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FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1966

'Plywood and Tinsel Palace'

Legislators Clamor Dislike Of Buildings' Decorations

The man responsible for the "ugly" red and blue centennial decorations on the legislative buildings should be sent out with a hammer and crowbar to tear them off, the House was told Thursday.

The subject arose during consideration of Provincial Secretary Wesley Black's \$2,500,000 estimates for centennial celebrations.

It was touched off by Esquimalt MLA Herbert Bruch, who felt the decorations detracted from the stature of the buildings. The people responsible

should "take a second look," he said.

'PRY THEM OFF'

Randolph Harding (NDP, Kaslo-Slocan) told the House, "This hideous adornment doesn't help it one bit."

"I'd make the minister or whoever is responsible go out with a hammer and bar and make him pry them (plywood panels) off on his own time."

Gordon Dowding (NDP, Burnaby) chimed in: "It's become a plywood and tinsel palace."

'TARGETS FOR .22'

Mr. Harding said the overlapping centennial emblems "look like targets for someone with a .22."

Lois Haggen (NDP, Grand Forks-Greenwood) didn't like the decorations either. "The buildings are so beautiful that we need nothing to adorn them."

But one of the New Democrat members disagreed with his colleagues about the decorations. "They are stuffy and conservative," said Alex Macdonald (NDP, Vancouver East).

BATH FIRST

Dr. Patrick McGeer (L, Vancouver Point Grey) told the House it was time the government gave the legislative buildings a bath. "We should clean them up before we put the lipstick on," he said.

Fountain Design Remains Government Secret

Bennett Rampant on Ballots?

The government's super-secret Vancouver courthouse fountain was the object of some fanciful speculation in the legislature Thursday.

★ ★ ★
"Give us a little hint," urged Dr. Patrick McGeer (L, Point Grey).

"Will it be a statue of Premier Bennett running rampant on a filed of ballot boxes?"

"A large statue of Major Douglas (author of the original Sacred monetary scheme) holding up a batch of Sacred dividends with a mint-green light playing over it?"

"A barg-load of securities with an arrow with a perpetual flame hanging nearby?"

★ ★ ★
Commenting on "the strange circumstances surrounding the new fountain," Dr. McGeer said he did know

what happened to the begonias, magnolia trees and beech tree scrubbed out of the site by work crews behind what has become known as the "plywood curtain."

"I did a little sleuthing and I did find out where most of the shrubs went — to the city dump.

"I don't blame people for being a bit nervous," he said.

"There is so much secrecy all we can do is speculate."

The minister gave no peek at his big secret.

★ ★ ★
"It will be a fountain that I am quite sure most of the people of B.C. will be proud of," he proclaimed. "My department staff is quite capable and we've also had a great deal of advice from people in the field.

"It will be of a good design."

'Peace Best Defence'

The \$750,000 the government has earmarked for civil defence would be better spent on promotion of world peace, says Dewdney MLA David Barrett.

The New Democratic MLA told the legislature Thursday, "I believe there is a defence against nuclear war, and that defence is world peace through world law."

He said it was impossible to defend against nuclear warfare and the \$752,300 estimates, which the House later approved for civil defence during the new fiscal year, would be better spent on "the Peace Research Institute or United Nations clubs in the local area."

John Tisdalle (SC, Saanich) disagreed: "We need to train ourselves continually to the time when we may need it," he said.

"We need this kind of defence to protect ourselves in the event of a limited war" of the type the world has been experiencing for the past 25 years, said the Saanich MLA.

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1966

Tax Exemptions On, House to Prorogue

Lieutenant-Governor George Pearkes will prorogue the third session of the 27th Parliament at 5 p.m. today.

The legislature will sit at 2 p.m. to deal with the remainder of unfinished business, which includes 13 resolutions and debate on 21 public bills in the hands of private members.

STARTED LATE

The session, which started late and lasted nine weeks—one week longer than normal—overlaps one day into the new fiscal year which started today.

After the house rose at 11:45 p.m. Mr. Bennett skillfully fielded election questions by reporters and added no new support to speculation that ran through

the session, which he described as "the most effective and best" in his 25 years.

HOLIDAY SET

He said he will leave today for Salt Spring Island, where he will rest until Wednesday, then take a 10-day Easter holiday in Kelowna.

After the House had risen, the premier announced in the corridor that so far as he is concerned the sales tax exemptions on restaurant meals, confections and magazines would be effective at 12:01 a.m. today.

Officials in the provincial finance department spent all day Thursday telling callers to keep collecting the tax until the government's bill is given royal assent by Lieutenant-Governor George Pearkes after prorogation.

In countermanning the finance department's instructions to the public, Mr. Bennett told reporters he would instruct his deputy finance minister not to enforce collection today.

The premier's decision means that the five per cent sales tax will not have to be paid on meals, confections, candies, soft drinks, newspapers, magazines and school supplies.

URNS DEAF EAR

Premier Bennett turned a deaf ear to pleas of opposition members for more space in the Legislative Buildings.

He said everyone realizes it is difficult to find extra space in the old building and that every department is expanding.

But in his travels, the premier pointed out, he has never seen a place where the chairs are so comfortable.

Welfare 'Wears Blinders'

David Barrett (NDP, Dewdney) charged the provincial welfare department with wearing blinders as he resumed his perennial attack on welfare policies in the legislature Thursday.

He drummed at his theme that current welfare policies destroyed the recipients' initiative to help themselves, as debate continued on the estimates of Provincial Secretary Weslie Black.

A deserted woman with three children receives \$175 a month, he said. She is permitted to earn \$20 a month on top of that.

'IF ON, STAY ON'

But anything above the \$20 a month is deducted from her welfare cheque.

"So the policy is: if you are on welfare, stay on welfare," he charged.

"Immediately, the initiative of people to help themselves is lost."

He urged the government to initiate a homemaker service which would release a lone parent to seek worthwhile employment.

NOT ROBBED

"That way you don't rob the family of charting its own course in society," he said. "Somehow there's a mental block between the government and actual implementation of experimental ideas.

"Why do you continue to be obsessed with your written procedures?"

In return, Mr. Black charged the Dewdney social worker with "creating a problem in morale in my department."

Copper Smelter 'Good Sense' In Stikine Area

Mines Minister Brothers said in the legislature Wednesday the Stikine River country produces enough concentrates that a copper smelter there "makes good economic sense."

He made the statement in answer to questions by Frank Calder (NDP, Atlin) as the minister's estimates went smoothly through the House in about 2½ hours.

He said a copper smelter in the Stikine area is "our hope and anticipation."

MAJOR INDUSTRY

Drawing concentrates from Granduc, Stikine Copper and other mines in the north, the smelter would support a major industry in the north, "with a community of not hundreds, but thousands."

Answering a question by David Stupich (NDP, Nanaimo-

Islands) the minister said the provincial government received seven per cent of the value of class A coal and two per cent of class B coal on the Island.

ACADEMIC

However, he said, coal deposits on the west side of Island Highway are "considered depleted" and deposits on the east side are good for heating but not for coking, making any question of its value "really academic."

He also informed the House that space was being set aside in the new museum and archives complex for a section on B.C. mining, and that he intended to discuss with the B.C. and Yukon Chamber of Mines preparation of a history of mining in the province, with possible help from the government.

SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1966

House Prorogues

Three MLAs Packing It Up

By JACK FRY
Legislative Reporter

Third session of the 27th Parliament of British Columbia quietly came to an end Friday, when Lieutenant-Governor Pearkes gave royal assent to 71 government bills and prorogued the House.

Hours before the closing ceremony took place, two Socred MLAs had predicted an election, and there were indications that at least three of the opposition MLAs would not seek re-election.

JUNE ELECTION

Victoria MLA Waldo Skillings and Alex Matthew (SC, Vancouver Centre) both said they think a provincial election will be held in June, and Mr. Matthew pinned the date down to June 13.

Sixty-one-year-old Gordon Gibson, the millionaire "bull of the woods" from North Vancouver, said he feels his chair should be "handed over to a younger man."

FEDERAL FIELD

It is understood that another of the five Liberal members in the House Harry McKay of Fernie, is interested in the federal field of politics.

Arthur Turner (NDP, Vancouver East) who has been in the House 25 years, the same as Premier Bennett, said earlier he will not run again if there is an election this year.

PLANS REST

But Premier Bennett, who plans to slip away for a few days' rest at his cottage on Salt Spring Island before taking a 10-day Easter holiday in Kelowna, maintained to the end that he

has no plans for an early election.

The session itself lasted through 71 sittings — including 25 night sittings — compared with the 70 sittings, 23 at night, during the 1965 session.

LARGEST BUDGET

The \$657,000,000 budget passed by the House was the largest in British Columbia's history, while concessions were granted in the form of sales tax exemptions on restaurant meals, confections and magazines.

Most controversial legislation was the provincial redistribution bill in which the government gave ground to pressure from all sides of the House, so the legislature will have 55 instead of the present 52 members after the next election.

GRADUAL START

Another measure which drew heavy fire before final passage was the bill giving peace officers the power to suspend licences of drinking drivers for 24-hour periods. This is a proclamation bill which will be brought into effect gradually throughout the province.

A Socred-dominated, special legislative committee recommended the the government allow Western Mines Limited to build a townsite inside the boundaries of Strathcona provincial park on mid-Vancouver Island.

One highlight of the session was the tabling of a royal commission report prepared by Judge Charles Morrow, who recommended that the government step in to regulate gasoline prices and service station operations if the oil industry is not willing to bring about the changes.

But the feeling in the corridors of the legislature was that no

action will be taken by the government on Judge Morrow's recommendations.

PEARKES ARRIVES

The lieutenant-governor's limousine escorted by two city police motorcycles rounded Humboldt and Government Streets at 5:15 p.m. and headed for the Legislative Buildings.

Premier Bennett, flanked by executive assistant William Budd and deputy provincial secretary L. J. Wallace, greeted Mr. Pearkes and his aides at the front steps and accompanied them to the cabinet chamber.

GIVES ASSENT

A few minutes later the lieutenant-governor entered the House, gave assent to the government's bills and said the legislation which has been enacted "will be of great benefit to the citizens of this province."

These measures included the compulsory testing of motor vehicles and a \$10 increase in the homeowner's grant, he said.

