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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Grit Questions Argue's Value

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HAVING PASSED up a chance several weeks ago to scoop the country on the Hazen Argue switch from the New Democrats - a Liberal friend just back from a top-level Ottawa talk told me the move was indicated - I have watched this week with more than usual interest what has been happening in the hottest political argument to hit this country for many a day.

I actually had a couple of paragraphs written several weeks ago, but finally passed them up for something I thought was of greater local interest at the time.

THE ARGUE move is apparently welcomed in Ottawa Liberal circles but I find the approval is not general here. A professional man asked me this week why can "a political turn-coat like Argue" find the entry into the Liberal Party so easy? He was serious about his objection and I gather there are others like him. I haven't the slightest idea as to the percentage of Liberals who feel that way

The "politics makes strange bedfellows" saying is an oldie, but it kept coming back to me this week, as I followed some of the stories and controversies in the current political gossip tidbit.

Ross Thatcher Story Recalled

ROSS THATCHER was a CCF member when I went to Ottawa in 1953. Sometime later he left the CCF'ers and moved several steps to his left to join a trio of Independents. Later in the session - I can't recall the date - he crossed the Commons aisle one afternoon to join the Liberals.

He ran against Argue in Assiniboia in 1957, and was beaten in an unusually bitter campaign. He was third behind Argue and the PCs in 1958.

Then Mr. Thatcher switched to provincial politics, became leader of the Liberals and last time I heard, was talking confidently of winning the government at the next election.

It is Thatcher who is credited with master minding the Argue switch from NDP to the Grits. That was my information several weeks ago, and Tommy Douglas openly charged it this week.

FORMER LIBERAL leader W.L. MacKenzie King used to say CCF'ers were only "Liberals in a hurry" I wonder what he would call CCF'ers who left their party, to come back and gain top level recognition in the Liberal ranks.

Apparently most of Ottawa's Liberals are happy with the latest gift from the CCF-NDP group. I gather that the elation is not shared by Liberals across the country.

That should be enough about the Grits for this time, but it seems I can't get away from politics this week.

Howard Green Is Expected Today

IF THE developing storm doesn't force a cancellation, Queens County PCs are going to meet one of the most likable men on Parliament Hill, when Howard Green speaks to them tonight at the Community Center. I'm looking forward to a chat with the Secretary of State for External Affairs myself.

He gave the impression of being a tough, almost unscrupulously demanding critic, when he sat on the opposition benches directly across the house from men like Louis St. Laurent, C.D. Howe and Jimmy Gardiner.

I can't recall that I particularly liked him at first, as I listened to him cut loose with the kind of criticism that made him one of the most feared men on "the other side" of the house.

But my opinion changed quickly when I got to know him. I can't think of a more pleasant, charming man, than the Vancouver lawyer who will speak to the Queens County Tories here tonight.

PC Records In The Legislature

A READER called this week to say I had not been correct when I said in a news story that Frank Myers, Crapaud is the dean of the Legislature on the Conservative side. "John R. MacLean, Souris is the dean among the PCs", he told me.

My friend is right, If he counts seniority from the time the two men entered the house. Mr. MacLean was first elected in 1947, was beaten in 1951, was elected again in 1959 and is now in his seventh year as a member. Mr. Myers was elected first in 1951, was beaten in 1955 but came back in a 1957 byelection and has not been beaten since. He is now in his ninth year as a member.

IN CASE someone is checking up on me, and using the Parliamentary Guide, let me explain that the guide is unreliable. It says, for example, that Hubert Gaudet, PC, 1st Prince; J.W. Don Campbell, PC 1st Prince and Mr. MacLean were first elected in 1959, and that Mr. Myers was first elected in the 1957 byelection.

Both Mr. Gaudet and Mr. Campbell sat in the house through the 1951-55 session, and were elected again in 1959. I've already given you the records of the other two. There may be other errors. I list these merely as examples of the ones I noticed in the research I did for this column.

Moase Herd Wins New Honors

W.A. MOASE and Son, Kensington have again qualified for a coveted award, a note from the Canadian Ayrshire Breeders Association tells me. The father-son combination were among the top Canadian cattlemen qualifying for a Superior Breeders' Certificate awarded at the annual meeting earlier this month.

Winning top awards is not new to the Moase family. I recall awards being presented to them on at least two occasions during the past year. On behalf of their fellow breeders, I want to extend congratulations.

Wants 100 New Baby Rats Per Day

ONE OF the unusual items I picked up this week was the story of a 55-year old Cancer research scientist, Dr. Ham, Toronto who is aiming at having 100 new baby rats each morning to experiment with before he can push his research program to the desired peak of efficiency.

The information came from Kenneth Gardiner, vice-president of the Canadian Cancer Society. Last time Gardiner visited him, Dr. Ham had 20,000 rats in his laboratories. He could not tell me how many adult rats Ham has to have, before he reaches his goal of 100 new babies each morning.

I THOUGHT as I talked with the Toronto man, how much better it would be if some of the many hundreds of millions of dollars that are being spent on space research could be devoted to research on finding a cure for some of the diseases that still baffle the world's best doctors.

Maybe I am out of step with ultra modern space thinking, but I know I speak for many of the average people who have watched with broken hearts, as a loved one died before their eyes, only because science had not yet found the answer to their disease problem.

The greatest space triumph pales into insignificance, compared to the worth of a loved one in the humblest home in the land.

Wild Fowl Propagation Story

I'VE WANDERED far away from the sort of thing you usually find in this column, but I have some interesting items that I hope to tell you about in the next few weeks.

The success achieved by some of our Island people with water fowl and upland game bird propagation and conservation, will make an interesting item. I want to tell you about it next week, unless something else claims priority.