

# Canada Weekly

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## Expansion of private industry main spark of Canada's economic growth

The Prime Minister and provincial premiers agreed on a number of economic matters at the Federal-Provincial Conference of First Ministers in Ottawa, February 13-15, although Quebec was not in agreement with the total substance of a *communiqué* issued at the close of the Conference.

The *communiqué* stated that steps would be taken to: "facilitate the setting of economic objectives; improve demand management policies; foster responsible price and incomes behaviour; strengthen the business investment climate; and further shape trade, industry, energy, manpower and regional development initiatives".

Expanding private industry was cited as the major impetus for growth in the Canadian economy.

### Prices and incomes

After controls are phased out, "the common sense and realism of all Canadians must be relied upon to avoid any renewed outburst of inflationary pressures", states the *communiqué*, and, in this regard, consultations between government and the private sector "would be crucial in lowering the rate of inflation to the target level of 3.5 per cent by 1981".

The Economic Council of Canada will analyze price and cost developments for a while when controls are lifted. It will draw public attention to any cost price movements that might threaten economic objectives.

The Conference agreed that the total compensation paid to public employees "should not lead the private sector".

### Business environment

Foreign investment is welcome in Canada, the *communiqué* states, "wherever it is consistent with national or provincial objectives". And the federal-provincial corporate tax structure, which appeared to be internationally competitive, must remain so.

A review of the taxation of the petroleum and mineral industries will be undertaken by finance and resource ministers.

Improvement of tax incentives or credits to industry for research and development, expansion of employment opportunities in these areas and increased dissemination and application of existing technology were other steps to be taken jointly by the Federal Government and the provinces.

### Trade and industry

A federal-provincial advertising campaign: "Create-a-job — buy Canadian" was recommended in an effort to replace imports.

The Federal Government will continue to keep the provinces informed on the progress of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade negotiations.

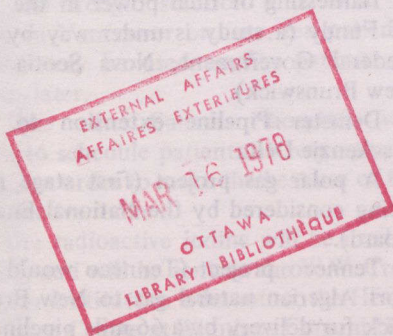
Continued growth in exports is important enough for Canada to seek increases by reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers, particularly in the export of processed raw materials. Greater export opportunities should be sought for agriculture and fishing products, machinery, equipment, petrochemicals and automobiles.

### Regional policies

"First Ministers strongly affirmed the importance of reducing regional disparities," the *communiqué* stated, "and the continuing need for review and expansion of programs for regional development, based on the longer-run economic development potential and transportation requirements of each province and region." The Department of Regional Economic Expansion will continue to be a major federal agency for these purposes.

### Energy

The Conference strongly affirmed the importance of reducing dependence on foreign sources of energy and agreed on the necessity of conservation, substitution of energy sources and the need for



Mar 16 78



William Bennett  
British Columbia



Peter Lougheed  
Alberta



Allan Blakeney  
Saskatchewan



Sterling Lyon  
Manitoba



William Davis  
Ontario



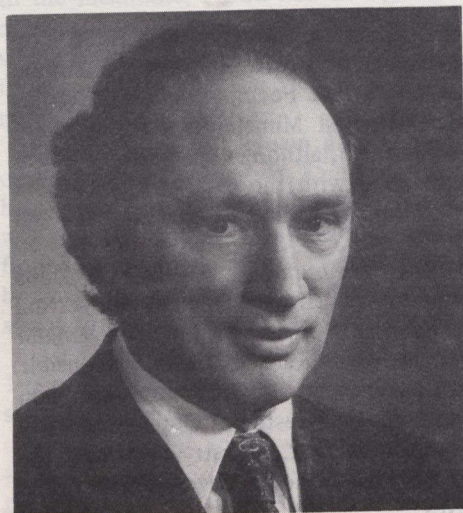
René Lévesque  
Quebec



Richard Hatfield  
New Brunswick



Gerald Regan  
Nova Scotia



Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau (centre)  
and Canada's ten provincial premiers.



Alexander Campbell  
Prince Edward Island



Frank Moores  
Newfoundland

research and development. The Ministers agreed to collaborate in accelerating major energy developments, wherever possible.