"Honorable members, I now relieve you of your legislative duties and I trust that the blessing of Divine Providence will accompany you to your respective homes."

The House was prorogued at 5:40 p.m., the premier stepped into the corridor, glanced at his watch and told reporters he and his wife would be "on the 7:30 ferry to Salt Spring."

There would be no change and no new addition to the provincial cabinet and no provincial election in the near future, Mr. Bennett said.

Cabinet members and MLAs then lined up to receive their indemnity cheques from Ned DeBeck, clerk of the Legislative Assembly, and it was all over for another year.

SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1966

Regional Districts To Build Hospitals

By JACK FRY
Legislative Reporter

Municipal Affairs Minister Campbell announced Friday his department will be pumping in the future for regional district control of hospital construction costs.

Everywhere, that is, but Greater Victoria where efforts in this direction were soundly defeated in the civic elections last December.

* * *

Mr. Campbell's department Friday mailed a release to the Greater Victoria Hospital Planning Council and regional district officials throughout the province.

It explains the procedures under which regional districts can assume the function of levying taxes for hospital construction purposes.

The minister later said, "My department is going to move more actively into hospital construction through the regional district."

* * *

But he said he will not take any further steps to initiate this function for the Greater Victoria Regional District.

The hospital financing information was intended for "the rest of the province, not Greater Victoria," Mr. Campbell said.

"The vehicle is in the garage if they want it, but they will have to come to me to ask for it."

SUNDAY, APRIL 3, 1966

'Instant Hansard' Editorialized

NDP Keeps You Informed!

The New Democratic Party has a new propaganda medium — an information pamphlet which is mailed out once a week from the NDP rooms at the legislature.

It is the brainchild of lawyer Gordon Dowding, MLA for Burnaby, who jokingly refers to his publication as an "instant Hansard, editorialized."

The weekly political report now being printed on a government-issue mimeograph machine is mailed to 600 people throughout the province, including the editors of 75 weekly newspapers.

Each edition, marked "for immediate use and republication," carries the week's happenings in the legislature as interpreted from an NDP point of view.

"We don't expect the weekly papers to publish it all but we want the editors to know our

point of view," the Burnaby MLA who edits the report told me.

"Our complaint is the people don't know what is going on in the House because there is no Hansard, and you can't expect the daily papers to cover every aspect of debate from our point of view.

"Papers pick out the sensational things like name calling or wrangling but not the constructive proposals of the opposition," Mr. Dowding said.

His modest effort "in no way rivals the outpourings of the government — they mail out truckloads of material."

But it has proven so successful that it will be continued this summer from the provincial NDP headquarters on East Broadway in Vancouver.

The Vancouver office publishes a monthly tabloid news-

paper called the Democrat, but Mr. Dowding claims it so full of national politics, meeting notices and stale provincial news that it is not nearly as effective as his own mimeographed pamphlet.

"We want to get our views on the day-by-day political issues to the people while the issues are still hot," he explained. "This is more effective and we want to expand our circulation list."

While I question Mr. Dowding's suggestion that the opposition is not given a fair shake in news coverage, no newspaper can possibly give a Hansard-type verbatim account of what happens every minute in the House.

The Colonist, at least, tries to be impartial and present every side of an issue, regardless of party lines.

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ADD MORE BENEFITS TO MEDICARE PLAN

Provincial Secretary Wesley Black Thursday said the B.C. Medical Plan will be widened to cover more services as time goes by.

"This plan is progressing with great strides but we have never tried to say . . . it has reached its zenith," he told the legislature.

"We know perfectly well there are benefits that have to be considered reasonably soon."

'66 Decorations Termed Hideous

By BOB DONAHUE

Herb Bruch (SC—Esquimalt) Thursday urged the government to "take a second look" at the centennial decorations on the Legislative Buildings.

"Every time I come down the causeway and see them I'm surprised," he told the house.

"These buildings have a certain stature and anything we add to them only detracts from it."

Other Soerod backbenchers applauded his remarks and opposition members were quick to agree.

"This hideous adornment doesn't help a bit," said Randolph Harding (NDP—Kaslo-Slocan). "If the minister is responsible we should make him go out and pry them off with a bar—on his own time."

Pat McGeer (L—Vancouver-Point Grey) said a more fitting thing would be to restore the buildings to their former grandeur.

CLEAN THEM UP

"The minister should do the proper thing," he said. "And the proper way would be to clean them up. I think we should do this before putting lipstick on them."

He was referring to the plywood and sail cloth red and blue bunting which is to be placed not only on the legislature, but on all provincial public buildings in the province.

Mrs. Lois Haggen (NDP—Grand Forks-Greenwood) added to the chorus of protest.

"It seems to me our buildings are so beautiful we need nothing to adorn them. And I understand the plywood used was most expensive."

Gordon Dowding (NDP—Burnaby) likened the decorations to a "South American bordello. Whatever that is," he added.

The protests came when the house was considering the estimates of the provincial secretary's department for centennial celebrations.

SONGS

Earlier Opposition Leader Robert Strachan allowed that birthday celebrations were a fine thing, but he didn't like the sound of the birthday centennial songs.

"The songs don't identify with B.C.," he said. "An effort should have been made to employ musicians and singers here in Victoria who would have served well. It's unfortunate we got off to this kind of start."

A Bennett With Boxes? Not So: Chant

Government secrecy on the design of the fountain to be placed in front of Vancouver's new courthouse prompted some speculation by Pat McGeer (L—Vancouver-Point Grey) in the legislature Thursday night.

"Give us a little hint," he asked Public Works Minister Chant whose department has been accused of hiding the sketches.

"Will it be Premier Bennett rampant on a field of ballot boxes?"

"Or a large stature of Major Douglas holding a batch of Soerod dividends with a mint green light playing on it?"

"Or a miniature barge load of securities with an arrow in perpetual flame nearby?"

"What is going to dominate this aquatic display on the courthouse lawn?" he pleaded.

Replied Mr. Chant: "It will be a fountain that the majority of people in B.C. will be proud of."

"My department staff is quite capable. And they have also had expert advice."

"Consequently, the fountain is of a good design," said the minister.

And in reply to a government member's question Mr. Chant said he could neither give assurances or a specific date when the courthouse building would be started.

WHY SHELTERS?

'Use CD Funds For Peace'

David Barrett (NDP—Dewdney) suggested in the legislature Thursday civil defence funds be donated to a peace research institute rather than used for building bomb shelters.

"I protest the use of public funds to give people the impression there is protection from nuclear weapons."

"There is only one defence against nuclear weapons and

that is world peace," he said.

BUY AIR AMBULANCE

"If the government can't direct the funds away from building bunkers then why not purchase an air ambulance as well. It would be much more useful."

"It would be more constructive to donate these funds to a peace research institute or United Nations clubs instead of the government posting signs to bomb shelters."

John Tisdalle (SC—Saanich) said the bunkers would be the best defence for the limited type of wars which are now being fought in the world.

"It is foolish to say because we stand between two major powers that they will shoot over our heads," he said.

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1966

Socred Ready For Election On June 13

'I've Been Right More Than Wrong'

By JOHN MIKA

Times Legislative Reporter

The B.C. legislature was to prorogue late this afternoon after one of its most exhausting sessions in recent years.

But most MLAs believe the political battle—which went 70 innings in the assembly chamber since the opening bell Jan. 27—has yet to reach its climax.

All of them plan to rest up as much as possible from now until after Easter—and then begin organizing for knockout efforts in an expected spring election campaign.

Frank Calder (NDP—Atlin) and Alex Matthew (SC—Vancouver Centre) already have begun formal organizing for the campaign.

'GO TO WORK'

"I've instructed my people to begin setting up committees and start working on an election campaign," Mr. Matthew admitted this morning.

"I think the election date will be the second Monday in June (13th)."

"That's only a guess, of course, but I've been right more often than wrong in this sort of thing."

Mr. Calder made his first campaign statement after being formally nominated Thursday night as the first of his party to stand for re-election.

The nomination was confirmed and announced by the NDP council so that the far northern member—only Indian MLA in Canada—could begin preliminary organizing in his huge and still snow-bound riding.

STRONGEST HINT

But, as always, Premier Bennett himself gave the strongest final hint that an election is in the cards for this year.

He did it by, in effect, waving goodbye to 78-year-old dean of the House, Arthur Turner.

Mr. Turner told fellow MLAs he would like to say a tentative goodbye because, if an election is held this year, they wouldn't see him on the floor at next year's centennial ceremonial opening in New Westminster.

FAREWELL TRIBUTE

The premier, wittingly or

otherwise, took the bait and paid a final sounding farewell tribute to Mr. Turner for his public service rendered "in a quiet and unassuming manner."

Tedium predominated during the 222 hours that the House was in session, but the nine weeks will be memorable for several reasons.

EVASION

Opposition leader Robert Strachan said the chief feature of the session was the government's evasion in the face of Opposition demands for information about its operations.

Premier Bennett, on the other hand, said the 42 day sittings and 28 night sittings produced "the most effective" session in his 25 years' experience because, despite criticisms, the Opposition supported all government bills.

(His point was underlined by all three parties uniting behind a resolution of Mr. Strachan's Thursday night roundly condemning the federal government's cutoff of shipbuilding subsidies for provincial ferries.)

But historians probably will take a different view of the third session of the 27th Legislative Assembly in B.C.

POWER SWING

Undoubtedly, the redistribution legislation will stand as the most important event because its changes of most boundaries and addition of three seats will swing the power finally away from the rural hinterland and to the urban ridings of the province.

This power shift will color every future action — of both

commission and omission—by the governmental system of the province and may well mark the historical "take-off point" in the province's development.

The power given police to make 24-hour "roadside suspensions" of drinking drivers and introduction of compulsory vehicle testing will loom large too.

PROVIDE SCOPE

The future will tell how important the royal commission on automobile insurance will become but the terms of reference given it by the government provide scope for a monumental reassessment — whether or not government insurance is advocated.

Strides were made and promised in the residential field. These include the \$10 increase to \$110 in the home-owner grant, a 5 per cent annual ceiling on assessment increases and legislation to enable apartment dwellers to hold title to their suites and collect the home-owner grant.

In addition, the session saw the premier give notice that he plans to introduce a cash down payment grant for low-income families wishing to own their own homes, at the next session — although details are expected to be announced in an election campaign.

