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Social Credit candidate wins byelection by narrow margin

Brothers beats CCF with 385-vote edge

TRAIL, B.C. (CP)—The governing Social Credit Party clung to Rossland-Trail riding Monday in a provincial byelection that saw the party's winning margin reduced sharply.

The victory was described by Premier Bennett as the "finest Christmas present any government ever had." Opposition leaders pounced on the reduced majority as evidence of decreasing voter support of the government.

Donald Brothers, 35-year-old Trail lawyer, collected 3,129 votes—30 per cent of the 10,396 ballots cast—to win the hotly contested byelection, the first in British Columbia in more than a year.

SLIM MARGIN

His margin was only 385 votes over the runner-up, CCF candidate F. E. (Buddy) DeVito, a Trail alderman.

The Liberal and Progressive Conservative candidates were close behind. Dr. M. E. Krause drew 2,351 votes as Liberal standard-bearer while Conservative Alex Brokenshire garnered 2,172.

Almost 80 per cent of the 13,024 eligible voters were drawn to the polling booths after a heated campaign.

Mr. Brothers' edge was far short of that shown by his predecessor, Robert E. Sommers. Despite accusations of bribery, Sommers carried the constituency with 5,097 votes in the last election here, Sept. 19, 1956, almost double the runner-up CCF candidate's total and more than that of all three opposition candidates together.

Sommers resigned his seat a month ago when he was convicted of bribery and conspiracy in his handling of provincial forest management licences while he was lands and forests minister. Sentenced to five years in prison, he is free on bail pending an appeal.

TORIES GAIN

The biggest gain Monday was in Conservative support. Mr. Brokenshire's total was way above the 252 votes won by the Conservative in 1956. The Liberals recorded a substantial gain while the CCF vote decreased slightly.

Mr. Brothers told supporters at a post-election party here he will talk with civic officials throughout this industralized interior B.C. riding, then bring their problems before the legislature.

Mr. DeVito, his closest competitor, claimed the "opposition split the votes and allowed Social Credit to slip in."

SEEKS LIBERAL SUPPORT

His statement was echoed by CCF leader Robert Strachan, head of the legislature opposition. The Liberals, Mr. Strachan said, must realize they will have to support CCF candidates in future elections "to ensure the defeat of the Social Credit government."

Premier Bennett, following election returns in his legislature offices in Victoria, said the decision is an "endorsation of the government."

"This represents general support of the government. It was almost a general election, in a way. And it removes any thought that there will be an early general election."

"SIGNIFICANT" DROP

Liberal leader Arthur Laing felt the government was "heavily disciplined" by the voters while Conservative chief Deane Finlayson found the drop in Social Credit votes "significant."

The government platform, presented in person by Premier Bennett and a battalion of cabinet ministers, featured B.C.'s road - building program and other public works.

While Sommers himself was mentioned only infrequently by opposition speakers, they stressed that morality in government was an issue.

The results left the standings in the legislature unchanged: Social Credit 38, CCF 10, Liberal 2, Independent 2. Total 52.

RCMP call on Sommers defended

VICTORIA (CP) —Attorney - General Robert Bonner also lost sleep the famous morning that an RCMP officer served notice on Robert Sommers that the crown would seek to have Sommers' bribe-conspiracy sentence increased.

The wife of the former lands and forests minister said Sunday she phoned the attorney-general immediately after the policeman made his appearance in the wee hours of last Wednesday.

"I phoned Mr. Bonner and demanded an explanation . . . why the job had been done like this," Mrs. Sommers said. She did not say what the attorney-general replied.

An RCMP spokesman said there was "ample justification" for the papers being served when they were and that the policeman approached the Sommers home only after noting that the lights were on and seeing "obvious signs of activity."

The spokesman said Sommers, who is free on bail awaiting his appeal from five consecutive one-year jail sentences, appeared at the door fully dressed and smoking a cigarette almost immediately after the officer knocked.

"That is not fair," Mrs. Sommers said. "They are not telling the truth."

She said both she and her husband were sound asleep when she was awakened by a "heavy rapping."

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT—Ten-year-old Elizabeth Knox ponders the strange gift of a Toronto woman known only as "Another Elizabeth". Each Christmas for the last three years, Elizabeth, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Norman Knox of Lambeth, Ont. has received a gift. First $10, then $110 and now $1,050. Part of the money is for charity, part for Elizabeth's education. The unknown Elizabeth, facing her last Christmas, was attracted to the child when she read her letter to Santa asking him to remember needy children and send her a doll if there was anything left. —CP photo.

Liberals jubilant at Trinity

OTTAWA (CP)—A young dentist has held the Manitoba constituency of Springfield for the Progressive Conservative government but a former Liberal cabinet minister has taken over Toronto Trinity.

