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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Young Groups Show Interest

By NEIL A. MATHESON
Provincial-Farm Editor

FARM PRODUCTS have been in the news spotlight this week and that's a healthy sign for an agricultural province. The new food processing plant at New Annan, and news of large egg contracts becoming available to producers here, made unusual news.

In both cases there was a mixed reaction. I find many people reserving comment on the ultimate result of the latest development in frosted foods, and some people have openly ridiculed the suggestion of a large-scale egg production that one of the suggested contracts demands.

I talked to John Fowler, the big man in the big company that's behind the new food plant, and he insists they realize that they can't succeed, unless the supplying farmer succeeds and is happy about his share of the bargain. And I definitely got the impression that Mr. Fowler and his company mean to succeed.

The development could be a splendid thing for a large area of the province. I join with many others across the country in the hope that it will be just that.

I'VE DISCUSSED the problem of egg production this week with a number of people in various phases of the poultry industry. I get from a professional agriculturist friend the opinion that the egg producer who succeeds today must have the smaller, economical layer that has been developed in recent years. The older type large bird eats too much food in relation to her egg potential, he told me. A poultryman can succeed with the smaller birds, and with careful management, he said.

One order from the North Shore of the St. Lawrence talks of 127,000 dozen eggs a week and another possibility from Newfoundland talks of 4,500 dozen being wanted weekly, if continuous production can be assured and contracts are negotiated successfully.

But several former poultrymen completely ridiculed the idea of trying to produce eggs for a profit at the present time. They ridiculed, too, the idea of government people telling us there's a good egg market in sight.

But a Prince County farmer told Publisher Bill Hancox and me at Summerside this week, that he made more money out of poultry last year than from anything else on his farm. He farms 230 acres and has a diversified farming and livestock program, I understand. Unfortunately we didn't have time to get the details - he was at a reception and someone else claimed attention at the time - but I hope to see him on the next visit to his area.

Good Stories Heard In Prince

And that reminds me that we picked up several good yarns on a Western Prince visit recently. There's one on pirate gold, one on another type of treasure lost by old sailormen, and one concerns old beliefs on seeding, and other farm practices that have been handed down through many generations. I expect to have some of those for you the first time there is room in this column.

Youth Interested In Politics

I LIKE the political interest that is stirring in our youth. The present development is sparked by the Liberals, but the PCs have a live organization going.

Both the Young Liberals and the YPCs have been organized here for a long time but there have been times when they were not very effective. The YPCs achieved effectiveness some time ago and some of the senior party people told me this week they have been a major factor in the party's climb back to the top, after some of the most dreary periods of defeat one could imagine.

I chatted yesterday with Gerald Foster, QC who gave me some impressive evidence of the value the group has been to the PC party in the province. Three ministers of the cabinet, Andrew MacRae, George Dewar, MD and Leo Rossiter, all got their start in the YPC organization. Mr. MacRae had been president back in 1949 or 1950, before he went to Korea as an Army Major.

The group had some lean years, though, and Mr. Foster recalls that only five people showed up at an annual meeting in 1950. The officers persevered, though - Mr. Foster was president 1950-52 - and they organized a meeting several weeks later at which they got a respectable number.

They had their own difficulties in the earlier days but they stuck together. I'm told, for example, that YPCs came from Kings and Prince to help man polls in Charlottetown when some of the old regulars quit, as Angus MacLean, present fisheries minister, insisted on running the 1951 byelection "strictly on the up-and-up," as Mr. Foster put it yesterday.

Older people are slow to accept youth at times - I recall some Liberal members telling me there was no need for a party youth group - but the YPCs seemed to have overcome most of their early difficulties.

Three of Premier Shaw's cabinet ministers, Andrew MacRae, Dr George Dewar and Leo Rossiter got their start that way and Lloyd MacPhail, newest PC member, is vice-president of the provincial PC association although he is still in the YPC age group. President Chester MacDonald of Summerside is another, and most provincial executive members are still in the YPC age group, Mr. Foster told me.

The late John A. MacDonald, Cardigan, who was a provincial and later a federal member, is another who started with the young group.

The Island YPCs have been prominent nationally with Allison Carr being a former national president and Mr. Foster served once as national English-speaking secretary.

The Island YPCs also claim another distinction. They were the first group to bring John Diefenbaker to P.E.I. They naturally shared a feeling of unusual pride when he came back as Prime Minister.

There's no doubt in my mind, that the YPCs have been a major factor in the party's climb to power, Mr. Foster assured me.

Young Liberals Active Now

THE YOUNG Liberals were organized provincially in 1953, the year that I was elected to parliament. But they never worked up much pop as a province-wide organization. It was reorganized in 1957 or 1958 I was told yesterday by Charlottetown lawyer, Robert MacLeod who is provincial past president.

The 5th Queens Young Liberals were the first district group formed, and right now they are organizing Young Liberals in every electoral district in the province.

They have some energetic young men behind it including Mr. MacLeod, Dr. Douglas MacDonald who is provincial president, and David Walker, Charlottetown, the 5th Queens president. They've been having an active week with the national executive secretary of the young Liberals here to speak to a number of their groups, and help spark the revitalization effort.

I'M HAPPY to see the leading part being taken by our young people in the business of government, for that's what politics amounts to. I was shocked to be told in Prince County last week that 30 is too young for a man to offer as a political candidate.

I thumbed through the Parliamentary Guide this week and found that at least a dozen MPs from other provinces were elected before they were more than 30, and some of them were much younger.

I found Hazen Argue, acting CCF house leader, started at 24 and Harold Winch, MP for Vancouver East, started in provincial politics at 26. He was opposition leader in B.C. at 34 although he was 46 when he finally entered the House of Commons.

First Man To Cross Bridge

DR. G.F. DEWAR was the first man to cross the old Hillsboro Bridge when it was opened officially some 55 years ago. A former member of the Legislature from Third Queens, he represented the area that includes the Bunbury area on the South end of the structure.

Talking to Highways Minister J. Philip Matheson at Summerside this week, I find that he agrees with the suggestion that it would be nice to have Dr Dewar be the first man to cross the new bridge when it is officially opened sometime early next summer.

The opening for general traffic will likely be in the next week or so, but Highways Minister Matheson has announced that the official opening will be postponed until fine weather comes early next summer.