The session also saw the revenue budget—partly through a new method of reporting sums—leap from \$452 million to \$657.2 million in one year.

It provides higher medical grant subsidies, cuts of "nuisance" items from the 5 per

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cent sales tax levy which went into effect today, higher school grants, more "money for marks" scholarships to high school graduates, higher per capita grants to municipalities as well as \$25 million more for the Pacific Great Eastern Railway and elimination of the B.C. Ferry Authority's \$37 million debt.

VICTORIA AFFECTED

The local area was affected by legislation too—favorably and unfavorably depending on viewpoint—by such items as:

Legislation turning the water rights over Elk, Thetis and Sooke Lakes to the provincial government; civil service salary increases averaging 5 per cent; integration of civil service, teacher and civic worker pension plans with the Canada Pension Plan rather than "stacking" the two; clearing the way for construction of a joint Centennial Stadium on the campus, reconstruction of Royal Athletic Park Stadium and proposed construction of a tall "needle" restaurant tower on the Belmont Street esplanade.

Hunters will remember the session as the one authorizing formal examinations before youths could obtain licences and firearm permits while sports fishermen will remember the committee report recommending a study of salt water fishing licences.

ROUGH TIMES

It wasn't all smooth sailing for the government side.

It took its lumps over a report approving a townsite inside Strathcona Park; failure to halt air pollution or make regulations to control it; refusal to make enumeration of voters mandatory; chronic care handicapped children and general hospital policies; and its relations with municipalities.

Two pieces of legislation also gave tacit admission that Gordon Dowding (NDP—Burnaby) had scored: a bill to plug all the possible loopholes in the 1961 B.C. Electric takeover and another legally authorizing transfer of voter lists from present to new ridings.

Any purely political embarrassment was suffered by the Socreds in reminders of the Al Williamson trial and the firing of purchasing commission chairman G. E. P. Jones last year—both events being connected by the opposition to Einar Gundersen, chief Socred fund-raiser and salaried official of several government ventures.

All the Signs Point To an Election . . . But

By JOHN MIKA

In a gratuitous corridor interview, Premier Bennett this week gave an assurance that he was not planning to dissolve the legislature.

"The premier won't be making any quick trip to government house," Mr. Bennett promised.

This was his response to the fear expressed publicly by Frank Calder (NDP—Atlin) that not only was a spring election coming, it could be expected as an imminent event with the premier obtaining Lieutenant-governor George Pearkes' fiat for the dramatic announcement on the floor of the house.

Well, the premier may have scotched that fear but he heightened the one that an election writ will be published a couple of weeks after prorogation when exhausted MLAs will have had time to recover their wind for the hustings.

Well, the premier may have scotched that fear but he heightened the one that an election writ will be published a couple of weeks after prorogation when exhausted MLAs will have had time to recover their wind for the hustings.

Pros and Cons

Because, in a candid statement, he confirmed that he is seriously weighing the pros and cons of an early election.

"We're due for an election in B.C. ordinarily every four years," he said. "That would be next year."

"But next year is the (Confederation) centennial.

"And this year is the B.C. centennial."

There lies the dilemma, he suggested, and followed this up with a statement implying he has been thinking pretty hard about it.

"The government hasn't made up its mind whether it will be this year or next."

Asked if it will make the decision soon, say, this weekend, Mr. Bennett replied: "It may or may not."

"If we close (prorogue) Friday, don't look for an announcement Saturday. I would like to go to Salt Spring Island (where he has a weekend retreat)."

Total Good

Mr. Bennett, slipping back into the politician's stance, added that whatever he decides it won't be done on the basis of "what is good for the Social Credit party (but) on what is good for responsible government."

However, later, he seemed less non-partisan.

Chatting with this reporter,

he posed the question: "Why is the opposition so nervous of an election this session?"

"They've done a lot of yelling but you notice that they always turn around and vote with the government? They support our program, why?"

Then he supplied one possible answer—certainly the answer every Socred would like to believe:

"They feel vulnerable. They think they would lose an election at this time."

Mr. Bennett several times was obviously fishing for an issue during this session and his remark would indicate that the opposition hasn't given him one.

But he holds two strong arguments for a spring vote up his sleeve, if he chooses to flash them out.

The first is that the distribution of constituencies has been totally altered and improved, even more than the Angus report recommendations because the next house will be increased three seats to a total of 55.

What could an election now be other than an attempt to be completely fair to the voters to ensure they are not represented one minute longer than necessary by an admittedly outmoded legislature?

That's one argument that could be used to justify an election.

The other could be used both as justification and also as a sort of issue of state.

It lies in the fact that the next federal-provincial conference will be held here in Victoria in June. Premier Bennett said he has informed Prime Minister Pearson of four possible dates in that month and is awaiting the decision on which will be chosen.

A provincial government that has so strenuously accused Ottawa of discrimination in the past few months, could reasonably pose this proposal to the voters:

New Mandate

Show us and the country your support by a fresh — and stronger — mandate on the eve of this important conference.

The opposition obviously could counter with the cry that separatism can be rejected only by defeating the Socred party.

But whichever side was taken, how many voters would consider the question: "Is this vote important or necessary?"



Mika

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1966

16 CRITICISMS VOICED BEFORE ESTIMATES PASSED

By JOHN MIKA
Legislative Reporter

The legislature Thursday night met a deadline for passing the \$657.2 million revenue estimates of the government for the fiscal year that began today.

But Gordon Dowding (NDP—Burnaby) took 16 final cracks at the government before the budget votes were finally agreed at 10:41 p.m.

He made his attack from an unusual angle, using Vote No. 1 which provides the salaries of the M.L.A.s themselves—traditionally the last vote dealt with by the legislature—as his springboard.

"I propose to speak on whether the members of this house deserve their indemnities and whether they have stood up for the rights of the legislature or permitted the government to carry out a blueprint for undermining the legislature," Mr. Dowding said.

First of his 16 criticisms of the legislature concerned the absence of a Hansard verbatim record of speeches in the house.

"Three times the members of the house have voted for a Hansard and we still haven't got it," he said. "Who runs the house? Not the members apparently."

Other criticisms were: Lack of an oral question period each day; refusal of ministers to answer questions during estimates scrutiny; refusal automatically to activate standing committees; "legislation by exhaustion" through late-night sittings; failure to hold regular private members' days for debate of their bills and motions;

Failure to hold province-wide enumeration of voters; "gerrymandering" of the redistribution proposals; "calling snap" provincial elections without reason or purpose; refusal to answer opposition debate; "turning Parliament into a propaganda machine by churning out thousands of political speeches and ads at taxpayers' expense, such as the budget and throne speeches written by public relations men;"

Collecting political contributions from government contractors; destruction of public documents harmful to the government; attacking the federal government; delegating legislative powers to the cabinet; and threatening the speaker with an election if he rules against the government.

International Problem: Who Owns Fixtures?

By WAVERLEY ROOT
The Washington Post

PARIS — One result of the head-on collision between France and the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is that the shock is jarring some of the secrets loose from the Franco-American treaties covering United States installations in this country.

Some of the scraps of information that are now coming to light have pertinence to what is likely to happen next in what promises to be a long negotiation over the practical consequences of the French action.

For instance, from a European source it is learned that a clause in some of the treaties concerning NATO installations in France is that when they are "no longer useful" to NATO, they become the property of the nation where they have been established.

This seems capable of affecting the argument about compensation. Apparently the American installations in France are on the same basis as a "fixture" in a French

apartment. If you bolt a brand-new electric water heater to the wall when you rent a French apartment, and then leave, you can't unbolt it and take it away with you. It has become integrated with the apartment and belongs to the landlord. He doesn't owe you a cent.

Another piece of information about the treaties is that while American spokesmen were quite right in saying that four of the five principal agreements between France and the United States contain no provision for unilateral denunciation, they would not have been right if they had forgotten to include the word "unilateral." These treaties provide for their alteration or abrogation "by common accord."

The French will apparently maintain that in announcing that the United States must move, they are opening a procedure by which the mechanics of the moving will be decided upon "by common accord." This may be stretching the meaning of the phrase.

Courthouse Delay Hit

'Political Discrimination'

"Outright discrimination," thundered Opposition Leader Robert Strachan in the legislature Thursday on the construction progress of Duncan courthouse.

"It's political discrimination just because I happen to be the leader of the opposition," he told Works Minister Chant.

"This is the 10th anniversary of

your famous statement that the drawings were complete and tenders would be called in a few months.

"That was 10 years ago. Ten years. And we still have a shell of concrete. That foundation is almost an old foundation now."

Mr. Chant replied: "There is a slight delay in planning and work. I don't think you will have to wait too much longer."

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1966

'Triple Spending For Homemakers'

Homemaker services costing \$150,000 in the 1956-66 fiscal year will be "doubled and possibly tripled" in the new fiscal year, Welfare Minister Wesley Black told the legislature Thursday.

He was replying to David Barrett (NDP—Dewdney) who said the department could save money and help restore initiative at the same time in fatherless families on welfare.

The opposition's chief welfare department critic pointed out a widow with children now can collect \$175 a month in welfare payments and earn up to \$20 a month additionally "but if she earns more than \$20 it is deducted from her welfare allowance."

If the mother was a stenographer she could earn possibly \$325 a month if the government subsidized homemaker services — a woman to care for the youngsters in the home during working hours.

"That would save the government money and you would not rob that family of the dignity and pride of charting its own course," he said.

Mr. Black replied that the homemaker program will be expanded in the lower mainland this year as an experiment before the government decides on the feasibility of a province-wide program.

He attacked Mr. Barrett's criticism as an annual event that always "creates a problem of morale in my department."

"I admit that this department has shortcomings, indeed we have," he said, but the blame lies in society itself.

"There appears to be a breakdown in society," Mr. Black said.

Mr. Black said the juvenile delinquency problem is on the increase and so is the problem of emotionally disturbed children.

"The costs (of treating emotionally disturbed youngsters) will stagger you — it takes as many as 11 or 12 staff for one person."

He said he had to choose a middle path between extremists who said nothing should be done and those who said complete and modern services should be provided.

ANOTHER VOTE HINT

Premier Bennett paid a personal tribute to Arthur Turner (NDP—Vancouver East) when the opposition member said he will retire from public office if an election is called this year.

