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Northwest Highway Needed

WHEN is the B.C. government going to show more interest in opening up the great north-west area of this province?

Although there is plenty of evidence that Americans would do their part in any scheme which would help to provide highway communications for southeastern Alaska, this province, which has possibly more stake in the matter, remains completely dumb about it.

Speaking on the subject recently, A. F. Ghiglione, head of the Alaska Road Commission, explained that it was disheartening to have money for road surveys into Canada and then, because of a lessening interest on the part of Canada in connecting roads, to find it unsound to initiate the detailed surveys that had been planned.

In the same vein, the Daily Alaska Empire of Juneau urged Alaskan Chambers of Commerce to take up the subject with the Associated Boards of Trade of Central B.C.

"They should press for a Canadian survey of the old 'A' route proposed originally by Donald McDonald, the father of international highway planning, from Alaska through Canada to the States," the paper said. "This plan would continue the present highway from Atlin to Hazelton, B.C., with connecting branches to the principal towns of southeast Alaska. . . . But it would be useless to do the work on our side of the boundary until it is justified by Canadian agreement to do similar work in B.C."

Routes from Alaska into this province already surveyed are up the Taku, Stikine and Unuk rivers, and from Skagway to Carcross.

This province's stake in any such undertaking would be principally to provide overland access to the present and future settlements of northern B.C. These are certain to increase in both size and number. But under the conditions which exist now, they will be isolated from the rest of the province.

A secondary, but nevertheless important, consideration is the tourist and economic value of such a highway to the province as a whole. Possibly the federal government could be persuaded to take part on the basis of the defence purposes that would be served by a westerly route to Alaska.

The subject is almost certain to come in for thorough discussion in September when the Associated Boards of Trade of Central B.C. and Southeast Alaska hold their annual convention, which this year is scheduled for Ketchikan. It is hoped that, if the provincial government is not too busy pouring money into the PGE, it can be prompted to take the action which already is so long overdue.

Ray REFLECTS and REMINISCES

Looking back as far as memory allows can sometimes be helpful, as well as of mutual interest, in the development of this reminiscence business. Or maybe not, yet there's always the chance.

Anyway, back in the 'eighties, a cub called Bill, discovered he'd quit living in New Brunswick. Instead he was one of a small family aboard the Union Pacific Railway, and all he knew about the Mississippi was that it changed to be just another river.

MAKING DISCOVERY

Wyoming in the autumn of 1888 looked lonesome from the car window, but how clear the air, and how few the signs of anything that looked like substantial settlement.

"What are you looking at, son?" This from a passenger, an old gentleman enjoying a railway station walk one morning. The youngster was staring at something in the far distance.

"Clouds, I think, sir."

"You mean the Rockies?"
Destination of the family from the Maritimes was Butte City, the famous mining camp in Montana, and to this day one of the foremost communities in the industry. Montana was then a territory. Statehood would not become a fact for many a year. A territory—and a wild one in spots—would serve.

NOT A SURVIVOR

On June 25, 1876, in the valley of the Little Big Horn River, Montana—and not so very far from the townsite of Butte itself—was fought the battle that massacred the 7th Cavalry (USA), commanded by General George A. Custer. There was not a sur-

vivor. Through some mischance, it is believed, Custer and 200 men were surrounded and cut off. Greatly outnumbered the 7th Cavalry hadn't a chance when overpowered by the Sioux and Cheyenne under Chief Sitting Bull.

SIXTY-SEVEN YEARS AGO

It was like another world sixty-seven years ago, and not so easy to recall. Cars practically unheard of. No radios. The scores of essentials and conveniences accepted today as a matter of course, then not known. The first and only election parade I ever witnessed in the United States took place in Butte, when a spectacular torchlight affair helped Ben Harrison take over the presidential office.

The battlefield of the Little Big Horn River is preserved as a national monument with memorial inscribed to Custer and comrades, among whom, about fifty out of a total of 200, bore Irish names. Following the fate of one, Col. Myles Keogh, his faded uniform, a sabre, hat and medals were sent to the old home in Kilkenny.

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As I See It



by
Elmore
Philbott

World Asleep

SOMETIMES I look around the House of Commons and ask myself: What will the historians of the year 2000 say about our state of mind in 1954?

We plod on our hum-drum way, arguing our little arguments, and scoring our little points between parties. But only a few miles from where we sit giant furnaces are turning out atomic energy.

They are doing this in many other parts of the earth, for war and peace. Both for war and peace atomic energy will change the face of all the earth. Yet the great leaders of the nations are still talking and acting as if we were armed with bows and arrows or spears or muskets.

General de Greef, Belgian minister of defence, says that within four to six years Russia will have enough hydrogen bombs to blast U.S.A. pretty well off the face of the earth.

He shows that a single hydrogen bomb could destroy his entire country. If that is true, a single bomb could also destroy Britain.

