

- R. We might as well start at the time when Lieutenant-Governor Ross was coming to the end of his term. Looking at this last chapter of ^{the} proposed book one would always wonder how do you, as sort of a permanent senior official of Government House, first hear that a new Lieutenant-Governor has been appointed and who he might be? There are always questions about this in the press - who is going to be the new Lieutenant-Governor. Presumably you would know first.
- D. No.
- R. Oh, wouldn't you? Well how do you find out - read the paper? . . . Good Lord, is that right?
- D. Yes. In fact, if the government of the province is favourable, or is of the same political faith as the one in Ottawa, the government is consulted; whereas we have a Social Credit government and a Liberal government in Ottawa, and in Pearkes' case, a Conservative government, the local people who are consulted are the local M.P., the cabinet ministers from the province. So I don't know who And some of them ^{went} ~~go out~~ to be Lieutenant-Governor. This man went out ^{of his way} to be Lieutenant-Governor. It was obvious at the garden party when Princess Alexandra was here. He came over and stayed in the house and was practically counting people in it. It was obvious that he was trying hard to be Lieutenant-Governor. Why would the appointment. And he had his swing at the cat. But the premier of the province would be consulted by the Prime Minister if the governments were the same ^{political} faith, but not

if they're opposite.

R. In other words, possibly the Premier might be as surprised as anybody else.

D. When he reads the papers, the first he . . . although I think he knew. Mr. Pearson told Bennett that Nicholson was going to be the lieutenant-governor - did he have any objections - something like that. I don't think he said did he have any objections because I think Bennett would probably have said yes. This man was the organizer of the Liberal Party in Vancouver for years before he became active in politics around 1960, and I think he and Bennett had run-ins. Bennett has never forgiven him. In fact, Bennett has been less at the house than anybody. He doesn't like the man. ^{as far as I know} I saw Bennett at the club the other day (now we're getting off at a tangent) and he said "How are things at the house?" And before I had a chance to say anything he said, "as well as can be expected, eh?"

R. But on the other hand, with Pearkes, of course, Pearkes had helped campaign for Bennett - way back in . . .

D. Oh yes, when they were Conservatives.

R. Yes, when they were both Conservatives, so presumably . . .

D. Bennett ran - he'd resigned about '47 from the local house after the coalition, and ran as an M.P. for the Okanagan for the federal House and got defeated. Then he tried again and came back in the House as an M.L.A. and then in '52, or just before that, changed to the Social Credit Party and he hasn't looked back.

- R. Well, of course, he would know - not only know, but presumably be quite favourable to Pearkes when he first . . .
- D. Yes, and his admiration for him has never dimmed through the whole period of Pearkes' stewardship at the house here. But not the same in the present incumbency.
- R. Well now, let us assume that the news has been announced. In Pearkes' case let's imagine now - you knew that he was coming?
- D. I didn't and even after he had phoned me, he didn't know he was coming because he was looking at it and the day he came in he said, "I'm a bloody fool to take this." And his son was here and he said, "I don't know how Dad's going to do it." I think General Pearkes has probably told you about some little help he's got - or has he?
- R. You're thinking about the financial prospects? I know through the series of talks and through his correspondence and one thing and another like that, I know the financial difficulty that he faced from the very beginning and I think I know too, (at least I'm pretty sure of this) that the salary that he received as lieutenant-governor he put wholly, I gather, into the maintenance of Government House.
- D. The running, not the maintenance. In fact, he couldn't afford a chauffeur and a car and he did without it in the first several months.
- R. Didn't he get some help from the navy, or the local regiment?

D. Yes, the local regiment of the P.P.C.L.I. loaned him a batman. Now he was borne on strength. It was illegal as far as the army was concerned and every once in a while somebody would raise the question - whether in the House or somewhere - about this. They had come here and seen this lad in the mess kit and two or three of them raised the question in the [House], so then the Colonel of the regiment, the then Colonel of the regiment, had to take the boy and put him on duty down at Work Point for so many hours a day for a little while to cover up and then the kid would be working here in the evening. He was a Dutchman - Hans. He turned out to be a lot of trouble to General Pearkes in the end. He ^{accidentally} burnt the house down and he killed a man one night. *in a car accident*

R. Oh, go on!

D. No. On New Year's Day - he was driving ^{away} here. We had the New Year's Day reception and driving home he hit a man and killed him - an old man crossing by the Royal Jubilee Hospital and the kid drove home, put his car in the garage and then, drunk as a skunk, and then the next day a hit-and-run driver And this was the man at Government House. He was a man of eighteen years old or something. It was a foggy night at five o'clock and he was foggier than the night. And then one night when his wife was away - they had two children - and his wife was visiting her people (she was Canadian born) he fell asleep with a cigarette and a fire started and burnt the cottage down here.

