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Why All The Secrecy?

A DISTURBING aspect of the halibut dispute is that there seems to be an attitude that nothing can be done to prevent a strike. As far as can be determined from press reports, absolutely no progress is being made toward a settlement and the disputing parties are not even meeting.

Meanwhile the season's opening on May 12 is much closer than it appears as at least 15 days must be allowed before that date to enable fishermen to rig their gear and reach the grounds.

Although it does not necessarily mean that they are right and the other side is wrong, it must be said that the fishermen have made their position clearer than the dealers. They have two main points. One is that the season be spread out to avoid the concentrated rush of past years to the fishing grounds. They contend that with approximately 26 million pounds of fish being landed in the 20 days of the B.C. halibut season, prices fall drastically and most of the fish has to be frozen.

The other point is their proposal that a floor price be established in the auction system of buying halibut.

To this the dealers have replied, though they do not appear to be speaking officially, that they are unanimously opposed to any form of collective bargaining and minimum price agreement. This is an extremely cryptic attitude to take in the face of such a large issue and certainly has done nothing to convince the public of the rightness of their cause.

At the same time, the fishermen seem to be holding out for two things that would serve similar, if not identical, purposes. Commenting on the congested fishing season, Homer Stevens, secretary of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union, said: "If we can spread out fishing so that the halibut quota is caught over a longer period, both the fishermen and the public will benefit. Prices will be maintained at a more economic level and the public will get more fresh halibut."

If this is so and it can be arranged, why must a floor price also be included? In the circumstances he outlines, the fishermen would stand a very fair chance of getting a better deal than ever before without throwing in an additional demand.

Naturally, however, it is presumptuous to suggest a solution without having full knowledge of all the factors. In this case, one factor that is missing is word from the International Pacific Halibut Commission. If there is any change to be made in the fishing season, this is the body that will do it. Consequently the whole situation must remain in the dark until the commission makes its position known.

It is another aspect of the secrecy and silence in this dispute which are way out of keeping with the importance that the public attaches to the outcome.

Watch Your Credit

ALTHOUGH its title is somewhat forbidding, National Retail Credit Week which starts tomorrow has a meaning for almost everyone.

As the sponsoring National Retail Credit Association points out, it would take months, maybe years, for many of us to save enough to pay cash for that refrigerator, piano, automobile or household furniture. The dress or suit we want today might have to wait until next week or next month. Lacking the cash, we might even have to put off a visit to the doctor, dentist or hospital.

Credit is the magic force that puts the good things of life within the immediate reach of responsible people. It enables us to buy now and pay at a more convenient time. It also enables us to get more for our money. The expanding purchasing power created by credit results in mass production and that in turn lowers the price of manufactured goods.

Keep your credit in good shape and it will keep you in good shape.

As I See It

By Elmore Philpott

Our Hand Not Empty

PEOPLE often write MPs suggesting this country should do more to help other parts of the world, particularly in Asia.

No doubt this is true. But I am impressed by the fact that very few Canadians have any idea of what we are doing already. They do not know that during the present year Canada will spend $34,400,000 through the Colombo Plan, to help some of the nations of South East Asia. They would be even more surprised to realize that we have spent the very considerable sum of $167,300,000 on the Colombo Plan to date.

SINCE 1945 Canada has given away or loaned more than four billion dollars' worth of money and material to countries in various parts of the world. A breakdown of the reconstruction loan to various countries is most interesting. Here are the figures:

To Belgium, $68,800,000; to China (under Chiang), $65,000,000; to Czechoslovakia, $16,700,000; to France, $253,400,000; to The Netherlands, $123,900,000; to Indonesia, $15,500,000; to Norway, 23,700,000; to Britain, $1,185,000,000; to Soviet Union, $15,200,000.

The above items were all originally supposed to be loans, and some of the countries are honestly trying to pay back what they borrowed. However, most of the money has literally gone down the drain. In the case of the $65,000,000 worth of supplies and munitions advanced to Chiang Kai-shek, the materials long since fell into the hands of the Communists.

In addition to the $1,767,200,000 itemized above as loans, Canada gave military relief to the Balkans, Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, to a total of $105,200,000.

Canada gave $215,100,000 through the UN for various purposes of relief and welfare.

In addition, more than eight and a half million dollars was spent in other humanitarian food grants, or for hurricane or flood relief. The countries receiving such aid were Greece, Korea, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Haiti, Japan, Yugoslavia, British West Indies, European flood relief.

APART from the above welfare and humanitarian grants, Canada has spent a vast sum on military aid to assist our allies in NATO. By the end of this year, such assistance will amount to $1,417,900,000. Miscellaneous international organizations have received contributions of almost $368,000,000. This does not include Canada's share of the UN administration costs, nor, of course, does it include the cost of our diplomatic representation abroad.