Voting Monday—light in both ridings—enabled Liberal Paul Hellyer in Trinity to inflict the first byelection setback on the government since the 1957 general eletcion.

And in Springfield, Dr. Joseph Slogan lost a comfortable Conservative vote margin but led from the start against a resurgent Liberal candidate who took over second place from the CCF.

The results restored the standing in the 265-member Commons to 208 Conservatives, 49 Liberals and 8 CCF—just where it was after the March 31 general election. The Conservatives had stood to achieve a new Canadian high in the number of Commons members ever held by one party, set at 208 in March.

In four subsequent byelections, they now have retained Ontario and Manitoba seats, taken the Liberal stronghold of Montmagny—L'Islet in Quebec and been forced to return Toronto Trinity to the Liberals.

Prime Minister Diefenbaker, just back from his world trip, was expected to comment today.

Liberal leader Lester B. Pearson called the results a "powerful stimulus" and an indication beyond doubt of public uneasiness regarding government policies.

SEEN BY MILLIONS—Use of television and high-speed travel is part of a policy which the Queen has initiated to make herself known to her peoples. Millions saw her on television during 1958. This year she will be seen again making the traditional Christmas broadcast. This picture was taken following her 1957 Christmas message, the first to be televised. —CP photo from UKIO.

Krushchev opens fire on Malenkov, Molotov

MOSCOW (AP)—Nikita Khrushchev has hurled a bitter new attack at the Malenkov-Molotov "anti-party group," blaming it for major shortcomings in Soviet agriculture.

Khrushchev's new blast, made at a meeting Monday of the Soviet Communist Party's central committee, came after a new press campaign against the five officials Khrushchev toppled from power in the Kremlin shakeup in July, 1957.

Accounts of the speech today in Tass, the Soviet news agency, gave no indication of whether further measures would be taken against the five men—ex-premiers Malenkov and Bolganin, former foreign ministers Molotov and Dimitri Shepilov and former economic czar Lazar Kaganovich. All have been banished to obscure posts in the Soviet Union.

Nor was there any mention of Gen. Ivan Serov, who was removed last week from his key post as chief of state security, the Soviet Union's top police official. Serov's future has not been announced, but so far he has not been linked with the anti-party group.

Khrushchev claimed Malenkov, Molotov and their disgraced associates:

1. "Tried to stifle the patriotic movement for catching up with the United States in per capita production of livestock produce."

2. Opposed the Virgin Land Project, a pet Khrushchev scheme which he boasted had proved the key factor in bringing a record grain production of 140,000,000 tons this year.

3. Attempt to "revise the party's general Leninist line on basic issues of the country's development." In this, he said, they "failed ingloriously."

4. "Stubbornly opposed for a number of years the realization of important measures in agriculture and thereby retared the development of the Soviet economy."

The group, he continued, was responsible for "the difficult situation in agriculture that developed by 1953." He accused Malenkov of deceiving the party to cover up his failures.

Khrushchev boasted that despite the shortcomings in various fields of agriculture, the Soviet Union already is ahead of the United States in total production of wool, butter, milk and cotton.

Did you know?

That no person, except when accompanied by a person authorized by the superintendent to examine persons as to their abilty to drive and operate motor vehicles, shall drive or operate any motor vehicle on the highway unless, in addition of any licence or permit which he is otherwise required to hold under the Motor Vehicle Act, he is the holder of a subsisting driver's licence issued to him pursuant to the provisions of the Act.

CHRISTMAS TREE SALE SLATED THIS WEEK BY ROTARY CLUB

There will be Christmas trees later this week if the Rotary club is successful in its "Christmas tree hunt" tomorrow afternoon.

About two dozen Rotarians are scheduled to leave the Department of Transport dock at 1 p.m. tomorrow, heading for Digby Island. Chairman for the project is Norman McClary.

The Rotarians hope to gather about four or five trees per man and the Yuletide harvest will go on sale Friday and Saturday at the empty store at 508 Third Avenue West, opposite the Capitol Theatre.

Money from the project goes to Rotary charities.

There may be a second expedition to Digby Island to find Rotarians.

Man fined $100 after mishap

Frederick Harold Johnson, 1634 Eleventh Avenue East was fined $100, costs and prohibited from driving anywhere in Canada for three months, when he pleaded guilty to a charge of impaired driving when he appeared in police court this morning.

Magistrate E. T. Applewhaite also fined Johnson $10 for driving a car while his right to obtain a driver's licence was under suspension. The charge arose from an accident November 30 when the car Johnson was driving ended up in a ditch in the 200 block Eleventh Avenue East.

No sign of tug

A search yesterday in the Queen Charlotte Islands by 45 men, three aircraft and more than a dozen vessels failed to turn up any clues to the fate of a 35-foot tug missing since Friday with one man aboard, RCMP at subdivision said today.