R. This is the cottage where the chauffeur . . . ?

D. No, the chauffeur always lived in a flat over the garage.

But this was about a five-bedroom house with two kitchens and two bathrooms that we used for ^{visiting} butlers, etc with a royal party . . . it was a big house, big as the garage, and ^{it was} burnt ~~the thing~~ to the ground.

R. Good Lord. Has that been rebuilt, by the way?

D. ~~Yes, or they turned it into a garage.~~ ^{No} But this is a place we used for male members of royal visitors, the detectives and valets rather than mixing them in with the maids on the top floor. But with running it like a hotel up top, so they built extra rooms when they rebuilt this house.

R. What about the car? Was it an army . . . ?

D. Army car out of motor transport pool. Then somebody arranged for General Pearkes to buy a car, a Buick, at the factory in Oshawa, less the government sales tax. They got a Le Sabre, I think it was, and David Lawson brought it out and he was in on the deal and gave the car to General Pearkes with no profit to him. He just serviced it. Then he had to hire a driver. Then the first driver we had, got drunk up at Duncan and then we had to fire him. Then we got another one and we had him for about six Maybe we should wait till the next time you come to put it on tape and we'd have another session. But all this is background to you. Then we had a David Luton come here one day. He had been in the army, or claimed he had, and he was hired by the comptroller after an interview and I don't know why they didn't screen him through

the R.C.M.P., but they didn't. ~~After a couple of bad incidents we had to . . .~~ He should have been [screened], ~~but he went down at the head and the heels.~~ They interviewed him and everybody thought he was fine - he was married and therefore, he was A-1. We had him for six months or something and the insurance ^{Company} Bill Clark - he had just taken over Hagars (Hagars sold insurance) - Bill was a friend of mine and he phoned me and said, 'Gar, may I see you?' So I said yes, and he came up. He said, 'What do you know about the chauffeur?' I said 'Nothing. He's a good chauffeur, he's worked out fine. He's been with us six months or a year.' He said, 'Did you know he's a convict?' And I said, no. 'Well', he said, 'we put a spot [we were putting ^{renewing the} insurance on the car, ~~or on him or something~~] and he spent two years in penitentiary for arson and burglary.' So I said, 'You must be kidding. The guy has proved ^f fine. He's been here for six or eight months or a year ~~or something~~ - quite some time.' He said, 'I'll bring my insurance man up and I'll bring a dossier on him produced by our investigator.' So they came up. Sure enough - I've got a copy of the letter in my file, marked confidential. Sure enough the guy was a burglar and he had been working for these private detectives with the dogs in the cars, over around New Westminster or Vancouver, on the outskirts, and he was the burglar. Whilst he was checking the property he was stealing and they caught him and put him away. Then he was married to a German girl and the German girl came home one day and found him in bed with

one of the maids - ^{his wife} ~~she~~ was a practical nurse. So she left and went back to Germany and then we found out that he wasn't even married to her - he'd been living with her and she had a husband or something. Then they decided to go on - this isn't helping General Pearkes biography, but it's background. I went to General Pearkes and told him this and he said, "The lad is trying. He's had his prison term and probably learned a lesson and he is trying his best and we want to give him a fresh start. Let's watch him. If there's nothing disappearing from the house then everything is working fine. But let's you and I keep this between us." So I said, "Fine, I'm happy with this." And he said he was so a few years later the lad came and said he was leaving. The next thing we knew he was working as a steward on the B.C. ferries from here to Vancouver. And then he was transferred and he was running from Vancouver to Nanaimo on the B.C. ferries. They, ^{B.C. Ferries} the ~~civil~~ ~~service~~, never asked us one question how he was, what he did, or anything about good, satisfactory or anything else. Now I debated whether if they did - I'm glad they didn't. If they didn't ask me the comptroller would have to answer. So I debated whether to disclose his past record which I decided not to. But anyway I wasn't confronted with this problem. Then while he was still on the ferries, he married the maid who was here. They left and not too long afterwards there were two houses burned out View Royal and this is the same guy and he's back in the pen.