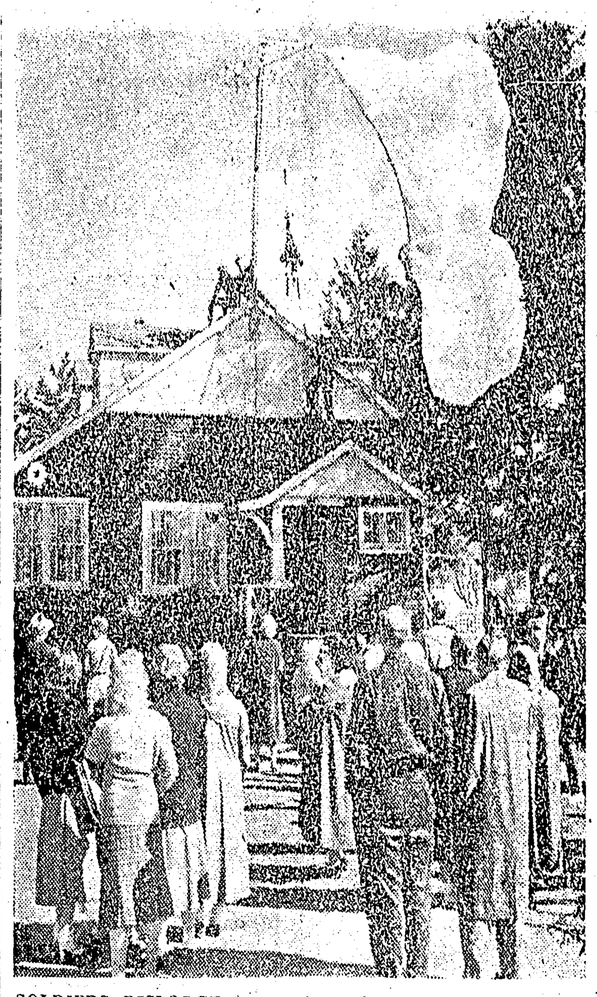
Canada is about the only country in the world which has never received a single cent, by way of military assistance, from our big ally, the United States. We long since worked out with her a mutual arrangement whereby we each buy from the other an equivalent amount of military help and supplies. Of course, Canada is the beneficiary of such works in our territory as the Distant Early Warning Line, which was financed entirely at U.S. expense.

We have agreed to allow the Americans to finance this, because it is for the protection of the whole North American continent and we ourselves have borne the entire cost of the second line of radar defence, as well as carried our fair share of the southernmost Pine Tree line, which is a partnership affair.

Canada has no need to be ashamed of what we have done for the other peoples of the world.

FAMOUS SPIRE

The 400-foot stone spire of Salisbury Cathedral is known as the tallest and most graceful spire in England.



SOLDIERS DISLODGE a parachute from a television aerial atop a Preston, Ont., house after high winds blew 47 members of the Royal Canadian Regiment off course during a mass parachute drop. Police said the parachutists landed on roofs, trees and lawns, snapping aerials and breaking windows. Four soldiers were treated for minor injuries. The soldiers were members of the RCR located at London, Ont. (CP Photo

OTTAWA DIARY

By NORMAN M. MacLEOD

Conservative members of Parliament are particularly fond of throwing back to Rt. Hon. C. D. Howe, Minister of Trade and Commerce, his once off-hand remark, "What's a million?" But this week when they found nearly half a billion dollars tucked away in the Public Accounts of Canada they became more than a little suspicious that the government has been juggling the books to hide some of its embarassingly big federal surpluses.

Canada is one of the few countries that publishes a statement of Assets and Liabilities. The latest figure put the total liabilities of the Dominion at $17,951,500,000, and total assets at $7,184,800,000. But then there's an item of $496,400,000 listed under assets as "Less: Reserve for losses on realization of asset." This was the item that drew the attention of Opposition MPs.

Going through the big 2½-inch volume of the Public Accounts is something like going through a house of mirrors: you always find yourself looking squarely at yourself, without getting anywhere.

Flip over several hundred pages in the volume and you find the figure of $496,384,064.72 listed as "Reserve for losses on realization of Assets." That item refers you to another notation a few pages on, with the enlightening information, "This reserve is provided for losses on the realization of assets."

Now, William Hamilton of Montreal and Douglas Harkness of Calgary, Alta., are two hard-working members of the Conservative group in the Public Accounts Committee. And even this very merry-go-round didn't becloud their minds.

Deputy Finance Minister Ken W. Taylor was the witness before the committee, and Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Harkness asked him pointblank: Is this a convenient hole in which to store embarassing government surpluses?

