

An independent daily newspaper devoted to the upbuilding of Prince Rupert and Northern and Central British Columbia.
 Member of Canadian Press—Audit Bureau of Circulations
 Canadian Daily Newspaper Association.
 Published by The Prince Rupert Daily News, Limited.
 J. F. MAGOR, President H. G. PERRY, Vice-President

Salesmanship Needed

IN CASE there is any doubt about the federal government's position on sale of the drydock and shipyard, we offer this excerpt from Hansard by Transport Minister Chevrier. Replying to F. G. J. Hahn, New Westminster, who asked about the proposed closure in March, Mr. Chevrier said:

"I made a statement on that matter last week but since then there has been a change. Perhaps I should advise the house that the change came about because of representations made to myself and to certain colleagues of the government by the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Applewhite), and the fact that he brought a delegation from Prince Rupert in the riding of Skeena.

"The change is that the Canadian National Railways have now agreed to postpone the sale for a period of six months in the hope that a purchaser may be found and also with the expectation that those keenly interested in the fishing industry in that area may be able to find someone who would be a satisfactory purchaser either of the whole drydock or of a portion thereof."

It would appear from this that the government is putting the burden of the selling job on Prince Rupert. Since the city stands to gain most from the right kind of sale, perhaps the arrangement is reasonable enough. But if the job is to be carried out in the best manner possible—and it is also in the government's interest to see that it is—Ottawa should handle it.

As a first step, there could be the distribution of an illustrated brochure giving all necessary information about the property and the district as a whole. Any large private concern about to undertake an important selling project puts out its own promotional literature, and there is no reason why the government should not do likewise.

This could be supplemented by advertisements in trade magazines and instructions to Canadian consulates everywhere to check on all possible prospects.

Merely calling for offers is not good enough. Some real salesmanship is needed and, while Prince Rupert should not ignore its own responsibilities in this respect, Ottawa is in by far the best position to line up potential customers.

Ray REFLECTS and REMINISCES

Went to a show the other night to find the screen staging a surprise. We've never actually beheld Gibraltar, but this was the next thing to it. The impregnable shores, lofty precipices, challenging heights and awesome cannon made a marvellous picture. Studying new ways and methods of kissing can be all very well, but this had it beaten a mile.

AROUND A DOZEN

An anatomist tells us the average person has twelve billion brain cells. All, with the excep-



DRAWING WITH HER TOES is a favorite pastime for Celia White of London. The 16-year-old girl discovered her artistic foot quite by accident. Told to pick up pencils with her toes to help her fallen arches, Celia grasped them between, rather than beneath, the digits and started to draw.

tion of a possible half dozen are not in use when he drives his car.

The price of coffee goes up, but we would like to know the grounds for it.—London Free Press.

Puff-adder venom has been found valuable as a life saving medicine. Regular shipments will go regularly from Nyasaland in South Africa, to supply the world market, which means a gross annual salary of three thousand pounds. Rattlesnakes may be imported from the United States. As for Canada, Skeena is not recommended as a source of supply.

QUITE A JOLT
 There are some things one never suspects. Here's a man who handles statistics, doing the job in a neat little office in Ottawa. He says the figures show there are more suicide cases among married folks. And all these lonely years we've been taking for granted that if old single folks aren't reasonably happy, they jolly well should be.

PLEASURE ABSENT
 In fact, I believe some of the unhappiest I have ever known during my lifetime have been people who made the mistake of trying to accumulate money, and with few exceptions, whether they made a lot, or very little money, they missed a great deal in life.—A. M. Nicholson (MacKenzie) speaking in Hansard, February 22.

There appears to be a strong impression that the national flag question will be settled before the end of the present session. Perhaps, but only perhaps! How many of us realize the number of designs already submitted? The total is said to be 2,695. If the origin of every flag on earth today could be determined it would doubtless be discovered the choice just "didn't happen". Some one who knew what was wanted, was there, and had the intestinal fortitude to go ahead and do it.

As I See It



by Elmore Philbott

The MP's Day

HERE is one typical working day of an M.P. You arrive at your office about nine-thirty. Your secretary brings in a big pile of mail. You lay the newspapers aside to read at leisure.

