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## An Office in Ottawa, Maybe

FOR the love of dear old B.C., when is the provincial government going to forget politics?

No sooner is Premier Bennett in an excellent position to get the kind of power he has sought in the province than he turns his attention to federal affairs. According to his latest announcement, he intends to take an active part in the coming Dominion elections.

While it is understandable that he should wish his Social Credit party well represented at Ottawa, it would seem that he could do the province more good at this critical point by devoting all his thought and energy to its immediate problems. If he finds that he has enough time between now and the next session to go campaigning, why could he not use that time instead to make a province-wide tour of inspection?

This business of visiting more distant constituencies only when looking for votes is a political practice designed for nobody's benefit except the campaigner's. If Mr. Bennett really wants to gain esteem for his party, he should make a trip looking for nothing but information.

He should visit lumber camps, mines and fishing settlements to learn at ground level what is the matter with these vital industries. He should climb aboard a plane and visit the Peace River country whose future is discussed so glibly at Victoria. He could see this important port with its wasted opportunities and call at Kitimat, a city in the making. Continuing north, he could take a look at the Yukon watershed which one day might provide power for a vast industrial development.

It is not necessary that Mr. Bennett be an engineer or an economist to profit by such a trip. If he returned home with nothing but a firmer impression of the size and possibilities of the province he governs, the trip still would be eminently worthwhile.

Apparently, however, he has no such plan. Mr. Bennett's compelling interest is to add to the power he already has, or appears likely to have. The man who turned his back on the opposition in the last session seems to be looking for something more inspiring than the problems of B.C. An office in Ottawa with Prime Minister on the door might answer his need.

## Ray REFLECTS and REMINISCES

Every now and then somebody starts a new paper which recalls the fact of the Montreal Gazette being 175 years old this month. The first copies contained no news and no advertising. Poems only were printed. This is just mentioned, the poetry being published in desperation.

### SLIGHTLY CONFUSED

A husband broke his bride's leg when he fell while carrying her over the threshold. She is resting fairly comfortably, but he is suffering acute embarrassment. —Kingston Whig-Standard.

Few people live more than 45 years. After that they just stay here.—Ex.

Twenty ordinary cigarettes a day, says a doctor, can do no harm to the average person. But, judging by the advertisements, there are no ordinary cigarettes.

A mother-in-law's health is usually fair to meddling.

A physician declares that wearing a copper ring will not cure arthritis. Neither, for that matter, will the doctor.

If Queen Elizabeth ever feels a craving to write a best seller—and sometimes one could confess to it—Her Majesty need only brush up on the story of Holyrood. It's Scottish history, of course, but how many of us today know much about what happened yesterday? Holyrood, how-

ever, can find material for a thriller, handled the right way. Everything is there. Everything, from all kinds of emotionalism including murder to high class beheading.

Four thousand new Canadians arrived in Halifax lately, all from Europe. Some believe all they hear. For example, not long after, one got into an argument with an affable stranger who had made a wager that if he ever deposited cash in the bank, it would be impossible to withdraw any. Oh well! Even a few hundred's far too much to lose.

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## OTTAWA DIARY

By Norman M. MacLeod

Actually, the St. Laurent Liberals are about the only political group on Parliament Hill to derive any satisfaction from the past week's two provincial general elections. And their elation is far from exuberant. Their disappointment in British Columbia tempered the re-assurance they gained from the victory of the Campbell administration in Manitoba.

The optimism which Liberal circles here professed on the eve of the British Columbia voting was NOT synthetic. It was the genuine thing based upon the conviction that the party's new provincial chieftain Arthur Laing—a fresh and popular figure—had fielded the strongest team of local candidates ever to go before the province's electorate.

The Laing leadership was believed to have gone right back to political fundamentals in its efforts to rehabilitate Liberal fortunes in the West Coast province. Without alienating the support of any of the old and discredited party machine, it had built up an entirely new organization with a strong "grass-roots" atmosphere surrounding it. But it had laid its main emphasis upon drafting candidates of highest local prestige in every constituency.

Logically, the formula should have commanded success. Its failure to do so is unnering to the Liberals. They don't know what further steps, if any, are left to them. British Columbia is beginning to look ominously like a second Alberta—like a province that will have to be written off as lost irrevocably to the old-line parties.

The PC's expected a lot less than the Liberals out of the consequence. As a result, their disappointment is correspondingly smaller. But their pessimism for the future outlook is equal. The sorry showing made by a prominent Vancouver former City Father in the constituency which federally has returned PC stalwart Howard Green has aroused a deep sense of foreboding amongst the Tories.

Federally, the Social Crediters are more sobered by their Manitoba failure than elated by their British Columbia success. They had hoped in the prairie province to demonstrate their ability to break new political territory. Such a demonstration would have increased their dynamics in the provinces of Eastern Canada, where their greatest potential consisted in the legend of unpredictable strength which they were building in Western Canada. But that legend now is damaged seriously by the Manitoba set-back. As a consequence, the Social Crediters are a less feared and less-fearful factor in Eastern Canada politics than was the case a few months ago.