Dr. Taylor, who wouldn't admit that it was, had a nice explanation for it all. There were, he said, certain loans to foreign governments which cannot be described as bad debts but which are, at least, dubious. There is a $6,500,000 loan which has been outstanding to Greece for many years. There is a $24,300,000 loan to Roumania which, under the present world alignment, cannot be counted on as a very sound investment.

These and other accounts, or at least some of them, may ultimately have to be written off as bad debts. If that should happen, argued Taylor, it wouldn't be fair to charge the whole amount to one year. Hence, the origin of the "Reserves for losses on realization of Assets."

The Hamilton-Harkness reaction: a very unconvinced "Hmmmm . . ."

LONDON (AP)—Author and journalist Rebecca West, replying to a newspaper question about where she would like to live, said she would always prefer England "but I imagine I would settle down very happily in Canada."

All Aboard

By G. E. MORTIMORE

People can now go to a clinic and get oxygen treatments that are supposedly as good as a month's holiday.

At an "oxygen centre" in Paris, jaded Frenchmen will pay $37 for 10 sessions of 25 minutes each in a transparent oxygen tent. There will be red rooms for a brisk mountain holiday; green rooms for a rest in the country; and blue rooms for the seaside.

Each room has artificial windows that overlook giant pictures of soothing landscapes. Temperatures and oxygen are regulated to give the feeling of mountains, beach or meadow.

In this age of capsules and substitutes, the announcement of an ersatz holiday is no surprise. Already we have wallpaper that looks like wood and wood that looks like wallpaper. Whiskey can be aged by chemicals in minutes instead of years. (It ages the consumer at equal speed, no doubt).

There are vitamin capsules that are nearly as good as food book capsules that are better than books; and easy-to-digest capsule religions, prepared by experts and guaranteed not to ruffle the intellect or disturb the conscience.

In some towns we can dial a prayer by telephone. We can switch on TV and get other people to do our living and loving for us. So the capsule holiday comes as a matter of course.

A few refinements may be added to it, in the shape of synthetic poison ivy, clockwork flies and mosquitoes and a bruising machine to give the holidaymaker sore muscles.

We can be sure of one thing, however. The management won't accept any plastic imitation banknotes, no matter how crisp or smooth. They'll demand real money.

Only 19 B.C. Hospitals Presently Accredited

CHICAGO— The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals this week published its annual list of accredited hospitals in the United States, its possessions and Canada.

The list shows 3,102 hospitals fully accredited and 528 hospitals provisionally accredited. There are approximately 6,000 hospitals eligible for accreditation but Dr. Kenneth B. Babcock, commissioner director, pointed out that the omission of a hospital from the list did not necessarily mean it had failed to pass an accreditation survey. Hospitals with less than 25 beds are not eligible for accreditation.

The accreditation program is a voluntary one and only those hospitals which request survey are visited. Therefore, some of the hospitals not listed may not have requested survey. Further, Dr. Babcock pointed out, the limited survey staff has made it impossible to visit all requesting hospitals during the Commission's three years of existence and thus a hospital not listed may have requested survey but not yet have been visited.

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals is an agency established by five leading health organizations—the American College of Physicians, American College of Surgeons, American Hospital association, American Medical association and the Canadian Medical association—to conduct the hospital survey and inspection program initiated by the American College of Surgeons in 1919. The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals began operations on January 1, 1953.

"Accreditation of a hospital means," Dr. Babcock said, "that it has voluntarily submitted to a survey of its facilities and its patient care. It is a badge of recognition which the hospital can display to its community to prove that it conforms to high standards of patient care."

Dr. Babcock said that the survey is undertaken on a confidential basis between the hospital and the Commission. "Therefore," he said, "The Commission cannot release any information about its work other than the annual list published herewith. All information concerning a specific hospital must be obtained from the hospital itself."

Dr. Babcock said the surveyors, all physicians, rate a hospital on certain basic requirements such as: a safe physical plant free from fire hazards, proper supervision and review by the medical staff of the clinical work done in the hospital; maternal, infant and anesthetic death rates that are not excessively high; adequate medical records; ethical practices; investigation of all tissue removed at operation; mortality rates that are within reasonable limits; proper nursing care; proper administrative and medical staff organization.

"It can be seen from this explanation," Dr. Babcock said, that the survey covers the essentials of good patient care. The accreditation program is a tribute not only to the organizations which support it but to the hospitals which make it possible by their willingness to have their patient care judged by objective criteria. It is proof that, with few exceptions, our hospitals are striving constantly to improve the care they render."

Of the hospitals accredited in Canada only 19 are accredited in British Columbia and three are provisionally accredited.

