

Covers Prince Edward Island Like The Dew
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Takes Firm Stand

The Pearson Government has been criticised for its proneness in yielding to various demands of the big provinces—notably Quebec. But it has taken a commendably firm stand on one issue of this kind. It has refused to back down, under heavy pressure from Premiers Bennett and Lesage, from its position that provincial governments have no business getting into the field of commercial banking.

Having been thwarted by the Senate in his plan to found a provincial bank of his own, the British Columbia government leader is now trying to purchase shares in an existing chartered bank over which he would exercise effective control. His Quebec counterpart, Mr. Lesage, says he hopes to invest some of the Quebec pension plan funds in private bank stocks, but denies any desire to influence national monetary policies.

Finance Minister Gordon, however, has put his foot down. He has reiterated the federal position, in response to Premier Lesage's demands, that Ottawa will not permit provincial governments, "directly or indirectly," to enter the banking business. Why should they seek to do so, if it is not their purpose to bring influence to bear on banking policies? It cannot be simply for the purpose of investing dividends, since higher returns could be earned from other investments.

As Mr. Gordon pointed out, the British North America Act clearly makes banking an exclusive federal responsibility, and there it should remain. Even a limited ownership of bank shares by another government—whether foreign or provincial—could place such a government "in a special position of power or influence in relation to that bank."

And suppose all 10 provinces should take advantage of this precedent? That would create two nationwide banking systems, one privately owned and the other operated by partisan governments. The provincial banks would be in a position to combine for joint purposes and bring enormous pressures to bear on the federal government and on central bank policy.

Parliament may be asked to endorse measures which will further strengthen Ottawa's hand in this matter. If so, there should be no delay in putting them through.

Inviting Trouble

East German Communists have, in recent days, been harassing traffic on the land routes to West Berlin. Tension was relaxed when they reopened the Berlin autobahn late Thursday night after closing it twice in defiance of challenging U.S.-British convoys; but there has since been more interference and this will likely continue until the joint Soviet-East German military manoeuvres end tomorrow.

It is said that the closings posed a challenge to the United States, Britain and France to take counter measures which would create a new East-West crisis. So far, the Western allies have had the sense to confine themselves to protests and it is unlikely, in the circumstances, that they will go further. They are well aware of what prompted the Communist demonstrations if the first place.

These were quite evidently intended as a reprisal for West Germany's decision to have its Parliament and Cabinet meet officially in West Berlin this week. Such meetings had not been held in Berlin since 1958. East Germany has always opposed them, claiming that West Berlin is not a

part of West Germany, and that it is improper for the West Parliament to convene outside its own territory.

Regardless of the merits of this argument, the fact remains that Berlin is a divided city, and nothing the Western powers can do about it—short of going to war—is likely to change the situation for the present. West Germans naturally find it hard to reconcile themselves to this situation. They are prompted to make provocative gestures, regardless of the consequences to others as well as to themselves. But this is hardly the time for stirring up trouble of this kind.

Thanks to wise diplomacy on both sides, the Berlin situation has been calm for many months. A definite easing in East-West tensions had taken place without compromising Western interests. Now the calm has been shattered, for the sake of a ceremony which had not taken place since 1958 and which, at best, does nothing to enhance West German prestige. It just isn't worth it, as the Communists have been at pains to point out.

On The Uptrend

The week of April 10 to 17 has been officially designated Canadian Library Week, and there is good reason why we should keep the observance in mind in this Province. Speaking of public libraries alone, we have 24 branch libraries in our provincial regional system, strategically located in towns and villages from one end of the Island to the other. We doubt whether any part of Canada is better serviced in this important respect.

But libraries are of little value unless they are widely used; and here, too, the indications are reassuring. Circulation figures indicate that reading is on the increase again after experiencing a sharp decline with the advent of television in 1956.

In 1955, for example—the year before TV became general in the Province—our public libraries circulated something like 191,000 books, and in 1957 the number dropped to approximately 156,300, a decrease of 34,000 or close to 18 per cent. But circulation is moving upwards again, albeit slowly. Figures for 1964 showed 162,000 circulated in public libraries in spite of the fact that five of the branch libraries were closed for extended periods during the year for various reasons. In spite of the fact, too, that the Charlottetown Public Library has had a large drop in volume of business since moving into temporary quarters.

In addition, circulation in public libraries in towns and villages where regional high schools are located has been affected to a large degree since high schools maintain their own libraries. So, in view of all these things, business can be said to be brisk. But there is plenty of room for improvement. We can still provide services for many, many more book borrowers.

From library officials we learn that circulation at Georgetown and Montague has always been surprisingly high, and North Rustico has been high for the past five years. Summerside is moving up. St. Peters has a huge circulation for its comparatively small size, and this can be attributed in part to a new library building opened there in July, 1964.

It's a grand habit to get into—that of patronizing our public libraries. A salute to all who are engaged in promoting this wonderful movement, the possibilities of which can truly be said to be inexhaustible.

EDITORIAL NOTES

It is to be hoped the federal government will not start its "war on poverty" the way New York City is said by the New York Herald Tribune to have done—by hiring a special poverty consultant at \$500 a week.