#### Agriculture, tourism

Included in the agricultural policies agreed upon at the three-day meeting were: upgrading and processing of agricultural products; a "buy Canadian" food campaign; a grain-marketing strategy; agricultural research; expansion of export markets and an improved transportation system.

A federal-provincial campaign will be undertaken to boost the domestic tourist industry, by increased travel promotion, expansion and improvement of facilities and by reducing costs to the travelling public.

#### Fisheries and forestry

The First Ministers agreed that all governments must move quickly to maximize Canada's economic potential arising from the implementation of the 200-mile fishing limit. Provinces should be more involved in policy, for example, in fleet development, onshore production facilities, harbour improvements and marketing.

In forestry, co-operation was agreed upon in the area of research and development, elimination of harmful pest infestations such as the spruce budworm, and forest management.

#### Housing

A proposal by the provinces for "global

funding of housing programs" will be examined by the federal and provincial housing ministers. The rate of housing production will be increased for those in greatest need. The best possible use will be made of private capital to finance construction. Rules governing federal and provincial housing programs will be simplified.

#### Major capital projects

The Federal Government and the provinces agreed upon an investment and job-creation program to include the establishment of the lower Churchill Power Development Corporation in Newfoundland, which will involve engineering, marketing financing and construction of the Gull Island Hydro project.

Also, the Federal Government and the province of Saskatchewan, in conjunction with private industry, will participate in the development of a heavy oil upgrading facility in northwestern Saskatchewan.

#### Priority projects

The *communiqué* specified that urgent attention should be given to:

- Maximization of benefits from the

new 200-mile fisheries limit.

- Expansion of grain-storage facilities at Port of Prince Rupert, British Columbia.
- Increased investment in the automotive industry.
- Opening of a new coal mine in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, which will cost an estimated \$100 million and employ up to 1,000 workers.
- A natural gas pipeline for eastern Canada, extending from Cornwall, Ontario to the Maritimes, with initial construction in 1979.
- Harnessing of tidal power in the Bay of Fundy (a study is under way by the Federal Government, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick).
- Demster Pipeline extension to the Mackenzie Delta.
- A polar gas project (first stage now being considered by the National Energy Board).
- Tenneco project (Tenneco would import Algerian natural gas to New Brunswick for delivery by a 66-mile pipeline to the U.S.).
- Arctic pilot project (Melville Island natural gas would be shipped to U.S. or east coast of Canada).
- Demonstration at Summerside, Prince Edward Island, of atmospheric pressure combustion for heating plant, using either coal or waste.
- Ontario government's continued support of Ontario Hydro's construction program at the Bruce, Pickering, Darlington, Wesleyville and Atikokan plants.

## News of the arts

### Diagnostic advance with radioactive iodine — pilot project

A team of scientists at the University of British Columbia has received more than \$150,000 to produce a form of radioactive iodine for use in hospitals in four Canadian cities. The radioactive iodine will enable specialists in nuclear medicine to increase significantly the number of disease conditions that can be diagnosed by radioactive means.

The pilot project, funded by the Department of National Health and Welfare, involves scientists at TRIUMF, the \$32-million cyclotron located at UBC, and nuclear-medicine experts who hold joint appointments at UBC and the Vancouver General Hospital.

Dr. Don Lyster, a member of UBC's Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences who works at VGH, said the aim was to have a laboratory and production facilities operating at TRIUMF within six months.

UBC's TRIUMF cyclotron will produce iodine<sup>123</sup>, a radioactive isotope with "a half-life of 13 hours". This means that within 13 hours the original amount of iodine will be only half as strong radioactively.

One of Dr. Lyster's problems will be to get the radioactive iodine to the Canadian hospitals where it will be used for diagnosing diseases by nuclear medicine experts.

"The I<sup>123</sup> we will airlift out of Vancouver will have lost half its radioactivity within 13 hours," he said. "Consequently, the full-strength solution that could be used in Vancouver on, say, ten patients, could only be used on five patients 13 hours later.

"The other Canadian hospitals will have to schedule patients at very specific times in order to make the best use of the radioactive iodine."

The radioactive iodine will be used at VGH, and will be sent to the W.W. Cross Cancer Institute in Edmonton, the Health Sciences Centre at Winnipeg General Hospital, and the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto.

Dr. Robert Morrison, head of the nuclear medicine division at VGH and associate professor of pathology in UBC's medical school, said the radioactive iodine would enable his division to carry out many more diagnostic procedures.

