to add on the subject.

One thing I can say at this stage is that it was very heartening and encouraging to see the way the whole community and area rallied to the support of this facility.

Any immediate results will have been wired or phoned to Prince Rupert before this letter gets there. At the earliest possible date, I shall record a full radio report for you on the subject.

A much smaller matter, but one which I am glad to say is also much more satisfactory, is the Cow Bay Floats' situation. In the estimates which were tabled on February 5 there is an item for \$29,000 to acquire and repair the Cow Bay floats.

As I have pointed out previously in letters to interested parties, we — the Dominion — don't own the floats or the site and cannot legally spend money on them until we do and until Parliament approves the acquisition—as to which there will be no trouble. But those estimates—as I said in previous correspondence—are for 1954-55 and have become effective April 1st, 1954. The Hon. James Sinclair, Minister of Fisheries, is familiar with the situation and the urgency, but I have advised him that I think further funds will be required. As soon as I can get more details on the work proposed, I will make them available.

I note that quite a sizable job is to be done at the Miller Bay hospital involving the installation of a new boiler with all the necessary accessories, storage tank, etc., which is required for the heating plant there. I hope a local firm will be able to tender successfully on this.

Reports from Berlin suggest that there is very little hope of accord on the major issues before the Conference of Foreign Ministers. At least it may be said that the Western Powers have escaped certain perils implicit in a meeting with the Russians at this time; perils which were in no sense the fantasies of fearful statesmen but very real and grave. After Stalin's death, so strong was the disposition to clutch at every straw suggesting a change from the hard Stalin

policy to a new and more co-operative attitude, in default of some test or diplomatic reconnaissance, it was politically impossible to move ahead on such central policies as the European Defence Community. From the outset the gravest danger of such a meeting as the one in Berlin has been the opening afforded to Russian diplomacy to split the Western front by isolating the French from their democratic partners; it now seems reasonably sure that that particular line of Russian strategy has failed.

Union-Hiring System Sought

VANCOUVER (CP) — A demand for a union hiring system in the B.C. logging industry was made Thursday by the International Woodworkers of America (IWOA).

The resolution, submitted by Local 1-363, Courtenay, was among a backlog pushed through by delegates at the closing session of the four-day, 17th annual convention of the B.C. District. The resolution said there had been "a terrific influx" of immigrants and workers from eastern Canada into the logging industry and veteran IWA loggers were being discriminated against.

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