

B.C. Politics

Canada's two major political parties, the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives, have been relatively inconspicuous in British Columbia.

In 1972 the New Democratic Party under David Barrett took thirty-eight of the fifty-five seats in the British Columbia legislature, turning out the Social Credit government of W.A.C. Bennett. It was a major upset as the Social Credit party had been in power for twenty years. Mr. Barrett remained in office until 1975 when William R. Bennett, the present Premier and son of W.A.C. Bennett, brought Social Credit back in. Mr. Barrett is now the Leader of the Opposition in the provincial legislature.

Both Social Credit and the New Democratic Party grew out of the farmer-populist movement that burgeoned in western Canada after World War I. The former became a staunch champion of free enterprise, while the NDP embraces a socialism akin to that of Great Britain's Labour Party. The NDP left some mementoes behind, the



William R. Bennett



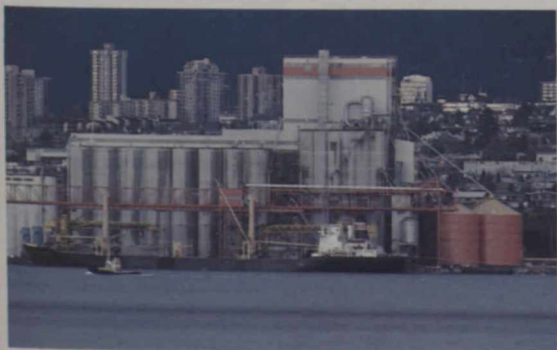
David Barrett

most notable being, perhaps, what is now the British Columbia Resources Investment Corporation, which was set up with \$25 million in capital and a mandate to "develop secondary industry" so the province would be less dependent on its resources. In 1979 the Bennett government transferred the provincial ownership by giving away most of the corporation's assets in five-share lots to every citizen of B.C.

How to Move Wheat

The Saskatchewan Terminal on the north shore of Burrard Inlet is the largest wheat depot on the West Coast.

It has a storage capacity of 237,000 tons and can unload one hundred rail cars or 20,000 tons in eight hours. It handles almost three million tons a year. The grain from the cars is gravity-dumped in pits (usually by tilting the cars) and then carried by vertical conveyor belts to the top of the terminal cylinders. When it is ready to be cleaned it is dropped to tanks where straw and other extraneous materials, called "dockage," are removed. It then goes by belts to storage bins. When ships are waiting, the bins are unloaded at the bottom and the grain is carried up and out by conveyors. It is then dropped into shipping tanks, moved out to the docks and funneled into the holds of vessels moored at loading berths forty or more feet deep.



The Saskatchewan Terminal.

Trees

Forests cover fifty-five per cent of British Columbia or 128 million acres. Over 116 million are considered of productive value.

The commercial forests are concentrated in two regions. The area east of the Coast mountains, from the town of Hope northwest to the town of Terrace, has 19,500,000 acres of commercial timber, including stands of immense hemlock, red cedar, Douglas fir and true firs. The interior region east of the Cascades has 109,200,000 acres of spruce, lodgepole pine, western hemlock and true firs.

In the early nineteenth century the government sold much of the timberland to farmers or sawmill operators and gave it away to railroad builders. The land ordinance of 1865 established a new policy for Crown land — contractors could buy the trees for harvesting but not the land. Today the provincial government controls ninety-four per cent of the forest land and private owners five per cent. The federal government controls one per cent, in the form of national parks and military reserves.

The forests are administered through a "sustained yield policy" — the total annual harvest must not exceed the total annual growth — adopted in 1947 at the recommendation of a Royal Commission.

The provincial forests are divided into eighty-one Public Sustained Yield Units. The Provincial Forest Service determines the allowable cuts in each unit and checks out the cutting plans. An additional fifty million acres will be divided into