- R. Well this maid that he was making out with - that was one of the ones here at Government House?
- D. One of the ones at Government House. So he shacked up with her, and he got drunk one night or went arson crazy - pyro-maniac - and he set fire to two houses out here on the Island highway and they caught him and he's back in jail.
- R. Good heavens! This is a good point, actually, that we're on with respect to finances because I think that whenever you have had a lieutenant-governor, whoever had the position did have a fair amount of money. Certainly people like the Rosses and the Wallaces and what-not, they had it. And yet Pearkes manages during his term to overcome this in a terrific way. What I gather . . .
- D. He did.
- R. What I gather was that in . . . that whereas small parties in and load them with liquor, he would be much more in favour of having larger parties with a greater variety, from the blind to the boy scouts and serving tea and cookies. Now am I right in this - this is how he accomplished what he did?
- D. He also served a fair amount of liquor. He never let down on the state ball or state dinner. Shortly after he came in they increased the ^{number of liquor} ~~liquor~~. Diefenbaker did this. Diefenbaker wanted to prove that a lieutenant-governor ^{could be} ~~was~~ appointed on his own merits and not because he was a social, or wealthy social and wealthy lion in his own province. And therefore, after he

appointed - he did two or three - after he appointed General Pearkes he raised the salary from \$9,000 to \$18,000. I think he did it. And he raised travelling expenses from \$4,500 to \$18,000 and you didn't have to vote your travelling expenses; you had to claim it and it was every three months. Was it a thousand? For a while there wasn't any travelling; Ross and Wallace got by on the \$9,000, that's all they used. And it cost them a fair amount. But we had to put a claim in every three months and we used to say \$2,000 or \$1,000 or \$998 travelling and the rest put hospitality. His Honour signed it and there was never any question. The same thing goes on now. And then the provincial government during Pearkes' time gave, or put through a special vote for Government House, \$25,000 and the same thing is in effect now, which I thought it may be cancelled when this new man came in. I don't see how Bennett could do it because once he had established it then he couldn't retract. And then it goes through every year in the votes now. We had a dinner here the other night, for example, and - but Bennett wouldn't pay anything for . . . we can't claim liquor on it, but we claim anything else - ^{e.g.} 14 boxes anchovies, 16 boxes of tomatoes and everything - and the comptroller makes out an itemized list of everything used - extra help, you can get four cooks in, twenty girls, it doesn't matter, and girls in the check room, commissionaires. We had a dinner here the other night for the editorial league. For the centennial com-

mittee there were 99 people here, 15 maids, two commissionaires, three or four girls in the checkroom and just those plus the - we had ham - the bill came to \$670 for the dinner, and on top of that the wines which His Honour pays out of his hospitality, ~~which he gets paid for.~~

- R. Well, let me put it this way, and I know you could only give a very - perhaps a rough estimate. Before Pearkes came, let's say in the time of Ross and the way he operated, how much per year would Ross or Wallace put out over and above his government salary to maintain Government House?
- D. Around \$75,000 to \$100,000 each year.
- R. I can see now why Pearkes said he was crazy to accept it.
- D. But then, you see, Wallace, for example, had business interests. He was the shipyards and every once in a while they would have - and this was the day of - when Wallace was here it was right after the war and there was a lot of shipbuilding and government contracts going - and they had this shipbuilders and ship-repairers association, they had their convention out here - held it in the lower lounge. Wallace had cocktail parties and . . . now this boosted - had the deputy ministers and the ministers out and had businessmen all across Canada, not only in shipbuilding, but things like B.A. Oil. Wallace got a B.A. directorship out of it. Now that would be offset and he could charge a lot of this off as company expenses.
- R. Oh, I see.

D. He had the ^{FIFER} Phyfer, this yacht here; maybe he was claiming that this was part of his expenses, taking his friends out but the ^{FIFER} Phyfer was owned by Burrard Drydock - it's on the books of Burrard Drydock where she had to be refuelled, and the staff, the captain and the cook - they were just shown on the books of Burrard Drydock. And then these people coming in all over the world, royalty, they'd stay with them and this always They'd get if they were

Same way with Ross. Ross had paint people coming over, international paper people which he was connected with. ^{He has about 30 Directorships} They'd be guests in the house and staying here and we'd invite people here to meet these - the Chamber of Commerce and people who were interested in making contacts with these. You can't say it cost them \$75,000 a year because a lot of this business entertaining and it was chargeable to their company and they were writing it off and they were getting a lot of business through using Government House.

R. Again, when Pearkes came in what would be the bare bone staff here at the house. For example,

D. I think it ran to about four.

R. That's exclusive of gardeners.

D. The gardeners are paid for by the ^{B. e} government.

R. Yes, but there are some people, too, in the house who are paid by the government.

D. The housekeeper is paid by the government and then the govern-

put in a spare man, sort of a janitorial man who keeps the basements clean - ~~using the Elliot Young~~, the lower lounge area - sweeps it up and washes dishes for the staff and helps out, sweeps the front steps and things like that.

R. That's two, then there'd be yourself . . .

D. Myself and the comptroller, and the stenographer.

R. She's government too?

D. She's government, and then we have a girl comes in three or four times a week and writes invitations and checks the callers register.

