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Constitutional Barriers Hurdled By Commonwealth

By Alan Harvey
Canadian Press Staff Writer
LONDON, Dec. 20 — (CP) — The world's oldest family of nations achieved a political miracle in 1949.

With almost elegant ease, eight partners in a Commonwealth which straddles five continents and embraces one-fourth of the world's population decided on a formula reconciling crown and republic within a single framework.

In a 212-word declaration jointly signed in London last April, the Commonwealth countries—Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan, Ceylon and the United Kingdom—pledged themselves to "remain united as free and equal members" of the Commonwealth of Nations.

The vital point of agreement was that India, while not acknowledging allegiance to the King, agreed to recognize the crown as the symbol of Commonwealth association.

Thus, while other countries found it increasingly difficult to get along together, delegates to the eight-power Commonwealth conference at 10 Downing Street hurdled a formidable constitutional barrier—how to fit into the family-fold an India newly grown to nationhood and determined to become a sovereign republic.

They did it by a careful choice of words.

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, head of India's External Affairs department and believed largely responsible for the wording of the declaration, said the art of politics consists in recognizing that there are some important issues which cannot be reduced to hard, legal definitions.

External Affairs Minister Lester Pearson, Canada's delegate at the April conference, termed the declaration "historic." He said the quick agreement on it was little short of miraculous.

The Dollar Problem
Two months later, in the same harmonious atmosphere which marked the April meeting, Commonwealth countries and the self-governing colony of Southern Rhodesia sat down in Downing Street to decide what to do about Britain's dollar problem.

One of the decisions was that all Commonwealth countries except Canada, which deals in dollars, would follow Britain's lead in reducing imports from dollar countries. The decision resulted in friendly negotiations which are still going on.

Another historic development during the year was the passing by the British parliament of the Ireland bill. This provides that Northern Ireland will remain a part of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth unless her own parliament decides otherwise.

Strenuous objections to the bill were raised by the Republic of Ireland, which severed its last ties with Britain on Easter Monday. Armed police stood guard outside the House of Commons in London when the Ireland bill was discussed, but there were no incidents.

A major event in Anglo-Canadian relations was Canada's decision to abolish appeals to the Privy Council in London. Under new legislation, Canada's own Supreme Court becomes the final arbiter for all Canadian appeals.

In April, Newfoundland—oldest overseas community in the Commonwealth—became Canada's 10th province with the full blessing of Westminster. A bill clearing legal barriers to union between Canada and Newfoundland was passed in the British House last March. An amendment moved by Sir Alan Herbert, Independent, was defeated 217 to 15.

Sir Alan said Newfoundlanders who opposed confederation merely wanted to determine their own future "instead of being chucked across the counter like a tied-up parcel."

Knotty Problems
In what was generally a remarkably amiable year, there were some Commonwealth tensions. India, Pakistan and South Africa remained solidly opposed on racial problems. Pakistan was reported firing with Moscow and Pakistan and India were at odds over Kashmir, a princely state with a Hindu ruler and a predominantly Moslem population.

South Africa worried Britain by indicating she may press for incorporation within the Union of three territories now under British high commissioners—Bechuanaland, Swaziland and Basutoland, the latter an "island" surrounded by Union territory.

Britain announced that the three territories would not be handed over unless the inhabitants consented.

Many of Britain's 40 colonial territories approached nearer to self-government. Most significant development was in the strategic, cocoa-producing Gold Coast, where an all-native committee recommended a form of government which amounts virtually to home rule. Similar proposals are being worked out in Nigeria.

At year's end, plans were nearing the blueprint stage for a West India Federation of six Caribbean colonies and nearly 3,000,000 people. Under the plan, federations of Barbados, British Honduras, Jamaica, the Leeward Islands, Trinidad and the Windward Islands would become an accomplished fact.

BANK REPORT
OTTAWA, Dec. 20 — (CP) — The Industrial Development Bank today reported that at the end of November the amount owing by borrowers on the various forms of financial assistance extended by the bank was \$20,594,485. This was reported in the I.D.B. monthly statement of assets and liabilities.

Quebec Orphanage Damaged By Fire
QUEBEC, Dec. 20 — (CP) — Fire and water caused damage estimated between \$100,000 and \$150,000 at St. Jean Baptiste Orphanage at nearby Lac Sergeant late Saturday. The fire blamed on explosion of an oil heater broke out in a new wing of the farm school for orphans not yet completed and spread to the main four-story structure built 11 years ago. The school's 115 orphans all were taken safely from the orphanage and later moved to the Provincial Government's forestry school at Duchesnay, eight miles away.

Former Sydney Couple Die In Boston Fire
BOSTON, Dec. 20 — (CP) — Mr. and Mrs. George H. Doyle, former residents of Sydney, N.S., died of smoke inhalation in a small fire in their apartment here Saturday. Doyle, 73, and his wife Elizabeth, 72, were dead on arrival at hospital.

Police said Mrs. Doyle was found on a divan in the living room, and Doyle unconscious in a bedroom.

The fire, of undetermined origin, was checked before it spread from the first-storey apartment.

MISSIONARIES SAFE
TORONTO, Dec. 20 — (CP) — Canadian missionaries are safe in Communist-occupied areas of China, say reports reaching overseas missions headquarters of the United Church of Canada. The missions headquarters announced today it has just received cables reporting the safety of Rev. E. Braze Copeland in Chungking and Rev. Harris Veals at Chengtu.

He is a son of Mrs. Patrick Murphy of Sydney, and the late Mr. Murphy, of Sydney. Another brother, Rev. Fr. Louis Murphy is in Montreal.