"He has served in a quiet and unassuming manner," the premier told the House Thursday night.

"I want to pay a personal tribute to his service. His 25 years in public life should act as an inspiration to others to enter this field of endeavor."

"I don't regret one day," replied Mr. Turner. "If I was born again I would be happy to do it all over again."

Mr. Turner, who is 78, said earlier in the session he would not be contesting another election.

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SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1966

GOVERNMENT OUTVOTED ON FIREWORKS BILL

Bennett Douses Embarrassing 'Six-Year Fuse'

By JOHN MIKA
Legislative Reporter

Mrs. Lois Haggen's six-year-old fireworks bill ended the legislative session with a bang Friday when it unexpectedly blew up in the government's face.

In an astonishing development, the government was outvoted 24 to 23 barely a half-hour before Lieutenant-Governor George Pearkes arrived to close the session.

But Premier Bennett quickly doused the bombshell with a technicality to prevent the flames of rebellion in his own ranks creating an embarrassment at the last moment.

For six years Mrs. Haggen (NDP—Grand Forks-Greenwood) has brought in a bill to outlaw the sale and discharge of firecrackers and permit only approved public fireworks displays.

Each year, she has gained another convert or so from the government side but her bill always failed to win second reading due to government opposition.

Friday her bill came up again for second reading — approval in principle — as the House raced through the annual clearing of left-over business (usually opposition members' bills and resolutions) from the order paper.

Municipal Affairs Minister Dan Campbell said regional districts, such as Greater Victoria, now are moving into the field of fireworks control and for that reason the government could not accept the bill and would vote against it.

Bert Price (SC—Vancouver-Burrard) and C. W. MacSorley (SC—Burnaby) spoke in favor of Mrs. Haggen's bill as they have in the past.

But six Sacred back-benchers rose with the combined opposition benches of the NDP and Liberals to vote

in favor when the question was put — Mr. Price, Mr. MacSorley, Arvid Lundell (SC—Revelstoke), Don Robinson (SC—Lillooett), John Tisdalle (SC—Saanic) and Ernie LeCours (SC—Delta) — to give a yes vote totalling 24.

The government could muster only 23 "no" votes as a result of the absence of Dudley Little (SC—Skeena) who was ill.

General applause broke out among the opposition as second reading was given the bill but there was laughter too and Premier Bennett joked there would be plenty more fireworks before the bill passed.

As it was the final day of the session, it was obvious that it was too late for the bill to stand over the usual NDP efforts to urge the federal government to give diplomatic recognition to Red China and work harder towards ending the Viet Nam War on the 1954 Geneva Accord terms, produced considerable debate.

Others, such as the NDP bill to set up a government car insurance agency, were ruled out of order on the grounds they involved expenditure of money.

Finally, Lieutenant-Governor Pearkes arrived, the public galleries half-filled with spectators — most of them MLAs' wives — and the closing speech from the throne was read.

Mr. Pearkes declared the legislature prorogued at 5:40 p.m., wished the MLAs god-speed home, and marched out.

All members broke out into loud applause after Mr. Speaker William Murray left the chamber behind the ceremonial mace for the 70th and last time in the past nine weeks and press gallery members, following tradition, showered the members below with reams of sessional papers.

Moments later, the members received their sessional pay and expenses totalling \$8,000 each, hurriedly shook

hands with each other and left.

And the janitors took over the empty chamber for another year.

minimum 24 hours before going into committee and final reading stages.

Mrs. Haggen, who had never come so close before, was non-plussed for a moment, but, at the whispered urging of some colleagues, she recovered and asked the House for unanimous consent to suspend the rules so the bill could go to committee immediately.

"No, Mr. Speaker," said the premier, denying his consent.

So the bill died on the order paper and with it the threat to his government's equilibrium.

The result was a foregone conclusion but still a surprise moral victory for Mrs. Haggen — and possibly a farewell gift from the other MLAs who have heard rumors she does not plan to run for office again if there is an election this year.

After the bill was wiped off the order paper, Mrs. Haggen sent up a plastic box to the press gallery containing a giant firecracker and a rabbit's foot.

A note said:

"Given me by the press boys when I lost for the third time. I send it with my compliments plus my rabbit's foot which I have hidden behind my skirts over the years"

(The last remark harked back to a heckle by Waldo Skillings (SC—Victoria) that Mrs. Haggen should stop "hiding behind her skirts" earlier in the session.)

The fireworks bill was the only unexpected twist to the standard prorogation.

For three hours, the House considered 11 resolutions and 22 bills by opposition members.

Some resolutions, notably

SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1966

Six MLAs May Call It Quits

By JOHN MIKA
Legislative Reporter

As many as six MLAs may have voluntarily left the legislature for the last time Friday when the session prorogued—if an election is held this year.

Two of them—Arthur Turner (NDP—Vancouver East) and Gordon Gibson (L—North Vancouver) put themselves on record as not intending to run again so that they will be back only if there is no election call.

But rumored to be considering retirement also are: Mrs. Lois Haggan (NDP—Grandforks-Greenwood); Donald Robinson (SC—Lillooet); Harry McKay (L—Fernie), and Speaker William Murray (SC—Prince Rupert).

Mr. Gibson, characteristically drew numerous chuckles as he made his swan song.

"I say to you Mr. Premier, I haven't seen any man who was given just a pair of deuces in a poker game who has done as well as you," he said, prompting general laughter.

Mr. Gibson said he hoped that he would be replaced by a man "who fights as I did 10 years ago . . . because without a strong opposition you cannot have good government."

Both Premier Bennett and Mr. Turner paid warm tribute to Mr. Gibson as a man who had contributed a great deal to B.C. and the House broke out into prolonged applause.

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Friday, April 1, 1966

Soft sell works

By IAN STREET

Province Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA—It is a matter of constant complaint by politicians that the same people who blithely admit complete ignorance of politics have no compunction about casting ballots at election time.

That's why, when groups of high school students visit the legislature during the session, the MLAs who address them try to create a spark of interest in politics.

A regular speaker on these occasions is Opposition leader Strachan. His message: "The individual may ignore politics, but the politicians go on merrily passing laws that affect everyone, every day of their lives."

No one knows how many students have been converted to lifelong interest in politics and politicians. But it has always been apparent that there are people, usually connected with special interest groups, who take a direct interest in the affairs of the legislature.

These are often lobbyists; not quite the big time operators of Washington, or Ottawa, but meeting the definition "to frequent the lobby of a legislative assembly for the purpose of influencing members' votes."

Here it is all strictly soft-sell; no sleeve-plucking in corridors. Lunch or perhaps dinner and drinks at the Empress Hotel for members. The special interest is sometimes never mentioned. But if a question is asked the answer is quick and full.

Sometimes, however, thanks to an over-enthusiastic public relations man, plans do go a little awry. MLAs still chuckle over the dinner put on for them last year at the Empress by the men who make dental plates, one of the most active lobbying groups in recent years.

The meal was something less than a success, thanks to an eye-catching display of

upper and lower plates that dominated the room.

This soft-sell-with-hospitality usually works fairly well. Vancouver city council this week invited Strachan and several other NDP members to lunch and showed them slides of urban renewal projects in the city. Mayor Rathie and the handful of aldermen who were with him answered questions and the impression they made, by all accounts, was good.

William Speare, MLA for the Cariboo, and chairman of one of the select standing committees in the House, says the lobbyists perform a useful function.

"It's the function of these groups to inform," he says. "Members are busy and only too human so they can't know everything." But he adds: "MLAs do take into consideration, however, where the information comes from and they try to put it into perspective."

The special committee headed by Speare dealt with matters like pollution and a townsite in Strathcona Park so it attracted several special interest groups. They included a PR man for the applicants Western Mines, representatives of the Forest Industry and outdoors groups.

A measure of the growing importance with which legislative activities are viewed is the fact that the Council of Forest Industries has had a full-time representative on hand throughout the session. Again the soft-sell approach. Listen, answer questions, report back to home office, and on matters like pollution submit briefs giving the industry view.

Says Speaker William Murray: "Most lobbyists are quiet and well-behaved and adhere to the rules."

The rules include no entry to the Speaker's area around the chamber while the House is sitting. It's notable, however, that government PR men and admen, who fit the definition of lobbyist, seem to have special exemption.

UBC students paint great wall of Chant

"I'm paying \$15 a day for a room with a view and all I can see is a mudhole!" cried visiting comedian Murray Roman as he stood in front of his hotel and cheered UBC students who Thursday night painted the plywood wall around the court house.

The wall surrounds the site for the proposed provincial public works fountain. Its design is being kept secret by Works Minister Chant. The students, all from UBC's Engineering Society, came armed with paint spray bombs.

"Who Stole the Lawn?", in big letters, was as far as they got before police arrived. "The Purple Finch is homeless now

that the trees have been uprooted!" cried Roman as the police took one of the students away for questioning.

The hotel promised Roman a reduction in rent.

In the Legislature Dr. Pat McGeer (L—Point Grey) saw the secret design this way:

Fed by water from B.C.'s two-river policy with Premier Bennett running rampant against a field of ballot boxes and Major Douglas of Sacred fame holding up dividends with green lights playing over them perpetually, and a miniature barge loaded with securities with an arrow carrying a perpetual flame.

Only clue from Chant, whose department is designing the fountain: "It is a good design."

No election in near future, says Bennett

Province, Victoria Bureau
VICTORIA—Premier Bennett Thursday night repeated his earlier assurances that he's not planning to call an election in the near future.

He said that after the session ends later today he will go to his summer home on Salt Spring Island where he will remain until the middle of next week. Bennett said he hopes to drive Wednesday to Kelowna where he will spend Easter with his family. After a stay of about 10 days in the Okanagan, he plans to return to Victoria.

He will take part in acceptance ceremonies for the new \$6 million Queen of Prince Rupert ferry, tentatively scheduled for April 19.

Friday, April 1, 1966

House like 'tinsel palace'

Province Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA — Centennial decorations make the Parliament Buildings here look like a plywood and tinsel palace, the legislature was told Thursday.

Ran Harding (NDP-Kaslo Slocan) said Works Minister Chant should be forced to remove the plywood facings, centennial insignia and draped flags.

