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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Interest Stirs In Convention

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LAST WEEK I told you the Liberal leadership convention issue was dead. This week the situation has changed. I still don't find it as lively as it was when the "draft MacKay" forces were rolling, but interest is stirring and the issue should be really hot come voting time next Tuesday afternoon.

The change is so great that I checked yesterday with prominent Liberals just in case I had been exaggerating last Friday. They agreed that I hadn't, there was just no interest at all at the time, they agreed.

But the forces who are shouting for a change sent delegations into Summerside last weekend to Watson MacNaught as soon as they had heard George MacKay was not coming. The Summerside lawyer who had 12 years experience in the House of Commons threw his hat in the ring, and the interest started to pick up.

I was busy with an APEC convention the first three days of this week and I haven't had much time to check into the new situation, but enough people have talked about it to indicate battle lines have joined.

MACNAUGHT BACKERS told me this week their man is going to win. Matheson supporters still insist there's nothing to it. As I see it, that supreme confidence of his backers - at least some of them - could be the biggest handicap Mr. Matheson has as the balloting nears. Victory is something nobody can take for granted.

I've been asked to say two things here, and here they are. A Liberal Association spokesman wanted to explain they weren't trying to get rid of Mr. Matheson when they asked him to resign. A resignation was necessary in order to have a convention, they explain. I said that here last week, for how can you have a convention without a vacancy?

Call From Young Liberals

AND A couple of Young Liberals called me out of an APEC session Monday afternoon to protest a story that said "Young Liberals were against Mr. Matheson". Robert MacLeod, immediate past-president, and John Mullally, Kings County vice-president talked to me on the phone and insisted their organization is not against the former party leader who is seeking the party's endorsement now. Ken Jenkins is Queens vice-president and he phoned me yesterday to say the same thing. "We endorsed him at our meeting in May and we've held two meetings this week and we're still backing him," he said. Incidentally, Mr. Jenkins told me, they're establishing Young Liberal organizations in every electoral district in the province. That, of course, has no

bearing on Tuesday's contest. The association spokesman said that Douglas MacDonald, their president is out of the province.

WELL, THERE you are. That's what I promised them and that's that. I've known Alex and Watson since I met them first in Prince of Wales College many years ago. I've no intention of getting embroiled in a contest between them now.

The build-up in interest is a good thing, for competition was needed to make the convention a success. How much competition there will be depends for the most part on who you talk to.

I have my own favorite, just as you have, but I'll let you decide for yourselves. I think you would have done that anyway.

Orwell Cove Breeder Praised

WALLACE WOOD, Marshfield told me about an Orwell Cove cattle breeder who merits a bit in this column. Irving Nicholson never shows in our big fairs and he's never had his cattle on Record of Performance tests, but he has bred many outstanding Ayrshire cattle.

Wallace knows, for he and his father, Almon Wood and Sons, have some of the good ones. Their Lucky Susie's June was purchased as a four-year-old and produced 82,105 pounds milk, 3,466 pounds fat in her next seven lactations for an average production of 11,736 lbs.

Orwell Beauty, another Nicholson cow, was the senior and grand female champion at Charlottetown this year and in 1960 for the Woods. She's completed two ROP records with a breed class average of 127 in milk, 134 in butterfat since they bought her three years ago. Both of these cows have classified "Very Good" for type

"ORWELL PHYLLIS has completed three records since we bought her which average 13,872 pounds milk, 575 pounds fat. Her daughter, East River Phyllis, was first prize junior yearling at Charlottetown this year," Mr. Wood tells me.

Agriculture Minister Andrew MacRae has another Nicholson cow, Orwell Lady Sovereign, that also classifies Very Good, with several good records including 11,865 lbs milk as a senior 3-year-old and 512 lbs fat for an average test of 4.32 percent and a BCA of 149 in milk, 157 in fat which is unusually high. The BCA is the breed class average of the Ayrshire cows on test in Canada, so she would produce over fifty percent more milk and fat than the Ayrshire average across the country.

Incidentally I saw a beautiful Ayrshire cow, Gartney Polly, show in the class at Charlottetown for "cows at least 10 years old" and with production of 50,000 pounds milk. She had never shown before and was a bit nervous but she took a sharp second place and looked good enough to worry at least one breeder for championship honors. She's owned by James Kelly, Valleyfield East, who tells me he had unusual luck with his first Ayrshire purchase. She produced four heifer calves for him and he now has a granddaughter coming along. Incidentally that veteran cow class was topped by Fred MacRae, Hunter River RR with his Rivermere Fashion Cora.

Bit Of Gloom As Horse Goes

THERE WAS a bit of gloom in the Matheson house last night as we said goodbye to a beautiful big black horse we've had in our barn and pasture for some 16 years. You people who love horses know what I mean, for it's amazing how attached you can get to a horse, particularly when he's a trustworthy, friendly, lovable animal like this one.

There are pictures of Harry all over the Maritimes and many outside the area with children of visitors and summer cottagers riding on his back. The children never forgot. We've seen them coming back three or four years later, carrying lumps of sugar they took off of discarded tea or coffee cups on the car ferry, so their friend Harry could have a treat. Fortunately he ate and liked almost anything tasty, and he got all kinds of treats from them.

Unfortunately, 25 is old for a horse, and our old friend developed a sore foot that was causing him too much discomfort to keep any longer.

There are some interesting yarns about the big fellow and I'll tell you more about him some week when column news is slack.