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Divided Command

A FLAW in the American system of government is to be felt strongly, and perhaps painfully, for the next two years. A Republican president and cabinet will try to direct the affairs of the nation within the limits allowed them by a Democratic congress.

Of course, the difficulties may not be so great as they appear to be at this point. On several occasions President Eisenhower has shown his anxiety to follow a non-partisan policy, and this new seating arrangement may give him the extra strength he needs on the left to pursue such a course.

But in principle the system is not conducive to good working relations. It is as if the president of a company had one idea of how his business should be run, and the board of directors held an entirely different view. Under the British parliamentary system, this situation rarely occurs. The president or prime minister is also chairman of the board of directors, which is the party in power, and when it falls into disfavor, he goes with it.

The U.S. plan is intended to give the president at least four guaranteed years in office during which he can apply himself diligently without being compelled to campaign around the country every time there is a political crisis. But possibly those who drafted the constitution would not have been altogether pleased with their work if they could have foreseen that at this formidable time in its history their country was to be divided in its command.

What is wrong with the constitution is more easily diagnosed, however, than what is wrong with the Republicans. Just two years ago they swept into power with one of the most renowned and respected Americans in history at their head. After a series of petty scandals in the Democratic administration, the stage was set for great events but somehow none of them took place. Instead there was the awkward comedy featuring Senator McCarthy, and the rest of the party failed to direct attention to more inspiring subjects. As one writer has said of the Republicans, "They give the impression of being too scared, too mad, too cold or too small to represent so great a country."

But among the uncertainties of politics in that country and elsewhere, this certainty does exist—the U.S. will be the free world's leader for many years to come, and each test of its authority will better equip it to meet the next. Beside that main point, the periodic gains and losses of each party are of lesser concern.

Canadian Scene

IT IS easy—and all too common—to speak glibly of "the Canadian scene." But the Canadian scene does not consist solely in what is going on in Ottawa or Toronto, Montreal or Vancouver—or even in what is going on in Nova Scotia. It is even more what is being achieved and thought, said and projected, in Kitimat and Shawinigan Falls, in the outposts of Newfoundland and the fruit farms of the Fraser river valley, by ordinary Canadians from Aklavik to Yarmouth. And more and more today the north is emerging to play its increasing part in the growing life of this country.

—Halifax Chronicle-Herald.

TAX PARLEY SEEN SHORTLY TO DISCUSS QUEBEC ISSUE

OTTAWA—A federal-provincial tax conference may be held before the end of the year to offer the terms of a proposed federal tax agreement with Quebec to the other nine provinces.

Prime Minister St. Laurent said Wednesday after a cabinet meeting that Premier Duplessis' new proposals for solving the Ottawa-Quebec income tax dispute will be studied by federal tax officials.

However, he said, the terms of any tax settlement with Quebec first will be referred to the premiers of the other nine provinces.

He hoped to have something to present to the premiers before the end of the year and indicated that a federal-provincial conference likely will be held for that purpose.

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Ex-Liberal Group Prexy Gives Views on Socreds

The Editor,
The Daily News.

While it is more important to our way of thinking that the Liberal party should emphasize its own constructive policies rather than criticize opponents, it is nevertheless necessary to understand the principles, policies, resolutions and activities of other political parties—especially of the party which is in government power.

We have not yet been favored with another expensive booklet about the convention, such as the Social Credit party issued in August. Our information is therefore limited to press reports which were quite extensive and doubtless reasonably accurate.

We observed that 120 resolutions were dealt with, supplemented by comment on public affairs by Premier Bennett and Solon Low, the party leaders.

What amazed us was the puerile and petty nature of most resolutions; the almost total lack of resolutions on matters of high policy or on the most pressing problems of British Columbia; the insolence and intolerance of a few combined with the denunciatory nature of others.

According to press reports the liveliest debate occurred on the subject of water fluoridation.

Two resolutions on the Civil Service excited little debate and appear to have passed unanimously. Both demonstrate the insolence of the gossip; the valour of the ignorant; and the indifference or carelessness of the resolutions committee and the party leaders to the high responsibility of a political party, which is the government in two out of the 10 provinces of Canada.

One of these resolutions contained a most serious charge against and condemnation of one of the most important groups of men and women in British Columbia. It charged the entire Civil Service with being "wilfully inefficient."

After making such a sweeping charge against all those engaged in the many branches of the public services of his province, another resolution urged that civil servants, this same body of "wilfully inefficient" civil servants, unless they are all to be discharged and replaced by good Social Creditors, "should take part in politics."

Only the most stupid people would indict the whole civil service as "wilfully inefficient" based upon no evidence other than the ignorant gossip of the gutter. Only the most impudent and insolent would then offer to the insulted civil servants the consolation bribe of being magnanimously permitted to take part in politics.

Probably the most startling comment was that made by Premier Bennett when he reported to the convention the definition of Social Credit he had given to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had asked its meaning. Mr. Bennett parroted St. Paul's words to become applicable to Social Credit:

"Unto the Jews, it is a stumbling block; Unto the Greeks, it is foolishness; but we know unto millions of people throughout the world, it is life eternal."

There is no objection to anyone quoting Scripture or even occasionally misquoting it as Premier Bennett did. What we are startled at is the amazing composure of the Social Credit

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OTTAWA DIARY

By Norman M. MacLeod

Considering their much advertised status as "a little general election", next week's five by-election contests are evoking amazingly little stir in Capital political circles.

The St. Laurent Government's only evidence of concern so far has been its speedy pay-off—upwards of \$5,000,000—of the 1953-54 oats pools. The obvious inference is that there are a considerable number of growers of oats out Selkirk way, where the Liberal candidate is reported to be trailing veteran CCF'er "Scotty" Bryce, engaged in a strong attempt to make a Parliamentary come-back.