"At present," he said, "nuclear medicine depends primarily on a radioactive element called technetium<sup>99m</sup>, a decay product of radioactive molybdenum,

which has a half-life of six hours." Patients are given minute doses of technetium, which has been chemically bonded to a substance that will concentrate itself at specific sites and in organ systems in the human body.

Once lodged at a site in the body, the technetium emits gamma rays, which are picked up by a special camera in the nuclear medicine division at the VGH. Equipment associated with the gamma camera produces a "scan", a photographic negative that looks something like an X-ray plate.

"If the organ is cancerous, the scan would show changes in position, shape and localized function. If we bond technetium to another molecule that has an affinity for bone, the scan would show a high deposition of radioactivity around a tumor, because cancer stimulates bone growth."

Technetium has disadvantages, however. "It's an element made artificially in fission reactors such as the one at Chalk River in Ontario," Dr. Morrison said.

"We're limited in the number of diagnostic procedures we can undertake because the chemistry of technetium is unusual.

"For instance, there are chemical substances that have an affinity for the liver. But when they're bonded to technetium, they won't concentrate themselves in that organ. Bonding the substance to technetium completely changes its properties and the body no longer recognizes it."

The nuclear-medicine experts will be able to scan many more organs using radioactive iodine. "We have 100 years of experience in the properties and chemistry of iodine, whereas we know little about technetium because it was discovered relatively recently," he said.

"Using iodine<sup>123</sup>, we'll be able to scan for blood clots and heart disease because we can bond radioactive iodine to molecules that are unchanged in the bonding process and will be recognized by the body. It will also give us a greatly reduced radiation level and a much better scan picture than another form of radioactive iodine — I<sup>131</sup> — another commonly used isotope in nuclear medicine."

"Iodine<sup>123</sup> won't totally replace technetium in nuclear medicine," Dr. Morrison added. "It will complement technetium and significantly extend the number of procedures we can undertake."

### Canadian embassy in Kuwait

Secretary of State for External Affairs Don Jamieson announced on February 16 that Canada would open an embassy in Kuwait, probably within the next two or three months.

A resident embassy in Kuwait will fill a major gap in Canada's diplomatic representation in the Middle East. Kuwait and the other Emirates in that region have benefited greatly in recent years from considerably increased oil revenues, much of which are being used for economic and social development. As an exporter of technological goods and expertise, Canada is in a good position to supply many of the requirements of these programs. The new embassy will be able to assist Canadian businessmen seeking markets in the area.

Until the appointment of a resident ambassador, the Canadian Ambassador to Iran will continue to be accredited to Kuwait.

### Highways go metric

As the next step in the conversion from imperial to metric measurement, Metric Commission Canada is encouraging provincial governments to post highway speeds and distances in metric figures. Wary drivers seeking methods of adapting to confusing road signs are being taught to



Something new has been added to Ontario's highways — speed and distance signs expressed in kilometres to replace miles as shown above.

"think metric".

One way to do this is by associating specific measurements with a visual experience or activity. For example, a metre is the length of a long stride. A kilometre is about ten average city blocks. Traveling 100 km will take an hour of freeway driving at the speed limit. For those who can't or won't "think metric", conversion tables are available.

Motorists can also apply a simple rule when estimating the imperial equivalent of the metric figures. To find the familiar speed limit, one multiplies the metric limit by six and eliminates the last digit. To convert distances, the driver drops the last digit of the metric number and multiplies by six.

### **Preliminary statement of Canadian trade — December 1977**

Both exports and imports, seasonally adjusted on a balance-of-payments basis, moved up smartly in December, each to record high levels, following declines in November. Exports advanced 23 per cent to \$4,216 million, and imports rose 17 per cent to \$3,796 million. The merchandise trade surplus more than doubled to \$420 million from \$180 million (revised) in November. The December surplus was the third highest in 1977 after March and October.

At \$11,760 million, Canadian exports for the months of October-December stood 5.5 percent above the total for the September quarter. Seasonally-adjusted imports increased 1 per cent to \$10,616 million in the December quarter. The resultant fourth-quarter surplus of \$1,144 million exceeded that for the entire year 1976. The surplus of \$2,911 million for the year 1977 was the largest since 1970.

The underlying course of Canada's merchandise trade balance is more discernible in the semi-annual changes in the surplus for the past couple of years. The surplus of \$113 million in the first half of 1976 jumped to \$976 million in the second half. An increase of nearly 15 per cent raised the first half 1977 surplus to \$1,120 million, which was followed by a further expansion of 60 per cent to \$1,791 million in the second half of the year.

