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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Missing Kings Is Seen Unwise

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IT'S A pleasure today to join with other people "across the Island" who have extended a warm welcome to Hon. Lester Pearson, national Liberal leader, who came here recognized as "a great Canadian" to use the words of a political opponent, but a personal admirer, Premier Walter Shaw.

Mr. Pearson came here on a political mission, to win friends for his party, and convince as many as possible they should vote Liberal at the federal election. And that leads me into a criticism of those who planned this trip for him.

I'm referring to the fact that the Liberals did not include Kings in Mr. Pearson's list of stops. The federation president here told this paper he tried to have Kings included, but the "tight schedule" did not permit it.

I KNOW that these national tours are difficult to arrange, that national leaders cannot hope to cover more than a spot here and there. But the practical political fact here is that Prime Minister Diefenbaker included Kings in a visit he made last fall - he spoke at two schools and met the citizens in a Souris hall - and the New Democrats' Tommy Douglas made five stops in Kings County when he was here last week.

I recall that Kings had never been included in tours of national leaders, or political big names in other years. But that has been changed. Mr. Diefenbaker started it, I believe, when he came here in 1957 as leader of the opposition. He proved consistent when he went back there last fall as Prime Minister.

I suggest the Liberals had better match their opponents in their attention to our smallest county, if they are serious in their effort to regain the seat they lost in 1957.

Members Indemnities Compared

A HURRIED check yesterday reveals that members of our legislature get indemnities and other emoluments that are far below any other legislators in Canada. They get \$1,000 in indemnity plus \$500 expenses.

The current Parliamentary Guide reveals that Alberta members get \$3,000 in indemnities plus \$1,500 expenses, plus \$15 a day during the session while they are obliged to live at a place other than their home. Both expense items are tax free.

The Speaker gets an indemnity of \$4,750 plus \$2,250 expenses and the deputy speaker \$4,000 plus \$2,000. The premier gets \$14,000 and other cabinet members \$11,000 plus their indemnities. And each member of the opposition gets an extra \$625.

All the information I found on B.C. is that the speaker gets \$8,500, the deputy \$6,000 and the opposition leader \$6,500. There was no information on the private members. There are 52 members in all.

Manitoba members get an indemnity of \$4,000 for its 57 legislators.

NEW BRUNSWICK indemnities were raised this year, and I believe the private members now get \$3,400 plus \$1,700 for expenses which is tax free. The premier gets \$22,600 in all, a press report states. The speaker gets \$4,000.

Newfoundland pays \$9,000 to the premier and all ministers, plus indemnities of \$3,333.33 to all of its 36 members, with an allowance of \$3,000 to the Opposition leader.

Nova Scotia's 43 members get indemnities of \$3,200 plus \$1,600 expenses. The speaker gets \$8,000, his deputy \$1,200 and the Opposition leader \$6,000.

Ontario's 98 members get \$5,000, plus \$2,000 expenses. The speaker gets \$3,000 plus \$2,000 expenses.

Quebec's 98 legislative assembly members get \$6,000 plus \$2,000 expenses "for travelling and office." The Speaker gets \$8,000 plus \$1,000 for expenses, plus \$1,000 for lodging. The Opposition leader gets \$6,000 plus \$2,000 for entertainment plus lodging allowance while in Quebec City of \$2,000. The premier gets \$10,000, plus \$4,000 expenses and \$2,000 for entertainment.

Saskatchewan's 52 members get \$3,600 each. The premier gets \$8,500, cabinet ministers get \$7,000 and the Speaker gets \$2,000.

### Effect Of Moon On Killing Pigs

A NOTE I found in my desk this week quotes an Alberta agricultural fieldman as saying dark meat can be prevented by careful handling of cattle in the 24-hour period prior to slaughter. And the University of Missouri reports its tests show that cattle kept in a state of excitement during the 24-hour period before slaughter always yield dark meat.

It reminds me of strongly held beliefs, common to many areas in this province, that pork will shrivel up in the pan if the animal is not killed in the dark of the moon.

I had an argument with a friend who visited me several days ago, and I was unable to convince him of anything else. I talked this week with Rev. A.S. Weir who recalls that belief was strongly held in Pictou County, among other places, many years ago. But many people still believe it, despite the fact that packing houses slaughter animals any and every day of the month or year that they are available for processing.

A CALL to G.E. Hartlen, manager of the Canada Packers plant here, reveals that he has never even heard of it in his 35 years in the meat packing industry. I didn't expect Mr. Hartlen would agree with the idea, but I was surprised that he hadn't run into it somewhere in his long experience.

Several of the people at this office recall hearing farmers insist that Buckwheat, for instance, had to be sown in the dark of the moon, or it wouldn't grow properly. I also recall the superstition. But I'll venture there are people who still hold that belief, and there must be people who still sow buckwheat.

I won't even argue the point, though, if I can find someone who will sell me some real old-fashioned buckwheat flour for making pancakes. I've sampled the modern mixes, with all of the high pressure sales pitch that goes with them, but I haven't found anything to compare with the original product.

## Belle River Scene Of Bear Story

GORDON WADDELL, Kelly's Cross, brought me up to date this week, on the bear poem I spoke of last week. He also reminds me that the scene was Belle River, not Bear River as I suggested. The poem is too long to reproduce, but one verse, I think, is descriptive of the quiet winter countryside of that period:

"The girls were hooking, quilting, and casting many a gaze  
Out o'er the bleak, bare landscape and longed for warmer days.  
The Farmers smoked and chatted, the women knit and spun,  
The boys were growing restless, for want of sport and fun."

I'm going to save the rest of the dope on the bear until I have a chat with some of the Belle River folk, for I'd like to put family names on some of the colorful first names I find here and there in the poem.

"SANDY RONALD" saw the animal back of Allan Matheson's, the poem tells me. And that reminds me, I believe there were other areas that had bear stories in former years. I can barely remember neighbours gathering at our Rose Valley home, armed with everything from guns to axes, and even pitchforks. But the hunt didn't turn up anything, as I recall it.

Mr. Waddell tells me about an interesting collection he has, and I'm planning on visiting him for a look, and a chat, first chance that offers.

## Quintuplets Story Is Recalled

THE REFERENCE to the Bell quintuplets brought several interesting letters. Mrs. James Jewel enclosed an old newspaper clipping which says the mother, Mrs. David Bell "was a small, slight woman of 32, weighing only 90 pounds.

"Four girls arrived in early afternoon, and a boy was born two hours later", the clipping said.

They were all perfectly developed children, weighing between two and three pounds . . . They were all born alive but unfortunately, all died before evening. The mother survived and gave birth to another child inside of a year."

"As the first baby had been born ten months before the quints, Mrs. Bell actually gave birth to seven children within twenty-one months" said the old clipping which suggested it was "a record hard to equal in any other part of the world."

The clipping also reveals that Dr. H. D. Johnson was the attending physician.

And I'm told, it was Riley's Lane that was the scene of the unusual event. It's a short street that runs off Pownal to the East, between Richmond and Grafton Streets.

To keep the record straight, it was my colleague, Ralph Cameron, who heard about the interesting story in the first place.