In other respects the Cabinet is carrying on business as usual. That means that it is concentrating on such issues as Western European unity, falling taxation revenues, the drop in farm income, export trade and in general domestic business, and on preparations for the coming session of Parliament. The only Cabinet to intervene at all actively in the local campaigns has been Justice Minister Stuart Garson and Immigration Minister J. H. Pickersgill.

The relative indifference of the Cabinet to the contests has been at least matched, if not surpassed, in opposition circles. The CCF are largely concentrating on Selkirk where chances are favorable. Elsewhere their participation isn't much

above a token level. The P.C.'s are going through the motions of all-out campaigning in Stornoway, Toronto-Trinity, and West York. But the directing effort is coming somewhat curiously from the Toronto provincial party headquarters, rather than from Ottawa. Instead of being in the thick of the fight as Commander-in-Chief of the PC forces, Hon. Mr. Drew has been engaged in writing a series of travelogues on the tour of himself and his family in Europe during the past summer. The articles are appearing in syndicate form in a number of newspapers across the country and some Ottawa critics are unkind enough to suggest that they represent a misdirection of leadership effort. It is high time, these observers say, for Hon. Mr. Drew to put his holiday travels of the past summer away in mothballs and get down to the serious and exacting task of leading a major political party.

The lack of fireworks in the by-elections is the more surprising to Ottawa political circles because the effect that they could have upon the political pattern of the nation is widely realized. Economic conditions aren't too favorable at the moment to the government, which also faces the handicap of the normal temptation of electors to vote against a party in power when they can do so without

upsetting the national picture. The Drew leadership, for its part, urgently needs the reinforcement that by-election gains could give it. But despite these factors neither side appears to be too much concerned about its strategic position.

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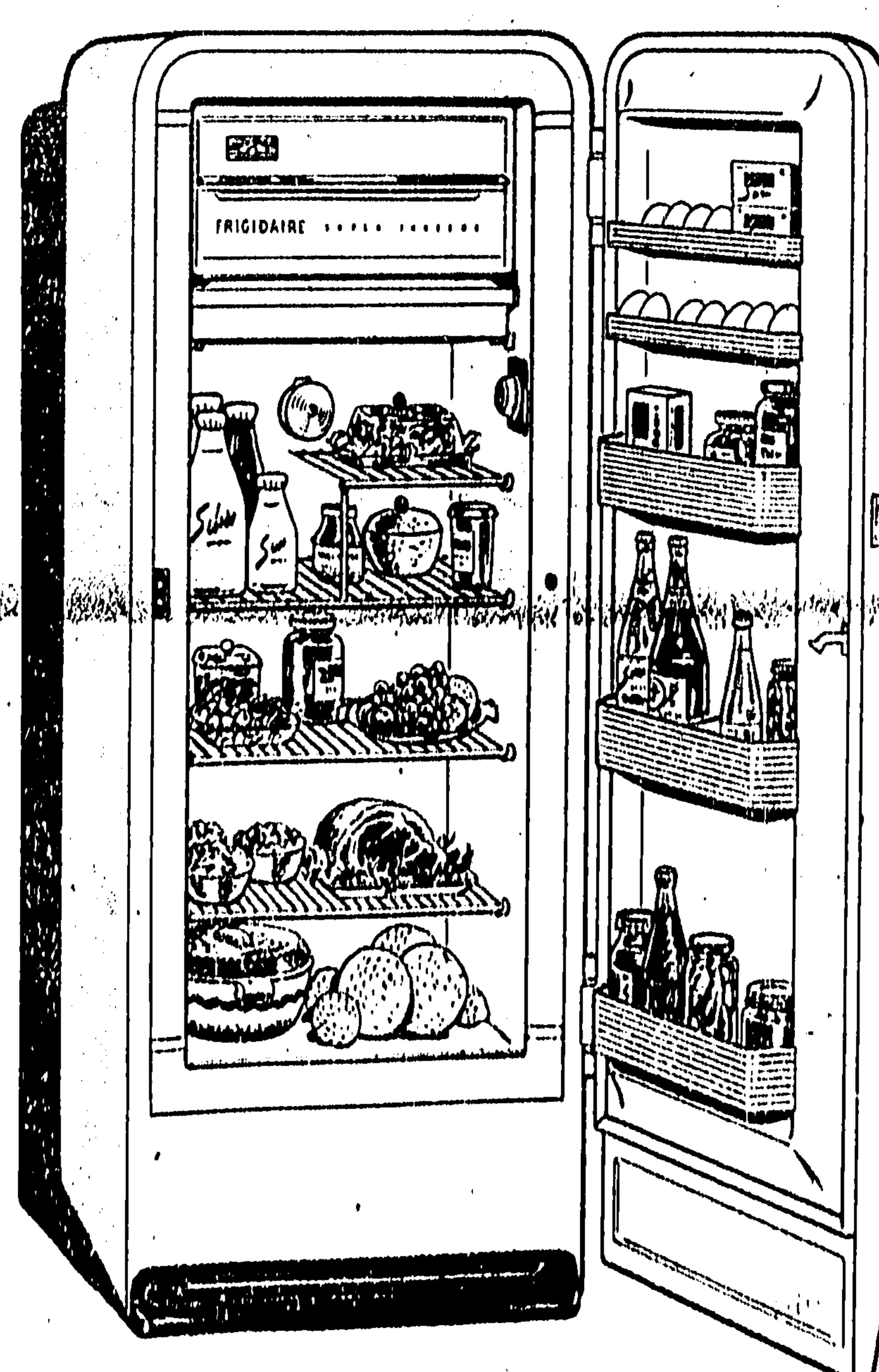
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