In none of the Federal appraisals of the B.C. result is the showing made by the CCF being overlooked. Despite a last-minute change in their party leadership through the sudden retirement of Harold Winch, the Socialists showed little if any loss of strength. It's regarded as an impressive feat which easily may have long-range significance.



## As I See It

BY

Elmore Philpott

• The Hansell Plan

EVER SINCE Social Credit organizers from Alberta captured B.C. in the cleverest, slickest invasion in political history, they have been working on the Hansell Plan.

That Hansell Plan is based on capturing power at Ottawa by precisely the same tactics they used in B.C.—first to cuddle up to the Tories, then when that purpose is served, to put the Tory dupes right out of the picture.

THE CLEVER, silent organizer who handled the capture of B.C. for Social Credit was E. G. Hansell, MP for Macleod, Alberta.

In the House of Commons on December 1, 1952, he made these points:

1. Liberals and CCF would be forced, by facts, to merge.
2. Social Credit would ally itself with, and then annihilate the Progressive Conservatives.
3. Social Credit is in deadly earnest about its monetary ideas, and will drive them through at Ottawa, if elected.

HERE is exactly what Mr. Hansell himself said:

I believe in a two-party system because there are only two ways of life. Those two ways of life are gradually merging today in Canada. I should like to suggest to those who write about splinter parties and to the Leader of the Opposition that Canada is coming back to a two party system, but it will not necessarily be a system composed of two parties bearing the names Liberal and Progressive Conservative.

I have nothing against my friends who sit to my far right. They are good fellows. I like them all and I try to work with them. But I want to say to them that if this country does come back to a two party system the Progressive Conservative party will not be one of them.

The only issue today in England between the parties is whether you want socialism or whether you want private enterprise. That is the issue, and that is going to be the issue as the days go by in Canada.

I am not a prophet, but I will make this suggestion that, whether or not I live to see the day, either the CCF will take over the Liberal party or the Liberal party will absorb the CCF.

AN HON. MEMBER: Never.  
AN HON. MEMBER: And you will take over the Tories.  
MR. HANSELL: That is going to happen and they will emerge as one of the great parties in Canada.

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## VICTORIA REPORT

By J. K. Nesbitt

VICTORIA—Extraordinary—that's the only word to describe the determination of the B.C. public to annihilate Liberal and Conservative parties in B.C.

This job of annihilation started a year ago. As far as the Conservatives were concerned, it was complete last week. The Liberals are left gasping. All this, of course, is on first count; but it's not likely to change a great deal on the finals.

Looking through the various ridings, the boom to Social Credit is almost staggering. In North Vancouver, for instance, the first count vote for Social Credit was almost double that of last year. In Chilliwack, Hon. Kenneth Kiernan received 11,000 more first count votes than last year. In Saanich last year the S.C. candidate had less than 3,000 votes; this year more than 6,000. In Comox the S.C. man, though behind C.C.F., came up with nearly 1,000 more votes. In Nelson-Creston, Hon. Wesley Black added several hundred first count votes. In Prince Rupert, the S.C. candidate, though at the bottom on first count, added several hundred votes.

It will be amazing if this boom to Social Credit suddenly stops with first count votes. The trend to Social Credit is there, in the first count, and such trends have a way of carrying through to the end. Of course, anything might happen on second and third counts. Last year C.C.F.ers and S.C.'s pretty well traded No. 1 and No. 2 choices. The partisans may not do so this year, because in recent months bitter enmity has grown between C.C.F. and S.C. But, how many voters are partisans? Comparatively few.

There are bound to be some upsets on second and third

counts, but at this moment it would appear Social Credit will be the government, with the C.C.F. once more the Opposition. There won't be a Conservative in the House; the Liberals will be lucky if they can seat two. If the straight voting system had been used last week, it would today be a Social Credit government of 30 seats; a C.C.F. Opposition of 17, and Tom Up-hill.

The choice system of voting is good, because it ensures that every M.L.A. is in the House on a majority vote of the people. Too often, in the past, an M.L.A. was able to claim his seat with more votes against him than for him.

The aggravating part of the new system is the long wait for the final outcome. The ballots, after the first count, are locked up for three weeks, until the absentee ballots are sent to their home ridings.

One wonders if the absentee voting shouldn't be taken out of the Elections Act. Last year only 3.26 per cent of the votes cast were absentee—26,538 out of a total of 783,974. In this way's slim majority of the people are able to greatly inconvenience the vast majority.

The advance poll is for peo-

ple who will be outside the province on election day. For instance, if you are going to the advance poll, But, if you vote outside your home riding on election day, but elsewhere in B.C., you vote absentee where you are. Why shouldn't you vote in the advance poll, just as you were going outside the province?

And there's something wrong with the absentee vote. It's not a secret vote. If you absentee your name is written on an envelope, and into the envelope, with your name on go your marked ballots. It was in this way, be quite easy to out how you vote.

The next Legislature should study this question well. It does, it will throw out absentee voting, and make wider use of the advance poll.

The best thing that could happen to Liberal leader Arthur Laing would be personal defeat in Vancouver-Point Grey. It will be in an impossible, frustrating position if he's elected with one or two other Liberals. If he's beaten, he can run again in the Federal election. He probably get back the House Commons seat he resigned take B.C. Liberal leadership.

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