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Operation Airport

IF THERE are any points in favor of an airport for Prince Rupert that have not already been made, the city's special airport committee is in the process of making them. With care and common sense the committee is preparing a case that should persuade the most die-hard sceptic that an airport here is neither the useless nor the extravagant undertaking which some have tried to label it.

This, of course, does not necessarily mean that it will succeed in Ottawa. The problem there is not so much scepticism as indifference. As a senior government official once remarked to a visitor from Prince Rupert, "You have an airport on one of the islands out there, haven't you? Why do you want another?" The explanation that the island in question, Moresby in the Queen Charlottes, was well beyond the local horizon did not seem to change the tenor of this interesting conversation to any great extent.

But it must be confessed that on the subject of an airport Prince Rupert has gone about with its hat rather obviously in its hand. It is not an attitude likely to evoke much sympathy and it is one which the airport committee is determined to change. As a result of its efforts, the city is now in possession of an independently made report which can show to the federal government where substantial savings can be effected without seriously reducing the value of the project.

The committee also is enquiring into means by which the site under consideration on Digby Island might be made available by the provincial government. By the time its case is ready for presentation, the committee hopes to have a complete analysis of the situation which will not only establish our sincerity of purpose at this end but demonstrate convincingly that the job is necessary and that it can be done without excessive cost.

After a prolonged and uncertain history, Operation Airport is beginning to look as if it means business.

Mix-Up in Millions

NO CANADIAN even reasonably familiar with the recent political history of his country will have been surprised that Mr. Howe, our Minister of Production, got mixed up in his millions the other day.

Mr. Howe has always been fearless, not to say occasionally reckless, in the face of millions, especially when the millions are dollars.

And while the difference between $100,000,000 and $5,000,000 may strike most ordinary people as a somewhat staggering gap, it must be remembered that $95,000,000 may not rate as much more than a slip of the tongue in Mr. Howe's league.

At any rate, after the digits had been sorted out, it turned out that what Mr. Howe was trying to say was that Canada had, in recent years, embarked on a "flying saucer" project, had been prepared to spend up to $100,000,000 on the job, and had abandoned it after about $5,000,000 had in fact been spent.

—Calgary Herald.

RAY Reflects and Reminisces

One of the most popular current songs is "Count Your Blessings." And it would be a good thing if a lot of us did.

Prince Rupert hasn't any dry-dock—but think of Kitimat.

According to expert opinion, four hours of sleep is essential for body and too much sleep is not beneficial in most cases. A normal condition of sleep is when muscles are relaxed, the heart rate it lowered, breathing is slower and deeper and there is a decrease in sensitivity and energy. The best kind of sleep is one which brings complete restoration to body and mind.

This is the season when nature turns over a lot of new leaves. All husbands have to do is rake them up.

When a man attacks a woman on the street, a piercing hatpin is sometimes worth more than a piercing scream.

As I See It

by Elmore Philpott

Who Wants Low Rents?

ORGANIZED labor is rightly concerned at the amount of unemployment in Canada. The trade unionists are very properly calling on civic, provincial and the federal governments for action to reduce that unemployment.

But are the unions themselves going about this in the best way?

Up till now only a few cities in all Canada have taken advantage of the new National Housing Act to build groups of rental houses. Yet the Act itself is so simple, so practical that it enables just about any responsible organization to get its own rental housing project going.

* * *

SUPPOSE that any provincial government, any municipal council, any trade union, any branch of the Canadian Legion, any Rotary Club, or any church of any denomination wants to go ahead with a rental housing project.

Nobody needs to go hat in hand to the government or parliament at Ottawa, for Canada has already set up the new housing act. Nobody at Ottawa needs to vote any more money for this project, from the Dominion end, for the money has already been voted and is in the bank just waiting for somebody to come along and use it.

All that the new Act requires is that some responsible local authority put up from 10 per cent to 20 per cent of the cost of the rental housing project in question.

