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An Impressive Leader

ALTHOUGH Arthur Laing is not Premier (yet), he had a provincial leader's stature as he addressed a Prince Rupert audience Saturday night. For an incredible two-hour period which seemed much less, Mr. Laing had his listeners following him every inch of the way as he made a verbal tour through provincial, and sometimes federal, politics.

There was no doubting his concern over the mismanagement he found and one could well believe his promise that, if the Liberals form the next government, their elected members will work as MLAs have never worked before.

This promise does, in fact, contain the essence of his whole view on how to administer the people's affairs. Clearly he does not sanction the attitude that members are just a numerical quantity which enable three or four to run the whole show. He seriously respects the intent of government by representation and, under his administration, each constituency would have the best possible assurance that its affairs would be considered through the medium of its own representative, whether or not that member was on the side in control.

While Mr. Laing's opinions are sufficiently strong and persuasive to make up an effective address, a valuable additional factor is that he is a man with a sense of humor. Not only does this give him an extra facility not available to everybody for putting points across, but it reveals a human quality which would be useful in a position that deals essentially with people.

Another feature particularly reassuring to northern audiences is that Mr. Laing sees B.C. as a province running north and south, not east and west. The fact that he was interested enough to include this part of the country in his campaign is sufficient proof of this by itself, but Mr. Laing took time in his address to confirm the view. It stands in remarkable contrast to the attitude of the Social Credit government which, disdaining its three northern members as cabinet material, could only think woefully of its lack of representation, on Vancouver Island.

It was good, too, to hear from this riding's own candidate, Bruce Brown. Legal training carries its special advantages to anyone in politics and, in Mr. Brown's case, enabled him to give a masterly summation of the state of affairs in this province. A remark from the audience about his being an "Attorney-General" for Mr. Laing carried as much wisdom as wit. Considering his work on the school board here, "Minister of Education" would also have seemed appropriate.

It was an impressive team that had the floor on Saturday night.

OTTAWA DIARY By NORMAN M. MacLEOD

Neither in his vocation of law nor in his avocation of politics does John Diefenbaker, QC, MP, mind doing things the hard way.

Because of that trait of persistence, he has saved more clients from the hang-man's noose than most Canadian lawyers. In addition, he has won election as the lone Conservative MP from Socialist Saskatchewan ever since 1940.

Also—on this is the final convincing proof of his refusal to ask or accept any favors—he now has been nominated as PC candidate in the forthcoming general election in the riding of Prince Albert.

Anyone who thinks that Diefenbaker's nomination in Prince Albert is approximately the equivalent of his being elected out of touch with the riding. It will be a real fight, with the result likely to be uncertain until the final returns are received. The riding which rejected Prime Minister W. L. M. King in order to return CCF-er E. L. Bowman in 1945 won't necessarily tender Diefenbaker the recognition which his qualities of intellect, personality, and industry deserve.

As a matter of fact, Prince Albert, which is the city where Diefenbaker lives and practices law, has been definitely hostile to him politically in the past. He sought election there in 1925 and 1926. Both times he failed to make the grade. It was for this reason that he transferred his candidature to the riding of Lake Centre, created by the Redistribution Act of 1933—and merged with the CCF stronghold

of Moose Jaw in the Redistribution Act of 1952.

The interesting thing in connection with Diefenbaker's forthcoming candidature in Prince Albert is the fact that, if he had wanted to feather-bed his presence in the next Parliament, he could have had his choice of almost any safe PC seat in Eastern Canada. Leader George Drew naturally is anxious to make certain of having Diefenbaker's talents available in the next House, regardless of what the over-all result of the vote may be. He is understood to have offered the Saskatchewan politician a choice of any of several safe Eastern Canada PC seats. While grateful for the offer, Diefenbaker rejected it and elected to leave his political future in the hands of Saskatchewan's voters.

Diefenbaker is reported reliably to have taken the stand that for him to leave Saskatchewan for Eastern Canada would be, if not a shameful retreat, at least a retreat, in view of the extent to which he has become identified with the wheat-growing province in recent years. In addition to not being a person who likes things made easy for him, he isn't the sort of person who retreats under fire.

BROCKVILLE, Ont. (CP)—Peach trees are difficult to grow in this part of eastern Ontario, so citizens watched with interest as blossoms appeared on the tree at the home of former magistrate George Wright. The sturdy tree is five or six inches thick at the base.

As I See It



by
Elmore
Philpott

PS—Clear as Mud

BRUCE HUTCHISON wrote a very lively, readable book on Mackenzie King. On the whole "The Incredible Canadian" makes recent Canadian history come alive better than any other book yet written.

But in some respects it shows Mr. King up in a very bad light. It implied, but did not prove, that Canada's long time Prime Minister had surmounted the second most serious crisis of his political career by shabby trickery.