Yet Sir Winston Churchill, in order to drive home the reality of the war danger, tries to scare the living daylight out of the British people by warning them that Russia could parachute whole armies of infantrymen into Britain, with as much surprise as was employed by Japan in the attack on Pearl Harbor. The grim, gigantic, horrible joke is that the parachute attack would have no meaning, in the face of Russia's ability to drop hydrogen bombs on Britain, from planes, rockets, submarines. Yet the astute old statesman is wise enough to know that you just can't rouse the people to the reality of atom warfare — because they just can't visualize it.

PROFESSOR P. M. S. Blackett, the atomic expert, has written a sensational article in the London New Statesman and Nation, for February 13.

He argues that as each of the super-powers, U.S.A. and Russia, have now, or soon will have, enough H-bombs to blast each other clean off the map, neither can afford to drop a single bomb.

He reasons something like this: Suppose it takes on hundred hydrogen bombs, dropped on U.S.A., to knock out that country. Then it gives the U.S.A. no real advantage to have a thousand or ten thousand such bombs—for the effective number to knock out either Russia or U.S. is the one hundred.

Blackett seems to conclude that as both sides have the power to destroy the other, neither will ever dare to drop H-bombs. How wonderful, some of us might say. But another part of the Professor's reasoning is far from assuring. He seems to figure that, as the A-bombs and H-bombs have cancelled each other out, that the big power rivalry will be carried on, by old fashioned weapons. In other words, Blackett seems to conclude that we could have a whole series of "little" struggles, such as Korea, without a world conflict.

That seems to me the kind of reasoning that is a short cut to world suicide.

We can't have more "little" wars without setting the match to the fuse which will finally set off the third world war.

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VICTORIA REPORT By J. K. Nesbitt

The Throne Speech debate has come to an end. It took three weeks. It was a case of speech after speech, hour after hour, day after day.

Now the budget has been delivered and the speechifying has started all over again in what's called the Budget debate. One would think one such debate would be enough per session. This may be called the Budget debate, but the budget is hardly mentioned. The Throne speech and Budget debates are just excuses for members to make speeches.

C.C.F. Mr. Strachan of Cowichan-Newcastle sought to have members speeches limited to 40 minutes. Nobody would go for it — not even Mr. Strachan himself when he spoke.

However, during all the long speech-making there are bright moments. C.C.F. Mr. Harding of Kaslo-Slocan had himself a fine time. He's the best debater in the House. Cleverly he draws out Government benches, and then, quick as a wink, he hits back. It's always a pleasure to hear Mr. Harding.

Liberal Mr. Gregory of Victoria brought along a daffodil for every M.L.A. The day before C.C.F. Mr. Hagen of Grand Forks-Greenwood had complained about Victoria's biting north winds. This annoyed Mr. Gregory, a loyal Victoria native son. And so the daffodils, to prove Victoria's place of constant sunshine and flowers.

All the Social Credit members gave their daffodils to Mrs. Lydia Arsens, and when she spoke next day they were in a big bowl on her desk. She gave them to C.C.F.ers Squire, Howard, Gargrave, and Moore, who share happy bachelor quarters during the session.

Mrs. Arsens wished Mr. Gregory (who beat Finance Minister Gundersen in the now-famous Victoria by-election last November) very well indeed, but she was doubtful of his good wishes for her. She said that she met Mr. Gregory at Christmas-time and he said to her: "A happy Liberal New Year to you, Mrs. Arsens." Mrs. Arsens said that made her so tongue-tied she couldn't think of a thing to say an awful predicament for her, or any other woman to be in. She wished she had been quick enough to retort: "And a happy Social Credit New Year to you, Mr. Gregory." That, said Mrs. Arsens, would have been a much brighter New Year greeting.

C.C.F. Mr. Turner of Vancouver East usually starts something, but not too much, so far this session. He was doubtful of the government's promises to

really get going on a new Marpole Bridge. He said the Minister of Public Works, Mr. Gagliardi got up in the House and he didn't say much about the Marpole Bridge except that he's now known as Mr. Marpole Bridge. Mr. Turner said Mr. Gagliardi said that with a great flourish of trumpets and promptly sat down. "Will the member permit a question?" asked Mr. Marpole Bridge.

"No—I don't think so—not at this time," said Mr. Turner. Having been thus snubbed, Mr. Marpole Bridge walked out of the House.

Mr. Harding said Government benches had been lax with their homework, and so he would review the whole government situation. Mr. Gagliardi said: "Please teacher, may I leave the room." Teacher Harding said yes, of course, he could. But a few moments later Mr. Harding wanted to talk about public

Profit Lowest In Canada Says Gas Dealers

VANCOUVER — Gas station operators here charged with operating a price-fixing combine say their gross profit was one of the lowest in Canada.

Thirty-one Lower Mainland operators and two trade organizations are accused by the federal government of combining illegally to fix retail gasoline prices in the Vancouver area.