"The minister should be made to go out with hammer and bar in his own time and pry them all off," said Harding.

Secured backbencher Herb Bruch, MLA for Esquimalt, started the at-

tack when he told the House he couldn't believe his eyes when he first saw the decorations.

Bruch said he wasn't directing his criticism at the centennial committee but asked that whoever was responsible take a second look at the decorations.

They are due to remain in place until the end of the national centennial in 1967.

Alex Macdonald (NDP-Vancouver East) said the decorations were "very stuffy and conservative in the aesthetic sense," but indicated he wasn't too unhappy.

Dr. Pat McGeer (L-Point Grey)

said he, like other MLAs, enjoyed the grandeur of the Parliament Buildings.

But he wondered why the government hadn't carried out its promise to steam clean the buildings for the centennial.

"I don't see why they shouldn't have attended to that before putting lipstick on the old girl," he said.

Works Minister Chant said later that the government would clean the buildings before the new \$7 million museum-archives complex next door is completed in the fall of next year.

The new building is to have a matching stone facing in front.

Welfare cases

Jobless may get medicare

Provincial Secretary Wesley Black says the government is considering some form of medical coverage for the estimated 18,000 unemployed employables on welfare.

But he didn't give the legislature any indication of how this might be achieved.

Black noted that starting today premiums for the B.C. Medical Plan covering a single person with no taxable income will be down to 50 cents a month through increased government subsidies.

"You know as well as I do," said Opposition Leader Strachan, "that someone on welfare can't afford to pay \$6 a year and many in the unemployed employable category don't qualify for subsidies because their taxable income in the previous year was too high."

"This is an impossible situation with 18,000 people on welfare of any kind. They need care coverage under the B.C. Medical Plan. The government can't let the present situation continue."

Black said the latest enrolment in the voluntary provincial plan stands at 200,884.

He denied Strachan's claim that the plan's administration costs of close to 8 per cent were excessive and said this was due in part to poor risks attracted from private plans in the province.

Growing pains beset any new plan, Black said, but these are gradually being eliminated and the provincial scheme is now providing excellent service.

Strachan said an estimated 250,000 British Columbians are still without medical coverage and he blamed this situation on the cost of premiums.

He urged the government to bring in comprehensive medicare with prescription drugs.

MLAs vote for early conference on relations

In the dying hours of the session Thursday night, the legislature passed an opposition resolution urging the government to call an early conference on provincial-municipal relations.

The resolution was proposed by Arthur Turner (NDP-Vancouver East) in what may be the last official act of his 25-year legislative career.

Turner told the House if there is an election this year he would

not contest the seat he has held without interruption since 1941.

Premier Bennett, who was elected an MLA in the same year but was out of the House for one year, paid tribute to Turner as the dean of the legislature.

"He has given 25 years of wonderful service to the people of this province," Bennett said. "His quiet and unassuming example will be an inspiration to those who follow."

'Desert' in Vancouver not fair, charges MLA

The government was accused in the legislature Thursday night of breaking faith with Vancouver by not developing Block 61, which it purchased from the city in February, 1964.

Alex Macdonald (NDP-Vancouver East) predicted the block south of the court house would remain a parking lot for at least five years if the government had its way.

"This will be a desert in the heart of our largest city, created by the dead hand of government, instead of the civic square that it was intended to be," Macdonald said.

Public Works Minister Chant said the block was purchased as a site for the headquarters

of the proposed Bank of B.C. and is being held in trust by the government for the Crown Real Estate Development Corporation. This corporation was authorized by the legislature last session but hasn't been set up yet.

Macdonald said he didn't believe the government was waiting for the approval of the bank charter before going ahead with development of Block 61.

He said any bank headquarters would be built in the city's financial section.

"The government doesn't care a hang about the city of Vancouver," Macdonald said. "Vancouver has become a desert in the march of progress."

Friday, April 1, 1966

Gov't finds it hard to cope with breakup of family life

The social welfare department finds it increasingly beyond its capabilities to cope with the breakup of family life in B.C., says Welfare Minister Black.

He told the legislature Thursday it was true there has been a breakdown in both society as a whole and in family life.

The welfare department is doing everything humanly possible to cope with this alarming situation, said Black, but the problem has to be tackled within the limits of existing financial resources.

The minister repeated his earlier statement that the people can have anything in the way of social services that they are willing to pay for.

Black said it was up to the minister to steer a middle course between extremists on both ends of the scale.

He was answering criticism by Dave Barrett (NDP-Dewdney) who claimed social welfare services are the government's

biggest failure to date.

Barrett paraphrased a recent speech by Dr. Hugh Keenleyside, who warned that society faces even greater social problems in the future. As Barrett put it: "You ain't seen nothing yet."

"Unless the social welfare department does something to reverse the present course of events," Barrett warned, "the social damage and chaos will be fantastic."

"It will be confined to the lower 25 per cent of the population, but it's creeping upward," he said.

Barrett said there is a serious crisis already in the breakup of family life and blamed the government for what he termed the bankruptcy of its social welfare policies.

It pays to break up a family, Barrett claimed, because social welfare payments for one child that remains with its deserted mother are \$25 a month compared with \$85 for a child placed in a foster home.



Saturday, April 2, 1966

B. C. mystery: When's election?

Experienced committee

In all my parliamentary experience, stretching over 13 years, I don't think that I have ever read anything more at variance with the facts than Ian Street's column under the heading of "Old power play" (March 31).

If it is true that Pat McGeer claimed the Private Bills Committee treats the Vancouver city council like a group of juvenile delinquents, I say with all respect that this is just "hogwash." It proves the truth of Will Roger's comment that "an educated man is only educated in the things that he is educated in."

This year the Private Bills Committee was composed of myself as chairman, Bert Price, lawyer Alex Macdonald, lawyer Gordon Dowding, lawyer Harry McKay, Arthur Turner, the Hon. D. R. J. Campbell, Minister of Municipalities; Charles MacSorley, ex-reeve of Burnaby; Waldo Skillings, ex-alderman of Victoria; Arvid Lundell, ex-mayor of Revelstoke and Hunter Vogel, a well known and highly successful businessman. I tell you most emphatically that a more competent and experienced committee it would be hard to find.

Of course it is always easy to criticize, especially when the one who criticizes doesn't know what he is talking about. The city of Vancouver has powers granted by this charter that are denied the rest of the province, thanks to the Private Bills Committee. I need only mention here Sunday sports and Sunday theatres.

My heart and soul are in Vancouver, and I will at all times work for its welfare without stint. All I ask is that my efforts as chairman of the committee be judged in the spirit of British fair play without jaundice and political bias.

ALEX S. MATTHEW, MLA,
Chairman, Private Bills Committee.

Expected May or September

By IAN STREET

Province Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA—The third session of the 27th B.C. legislature prorogued Friday at 5:45 p.m., leaving one big question unanswered: When will the next provincial election be called?

Premier Bennett was to spend a quiet weekend at his Saltspring Island retreat after assuring reporters there will be no election call in the next couple of weeks. But that is as far as he would go in predicting future moves by the government.

Most of the 51 MLAs departed in haste for their home ridings to make immediate preparation for the election, which is expected either in late May or September.

Lieutenant-Governor Pearkes prorogued the session nine weeks and two days after it opened Jan. 27. He gave royal assent to 71 bills, including one for a record \$657 million for government expenditures.

Among other legislation approved was a change in the Motor Vehicle Act giving police power to suspend the licences of borderline drinking drivers for 24 hours and making motor vehicle testing compulsory. Both sections will only take effect after being proclaimed later this year.

Also approved: A \$4 increase in per capita grants to municipalities; \$10 increase in the homeowner grant to \$110 a year; a five per cent ceiling on annual assessment increases; exemptions from the five per cent sales tax on restaurant meals, periodicals, confections and school supplies.

MLAs draw \$8,000

Government subsidies paid under the B.C. medical plan are boosted to 90 per cent of premiums for those with no taxable income in the past year and to 50 per cent in the case of those with under \$1,000 taxable income.

Lieutenant-Governor Pearkes told the House: "I wish to congratulate you, members of the legislative assembly, for these and many other measures which will provide for the well-being of citizens of B.C."

"I thank you for your deliberations and labors and for the supplies which you have granted for the public service."

Before they left for home MLAs drew their session pay cheques which amount to some \$8,000.

The 1967 session of the legislature will open in New Westminster, former capital of the province, as part of the government's observance of the national centenary.

In the dying hours of the session just ended the only woman MLA won a moral victory over the government.

After years of trying, a bill to regulate fireworks on a province-wide basis was approved in principle by a vote of 24 to 23.

It was proposed by Mrs. Lois Hagen (NDP—Grand Forks-Greenwood) who was denied the final victory when the government allowed the bill to die on the order paper so it could not take effect.

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Saturday, April 2, 1966

Won't censure U.S.

The legislature then ventured into the field of international affairs by approving a resolution by Leo Nimsick (NDP—Cranbrook) urging the federal government to use its position on the International Joint Commission to obtain a peaceful settlement in Viet Nam.

This was only done, however, after the government moved an amendment which struck out a section calling for settlement according to the 1954 Geneva Agreement, which requires withdrawal of all foreign troops.

Premier Bennett said the government would have no part of any move to censure the U.S.

"Every night I give thanks that B.C. is part of the great British Commonwealth and that our only land neighbor is the great United States of America," Bennett said.

The legislature defeated another Nimsick motion calling for diplomatic recognition of Communist China.

The house approved resolutions by Alex Matthew (SC-Vancouver Centre) asking Ottawa to ease restrictions on bingo games held by charitable and religious groups, and by Gordon Dowding (NDP-Burnaby) asking for a change in the law to allow advice on family planning in Canada.

Approval was given without debate to a resolution by Mrs. Hagen asking the government to set up a consumer fraud bureau under the department of the attorney-general.

ASK FOR MEAL TAX BACK!

Customers who paid sales tax on restaurant meals Friday shouldn't have.

And, according to Premier Bennett, they should get the five per cent tax back.

But just how this could come about, no one, including the premier, has explained.

This was the confusing situation as Bennett announced late Thursday night that the sales tax on restaurant meals, candy and magazines was wiped out at one minute after midnight Wednesday.

Some city restaurants were charging the tax early Friday, others weren't. The confusion came when the legislature didn't prorogue Thursday night as expected, and royal assent was not given the legislation.