#### **Exports to the U.S.**

Rising steadily during the year, exports to the U.S. reached \$30,890 million in

1977, up 19.7 percent over the 1976 total of \$25,796 million. A slightly smaller gain of 18.8 per cent was recorded in 1976. The proportion of exports going to the U.S. expanded from 65.3 per cent in 1975 to 70.0 per cent in 1977. Automotive goods accounted for 36 per cent of the latest increase, with shipments of passenger cars escalating 15.5 per cent to \$3,948 million, of trucks 47.5 per cent to \$2,001 million and of automotive components 23 per cent to \$3,447 million.

Lumber exports jumped about \$675 million, or 55.5 per cent, to almost \$1,900 million. Increases exceeding \$400 million each were recorded by three product groups: natural gas; metallic ores and non-ferrous metals; pulp, newsprint and other paper. Fabricated materials including fertilizers, chemicals, petroleum products and steel increased nearly \$660 million. Exports of machinery and other equipment rose more moderately. Crude oil deliveries fell by \$535 million (23.5 per cent) to some \$1,750 million.

#### **Exports overseas**

Although fluctuating considerably during the year, Canadian exports to overseas countries increased \$883 million (7.1 per cent) to \$13,233 million in 1977. Gains of roughly \$150 million each were recorded in exports of fish; oilseeds; metallic ores and non-ferrous metals; and automotive goods. Shipments of wheat, coal, asbestos, lumber, newsprint, chemicals and machinery advanced more moderately. Exports of other cereals, primarily barley, dropped by nearly \$270 million from the 1976 figure. The lack of barley shipments to the U.S.S.R. accounted for approximately \$100 million of the fall; and exports were also lower to West Germany, Poland, Israel and Japan. Shipments of pulp, petroleum products, steel and non-automotive equipment declined more modestly.

#### **Imports from the U.S.**

Imports from the U.S. rose 14.7 per cent to \$29,543 million in 1977, following an increase of nearly 9 per cent in 1976. The share of imports coming from the U.S. grew from 68.7 per cent to 70.2 per cent in 1977. About half of the growth, or some \$1,900 million, was accounted for by automotive products, which totalled \$10,450 million in 1977. Imports of fabricated materials rose over \$500 million, of which some \$240 million was

ascribable to chemicals. Machinery imports expanded \$211 million to \$3,940 million. Imports of other equipment advanced \$573 million (15 per cent) to \$4,351 million. Included in the over-all import rise was some \$265-million worth of crude oil brought in under a swap arrangement with the U.S. There were also smaller but still substantial increases in imports of food, coal and consumer goods, but imports of meat, forestry products and apparel declined moderately.

#### **Imports from overseas**

Rising steadily during 1977, Canadian imports from overseas countries increased 6.6 per cent to \$12,510 million from \$11,732 million in 1976. The rise was 5.9 per cent in 1976. Imports from the European Economic Community, Japan, the other OECD countries and Central and South America expanded between 2 per cent and 20 per cent in 1977, but imports from the remaining countries fell by 10.5 per cent. There were widespread increases including arrivals of fruits and vegetables, coffee, tea and cocoa, chemicals, steel, machinery, motor vehicles and other transportation equipment and consumer goods. Crude oil landings fell \$315 million (10 per cent) to some \$2,950 million. Fairly substantial declines in imports of crude oil from many of the traditional sources in Africa and the Middle East were partly offset by increases from Saudi Arabia, the U.S.S.R., Venezuela, Ecuador and Caribbean islands. Imports of meat, sugar, non-ferrous metals, hardware, apparel and some equipment and tools were also lower than they were in 1976.

China is beginning to see Canada as much more than just a supplier of wheat, according to External Affairs minister Don Jamieson. The minister learned during his recent trip to China that the Chinese were slowly becoming receptive to the idea that Canada could help them in the drive towards modernization.

Chinese officials showed considerable interest in a number of key areas in which Canada has experience as well as products for sale. These include telecommunications, oil development and pipeline construction, pulp and paper, non-ferrous metals and hydro-electric exploitation.

# News of the arts

## Graeme Gibson awarded fellowship

Graeme Gibson, a native of London, Ontario, is the first Canadian recipient of the Scotland-Canada Writers-in-Residence Exchange Fellowship under an exchange program established between the Canada Council and the Scottish Arts Council last year.