* * *

The only rules are that the buildings must conform to CM & HC standards, and that there be ceilings on the rents for stimulated periods.

* * *

HERE are two samples of how two different types of rental projects would work:

Suppose that the New Westminister local of the International Woodworkers Union decided that more rental housing was needed in its area. Suppose it decided to go ahead with a project of its own. Suppose that the union argued out the question—is this rental housing to be subsidized rental housing, or unsubsidized?

Suppose that the union decided to build a group of eight rental houses. Suppose the cost of each house, including land, came to $8000. That would mean that the union would have to put up 20 per cent, $1,600 for every $8,000 finally built.

For three years the union would be compelled to keep rentals below the ceiling set by CM & HC. But the union would take no great risk that the project might "go sour." For the new Housing Act actually contains a a provision whereby the rental income is guaranteed for 30 years.

* * *

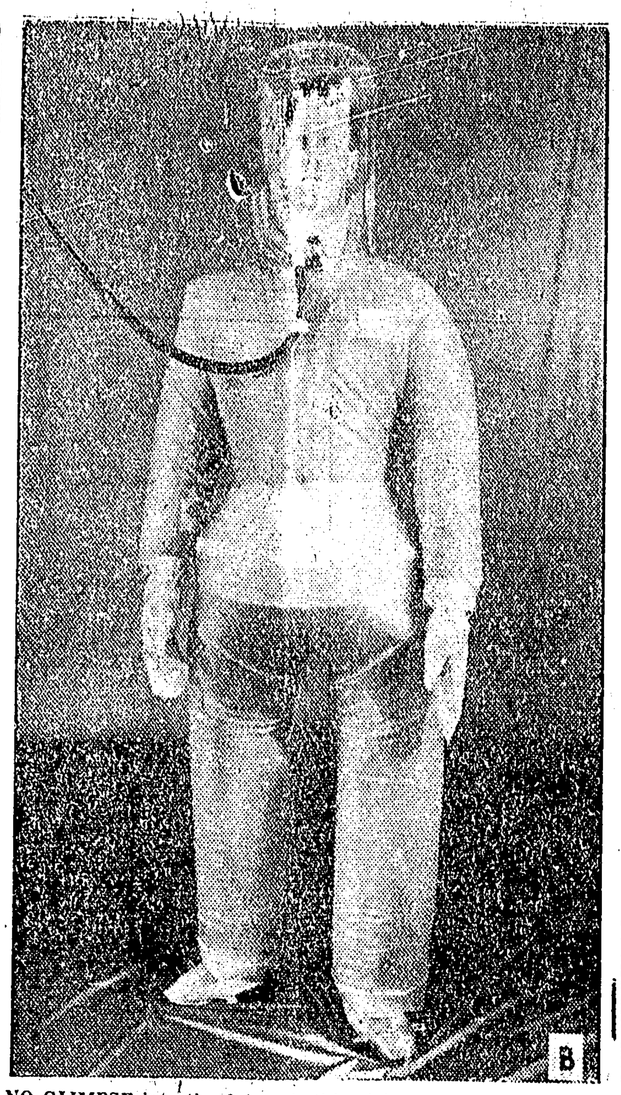
SUPPOSE that a branch of the Canadian Legion decided to invest its surplus in subsidized housing for its members on War Veterans Allowance.

An investment of $50,000 by any branch of the Legion, or any group of branches, would be sufficient to obtain the necessary money to swing a project costing $500,000.

Also, B.C. and some other provinces, provide outright grants to help pay for subsidized homes for old people.

This amount would provide a very large number of tiny homes or apartments for old folk.

The only thing that goes as far today as it did ten years ago is the dime that rolls under the bed.



NO GLIMPSE into the future is this picture. It is of a present-day worker in atomic research and production plants in Britain. The plastic clothing filled with compressed air protects against the deadly radioactive dust and particles. British industrial use of the atom includes an atomic energy power station soon to be in operation.