He instructed his deputy finance minister not to collect the tax Friday.

Gibson bids House goodbye

Province Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA—It was a sweet-and-sour farewell for Gordon Gibson in the legislature Friday.

The North Vancouver Liberal told the House he would not be back if an election is held this year. Arthur Turner (NDP-Vancouver East) made the same pledge Thursday.

Ten years ago it was Gibson's famous "money talks" speech which led to the Sommers' case, which exposed graft in the granting of provincial forest licences.

As the House prorogued, Gibson had some two-edged compliments for Premier Bennett and government MLAs.

Of the premier he said: "I haven't seen any man who has been given just a pair

of deuces do as well in a poker game as you have."

Turning to the other Soereds in the House Gibson said: "There is good and bad in B.C. and they all should be represented."

The legislature can't function properly without a strong opposition, said Gibson, and he paid tribute to Opposition Leader Strachan and to his own leader, Ray Perrault.

"I say this, Mr. Premier, you need a stronger opposition," Gibson said.

Premier Bennett said Gibson had proved himself a hard fighter over the years and made a contribution to both the business and political life of the province. This contribution was worthy of recognition, said Bennett.

He recalled, after meeting

Gibson's mother a few years ago, being told: "Look after Gordon, he's basically a good boy."

Bennett said he agreed with the need for a strong opposition. "I've said before and I say again, soft soap never sharpened an axe."

"I'd like to tell you about an election," Bennett said. "But it is the duty of the Queen's First Minister to first advise His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor."

Vancouver alderman Bob Williams is reported to be seeking the NDP nomination for Vancouver-East, the riding Turner would be vacating if he does not contest the next election. Williams is expected to give up civic politics if he succeeds in his bid for a provincial seat.



Monday, April 4, 1966



Victoria comment

Every one a winner

By IAN STREET
Province Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA — All parties in the legislature, with eyes on an election to come, are claiming a victory in the third session of the 27th B.C. Legislative Assembly, which ended Friday.

It's not the sort of question that can be settled conclusively, so in the final analysis the party that shouts the loudest is likely to prevail. The odds favor the government for several reasons including sheer numbers.

Premier Bennett sees the session just ended as the best one in his 25 years as an MLA. His main reason: the opposition supported all the government's major policy legislation.

The opposition claims the government program contains no major policy changes and is, in fact, a patch-work of vote-catching gimmicks.

The session was an excellent one for the NDP, according to Opposition Leader Strachan. He says: "It is the purpose of the Opposition to expose weaknesses in the government programs; this we have done with more success than ever before."

Strachan says this was shown by the discomfort and general edginess of Socred members, and the cabinet in particular, throughout the session.

"The chief 'expose' of the session was the bankrupt position of the opposition," retorts Attorney-General Bonner. "It had to descend to the level of bitter personal attacks on ministers."

He argues the very lack of sweeping changes is an indicator of progress achieved by some of Social Credit's legislative programs in the past 14 years.

Some of these fruits of success, says Bonner, are now being enjoyed in the form of tax cuts, increased medical grants, higher homeowner grants, a ceiling on assessment increases, and increased aid to school boards and higher education.

Nevertheless it must be obvious, he says, that any budget of the magnitude of \$657 million is bound to contain measures which can be improved by change — and that is what the government intends to turn its attention to in the coming year.

"This is like any huge corporation," says Bonner. "General Motors thinks this year's model is good. But it is still working on improvements so that next year's model will be better."

Liberal Leader Ray Perrault says his group tried to be as constructive as possible during a session which he described as "good."

But Perrault objects to the impression

left by some of Premier Bennett's public statements that the opposition has supported government programs because it hasn't any ideas of its own.

He says the Liberals sought a wide range of changes from a crown corporation for hospital financing to an aggressive industrial development program.

Throughout the nine weeks, which included 23 night sittings, the prospects of an early provincial election made members tense and jumpy.

Electionitis reached its sessional peak with a behind-the-scenes confrontation between Premier Bennett and Opposition Leader Strachan over a disputed Speaker's ruling. Bennett threatened to call an immediate election but never acted on his threat.

One of the lengthiest and loudest debates was on redistribution of provincial electoral ridings.

After the next election there will be 55 seats in stead of the present 52.

The natural concern of MLAs with the fate of their own ridings largely overshadowed other controversial pieces of legislation like the new roadside suspension law for borderline drinking drivers.

The opposition concentrated its bitterest attacks on Health Minister Martin for what they claimed were shortcomings in the fields of mental health and chronic care, and Agriculture Minister Richter for his handling of pesticide testing.

The election issue, which critics claimed Bennett was seeking this session, never really materialized. The premier launched a few trial balloons — including opposition obstruction and victimization of his ministers — but never found one to his liking.

The NDP feels it has a valid election issue, even if the government does not, though Strachan has said many times he doesn't believe an election is desirable or necessary.

The government, when it goes to the people, will campaign mainly on its record of achievement, though Bennett says there'll be a few more dynamic policies thrown in to sweeten the pot.

This province is now enjoying the fruits of government policies bitterly disputed in the past, according to Bonner. He claims people are willing to accept, on the basis of these results, the idea that continuity in a reasonable government is better than the kind of bear-pit policies existing in Ottawa.

In other words, says Bonner, there is general acceptance of the fact that the business of a province or country should not be viewed as a national spectator sport.

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MEDICAL PLAN

Increased Benefits Promised

Sun Victoria Bureau
VICTORIA — Increased benefits under the provincial government's medical plan will be considered soon, Provincial Secretary Wesley Black said Thursday.

Black was answering opposition pleas in the legislature for inclusion of prescribed drugs, optometrists' services and medical check-ups in the B.C. Medical Plan.

However, Black did not say if any of these were going to be considered.

"We haven't reached the zenith," Black said. "We know perfectly well there are benefits that have to be considered reasonably soon."

Black has charge of the medical plan which gives subsidies toward premiums to low wage-earners.

Black said further benefits would be considered by the plan's board of directors, which would then make recommendations to the government.

Opposition leader Robert Strachan questioned the government's decision to put Black in charge rather than Health Minister Eric Martin.

"The fact that the medical plan is not under the minister of health is a greater vote of non-confidence than any one expressed by members in this House," Strachan said.

Bennett Hints Welfare Aid

Sun Victoria Bureau
VICTORIA — Premier W. A. C. Bennett indicated Thursday he plans to announce more aid for B.C.'s needy.

Bennett was answering proposals in the legislature for better accommodations for MLAs during sessions. Randolph Harding (NDP Kaslo-Slocan) said working conditions were disgraceful.

"Before I'm going to be in favor of spending any more money for the members, I'm going to do more for people who need special care in the province," Bennett replied.

MLA Urges Peace Budget

Sun Victoria Bureau
VICTORIA — B.C.'s civil defence budget would be better spent on promoting world peace, Dewdney New Democrat Dave Barrett said Thursday.

He was commenting in the legislature on a \$752,300 allocation in the provincial budget for civil defence.

Provincial Secretary Wesley Black said B.C. actually will spend only one-third of this. The rest will come from the federal government.

"I believe there is a defence against nuclear war and that defence is world peace through world law," Barrett said.

He added the money should be spent on the Peace Research Institute or on local United Nations clubs.

MLAs Vote Own Wages

Sun Victoria Bureau
VICTORIA — MLAs may have moved slowly through most of the legislative program this year, but it took them only a matter of minutes Thursday night to approve their indemnities.

They passed the legislation vote of \$571,944 with a minimum of fuss, clearing the way for payment of their \$8,000 indemnities later today, after the house prorogues.

The MLAs get a basic \$6,500 each, with the balance paid for living allowances, mileage and telegraph and phone expenses.

The vote also includes Opposition leader Robert Strachan's allowance of \$7,500, and a similar amount for Speaker William Murray.

MLAs URGE PENSION HIKE

Sun Victoria Bureau
VICTORIA — The provincial legislature Thursday voted to urge Ottawa to boost old age pensions to \$100 a month.

A resolution calling on Ottawa to make the increase immediately and to tie pensions to the cost of living was approved unanimously.

The motion was made by Vancouver Centre Socred Alex Matthew, who said the way pensioners are treated now makes it a crime to be old.

Veteran NDP Member Says He's Through

Sun Victoria Bureau
VICTORIA — The dean of the B.C. legislature announced Thursday that he's going to end his political career when the next election is called.

Arthur Turner (NDP — Vancouver East), whose 25 years in the house gives him the record, told his fellow MLAs he is not going to run for office again.

Turner was first elected to the legislature at the 1941 general election, the same time that Premier W. A. C. Bennett was elected as a Conservative.

But Bennett broke his term by contesting a federal seat, and returned to the house later after defeat in the federal field.

Turner, now 77, was given a noisy desk-thumping ovation by his colleagues Thursday night for his service to public affairs.

Bennett praised Turner for serving the public in a quiet, unassuming and effective way and said that Turner's career should serve as an inspiration to others to take an active part in public life.

"I personally want to pay a personal tribute to his service," said Bennett.

Liberal leader Ray Perrault and Opposition leader Robert Strachan also praised the MLA.

B.C. HANSARD STUDY AGREED

Sun Victoria Bureau
VICTORIA — The government has agreed to look into the possibility of establishing a Hansard verbatim record of legislative proceedings.

A resolution by Liberal leader Ray Perrault was accepted by the legislature Thursday night, giving encouragement to Opposition members who have long pressed for a printed record of their speeches and deliberations.

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Gov't Buildings Decorated Like 'Bordello,' MLA Says

By FRANK RUTTER
Sun Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA — B.C.'s centenary has got off to a bad start, including decorations which dress up the legislative buildings like a South American bordello, opposition MLAs charged Thursday.

The critics sniped at Provincial Secretary Wesley Black in the legislature, because centennial affairs are largely being handled by his department.

SOCRED CRITIC

One of the first things the government did was to decorate the stone front of the legislative buildings with huge panels of blue and red plywood, signs, and flags.

"It's a tinsel palace," Gordon Dowding (NDP—Burnaby) said. "The buildings more resemble a South American bordello, whatever that is."

Even a local Socred criti-

cized the dress-up.

"I find it hard to believe my eyes," said Herb Bruch of Esquimalt.