As writer-in-residence at the University of Edinburgh, Mr. Gibson will be free to devote himself principally to his work, but will also travel, give lectures and readings, make himself available to students for consultation and participate in seminars and literary meetings. The fellowship is worth £5,000, plus accommodation and return travel fares for Mr. Gibson and his immediate dependants. Selection of the recipient was made by an independent jury appointed by the Canada Council.

Gibson is the author of two novels, *Five Legs* (1969) and *Communion* (1971); a collection of interviews, *Eleven Canadian Novelists* (1973); and a screenplay, with Peter Pearson, based on Sinclair Ross' novel *As for Me and My House*.

## Vancouver orchestra tours U.S.

What may well be the most extensive tour of the U.S. undertaken by a major Canadian symphony orchestra will take place from April 7 to April 17, when the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra visits seven major centres in the western states. Kazuyoshi Akiyama, resident conductor and music director, will conduct and Janina Fialkowska, Canadian pianist, will appear as guest soloist.

The orchestra will appear in Logan, Utah; Medford and Portland in Oregon; Las Vegas; Phoenix; and Long Beach, California. The tour, which begins with a concert in Vancouver on April 4, is sponsored by the Department of External Affairs as part of its program of cultural relations. Canadian consulates in a number of U.S. cities will assist the orchestra.

The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra has been under the direction of Kazuyoshi Akiyama since 1972. Akiyama is also permanent conductor of the Tokyo Symphony, principal conductor of the Osaka Philharmonic, principal guest conductor of the New Japan Philharmonic and music director of the American Sym-

phony Orchestra.

The symphony, officially formed in 1919, has enjoyed rapid growth under the direction of Akiyama and now plays to more than 40,000 subscribers — one of the largest orchestral subscription audiences in the world. The orchestra recently moved into the newly renovated Orpheum, now Canada's largest concert hall. It made its first international tour in 1974, performing in six major cities in Japan. In 1975, it became the first major orchestra to tour Canada.

Canadian pianist Janina Fialkowska, who will accompany the orchestra on tour, has been a prize-winner at the First International Arthur Rubinstein Piano Competition in Israel and the 1971 Montreal International Piano Competition.

## NFB wins Hollywood honour

The Los Angeles Film Teachers Association has presented the National Film Board with its Jean Renoir Humanities Award.

Alice Ladine, president of the association, said the group honoured the NFB because "its films have provided us an impetus towards the spiritual and have uplifted the hearts of those who have seen them".

The preamble to the scroll accompanying the award states that it is "given to commemorate the humanistic films of Jean Renoir, a spokesman for the human heart", who "has declared that any work of art that leads man to take a small comfort in the spiritual is a work worthy of our attention".

"The National Film Board productions certainly fall within this definition and are widely used and appreciated by film teachers throughout the United States," Ladine declared.

## Arts brief

The National Arts Centre's French Theatre production, *Woyzeck*, touring France and Belgium under the auspices of the Department of External Affairs, has been received with praise by audiences and critics. One critic called it "an emotional feast for the audience, a production of originality, coherence and charm, suffused with the imagination of every member of the company".



Canadian classical guitarist *Liona Boyd*, who performed recently in several cities in Brazil under the sponsorship of the Department of External Affairs and BRASCAN, was acclaimed by critics and applauded enthusiastically by audiences. In Rio de Janeiro, Miss Boyd (right) honoured the memory of well-known Brazilian composer *Heitor Villa-Lobos* by playing and dedicating one of his works to his widow, Mrs. *Aminda Villa-Lobos*, who appears in the above photo with the Canadian Consul in Rio de Janeiro, *Marc C. Lemieux*.

## A homesteader looks back

The following article by George Shepherd is from *Habitat*, Vol. 20, No. 3/4, 1977:

I was born on Castle Street, in Geoffrey Chaucer's cathedral city of Canterbury, England on March 20, 1890. England in 1890 was the heart of the largest and most powerful empire the world had yet known. The nation was rich, a commercial leader in a peaceful world under the shadow of British naval power. This was the Victorian Age at its zenith, yet the winds of change were blowing. It was also a time of rising international tension and sharpening domestic issues. England, leader of the industrial world, was losing her leadership.

My father was engaged in the butchering business and we handled English home-grown beef. But with the advent of refrigeration, the large American firms — such as Swift's and Armour's — entered world trade and our business was literally overrun by stampedes of Texas Longhorns. Yankee know-how devised better methods for storing and shipping frozen meat, and Texas and Kansas beef arrived in our seaport town of Ramsgate in as good condition as it had left Chicago. And it sold at less than half the price of English beef. Business declined and our future seemed uncertain.