The most sensational charge was that King induced Mr. St. Laurent to accept conscription by conjuring up a nightmare scare of a "general revolt"—a threatened putsch to overthrow the government.

Now in a postscript article in Maclean's Magazine Mr. Hutchison adds some further information which pretty well debunks what he himself previously wrote.

HERE is the original version on page 374 of "The Incredible Canadian".

"According to King's report, McNaughton telephoned him about noon and in a voice hoarse with shock, exclaimed: 'I have terrible news for you, Chief! What I must tell you will come as a body blow.'"

"The military commanders of Canada, said McNaughton, no longer would accept the responsibility of directing the Army unless conscription were applied immediately."

"Even King (according to his own version) could see no hope of survival! He hung up the telephone knowing, as he said, that he no longer faced a political crisis, or even a racial schism, but the disintegration of the Army, a MILITARY UPRISING WHICH MIGHT SEIZE THE CIVIL POWER, a state of national anarchy, nothing less." (Emphasis mine—E.P.)

"Called to King's office and told McNaughton's news, St. Laurent replied bluntly that the military must be resisted. Otherwise, he said, Canada was reduced to the status of some South American banana republic where the officer class could alter governments at will. The Cabinet must fight the uprising. 'Fight?' King retorted. 'Fight with what? Our bare hands?' The calm man from Quebec was incredulous. Civil government threatened by a military putsch? It was impossible. Yes, said King, but true. There could be no doubt about it. He had McNaughton's word."

HERE is the drastically revised P.S. in Maclean's Magazine for May 15:

"On that morning McNaughton met his leading military advisers. . . . The men responsible for that Army at Ottawa laid before him a chilling memorandum. It recommended that the zombies be conscripted because they could not be persuaded to go overseas voluntarily."

"When they had handed their memorandum to McNaughton the army officials added bluntly that if their recommendation in favor of conscription was not accepted they must resign forthwith. That was terrible news, the body blow, which McNaughton quickly communicated to King by telephone."

It seems strange that neither Mr. Hutchison nor Maclean's Magazine has published a statement from General McNaughton.

The story was blurred before. It is now clear—as mud.

Cost of Living Around the World

Per cent of change between December 1951 and December 1952



This chart shows the latest data on changes in the cost of living in 25 countries. It compares December 1952 levels with those a year earlier. The statistics were charted by the International Labor Organization, a specialized agency of the United Nations.

Trumpets Will Sound When Crown Placed on Head of Queen Elizabeth

LONDON (Reuters) — Trumpets in Westminster Abbey and guns fired from the Tower of London will signal the crowning on June 2 of Queen Elizabeth.

When the trumpets sound and the guns fire, those in the abbey and the millions outside who will be listening to the ceremony by radio and seeing it on television will know that the crown of St. Edward has been placed on the head of the Queen.

Just as Big Ben is striking 11 o'clock, the Queen's golden coach will halt outside the abbey and she will step on to a blue carpet running from the nave of the abbey to the entrance of specially-built annex.

From there she will go on to a robing room. In the vestibule, at 11:15 she will join the procession which has meanwhile been forming. Six maids of honor arrange themselves, three on each side, to carry the long train which flows from the Queen's robe.

The republic of India opened more than 42,000 new post offices during 1952.

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LETTERBOX

FROM A HOSPITAL WINDOW

An old frontiersman had been a patient at the W.M.S. Hospital for weeks. He had the favorite bed overlooking the well-kept lawn.

His window was open and he could hear the honking of the wild geese on their northerly migration which was at its height and practically continuous during the long days in the Central Interior.

Leaders of the flocks, familiar with the feeding grounds, were intent on landing at places where for season after season they had been unmolested on the spring flights. Flocks of sand-hill cranes chose the plowed lands of the farms of Burns, Francois and Ootsa Lake districts.

About 5 a.m. the old trapper heard the music of the landing calls, but a low-lying bank of fog hid both Burns and Decker Lakes.

A huge old gander in the lead honked as he circled clear of the fog. He prepared to land as the fresh green of the hospital lawn caught his eye, but an ambitious young gander took the lead and called to the flock to rise.

The old gander landed in the middle of the highway adjoining

the hospital lawn, evidently tired after a long flight, then tried to take off, but could not rise. A car came along. The driver stopped and jumped out, chased the gander into a dense hedge, caught him, wrung his neck, threw him into his car and drove on, to the disgust of the old trapper who had been surveying the scene with interest. "Some sportsman," he observed. "Wish Game Warden Richmond had been around."

BARNY MULVANY, Burns Lake, B.C.

British Deny Accusation By McCarthy

LONDON (CP)—"Not a shred of evidence" has been found to support allegations that British ships transported Chinese Communist troops last year, a government spokesman said Friday.

The government inaugurated an official inquiry last Wednesday, after Senator Joseph McCarthy claimed two British ships controlled by Wheelock-Marden Company in Hong Kong had carried Communist troops along the China coast.

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