Heavy Railway Traffic Reported

HALIFAX, Dec. 20 — (CP) — Jam-packed with passengers arriving home for Christmas holidays, the Scotian, Canadian National Railway's passenger express, arrived here tonight from Montreal more than 1 1/2 hours late.

Steaming into the station 15 minutes later was a second passenger train, also from Montreal, loaded with "overflow" passengers. Railway officials said they expect trains moving east from Montreal will run behind schedule from now until Christmas.

Coup Reported In Syrian Army

DAMASCUS, Syria, Dec. 19 — (AP) — A coup within the army today overthrew Gen. Sami Hennawi, the commander-in-chief who was accused of being the power behind the power behind the scenes in Syria's Government.

Col. Adeb Sheishakli, leader of the third of Syria's turbulent upsets in less than 10 months, announced that the army had acted to safeguard the safety of the country's republican regime. He accused Hennawi of conspiring with unnamed foreign powers.

Arab sources in Cairo say they believe one faction of the army acted to forestall plans of other military factions to unite Syria with either of the Arab kingdoms of Iraq or Hashemite Jordan, or perhaps both.

Eight Killed In Paris Crash

PARIS, Dec. 20 — (CP) — A Belgian Sabena Airlines plane crashed in flames tonight at near-by Aulnay-Sous-Bois, killing all eight persons aboard, including an American passenger. The plane missed a crowded movie theatre by only a few hundred yards.

The DC-3 plane with four passengers and a crew of four had just taken off from Le Bourget Field on its regular night run to Brussels. It made one turn over the field, firing a green and red flare, and began to lose altitude after rising only a few hundred yards.

It skidded the room of one cottage and crashed into flames inside the cottage suffered shock but escaped injury.

HULL, England — (CP) — William Solomon Wrigley earned \$711 (\$220) a week as mate of a fishing trawler but allegedly neglected to pay income surtax. He agreed to have the sum claimed deducted from his earnings.

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Following is the report for the month of November:

Senior Department

Grade X — 1. Roma McCloskey, 2. Wilfred Clarkin, 3. Bernice Flood.
Grade IX — 1. Louis McCloskey, 2. Rita McCloskey, 3. Esther Clarkin.
Grade VIII — 1. Desmond Callaghan, 2. Eileen Murray, 3. Bernice Cudmore.
Grade VII — 1. Brendon McGinn, 2. Florence Clarkin, 3. Wilfred McCloskey.

Junior Department

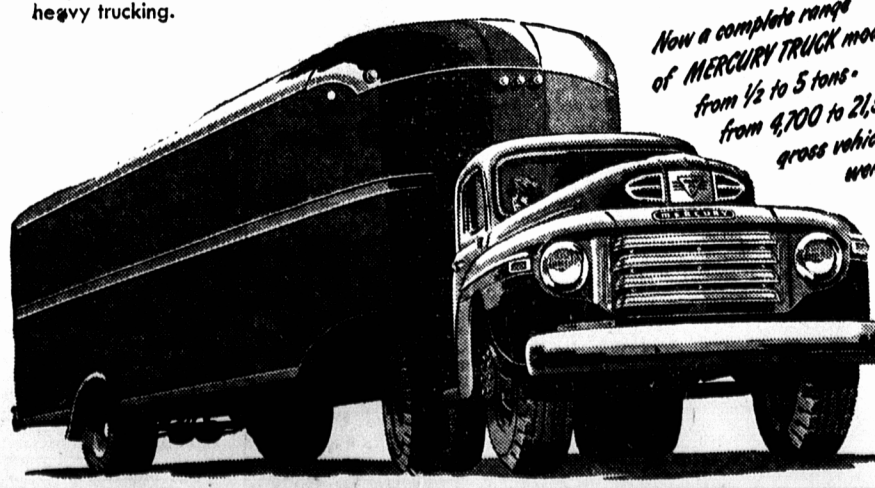
Grade VI — 1. Verna Clarkin, 2. Clarence Coady, 3. Florence Conway.
Grade III (a) — 1. Sheila Griffin, 2. Mary Griffin, 3. Damien Clarkin.
Grade III (b) — 1. Catherine McGinn, 2. Loyola Griffin, 3. Francis Coady.
Grade II — 1. Marie McCordie, 2. Joan Quinn, 3. Earl Griffin.
Grade I — No tests.
Highest average — Marie McCordie 92 per cent.
Perfect attendance — Regina McQuaid, Marie Clarkin, Francis McDonald.

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2 NEW EXTRA HEAVY DUTY MERCURY TRUCKS

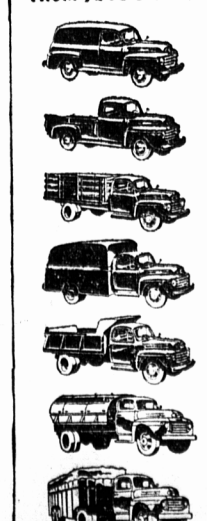
Two new series—M-190 and M-215 have now been added to the Mercury Truck line. These 4 and 5 ton models are Canadian-built with extra power and ruggedness. They're built to stand the strain of extra heavy trucking.

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- CLUTCH, 12-inch diameter, semi-centrifugal type. Frictional area 149.2 sq. in.
 - TRANSMISSION, 5-speed. Rear axle Super Quadrex on the M-215. Quadrex Hybrid on the M-190.
 - FRAME, Double Channel type. Side members 9" x 3" x 0.28" with built-in channel section reinforcements.
 - BRAKES, 16" x 2 1/4" front—15" x 5" rear on the M-190, 16" x 5" on the M-215. Lining area: M-190, 244 sq. in.; M-215, 483 sq. in. Air brakes optional on M-215.
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