### Greener pastures

Emigration was in the air, and it offered a chance to better prospects. We studied the literature. Australia seemed so far away. Canada was closer, and we thought we could go back for holidays every few years even in those steamship days. (I might add that I didn't return to visit England for 60 years.)

The literature on Canada, I must admit, was a little on the optimistic side. Canada was said to have a healthful climate, guaranteed to be free of malaria, and this we found to be true. It was said that while the prairie summers were hot, the heat was delightfully invigorating. That in winter the cold was dry, and not unpleasant. I used to recall those glowing words while working in the harvest fields with the summer heat blazing to 96 degrees in the shade, or in winter as I ran behind a sleigh to keep from freezing in temperatures that were 30 degrees below zero.

The lodestone that drew people from all over the world to Western Canada was the offer of free homesteads — 160 acres

of land to any male 18 years of age or over.

Pictures were shown of a farmer sitting in a folding-top buggy beside a well with a full water trough, fed by a windmill that provided free power. Around the water trough horses and cattle were gathered. In the background stood an eight-room house and a large hip-roofed barn. Lured by these pictures, and ignorant of the fact that these free "homesteads" consisted of nothing but miles of grass, we decided to emigrate to Canada.

### Journey begins

We called a family council and decided that my father and I should go first to secure a toe-hold in the land of milk and honey. Tickets were purchased. Dad and I were booked for passage on the *Empress of Ireland*. We were told that we would have to pass a physical examination as we boarded the ship. An officer stopped us at the head of the gangplank and in one breath said: "What's your name? Are you well? Hold out your tongue. All right. Go on." Our tickets were stamped and we hunted up our quarters. Our first day on the water was March 20, 1908 and I was 18 years of age.

After the eight-day ocean voyage filled

with the miseries of seasickness and homesickness, we landed at Saint John, New Brunswick. Our guidebook spoke of Saint John as the city of churches. We could hear the constant clamour of bells; surely every church bell in the city was welcoming us. We were soon disillusioned. It was only the yard engines signalling as they switched back and forth in the railway yards. This clanging sound was our welcome to Canada. It smelled of fish, of wood and pine trees. It was rugged, unkempt and slapdash. But it was Canada, our new home.

We disembarked from the steamship to the immigration shed. Right across from the shed was a waiting train with its long string of Colonist cars and its slatted wooden seats. We were soon on our way and in short order we found ourselves in the immigration hall at Winnipeg.

From there my father and I were booked through to Brandon where we were hired to a farmer to learn the rudiments of farming at a wage of \$10 a month each. After six weeks we moved further west to Girvin, a small town on the old Canadian National Railway, half way between Regina and Saskatoon. It was here that my mother, five brothers and sister arrived five months later.



To populate western Saskatchewan and Alberta, the Department of the Interior lured immigrants with posters, lectures and emigration offices in the European capitals.

In spite of our assurances, the family brought with them a small arsenal of guns and a naval cutlass donated by a friendly sailor in England. Presumably these were for fighting the Indians at close quarters, and needless to say the weapons were never used for such purposes.

### Homesteaders

During that first winter we were fortunate enough to be able to file on four quarter sections\* of homestead land, 18 miles east of Girvin. In the spring we moved there, managed to put up a rough lumber shack, and bought four oxen. We were now homesteaders.

During the summer of 1909 my brother Charlie broke 90 acres of land with the four oxen. My brother Will and I hired ourselves out to two good farmers at \$20 a month, thus providing cash for the family operation.

The Homestead Act called for residence on the homestead for six months during each of three years, the breaking of ten acres of prairie each year, and the erection of a "habitable" house. The habitable house was vaguely defined. Families were allowed to live together if it was more convenient. At the end of three years you got clear title to the homestead with no strings attached.

The Act defined "residence" as sleeping on your land at night. What you did, or where you were during the rest of the day was nobody's business. One young homesteader I knew worked for a local rancher. As often as possible he would ride horseback the five miles to his homestead by night. He would fill a lamp with an egg cup full of coal oil, light it, place it in a window and go back to his job on the ranch. When the oil burned out, the lamp would go out, but anyone interested would suppose that "residence" duties were being performed, and that the young man was at home.

This was the day of the big steam threshing outfits that piled up mountainous straw piles. In a strictly grain-growing area, the straw piles were of no value, and to get them out of the way they were often burned to the ground the day they were threshed. Often from our vantage point on the crest of the Long Lake Valley we could count up to 50 or more

of these twinkling straw piles burning like stars in the night.