Those accredited are Queen Alexandra solarium for Crippled Children; Royal Naval hospital at Esquimalt; Kelowna General Hospital; Royal Columbian hospital at New Westminster; North Vancouver General hospital; Powell River General hospital; Trail-Tadanac hospital; Tranquille sanatorium; Royal Jubilee hospital, St. Joseph's hospital and Victoria Veterans hospital all of Victoria; Children's hospital, Grace hospital, Pearson Tuberculosis hospital, St. Paul's hospital, Shaughnessy hospital, Vancouver General hospital and Willow Chest centre all of Vancouver.

Provisionally accredited are the Provincial Mental hospital at Essondale, Nanaimo General hospital and Vernon Jubilee Hospital.

GOOD CAMPAIGNER

LEICESTER, England (AP)—"If the men of England worked as hard as women there would be no economic crisis," says Cyril Osborne, Conservative MP for Louth, Lincolnshire.

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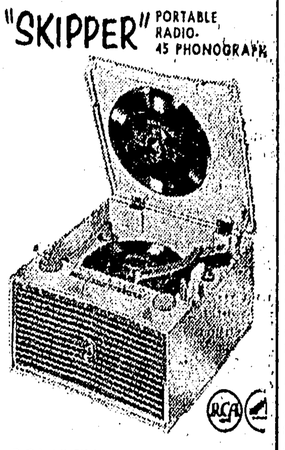
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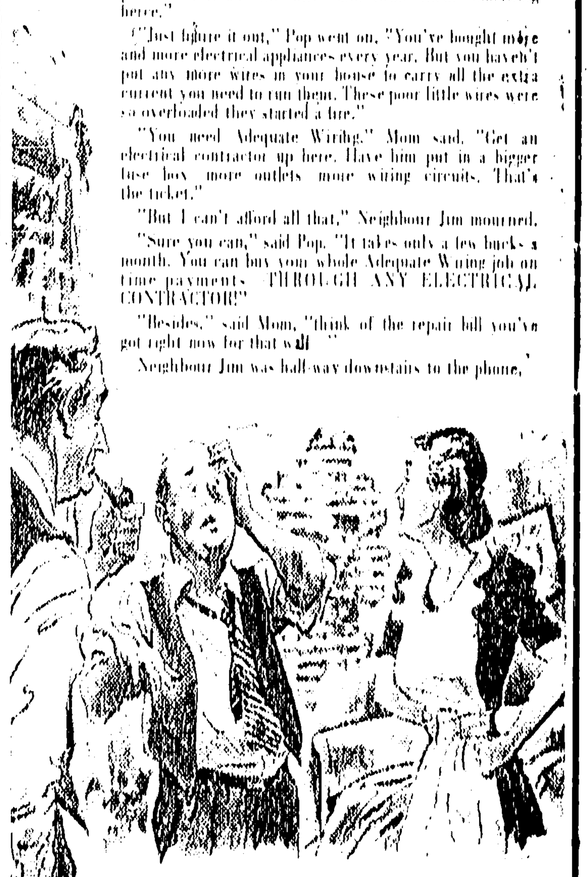
When the fire reels left

"Just can't figure it out," said Neighbour Jim staring at the charred remains of his bedroom wall. "Just can't."
"Humph! There's nothing to figure," Pop waggled a finger. "The firemen told you it was inadequate wiring."
"That's what I can't figure. Think I should sue someone?"
"Sue yourself" Mom retorted. "It's your fault."
"Mine! I didn't do anything!"
"Just a minute," Pop said. "How many fuses you got in your fuse box?"
"Four, I think."
"Any of them keep blowing?"
"Well a lot of them did until I changed them from fifteen to twenty-lives."
"Aha!" cried Mom. "No wonder you had a fire!"
Pop slowly shook his head. "Not good Jim. The electrician knew what he was doing when he put in fifteen amp fuses. He knew that was all the current the wires could safely handle. Changing them to twenty-lives is just a waste of power overloads the wires and heats them something heavy."
"Just figure it out," Pop went on. "You've bought more and more electrical appliances every year. But you haven't put any more wires in your house to carry all the extra current you need to run them. These poor little wires were so overloaded they started a fire."
"You need Adequate Wiring," Mom said. "Get an electrical contractor up here. Have him put in a bigger fuse box more outlets more wiring circuits. That's the ticket."
"But I can't afford all that," Neighbour Jim mourned.
"Sure you can," said Pop. "It takes only a few bucks a month. You can buy your whole Adequate Wiring job on time payments THROUGH ANY ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR!"
"Besides," said Mom, "think of the repair bill you've got right now for that wall"
Neighbour Jim was half-way downstairs to the phone.

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