The letters are of two kinds. Some are general, that is commending you or condemning you for something you have done, or not done. Of this class, the vast majority are from people drawing old age pensions or WVA grants, but who feel these should be larger.

Another class of letters covers actual applications for immigration into Canada, or for naturalization papers, or for any one of a score or more of things. These all require personal answers, plus letters, phone calls or personal visits to the departments concerned.

My own immigration mail is very heavy.

IF YOU ARE on the banking committee you meet at eleven o'clock in the morning. You hear witnesses giving evidence as to how they think the new Housing Act will work out. You share in the cross examination of those witnesses.

At one o'clock you come back to your office for a tray lunch, brought down to you by a messenger. By half past two you are in the House of Commons for the prayers and opening questions of the day.

But you must leave the main chamber by half past three and get back to the banking committee—which is working against time to rush through the new bill in time for this season's construction.

You have from six to eight o'clock free (unless you are a newspaper writer like myself). At eight you go back into the House and sit through till ten. While you listen to the speeches, with one ear, you catch up on your "must" reading.

At ten o'clock at night you are free.

ONCE a week the various party caucuses meet. These of course are secret. We also have our provincial caucuses, where we take up things of most interest to our home folks.

There is a good deal of social life connected with the job—mostly smallish parties among friends.

A few times each year the Speaker and his good lady put on a party for all the MP's. They had one on Mardi Gras night—wedged in however, complete with dance, between six and eight o'clock when the House met again as per usual.

WHEN I first came down here I thought that the Ontario and Quebec fellows were luckier than we were—as they can get home almost every weekend. But now I am changing my mind. For now I find that on those long weekends they have to take all sorts of speaking engagements, and so on, which never arise in our case—for we are too far from home to get them.

I write my own newspaper column either before I leave home in the morning, or at the noon or dinner break, or in lulls in the day's work.

If the House is too boring, I come back to the office, lie on the couch and read.

But there are so many bells around here it reminds me of my school days. We are called into session by gong and also into the main votes by gong. I think I have just missed one vote so far—that was the night I left for the Christmas holiday.

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A NEWS MESSENGER in Paris whose occupation keeps him out in all kinds of weather tries a system long practiced by Oriental potentates, but it's not easy without a flunky along to hold the umbrella. It may be hard on his backbone, but at least it keeps his cigarette dry.

OTTAWA DIARY

By Norman M. MacLeod

The House of Commons had the first Mardi Gras celebration in its history during the past week—and enjoyed it a good deal better than thoroughly.

For the benefit of any who may be strangers to the term, Mardi Gras (literally "fat Tuesday") is a festival celebrated in many places to inaugurate the austere season of Lent. It is a last fling of worldly pleasure. The twin spirits of carnival and more or less reckless gaiety are its deities. Fanciful costumes, masques, balloons, paper streamers, music, rich foods and exuberant beverages are its traditional trappings.

Parliament has never celebrated it before. But this year Speaker Rene Beaudoin, who has sponsored a number of "firsts" since he acceded to the high office of First Commoner, issued invitations to a Mardi Gras reception to be held in the Railway Committee Room during the dinner recess hours of the Commons.

It was a family party, with all MP's and their wives invited without regard for political affiliations, as well as the Press Gallery. Ingenious use of paper mache by the Parliamentary carpentry staff, colored paper streamers from the ceiling, gaily floating balloons, and two volunteer orchestras recruited from House of Commons talent, transferred the usually functional committee room into a satisfactory replica of a typical scene in New Orleans, the traditional shrine of Mardi Gras on this continent. Each guest on arrival was supplied with a masque to wear. Fancy-dress costumes were lacking, but their place was taken in sufficient measure by novelty hats. A generous buffet supplied the appropriate refreshments.

There is a general feeling in Parliament that these family parties, which commenced under Speaker Ross/Macdonald and are being carried on with an original touch by Speaker Beaudoin, are a good thing. They serve to relax the Parliamentary tensions and to mop up the bitterness-sometimes left by Parliamentary debate. They further create a feeling of solidarity and mutual consideration amongst MP's of all parties. It isn't too much of an exaggeration of hope to believe that out of them some day will come a definite parliamentary tradition.