### "Gopher eaters"

My brothers and I worked on the giant threshing machines to provide income for the family. We also worked on the railroad grade when it was being built in our locality. The regular railroad workers called us "gopher eaters" since homesteaders were accused of eating gophers. I personally knew only one who did. Never indulged in them myself; too much like eating rats.

Our stay on the homesteads in the Girvin country was educational and interesting. We had graduated from the 'Green Englishman' class to become real westerners. In 1913 we moved to new fields after acquiring a 1,000-acre spread 50 miles south of the old cow town of Maple Creek on the south slope of the Cypress Hills. This was the frontier all over again, although we were a little better equipped to handle it.

### Schooling problems

We helped form the one-room country school district of West Plains. At one time there were over 5,000 of these country schools in Saskatchewan. As soon as settlement had progressed a schoolhouse would be built. Schoolhouses were initially log or sod, but a sod schoolhouse would be very temporary. When a school district was formed and debentures issued, the school had to conform to government standards and would be solidly built of lumber. They were heated by a pot-bellied stove which usually went out overnight, making teaching very difficult during the winter months. The teachers in these one-room schools might have 35 pupils or more, of all grades, ages and languages, with some of the pupils as big as the teacher herself. Many prominent Canadians received their early education in these country schools.

### Dust, drought and depression

While on our land south of Maple Creek we became involved in that trauma that is often called the Dirty Thirties — the same decade that has become synonymous with the economic ills of the Depression. In 1931, the western prairies were swept by high winds and frightful dust storms, and for almost a decade Saskatchewan and southern Alberta suffered severe drought and gale-force winds. The Wheat Pool was near bankruptcy;

whole municipalities were in receivership; and for thousands relief was the order of the day. The situation was aptly summed up by a distressed Chinese café owner at Climax, Saskatchewan: "No wheat, no grass, no hay, no gardens, nothing of everything."

To escape those desperate days of dust, drought and depression I took flight into the heroic past. Whenever I could find the time, I dropped into the world of the western frontier. I became interested in the local history of the early North West Mounted Police and Fort Walsh. This was the first Mounted Police post, built in the Cypress Hills in what is now Saskatchewan, in 1875. This brought me into contact with the then commissioner of the RCMP, Stuart Taylor Wood, who became one of my most helpful and valued friends.

I contacted some of the pioneer cattlemen of the Cypress Hills. There was Bill Noland who had hunted buffalo with Buffalo Bill (William Cody) on the Kansas plains in the 1870s. My friend Tom Whitney had been brought up in Virginia City, Montana in the gold-rush days and his father was one of the Montana Vigilantes. There was Gabriel Lavallie, a Cypress Hills Métis, whose grandfather was a French officer who had been wounded at the battle of Waterloo. These men and many others enlarged my knowledge of the history of the early West.

### New career

Circumstance has a long arm, and after 45 years events had come full circle. I began another career in 1953 as curator of the Western Development Museum at Saskatoon, and I felt right at home. Here were the familiars of my other life in the Thirties. Now I was to be an agent caring for machines, tools, and artifacts of frontier days, talking to the pioneers who had used them, interpreting the West of yesterday to the visitors of today. It's a long way from Canterbury Cathedral to the Western Development Museum at Saskatoon, but this is the way it all happened.

George Shepherd is one of the few remaining homesteaders who helped settle the Prairies in the early 1900s. He has written two books since 1965, *West of Yesterday* and *Brave Heritage*; continues to contribute articles on the early West to newspapers, magazines, and radio; and remains curator of the Western Development Museum. In 1974, University of Saskatchewan Chancellor John G. Diefenbaker conferred on him the degree of Honorary Doctor of Laws.

\*My father and three elder brothers were able to file on a quarter section of 160 acres each, making one section of 640 acres all told.

## Visit to drought-stricken countries of West Africa

Garson N. Vogel, executive director of the World Food Program, visited three of the most affected countries of the drought-stricken countries of the Sahelian Zone of West Africa, recently with three senior WFP officials from Rome.

Mr. Vogel, a native of Winnipeg, Manitoba, took office last October and wished to gain first-hand knowledge of an area of the Third World which has been affected by drought for ten years, a situation which culminated in the 1972/73 disaster.

On November 1, 1977, the WFP assumed responsibility for the co-ordination and monitoring of all food aid, multi-lateral and bilateral, to the Sahelian Zone of West Africa which comprises The Cape Verde, Chad, The Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Upper Volta.