R. Five and a half then. So that the maids, any personal maid, and personal manservant . . .

D. There hasn't been one here since Ross left. Oh then, Pearkes had one who was on loan from the ~~Queen's Own~~ *Regiment*

R. What about the cooks?

D. They belong to the incumbent - he pays those.

R. Would it be normal for them to bring in their own cook, or would the cook remain on, or what?

D. Well, the cook we had here who left during the early part of Pearkes' time, he was here for forty years. He started with Mrs. Nichol, I think, back in 19~~17~~¹⁴ or ~~18~~ I think - Chung, he runs the Quality Fruit and Produce. His son you probably know - Terry who won the Bank of Montreal scholarship, \$20,000. That was his son who was the top student There's a little sidelight on Pearkes. The Bank of Montreal manager came out

from - this was the big thing and it was given a lot of publicity - and he called on Pearkes and the local assistant general manager in Vancouver came over and they were going to make this presentation at the Union Club at a luncheon and they had asked the lieutenant-governor. But before doing this the local manager, Bert Walters, the area manager from Vancouver and the Vice-President of the Bank of Montreal came up and made an official call on the lieutenant-governor and said "We've come ^{out} ~~up~~ to make this presentation. We know you're coming to the luncheon for this brilliant student at the university." So General Pearkes talked along and then he said, "By the way, would you like to meet the boy's father?" And they said, "Yes, very much." He said, "Come with me." And he took them down to the kitchen, and asked them there "Where's Chung?", and they said, "Oh, he's gone down to a luncheon at the Union Club." Terry, by the way, is now with the Department of Finance in Ottawa and he was out here on this Colombo Plan. We saw him - a nice boy.

R. I can easily see - we have only a few more moments - there's going to be at least one other interview - I can see that, Gar, if you have the time.

D. Oh yes, I have time.

R. When he first came - I'm thinking from your own point of view, not as you got to know him later, but in the first couple of weeks - was there anything about him that you noticed, I mean

personality, character, his impact on Government House, does he go to you for advice, and all that sort of thing? Not necessarily the differences between himself and Ross because there'd be a great many, but I mean how did he strike you as, well, here's a new man coming in, I wonder what he's like.

- D. Well I had met him before. I'd been to his house once at a cocktail party and when he was M.P., defence critic, I was in Malahat and he visited Malahat one night; and I had met him once or twice - a few times around. Like I know David Groos, I knew David in the navy, or George Chatterton. They were the local M.Ps. and you meet them around - they're politicians and you chatted with them. And he came down to Malahat - he was a Conservative - and I rather liked him. I sort of half believed that he was as "Time" depicted him, and the newspapers used to, as Colonel Blimp.
- R. That was my impression of him too - that was my first impression of him.
- D. I was one of the senior officers at Malahat and when he arrived the Captain just met him or something, and I showed him a little bit, showed him around and explained a few things to him. I think he knew me better than any of the other officers and I gave him, mainly and through the division, a good reception. And then when he phoned me that he was considering this, he said "I'm not taking it." He phoned me on Sunday from Ottawa and asked some questions and then I prepared a long list of engagements that he had to fulfill and the approximate cost of

them. He still has it - still has that letter on that file I used to keep here.

R. I think I may have that.

D. I got two or three calls from him. I'd come in to work in the morning almost bursting with - well, not bursting, I'm blasé, I suppose - and he [Ross] would say, "Did you hear any news about the next lieutenant-governor?" And I'd say, "Well, nothing official. I haven't heard anything about it from anybody." And Ross used to ask these questions and here I was sitting, the only one in Victoria, my wife and I the only people in Victoria who knew this, that he was coming months before it was finally announced. I'd go in with the mail to Ross in the morning and he'd be nice as pie. I lived in fear of the telephone ^{at home} because Ross would - he had trouble with his flebitis, with big ankles - when he finished dinner, or before dinner, he used to go up to the sittingroom and he'd put his feet up and his wife or somebody would be pouring him . . . he used to get quite high, ~~not~~ noticeably, ~~but~~ And then they'd start talking or something and then Ross would phone - the phone would ring and he'd ask for me at home - drunk - and you could hear Mrs. Ross giving him ammunition and he'd bawl the living daylights out of me - give me hell - why wasn't this done, why wasn't that done? You know I was completely drained and that last year I lived in fear of that telephone. I don't know why I think if

I had - in fact, I did try for a job in Ottawa much as I disliked it, I wanted to get out of the city and away from it and I did try there, in the civil service, but I didn't get it. I kept looking around - in fact I'm still looking. If something came up with even less money I'd jump at it and I've been 23 years here.

R. You're not a UVic or Vic College grad?

D. No, I've only got one year at university.

R. Because this new man is going to be hiring some new people, administrative people. One is going to be chap who will have two or three jobs - sort of