Power To Borrow \$30,000,000 Sought for PGE

VICTORIA (CP)—The legislature will be asked to approve borrowing power of \$30,000,000 for the government-owned Pacific Great Eastern Railway.

Premier Bennett gave no details of how the money will be spent in his budget address in the legislature today.

The government has promised to extend it northward from Prince George, in the central interior of the province into the Peace River country and from Squamish 45 miles to Vancouver at the southern end.

The northern extension is estimated to cost some \$50,000,000 and the southern end \$10,000,000. The government is also replacing steel on the railway.

The legislation submitted will have dual powers—the minister of finance, as agent for the railway, may sell bonds, fully guaranteed by the province; or the province itself may issue and sell the bonds and make advances to the railway.

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Mice Prove Money-Maker If Albinos

SADDLEWORTH, Yorkshire (CP)—Mice make money for 48-year-old James Hough—but only if they are white. Hough, who sells albino mice to scientific research laboratories, has 80,000 in his "mouserie"—all descendants of four pairs he purchased 20 years ago when out of work.

He sells youngsters at a shilling each, males at 2s 6d, and "expectant mother" mice for five shillings. Sales are approximately 6,000 a week.

Says Hough: "Wild mice are taboo here—they bring disease."

Cats? Hough says a number drop in during the summer when the mouserie doors are open, "but they don't cause any trouble."

New Unit Boosts Power Capacity For Quesnel Area

QUESNEL — Capacity of the B.C. Power Commission's diesel-electric generating station here will be increased from 3,200 kw to 4,200 kw this year with installation of a new 1,000 kilowatt unit, district manager J. D. Dobie has announced.

Quesnel has been one of the towns of B.C.'s central interior which has shown remarkable post-war growth which is showing no signs of abatement.

When the Power Commission commenced operation here August 1, 1947, there were 289 customers, and it had been estimated that there were only about 60 potential consumers which could be added.

Today, more than 1,500 customers are served. In 1947, peak demand was 210 kilowatts; in January of this year, it reached a new high of 2,580 kw.

Reflecting the improved living standard in the area, average residential consumption has increased from 45 kw per month in 1947, to 140 kw in 1953. Average commercial consumption has increased from 85 kw to 230 kw per month.

With this increased consumption has come lower average cost to customers.

In 1947, the average residential consumer paid 7.7 cents per kw-hr; in 1953, it was 3.8 cents per kw-hr—a decrease of about 50 per cent in six years.

It is the same story in other classifications; average commercial cost dropped 62 per cent from 8.2 cents to 3.1 cents per kw-hr; power service decreased 5.1 per cent from 3.3 cents to 1.6 cents per kw-hr on the average; and the overall average for all classifications decreased 60 per cent from 6.1 to 2.4 cents per kw-hr.

Short Holiday

PRINCETOWN, England (CP)—"Trusty" convict Thomas Schofield, working as a waiter in a Devonshire hotel used by prison warden, donned jacket and flannels and just walked out. He was caught a few hours later.

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B.C. Not Getting Equitable Return From Federal Government—Bennett

VICTORIA (CP)—The British Columbia government says it is not getting an "equitable" return from the federal government for what the senior government takes out.

In his budget address to the legislature, Premier and Finance Minister Bennett said the province expects to earn a total of \$45,374,000 under the dominion-provincial taxation agreement in the fiscal year ending March 31, 1955—an increase of \$1,638,000 over the year ending.

It also expects \$1,000,000 from one-half of the federal income tax on power distribution corporations—an increase of \$300,000.

But the premier said it is estimated the federal government makes collections in direct and indirect taxes, non-tax revenues and special receipts and credits that total \$474,700,000.

In direct taxation alone, including personal income tax, non-residents tax, corporation income tax, succession duties and income tax on undistributed profits, the federal government gathered \$259,700,000.

Premier Bennett, former Finance Minister Einar Gunderson and Attorney-General Robert Bonner, went to Ottawa Dec. 14 with a brief on federal-provincial joint investment of highways, railways and forest protection in B.C.

"The development of the province's resources is manifestly of major importance to the economy of the nation," the Premier said.

"No other economic area in Canada has such a variety, as well as such potentials in undeveloped natural resources."

It was the hope of the government to enter into a partnership with the federal govern-

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