Bruch said the buildings have a stature and dignity of their own without all the bunting.

'LIPSTICK'

Randolph Harding (NDP—Kaslo-Slocan) said: "The minister, or whoever is responsible, I would make him go out with a hammer and bar and pry them off on his own time."

"The proper thing was to give the buildings a bath — clean them off by sand-blasting," said Dr. Pat McGeer (Lib.—Point Grey). "You should have attempted that before you put the lipstick on."

The only MLA to defend the adornment was Alex Macdonald (NDP—Vancouver East).

"I disagree with my col-

leagues," he said, "they're stuffy and conservative."

Black made no comment. Opposition leader Robert Strachan also rapped the government for its imported centennial record, featuring tunes and performers from the U.S.

"We have the musicians in B.C. who could have done a first class job, and the singers, too," Strachan said. "It would then have had real meaning to the people of B.C."

Strachan said singers such as Betty Phillips, Ernie Prentice and John Dunbar could have been used for the record.

"It's unfortunate we got off to this bad start on the centenary in B.C.," he said.

The Opposition leader also said the government is using centennial celebrations as a launching pad for political propaganda. He said this had happened in past centennial celebrations.

"This is, perhaps, one of the privileges of government," he added.

Greensward Is Lawn Gone At Secret Fountain Project

Works Minister W. N. Chant's super-secret fountain plans got a razzing in Victoria and a smearing in Vancouver Thursday.

University of B.C. students, armed with paint spray cans, wrote "Who Stole the Lawn?" in four-foot-high letters on the plywood wall surrounding the fountain site in front of Vancouver's courthouse.

They were starting on a second slogan when police warned them to stop.

NO CLUES

The students carried on painting until the officers arrested a 19-year-old and took him to police headquarters, where he was reprimanded and then released.

Work done so far in the mudhole that was once the courthouse lawn has given no clues to the design of the fountain, which Chant is keeping a close secret.

But in the legislature, Point Grey Liberal MLA Dr. Pat McGeer said he has done some detective work and come up

with these design possibilities:

Premier W. A. C. Bennett running rampant on a field of ballot boxes.

A large statue of Major C. H. Douglas, founder of Social Credit, holding up Socred dividends and bathed in green lights.

A barge-load of securities with an arrow in perpetual flame.

SHRUBS DUMPED

Dr. McGeer also complained that beautiful shrubs that were on the courthouse lawn have been consigned to the city dump.

"They're going to try to save the magnolia trees, but I'm told by a horticulturist it will be very difficult," Dr. McGeer said. "We're going to lose these, too. They'll wind up on the city dump."

Chant still refused to divulge any details about the fountain.

"It will be a fountain I'm quite sure the majority of the people of B.C. will be proud of," said Chant.

"The fountain is a very good design."

B.C.'S LEGISLATURE WINDS UP SESSION

Sun Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA—The third session of B.C.'s 27th legislature will come to an end today.

Premier W. A. C. Bennett got approval of opposition party leaders Thursday night to call in Lt.-Gov. George Pearkes about 5 p.m. today to give royal assent to new legislation and formally wind up the session.

The session is at the end of its ninth week.

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1966

City 'Neglected'

Sun Victoria Bureau
VICTORIA — The provincial government doesn't give a hang about Vancouver, a city MLA charged Thursday.

"All we have applied to the city of Vancouver right in its heart is the dead hand of this government," Alex Macdonald (ND— Vancouver East) told the legislature.

He blasted the government for delaying development of Block 61 — supposed site of the Bank of B.C.—and for holding off new courthouse facilities.

"I say this government doesn't give a hang about the city of Vancouver," Macdonald said. "It's time you gave a little bit of consideration to the No. 1 city in B.C."

Macdonald's remarks came during debate on the estimates of Public Works Minister W. N. Chant.

Mining Pays Fee

Sun Victoria Bureau
VICTORIA—Western Mines Ltd. will have to pay the provincial government \$5,000 a year to cover supervision of its mine and town development in Strathcona Park, Recreation Minister Kenneth Kiernan said Thursday.

Kiernan said the payment is a condition of the park use permit the mining firm has for developing Crown-granted claims in the Vancouver Island park.

The recreation minister was answering a charge by Campbell River conservationist Roderrick Haig-Brown that his department does not have enough staff to properly police the project.

"I don't think we need to have a full-time man on that job," Kiernan said. "It won't cost the department very much."

Kiernan said of Haig-Brown — a persistent opponent to any industrial development in parks — "his approach to problems is idealistic. I have to deal with this on a different plane."

"It's one thing to be a sidewalk superintendent, it's another to get on with the job."

Family Crackups Hit Welfare Dep't

Sun Victoria Bureau
VICTORIA—Welfare Minister Wesley Black declared Thursday that increasing family breakdowns are overstraining the resources of his department.

He told the legislature: "There appears to be a breakdown of family life and it appears this breakdown is increasing beyond our capabilities to cope with it and members in my department are doing everything humanly possible within the realm of the financial structure to work in that preventive field."

Black, answering criticism levelled by Opposition welfare critic Dave Barrett (NDP—Dewdney), said the welfare department faces a "tremendous shortage of technical and professional people" like other professions.

"It's true that we ain't seen nothing yet in social problems in Canada," said the minister.

He said his chief problem is to fill vacancies within his department caused by a staff turnover.

He also said the criticism by Barrett — who is a social worker — is "creating a problem in morale in my department."

Black said his job is to provide a welfare program that falls midway between the extreme demands of the public.

QUOTES KEENLEYSIDE

"People in this province can have anything they want provided they're willing to pay for it," he said.

Barrett referred to a recent speech by Dr. Hugh Keenleyside, co-chairman of B.C. Hydro and Power Authority, who cautioned that even greater social problems will have to be faced in the future.

The MLA said this meant that "you ain't seen nothing yet."

"Unless the social welfare department does something to reverse the present course of events the social damage and chaos will be fantastic," Barrett said.

BLAMES POLICY

He claimed that a serious crisis already exists in the break-up of family life and said the government's bankrupt welfare policy is responsible.

He said it pays to break up a family because welfare payments for a child who stays with its deserted mother amount to \$25 a month compared to \$85 a month for a child who is put into a foster home.

Even though B.C. is enjoying boom times, the welfare caseload has remained constant at about 80,000, Barrett said.

Black answered that his department's homemaker service will be doubled or even tripled as an experiment, but he did not elaborate.

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1966

Ottawa Flayed For Ship Policy

Legislature United in Fight Over Federal Subsidy Loss

By IAN MacALPINE
Sun Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA—The B.C. legislature united Thursday in an attack on the federal government for altering the shipbuilding subsidy to exclude construction of government vessels.

A resolution, moved by Opposition leader Robert Strachan and amended by Socred John Tisdalle, of Saanich, calling for reinstatement of the federal aid, won full support of the NDP, Liberals and Socreds.

'MADE MISTAKE'

"I believe the federal government made a mistake involving construction of government ships," said Liberal leader Ray Perrault who was one of the most vocal MLAs on the subject.

He was referring to the Ottawa move that reduced from 35 per cent to 25 per cent the amount of the subsidy, and the exclusion of government ships from all help.

Strachan's resolution asked the legislature to request that the federal government provide a full construction subsidy to the B.C. Ferry Authority, which formerly qualified for the aid.

MLAs approved the motion as amended by Tisdalle, requesting unqualified aid to Canadian shipbuilders.

GENERAL ATTACK

Discussion on the resolution later led to a general attack on Ottawa for allocating defence department shipbuilding contracts to Eastern yards without giving B.C. a chance.

Attorney-General Robert Bonner said this action constitutes a serious danger to one of B.C.'s basic industries.

Bonner said B.C. has to pay subsidies to Ottawa for distribution among the poorer provinces, and is being further penalized by being left out of federal contracts for ship construction.

"It fills me with so much indignation that I can hardly talk about it," he said.

'DON'T UNDERSTAND'

Municipal Affairs Minister Dan Campbell said most people in B.C. don't understand the disparity that exists between B.C. and the East.

MLAs also agreed to a motion by Arthur Turner (NDP-Vancouver East) that the government should consider calling a conference of provincial and municipal officials to consider all phases of provincial-municipal relations.

Alex Macdonald (NDP-Vancouver East) withdrew a resolution asking that a special legislative committee be set up to inquire into the hearing-aid business.

Liberal leader Perrault's resolution for a legislative committee inquiry into causes of traffic accidents also was withdrawn.

'WON'T RUN AGAIN'

MLA Gibson to Retire From B.C. Legislature

Sun Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA — North Vancouver Liberal MLA Gordon Gibson announced Friday he plans to retire from the legislature.

He told the house he will not run in the next provincial election.

Lumber millionaire Gibson, 61, was first elected in 1952, the year Social Credit came to power in B.C.

"I will be back here only if there is not an election," Gibson told the house.

SPECIAL TRIBUTE

"I thank you all, gentlemen, and I've enjoyed being with you all."

Gibson paid a special tribute to opposition colleagues in the New Democratic Party as well as the Liberals for fighting hard for what they believe.

He also had this word of praise for Premier W. A. C. Bennett: "I haven't seen any man in a poker game given a pair of deuces do as well as you have done."

'HARD FIGHTER'

Bennett replied: "I'm glad to hear the member's sincere words. He's been a hard fighter."

"I'd like to be able to tell the member about the election, but it is the duty of the Queen's first minister to first advise the lieutenant-governor."

Bennett said the great thing about the British parliamentary system is that differences are settled with words, not swords, and outside the legislature all members are friends.

Vancouver East New Democrat Arthur Turner, who announced Thursday he was also quitting, adding his tribute to Gibson: "When he gets up to speak, nothing else can be heard. He's sure of an audience."

'SCHOOL WASTED'

Gibson was born Nov. 28, 1904, in Dawson City, Yukon. He attended school until the age of 12 and then joined his father and three brothers in a hand-logging, shingle-milling, commercial fishing operation on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

He said later: "I've only wasted six years of my life — those years between the ages of six and 12 when I went to school."

The family business prospered and multiplied. In 1939, Gibson became a partner of his father and brothers in W. F. Gibson and Sons, George River Logging Co. and Gibson Brothers.

After the war, he became part owner, director and production manager of the multi-million-dollar Tahsis Co. Ltd. He later sold his interest in this firm.