J. L. Kinneard, secretary-manager of the Automotive Retailers' Association, claimed that the station operators' markup on cost, put into effect in 1951, was the lowest in Canada. The association members made 20 per cent gross profit on regular gas and 20.2 per cent on premium gas, Kinneard said. Only lower gross profits in Canada were in Manitoba and Saskatchewan where the percentages on premium gas were fractionally below the Vancouver figures.

Meanwhile, Tom Alsbury, president of the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council, T.L.C., said the federal government should prosecute and levy heavy fines if the operators are found guilty.

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works. Mr. Gagliardi hadn't returned, so Mr. Harding said: "I shouldn't have given him permission."

Lands and Forests Minister Sommers, who is M.L.A. for Rossland-Trail had himself a fine time, too, making a speech. He went after the Liberals for their criticism of government forest policies. Mr. Sommers said that Liberal Mr. Gibson of Lillooet had given forth with—what Mr. Sommers called a garbled baten of verblage which nobody could possibly understand. Mr. Gibson merely made a voluble dissertation, Mr. Sommers said. Mr. Gibson didn't bother to reply, though he grunted a little.

C.C.F. Mr. Gargrave of MacKenzie said he now feels like an old hand in the Legislature, considering it's his third session. However, he looked down to Mr. Uphill, and then he didn't feel such an old hand after all.

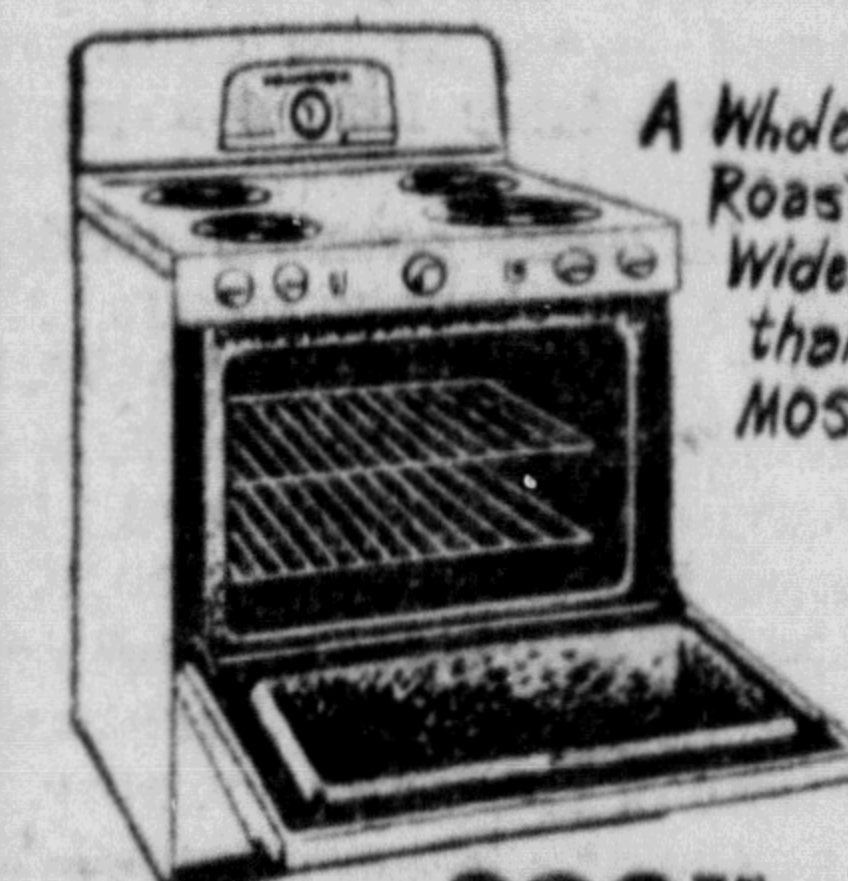
Mr. Uphill was in the House before Mr. Gargrave was born.

C.C.F. Mr. Shelford of Omineca said the north country wants roads so bad that even toll roads would make people happy. S.C. Mr. Price of Vancouver Burrard said he listens to up-country members crying for roads in far-away places, but he, being a good Vancouverite, said the best roads should be where there are the most cars and people—around Vancouver city. Up-country members, of course, didn't agree with Mr. Price.

Burnaby's Mr. Winch, like C.C.F. Mr. Nimsick, a few days before, frowned at the Legislature's glittering new mace. Mr. Winch thought the old mace quite good enough, and the new one extravagant.

And so went the lighter moments in a week of heavy speech-making.

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INCOME TAX EVASION SEES MAN FINED \$20,000

VICTORIA — Mayo Singh of Paldi, B.C., a 58-year-old East Indian has been fined a total of \$20,000 after guilty to four charges of making false statements on tax returns.

Two of the charges came under the Income Tax Act of 1947 and 1948, and the other two involved tax defaults in 1949 and 1950 under the Income Tax Act. Additional charges against Singh were withdrawn.

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