In Dakar, Mr. Vogel held working sessions with all WFP staff stationed in the Sahel; he also attended other sessions dealing with emergency food aid.

Two days were spent in Mauritania, where Mr. Vogel met with President Moktar Ould Daddah and discussed the country's food supply position with the Minister of Rural Development and the senior officials responsible for emergency aid.

In Senegal, Mr. Vogel was received by President Senghor with whom he discussed not only the general situation in Senegal, but the key role of the Port of Dakar in ensuring the timely deliveries of supplies to the neighbouring countries of The Gambia, Mali and Mauritania.

In the Gambia, after an audience with the President, Mr. Vogel held discussions with the Vice-President, the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Education and senior officials.

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## News briefs

Countless foreign journalists who have been in Canada as part of the Department of External Affairs visits program will be among the many friends and colleagues who were saddened by the sudden death of Muriel Ann Corbet, M.V.O. on February 16. Mrs. Corbet had been head of Visits Section, Information Services Division, since April 1974.

Cameron Irwin McIntosh, president of McIntosh Publishing Co. Ltd. and publisher of a twice-weekly newspaper, has been appointed Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan. Mr. McIntosh, at 51 the youngest lieutenant governor in Canada, succeeds George Porteous, who died in February, leaving the province with no one who could legally give royal assent to government documents.

The Export Development Corporation has signed a financing agreement of \$9.4 million to support a \$10.6-million sale by CAE Electronics Ltd., Montreal, to Morocco of three flight training simulators. Some 190 man-years of employment will be generated in the Montreal area from the sale, which will allow CAE Electronics to maintain its work force of about 850 people in the machine shop.

Preliminary figures show that the number of adults held in jail at December 31, 1976 was 11,884 — 11,462 males and 422 females.

Ivan Head, a lawyer and former diplomat and professor, has been named president of the International Development Research Centre, a federal agency that conducts and supports research into problems of developing regions. He replaces W. David Hopper, who resigned in December to take a senior position at the World Bank in Geneva. Mr. Head, 47, was a special adviser to the Prime Minister on foreign affairs for ten years.

Canada's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate decreased to 8.3 per cent in January from 8.5 per cent in December. The rate in January 1977 was 7.5 per cent. The adjusted employment level reached 9,866,000 in January, up 24,000 from the December figure. Unemployment stood at 891,000, a decrease of 20,000 from that of the previous month.

A preliminary survey of profits of publicly-owned Canadian corporations indicates that after-tax operating profits looked considerably better in 1977 than they did in either 1976 or 1975. The in-

crease last year was almost as large as that recorded in 1974. Combined profits of the 95 companies surveyed were almost \$3 billion, up 15.1 percent over the 1976 total. The increase followed a 2.8 percent gain in 1976, a 5.2 percent decline in 1975 and a 20 percent increase in 1974. Considered in real rather than nominal terms, 1977 was the first year in three years that a real gain was recorded, but it was not sufficient to offset the real declines recorded in the preceding two years.

Nova Scotia's first major mining operation in 30 years — the Gay's River lead-zinc property — will be put into production by Esso Minerals Canada Ltd. at a cost of \$27 million.

Health and Welfare Minister Monique Bégin and the Minister of Health and Social Welfare of the Polish People's Republic, Dr. Marian Sliwinski, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries that will provide for exchange visits and co-operation between specialists, scientists and health professionals in the public health, health care delivery and medical sciences fields. This co-operation will include mutual participation in conferences and symposia, liaison between research institutions in both countries and closer ties between medical societies.

The Montreal Canadiens have broken a National Hockey League record by maintaining a winning streak of 24 games so far this season. The previous mark of 23 was set by the Boston Bruins during the 1940-41 season and equalled by the Philadelphia Flyers during the 1975-76 campaign.

Two Canadian-made de Havilland DHC-7s (DASH-7s) have been purchased by the Canadian Armed Forces. The 50-seat, four-engined Short-Take-Off-and-Landing (STOL) aircraft, to be used in a passenger and freight transport role by the Canadian Forces in West Germany, will replace a Canadian CC-109 Cosmopolitan, a twin-engined turboprop transport assigned to Canadian Forces Europe on a regular rotating basis from Canada. The Cosmo entered service in 1960.

An Ontario man who recently pleaded guilty to three counts of trafficking in marijuana has had more than his share of bad luck recently. Not only did undercover RCMP agents put an end to his operation, but squirrels, nesting in his "stock room", managed to eat about \$300-worth of his merchandise.