W. H. Herridge, NDP member for Kootenay West, knows how to make a good start on an interrupted speech. "When we adjourned shortly after one o'clock to obtain some bodily sustenance and get the holes in our head repaired," he said in the Commons the other day, "I was dealing with" . . . etc., etc.

It now appears possible that a parliamentary decision on the plan for bringing the constitution home may be deferred for a year because of the controversy in Quebec over the future of the provincial legislative council. Before proceeding with ratification of the formula, Premier Lesage wishes to curb the powers of the upper house and to ensure, particularly, that it shall have no veto over questions of constitutional amendment.



HE CAN DREAM, CAN'T HE Why All This Poking And Prying?

I recently described in this column that the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism has 10 commissioners, each paid \$100 per day, as well as a full-time staff of 125 and also 24 part-time workers. The obvious question which poses itself is "How does this army occupy its time? Does it justify its cost to the taxpayers now running at the rate of over one million dollars per year?"

Nicholas Mandziuk, the 62-year-old Ukrainian-born Conservative MP for Marquette, Manitoba, has asked the Prime Minister in Parliament why the Bi-and-Bi boys have given themselves the job of psycho-analyzing MPs. It's an arrogant step by the Bi-and-Bi and it's a good question by Nick Mandziuk.

The drill is this: a phone call from the Bi-and-Bi to an MP asks for an appointment for an interview. Two females appear at the MP's office at a pre-arranged time, and ask him a number of questions, writing down his replies. This has taken from one to two and a half hours in various cases so far, according to the MPs who have allowed themselves to be subjected to this impudent imposition upon their busy day.

ARE POLITICS BILINGUAL? If the questions were relevant to the terms of reference of the Bi-and-Bi commission, every MP would be willing and anxious to co-operate. But some of the questions are far out. For instance, Nick Mandziuk picks this statement out as the prize: "Politics is a dirty game."

Our Yesterdays (From The Guardian Files) TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO (April 10, 1940) British warships have battled their way to the outskirts of the German-occupied Norwegian city of Oslo, it was reported, as the climax of a day which saw blow after blow struck by the Royal Navy and air force at the German garrisons in Norway.

TEN YEARS AGO (April 10, 1955) The monthly meeting of the Charlottetown Kinetic Club was held at the home of Mrs. Clive Cadmore. The president, Mrs. Stewart G. Ives, conducted the business meeting. Refreshments were served by Mrs. Ivan Sinclair, Mrs. Pius Stewart and Mrs. Roland Taylor.

had very little to do with getting me elected." "People tend to judge a party by the quality of its leader." "Dominion-Provincial conferences detract from the importance of Parliament." ARE THESE RELEVANT? Nick Mandziuk questions whether these topics are relevant to the terms of reference of the Bi-and-Bi commission; his next point is how much is this operation costing the taxpayers, and why?

Tucked away in the 30 statements are a very few loaded ones with an obvious purpose: "Translation facilities should be extended to all committee rooms, whatever the cost."

Fowl Play In England Hamilton Spectator TV explaining away the Liberal farm policies of the moment. With a grunt of rage, the farmer grabbed a nearby shotgun, took aim at Mr. G's image, and blasted the TV set to smithereens.

Cyprian Volcano New York Times Cyprus is like a live volcano. The ominous rumblings, the daily skirmishing around the northwest coastal village of Lefka, the arms build-up, the exchange of threats between Greeks, Turks and their respective communities on the island—these are signs that the volcano can blow its top any day.

Licensed Parenthood Vancouver Sun It was startling to say the least to hear a leading welfare officer in BC suggest the state should refuse marriage licenses to people who seem bad bets for parenthood.

Inadequate Circulation

By Dr. Theodore R. Van Allen When the circulation is inadequate, many changes are noted in the hands and feet. Coldness is not always a reliable index because normal blood vessels are capable of going into spasm and the temporary reduction in flow lowers the skin temperature. This explains why some nervous individuals complain of cold hands and feet, even though the vascular system is normal.

Characteristic symptoms also are noted when the circulation is impaired. Fatigue and weakness of the extremities are not unusual in arteriosclerosis. Many develop a cramp in the calf of the leg after walking a few blocks. This is relieved on standing a few minutes, only to recur after walking an equal distance. This symptom is more noticeable in cold weather, and when walking rapidly or uphill.

TODAY'S HEALTH HINT—Stay fit not fat.

NOTES BY THE WAY

She—"Does skating require any particular application?" He—"No; arnica or horse liniment—one's as good as the other."—Sarnia Observer. Paradoxically, the easier it is to get hold of a dollar, the harder it is to hold on to it.—Toronto Telegram.

A Diplomatic Opening

President Johnson appears to have thrown the Communists off balance with his concession to negotiate the South Viet Nam crisis without preconditions. The response has been slow, but there is a feeling, at least in British quarters, that the path towards a peaceful settlement is firmer and that the United States no longer is isolated from the great body of world opinion which questioned American motives and prospects in the Vietnamese jungle.



Espionage and Counter-Espionage

Spying has become accepted as part of our way of life and Canada's capital city sports a bountiful crop of Red spies. A Weekend Magazine feature by Robert McKeown describes the game of espionage and counter-espionage being played all around the Peace Tower—for real.

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