While a ground party directed by RCMP and RCAF officers searched beaches on Graham Island, planes and vessels covered a large area of nearby water seeking the tug Keleco II with its lone occupant.

The Keleo II, owned by Kelly logging company of Vancouver, was on a trip to Juskatla Inlet from Cumshewa Inlet when reported missing Friday. Police declined to reveal the name of the man aboard.

A BC. Airlines plane was out searching the shoreline again today and the United States Coast Guard also joined in the search, RCMP said here.

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Shrum Commission hears of B.C. power problems

VANCOUVER—In the first day-long hearing of the Shrum Royal Commission into the affairs of the B.C. Power Commission, officials of the utility today told a story of "extensive construction, heavy financing, and bold action" to meet the snowballing needs of its customers.

"The commission knows of no other electric power utility in Canada which was required to meet a similar rate of expansion" said Power Commissioner H. J. Macleod.

The submission of the publicly-owned utility was accompanied by a list of statistics showing the rate of growth between 1952 and 1958.

The number of customers has grown in that time by 160 per cent; the demand for power by 320 per cent; generating capacity by 260 per cent; revenues by 300 per cent; and average residential consumption of power by 200 per cent.

HUGE CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

Chief Engineer and acting General Manager R. C. McMordie told the Royal Commission that, in the same period, the publicly-owned utility had undertaken a total of 2,101 construction projects at a total cost of $169,000,000. The construction program included the building of six major hydro plants and additions to two others; 14 diesel plants and 50 additions; five mobile diesel units, and one gas turbine plant.

At the same time, circuit miles of transmission line had been increased by 230 per cent, and circuit miles of distribution line by 180 per cent.

The total cost of the six-year construction program — $160,000,000—represents an increase of about 18 per cent over the original preliminary estimates, said Mr. McMordie.

General factors cited in the construction cost picture were labor unrest during the six-year period, increasing rates for construction workers, and the rising costs of materials and transportation.

"Earlier commencement of some of these projects would have eased this pressure and would have improved the cost position" said Mr. McMordie, "but it was beyond the power of the commission or its staff to control the delaying factors." Earlier in his presentation Mr. McMordie cited the three-year Buttle Lake controversy, which held up construction of the Stratheona hydro electric development.

Dr. H. J. MacLeod told the Shrum Royal Commission that "unless a rate increase is put into effect in the near future, the B.C. Power Commission is clearly headed for heavy operating deficits."

Dr. Macleod gave these reasons:

1. High interest rates are costing the commission an additional $1,000,000 a year.

2. Diesel energy is relatively high in cost. The number of diesel served areas has steadily increased.

3. Insistent demands for rural electrification have resulted in a low customer density and a mounting average investment per customer.

4. The increased cost of hydro plant construction.

Bingo numbers

The telephone number to call if you reach "Bingo" in the Elks Lodge House Bingo contest for Crippled Children is 2273, an Elks spokesman said today.

He said the Elks Lodge number 3021, was not manned during the entire week.

Today's bingo numbers are **O-66; G-60 and N-37.**

Numbers previously drawn were: **B-3; B-4; B-6; B-11; B-14; I-18; I-19; I-23; I-26; I-28; N-33; N-42; N-43; G-46; G-53; G-56; O-62; O-63; O-64; O-65; O-67; O-71; O-72; B-13.**

DAILY NEWS GUESTS—Two distinguished visitors to The Daily News office recently were the kittens pictured. Their visit was enjoyable but hectic. They arrived unannounced via the window, and left as visitors' cards a trail of wet footprints throughout the office. While one tasted the sharpness of the office spike (right) the second watched this vital experiment. —Staff photo.

Lourmais postpones bid

BOSTON BAR, B.C. (CP)—Louis Lourmais today postponed an attempt to swim the mighty Hell's Gate Canyon on the Fraser River when icy roads made it impossible for his party to get to the jumpoff point.

The French frogman, who is trying to swim the Fraser river from Prince George, B.C., to the sea at New Westminster, set out from Boston Bar to drive six miles to the entrance to Hell's Gate.

He was forced to turn back after RCMP closed the canyon highway to all vehicles without chains. He rescheduled the attempt for Tuesday.

Hell's Gate is the most vicious half-mile of river which Lourmais has to conquer in his 600-mile swim to the south of the Fraser.

TRAIL (CP)—This city Monday completed its fourth successive year without a traffic fatality—the best record in British Columbia for centres over 10,000 population.

WEATHER—

Rain this morning, variable cloudiness with a few showers thereafter, continuing mild. Winds southerly 30 this morning shifting to westerly 15 this afternoon and to northeast 15 early tomorrow morning. Low tonight and high Wednesday 40 and 48.

TIDES—

Wednesday, Dec. 17, 1958
(Pacific Standard Time)

High	06:20	18.8 feet
	19:24	16.8 feet
Low	13:04	0.1 feet