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Make Festivals for Children

RESIDENTS of Prince Rupert have slightly more than a month to make up their minds whether or not they wish a Music and Drama Festival next year. A recent meeting of the moribund Music and Drama Festival association produced varied comments on the relative value of festivals as a whole, but failed to establish who benefits from festivals.

We can see Conrad Street principal T. G. Bateman's argument that with the present dearth of music teachers, other teachers are not equipped to produce highly competitive classes for festival work. Also under the present system, the festivals do completely disrupt a school's curriculum. Students are upset for weeks before the festival and take another week to settle down after the event.

We can also see Mr. Bateman's viewpoint on the matter of adjudicators who, from our observation, pour out a repetitious flow of platitudes, and do little to help either a student or a teacher in making any improvement in their performance.

It appears strange that Music and Drama association president W. C. Hankinson should wish to drop the dancing section from the Drama Festival and move the drama to Terrace, when it was the dancing and plays which drew the only sizeable crowds to this year's festival, but when the public pays money, even in small amounts, it expects something in return. We can quite understand that a dozen or more piano pupils playing one after the other "The Waltz of the Teddy Bear" or "Toys on Parade" can be most fascinating for the parents of the pupils involved, but as a drawing card for the general public it falls somewhat short.

At the same time there should be a yearly outlet for music pupils. Since the Department of Education is vitally interested, we feel that the festival should be held in the schools where it can be made part of the curriculum at the end of a term when exams are over and children can concentrate on the festival and not injure their regular work.

If a combination of drama and dancing along with music and choral speech proves too much, then they can be staged at widely separated times throughout the school term. Festivals should be for the children since they need both the assessment of their work and both praise and criticism where necessary to either encourage them or correct them before it is too late. Telling a child he or she is almost flawless when they aren't is a waste of time.

We wish the Music and Drama Festival association well in its search for officers to carry on the work that is needed to encourage music, singing, dancing and drama in Prince Rupert. We hope that they find sufficient interested persons who will pledge themselves wholeheartedly to a project that will benefit the youth of this city.

It is not something that can be dreamed up in a few months with small details being wrapped up five minutes before the opening bell. It is a year-long job that must result in an attractive product. Few will disagree that a festival as a whole comes under the heading of entertainment. Some of it, yes. The majority no. If it isn't entertaining then make it a matter of strict adjudication so that the pupils can gain the most out of it. Forget the public, let the parents attend if they wish. And by all means obtain competent adjudicators.

— GEMS OF THOUGHT —

A mother's affection cannot be weaned from her child, because the mother-love includes purity and constancy, both of which are immortal.—Mary Baker Eddy.

YOU can die when a high-throwing head light blinds, angers and confuses an approaching motorist. The Canadian Highway Safety Conference warns Check Your Car, Check Accidents, in May.

LONGER CARS

VICTORIA (CP) — Longer new autos have brought increased ferry rates between here and U.S. points. Modern cars take up more space, and the rate has been increased by about $1.

As I See It

by Elmore Philpott

• Well Said John

IN THE earlier days of the present election campaign both the Progressive Conservatives and the Social Credit parties were guilty of talking with tongue in cheek about old age pensions.

Both promised, both higher old age pensions and lower taxes!

The two promises certainly cancelled each other out. Canada can have and must have higher old age pension than the $40 per month payments, which are now to be increased to $46 per month. But Canada cannot have higher old age pensions without also having heavier taxes to pay for those higher old age pensions.

It is to the great credit of the CCF that they have not stooped to the double-talk tactics which both the Conservatives and the Social Credits have uttered on this matter of higher old age pensions. The CCF would levy much higher taxes against the rich and against "corporations."

In my opinion, this policy proposed by the CCF is mistaken.

There is a limit beyond which you cannot go in this "soak the rich" type of taxation without killing off the goose which lays the golden egg. But at least the CCF is candid and lets everybody know just where it stands.

BUT the new Progressive Conservative leader, John Diefenbaker, is a good man who learns from his own mistakes as he goes along. After his initial and rather minor exhibition of electioneering double talk on this matter of higher old age pensions, but with lower taxes to pay for them, he has turned over a new leaf.

John now says that the Conservatives are going to support the idea of a contributory old age pension plan, along the same lines as Roosevelt brought in in the U.S.A.

I am personally delighted at Mr. Diefenbaker's conversion to this cause, because I am one of several Liberal MPs who have already advocated this plan on the floor of the House of Commons. But as I pointed out on April 10 of this year, the Dominion does not yet at present have the constitutional right to move into this field. It would be necessary to get the provinces to agree to a further amendment to the BNA Act before this could be done by the parliament of Canada.

BUT the Conservative leader has rendered a real public service by making this a major matter for discussion in this election.

The U.S. Social Security system is by no means as beneficial as our system here, in a good many respects. But in some other respects it is much better.

In the U.S.A. there is absolutely nothing which compares with our universal old age pensions system, which is paid to everybody at age 70. In the U.S.A. only about 70 million out of 160 million people are covered for future pension payments, under the federal Social Security Scheme. And the main difference is that the person who actually gets the pension in the end must have paid for that pension by a great number of contributions which had been deducted in advance from his pay cheque, and deposited with the government.

But the U.S. scheme has been a tremendous success in the following points. It pays much higher pensions to some people. They are on a sliding scale, just like our unemployment insurance here. The higher your pay, the higher your deductions, the higher also the tax on your employer—but the higher your pension when you finally do get it.