EXPELLED

He joined the B.C. Legislature as the Liberal member of Lillooet in 1953 and soon gained a reputation as a volatile, fearless speaker.

His ready tongue caused

him to be expelled from the legislature, threatened with jail and slapped with a suit for slander.

The issue that brought his expulsion from the House later became his greatest triumph.

In February, 1955, he said twice in the legislature that "Money talks and has talked" in the issue of B.C. timber licences.

LICENCE INQUIRY

When he refused to withdraw his charges of corruption, he was expelled. Judge Arthur Lord was appointed to head an inquiry into the charges and in March, 1955, Judge Lord declared no impropriety had been committed in licence issues.

Gibson resigned his seat but financed an independent inquiry into the forest licence issue which resulted in the conviction of Lands and Forests Minister R. E. Sommers on a charge of accepting bribes.

Sommers was sentenced to five years in jail.

Gibson was re-elected (after an earlier unsuccessful bid) in September, 1960.

His first comment in the house was: "I am happy to be returned to Victoria to take the humble apologies of Bonner, Bennett and the whole cabinet for throwing me out on a point on which they were proved wrong."

Since that time he has been an unsparing critic of the government, though he has sometimes had to apologize for rash statements.

IN VICTORIA

Record Of Debate Okayed

Sun Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA — A Liberal motion calling for a written record of all debates in the B.C. legislature received unanimous approval in the final sitting of the house Friday.

The motion was introduced by Liberal leader Ray Perrault, who said a provincial Hansard would be one of the finest centennial projects the government could perform.

Approval of the motion does not compel the government to act on it, but Perrault feels

chances of a Hansard being started are better than they have been in past.

"This time," he said today, "the government voted approval without making any qualifying comments. In previous years, the government has signified approval but made it clear that action would not necessarily be immediate."

Perrault's motion calls for recording of all house debates, beginning with the 1967 session.

He estimated the printed record of debates, distributed daily, would cost about \$75,000 a year.

"B.C. is the only major province in Canada that does not keep a full record of proceedings in the legislature," he said.

In previous years, the government has argued that establishment of a Hansard would encourage long, drawn-out speeches by MLAs.

Mrs. Haggan Triumphs

Sun Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA — The woman member of the legislature defeated the government Friday in the last minutes of the session with her perennial move for province-wide regulation of fireworks.

A bill introduced by Mrs. Lois Haggan (NDP — Grand Forks-Greenwood) to control the sale of fireworks was given a second reading — approval in principle, by a 24-23 vote.

Socreds Arvid Lundell, of Revelstoke, Don Robinson, of Lillooet, John Tisdalle, of Saanich, Charles MacSorley, of Burnaby, Ernie LeCours, of Delta, and Bert Price, Vancouver Burrard, voted with the NDP and Liberal opposition to pass the bill.

But the government would not consent to referring the bill to committee of the whole house and it died on the order paper.

Mrs. Haggan at least won a moral victory, and her attempt could now lead to government action.

James NESBITT

VICTORIA—Arthur Turner, veteran NDP MLA from Vancouver East, has announced he will not run again for the legislature, and it's a pity, for he still has much to offer.

Certainly, as long as he chooses to run, he'll never be defeated in his faithful riding, where he is a political fixture, a sort of father confessor, a small-town MLA in a big city riding.

He and Premier W. A. C. Bennett came into the legislature together in October, 1941. However, the premier, more than 10 years younger, has no intention of quitting, unless the people of South Okanagan throw him out, which is not likely, as he is their white-haired boy and conquering hero.

As for Arthur Turner, he has sung a swan song before, and then returned.

Elected representatives do this often. Swept by emotion after many years, they announce they're quitting. Then their cronies tell them not to, and so they bravely carry on.

It has happened several times here. It happens in Ottawa.

Bert Herridge, MP for Kootenay West, announces now and then he's getting out, but so far he never has. Politics get in the blood; it's like a craving for nicotine or an Irishman's dependence on poteen.

Bennett and Turner have marched through the legislative years cheek-by-jowl, but they have never had any political togetherness. Always they have opposed each other, but there has been mutual respect.

And what a quarter century can do! Turner was elected a member of the CCF, an honored name in our political life; then he had to change his label to New Democrat, and one might suspect he didn't like it. To him, it was a sort of treason.

He has sat in the House under three socialist chiefs — Harold Winch, Arnold Webster and Robert Strachan. He has looked across at three premiers — John Hart, Byron Johnson and Bennett. He saw the birth of coalition, and the birth of Social Credit.

He saw the near end of the Liberals, and the death of the Conservatives. He has witnessed first hand all the political convulsions of the last 25 years, but he himself has remained calm and philosophical, feeling sure that some day there would be justice for all — under a socialist government. That



ARTHUR TURNER
... much to offer

day has not yet come, but Turner has not given up hope.

Of all the backbench Social Crediters of today, only two were in on the birth of Social Credit; Bert Price of Vancouver-Burrard and Cyril Shelford of Omineca. It's not often backbenchers last 16 years.

Price and Shelford may have had cabinet aspirations, but have never shown it, being content to work hard, taking a hefty kick at the government now and then to show their independence.

Mrs. Lois Haggen (NDP—Grand Forks-Greenwood) is now the woman MLA with the second-longest legislative record. It will be 10 years in September since she was first elected. Record holders are Liberal Mrs. Nancy Hodges, and Conservative Mrs. Tilly Rolston, who sat from 1941 to 1953.

If Mrs. Haggen is re-elected she will have her own particular crown in history until some other woman tops her. But it will take a long, long time, because women are not too long-lasting in public life.

There are many records in today's legislature. The premier, longer in the province's chief seat than any man in our history; Wesley Black, provincial secretary, longer than anyone else; Robert Bonner, the longest-term attorney-general; and Phil Gagliardi, building highways for more years than any other minister.

This Social Credit cabinet certainly is durable.

Legislature Backs Viet Peace Plea

Sun Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA — The legislature Friday dipped into international politics — approving a Viet Nam peace plea, but rejected a resolution calling for diplomatic recognition of Red China.

All MLAs approved Cranbrook New Democrat Leo Nimsick's motion urging Ottawa to use its position as a member of the International Control Commission to bring about peace in Viet Nam.

But they accepted it only after an amendment by Bert Price (SC—Vancouver Burrard) deleted a section in which Nimsick said the peace settlement should be in accordance with the 1954 Geneva treaty which called for withdrawal of all foreign troops.

Premier W. A. C. Bennett said he could not condone any criticism of the U.S.

"Every night I give thanks that we are part of the great British Commonwealth and our only great land neighbor, the great U.S.A.," Bennett said.

Nimsick also proposed Red China recognition, but his motion was defeated 34-14, with the Liberals and Socreds uniting against the NDP.

Attorney-General Robert Bonner said B.C. approves trade with anyone who is willing, but diplomatic recognition is another thing and infringes on federal responsibility.

The government accepted without debate a resolution by Lois Haggen (NDP—Grand Forks) asking it to consider setting up a consumer fraud bureau.

Also approved unanimously was Vancouver Centre Socred Alex Matthew's resolution calling on Ottawa to amend the Criminal Code to permit bingo games for bona fide charitable or religious causes.

Ruled out of order were opposition resolutions calling for takeover of the B.C. Telephone Co. and of all pipelines. Both are under federal jurisdiction.

A resolution protesting Canadian Pacific Railway curtailment of passenger services was approved, so was another urging Ottawa to rectify discriminatory freight rates.

SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1966

MLAs Scurry As Election Date Hovers

3rd Session of House Prorogued by Pearkes

By IAN MacALPINE
Sun Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA—The third session of B.C.'s 27th legislature ended at 5:41 p.m. Friday and 51 MLAs scurried home to make preparations for a general election.

Premier W. A. C. Bennett reassured reporters Friday night he will not be calling an election in the next couple of weeks. Most popular guesses are it will be in late May or mid-September.

Lt.-Gov. George Pearkes prorogued the legislature in its 46th sitting day, giving royal assent to 71 bills that now become law.

SAME LENGTH

His speech ended a session which covered 65 days from its start Jan. 27, the same length as last year's session.

The most controversial act of the session just ended was redistribution of its seats — boosting the total from 52 to 55 and changing virtually every constituency boundary.

A bill for a record \$657 million in government expenditures received royal assent. Among the times it will provide are a \$4 increase in per capita grants to municipalities and a \$10 increase in the homeowner grant, to \$110 a year.

The Medical Grants Act was amended, raising subsidies paid under the B.C. medical plan to 90 per cent of premiums for those with no taxable income in the past year and to 50 per cent for those with less than \$1,000

taxable income.

Other approved legislation allows apartment dwellers to obtain title to their home, a first in Canada; limits school tax assessment increases to five per cent a year; and lifts the five per cent sales tax on restaurant meals, periodicals, confections and school supplies.

STICKER LAW

The Motor Vehicles Act was amended, giving police the power to suspend for 24 hours licences of suspected drinking drivers.

This will only take effect after it is proclaimed by the cabinet later this year.

Another amendment to the act prevents garage mechanics from repairing a car with more than \$100 body damage until the vehicle has been inspected by police and given a sticker.

A new Wildlife Act introduced to replace the years-old Game Act gives the minister of recreation and conservation authority to let non-residents hunt without guides.

RELIEF FROM DUTY

In his speech, the Lieutenant-Governor said:

"I wish to congratulate you, the members of the legislative assembly, for these and the

many other measures which will provide for the well-being of the citizens of B.C.," said Pearkes.

"I thank you for your deliberations and labors and for

the supplies which you have granted for the public service," he said, relieving MLAs from their legislative duties.

Immediately afterwards, MLAs lined up to collect their \$8,000 indemnities from the clerk's office.

Two MLAs announced they will not seek re-election: Arthur Turner (NDP - Vancouver East) and Gordon Gibson (Lib. - North Vancouver).

This means that if an election is called before the next session, there will be at least five new faces in the House.

ROYAL CITY CEREMONY

The next session of the legislature is to be opened in New Westminster as a Centennial ceremony, because the Royal City was where the first legislature was convened 100 years ago after union between the colonies of Vancouver Island and mainland British Columbia.

It is expected to be held in Queens Park arena. Government officials are expecting that close to 10,000 people will attend the opening.

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