Pope Suffering From Hernia But No Stomach Ulcer Signs

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Detailed x-rays taken today of Pope Pius showed he is suffering from a small hernia, his private physician announced.

Dr. Riccardo Galeazzi-Lisi said the x-rays also showed the 78-year-old head of the Roman Catholic Church is suffering from gastritis.

Galeazzi-Lisi described the hernia as of "small importance" and added that the pictures did not reveal the presence of a stomach ulcer.

The Pope's physician did not explain just what was the condition of gastritis revealed by the x-rays, but he indicated that it was not a surprising factor.

The pontiff was reported tired by the examination, which was described as "very detailed." It lasted almost two hours. But the Pope was said to have tolerated the barium solution well. The solution must be taken by mouth to outline the internal organs for the x-rays.

A consultation of Galeazzi-Lisi and several other doctors was called for later today to decide whether or not to operate on the Pope for the hernia, which the doctors said was discovered in the diaphragm.

Dr. Raffaele Paolucci di Valmaggiore, famous surgeon who has been a consultant on the Pope's case, said last week that such an operation would be a "very minor and local affair" which the pontiff could survive.

OTTAWA DIARY

By NORMAN M. MacLEOD

The prospect of national health insurance being enacted at the approaching session of Parliament is described very authoritatively in government circles as exactly nil.

The official attitude is said to be that the burden of paternalistic legislation already built up is all that the Canadian economy can support in its present state of productivity—and having regard to the necessity of keeping Canadian costs competitive with other exporting countries whose goods must be met in world markets.

During recent months labor interests have been pressuring for amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act which, in effect, would have constituted national health insurance by a back-door method. What the unionists wanted was a scheme of sickness benefits comparable to the benefits which the legislation already pays for involuntary unemployment. They contended that sickness was the form of involuntary unemployment which the worker found greatest difficulty in meeting, and that the Unemployment Insurance Act would only be carrying out its proper mission if it made provision for sickness emergencies.

But Cabinet Ministers were quick to recognize the proposal as involving national health insurance, although by a somewhat indirect route. So the labor bodies were told that if Canada was to have national health insurance it would have it as the result of a carefully considered, specific scheme. But they also were warned not to expect anything like immediate or even early action. The subject was one, they were told, upon which a "very great difference of opinion" existed within the Cabinet.

In other words, national health insurance is something that's being left in the government deep freeze for some time to come. If a political emergency should arise in which the government considered that only some spectacular resort to so-called Santa Claus legislation could save the situation, it might be warmed up. Otherwise, it is likely to stay where it is.

The economics involved in the government's decision may be readily understood. During the current year Canadian production has been dropping. Tax revenues also have been dipping proportionately. Obviously further schemes of social welfare can only become possible as the increase in national wealth through expended productivity makes them possible, and as the revenues flow into the hands of the government to finance them. Neither of these conditions is being fulfilled at the present time. And with the steadily sharpening competition in foreign markets, there is little prospect that Canada will be able to afford any radical advances in socialistic legislation in the foreseeable future.

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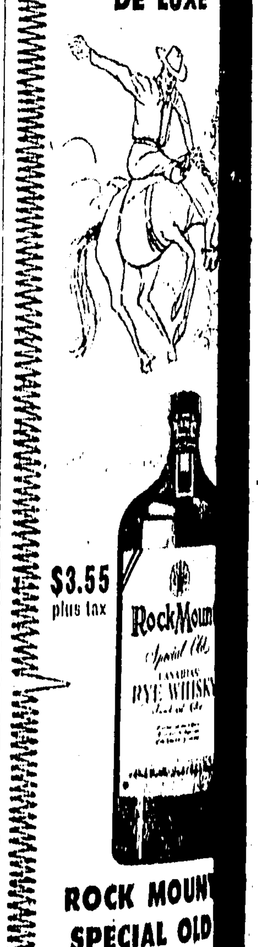

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