The maximum in the U.S.A. is $108.50 per month, plus half of the above amount for the wife of the pensionner.

In other words, both the Canadian and American schemes are better in some respects, and not so good in others.

We cover more people—and we give it to everybody, regardless of whether they personally paid any income taxes before the act went into effect. In the States, the whole thing is much more restricted.

The scheme is actually sound, for roughly double the amount has been collected in payroll deductions and employer taxes than has been paid out.

But the point is that in the U.S.A. the worker and his employer are personally paying for his own pension and that of his wife. It is not based on the false premise that you can have your cake and eat it too—that you can pay higher pensions, if you also cut the taxes to pay for those pensions.

Tunnel Work To Start Immediately

VICTORIA (CP)—The B.C. Power Commission has awarded a $3,200,000 contract to a Vancouver firm to build a five-mile tunnel for the Ash River hydro-electric power scheme in the Alberni Valley.

Successful bidder was Belmont Construction Co. Ltd., which already has started to set up camp facilities. The actual work of the tunnel will start almost immediately.

Steady Lives

RAYMOND, Alta. (CP) — When citizens of this town 25 miles south of Lethbridge sponsored a dinner to honor pioneer settlers, guests included seven couples who have been married more than 50 years. Oldest in the gathering was James Taylor, 91.

try Daily News Classifieds

TIME and PLACE...

NEW TYPE OF PIONEER

By KAY BURBIDGE

Have you ever given thought to what it means to be "A Pioneer?" Webster's dictionary gives two definitions which apply in principle to Kitimatians of the 1951 to 1957 era . . . 'to lead the way in any advance or development' and 'an early settler in a frontier land.' We are pioneers!

It is no easy task to forsake the known way; the old friendships, lifelong contacts, familiar places, to become 'a settler in a frontier land' and 'to lead the way.' There are those of us who recall with gratitude the bearded "Knights of the Unpaved Roads" who would hoist us up for a lift to townsite—not in your present day luxurious cars—but in the cab of a Bellydump, Euclid, or noisy jeep. Riding in one of these machines was comfort-de-luxe.

Some of us think back to the terrifying fire in what is now Neighborhood "C". Townsite might have been wiped out had it not been for the courageous work of the tiny fire department, the volunteer firemen, and the women who rallied round with help of every conceivable kind displaying a pioneer spirit second to none.

We have progressed unbelievably. Not so long ago, we battled and won against daily frustrations. Noise, dust, mud, rain, snow, lack of essentials and very real isolation. The women, of necessity, learnt how to "doctor" a temperamental toilet, prepare a meal by candlelight because the "power was off." To have outward patience with the undried washing, to wear cumbersome Kitimat fashions with a flair, to trim straggly hairdos into some semblance of city coiffures, and to pray for the day when they could browse through a "five and ten!"

And the menfolk. As in the olden pioneering days, they "led the way." Those who were here before the smelter was erected will recall the rough and toughness of it all. The frontier days atmosphere, when almost anything was allowed. Men came in, and men went out, many richer than they ever dreamed. Men from every walk of life came to Kitimat. They grew luxurious beards, washed their clothes and dried them on tree branches. They fished, played ball, they painted, and carved, and they hung their "Christmas Cheer" by rope outside their bunkhouse windows. Most of all they longed for the day they would see their womenfolk. So the women came, and so did a startling change. Colourful language gradually diminished. Beards slowly vanished. Courtesy overflowed. In short, civilization came to Kitimat.

In this year of 1957, how do we modern pioneers measure up? Have we done a good job of selling "pioneerism" to newcomers? We have demonstrated that homes can be pioneered, gardens planted, culture nurtured, and a solid future assured to all those willing to accept the daily round, the common task. Can we also pioneer the daily round of living and sharing, to make Kitimat 100 per cent Canadian . . . I believe we can!

BANGUP DEMONSTRATION

YORKTON, Sask. (CP)—A customer climbed into a car in an automobile showroom here and pressed the starter button. The car leaped forward through the showroom window. The car had been left in gear. The dealer did not say whether he made a sale.

MAY 5th — 1:00 p.m.
ROOSEVELT PARK

QUESTION AIR—As if to underscore the what-is-it reaction of most visitors who see them for the first time, these residents of the Hamburg, Germany, Zoo have tails which form a natural question mark. Resembling an outlandish joining of the monkey and cat families, they're lemurs from Madagascar, seldom found in European zoos. Their antics have made them the favorite attraction of visitors.

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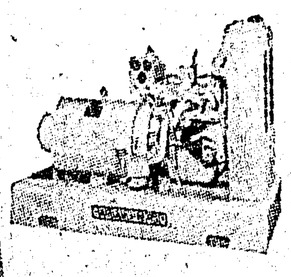
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HIGHLIGHTS IN THE IMPRESSIVE LIBERAL RECORD

Since Edward T. Applewhaite has represented this constituency, he has assisted in bringing into law:

— 1 —
The establishment "for the first time" of a nation wide program of allowances for Disabled Persons.

— 2 —
Far reaching improvements in the benefits provided under the Unemployment Insurance Act. Fishermen now come under the Act.

— 3 —
The provision, in co-operation with the Provinces, of Salk Vaccine to immunize millions of Canadian children against the crippling effects of Polio.

— 4 —
The introduction of a completely new plan of unemployment assistance to extend help to persons excluded from the benefits of existing welfare measures.

— READ THIS COLUMN DAILY —