

THIS WEEK AND NEXT

by Ray Argyle



In The Provinces

In every provincial capital across the land this week, the politicians were trying to stretch tax dollars to match the new demands of education and medicare. It was the legislative season in Canada, and from Victoria to St. John's, as well as Ottawa, the lawmakers faced the same old problems — too many needs, not enough money.

In the provincial legislatures, the issues and problems run the gamut from bridges and roads to law enforcement, fluoridation and Sunday sports.

But topping all the issues in the current sessions of the 10 legislatures are education and medicare. On the first — education — there is general agreement that budgets will have to rise for at least the next 10 years, until the current drop in the birth rate begins to be felt a decade hence.

On medicare, despite the urgings of the federal government, it was beginning to look as if as many different schemes as there are provinces will be hammered into shape before the country begins to assemble a national, universal health care program.

The Ontario legislature was only a few days old when Premier Robarts, after rejecting Ottawa's share-the-cost offer on the grounds that the province would be left holding the financial bag, unveiled his own medicare program. It will be a government-run plan independent of insurance companies and will cost \$65 million a year in subsidies to low income residents.

Because the scheme is not compulsory, it does not meet federal government requirements. Nor do the B.C. and Alberta programs. Of the three, Alberta's is the most limited in that it merely provides subsidies for low income persons who want to join a privately operated insurance program. And relatively few Albertans — including those who most need help — have bothered to join.

The only medicare plan meeting federal standards is that running in Saskatchewan. The scheme, set up by the CCF, has been maintained by the Liberal government and costs have begun to drop after the first year of operation.

Alberta remains the only official hold-out against medicare in principle, but observers believe Premier Manning will bow to

the inevitable, just as he has bowed on other issues he once staunchly fought. These include cocktail bars, fluoridation and Sunday sports. Alberta has had cocktail bars for several years now and in preparation for the current provincial legislative session, the premier said he would permit fluoridation and Sunday sports in any community voting for them by a simple majority.

In B.C., as well as in Quebec and Prince Edward Island, there's talk of a provincial election this year. Premier Bennett has clung to power by knocking the props from under the NDP by adopting their programs — such as socializing the B.C. Electric — whenever it looked as if his government was in danger. Around the handsome B.C. legislative buildings this year, there's talk that Mr. Bennett will upgrade medicare while leaving automobile insurance — another pet NDP issue — to a newly-appointed royal commission.

The Saskatchewan, Alberta and Nova Scotia legislatures open next week, and in Regina Premier Thatcher faces the prospect of his three-seat majority being further cut in a crucial by-election. The Nova Scotia and Alberta governments face no such danger, but there's mounting controversy in Nova Scotia over a proposed Halifax hotel room tax. New Brunswick's lawmakers, meanwhile, have been at work since before Christmas on Premier Robichaud's plan to take over most municipal responsibilities.

Taxes are also worrying Premier Shaw of Prince Edward Island, who faces the prospect of boosting the island's sales tax to six per cent. and would like to win another election first. Ontario also has heard rumbles of an increase in its three per cent. sales tax.

Quebec's legislative session opened without any central piece of keystone legislation but the emphasis was on the province's own war on poverty, with the usual stress on defending French culture. Only in Newfoundland, where Premier Joey Smallwood has already publicly picked his successor, can the current legislative session be expected to run a predictable course.

CLEAN SWEEP FOR BOMBARDIER

Lake Placid, N.Y. — Bombardier Skidoos won every major trophy at the International Snowmobile Classic for the Kawartha Cup held here January 29th and 30th.

This event drew top competition from the United States and Canada and included all major makes of snowmobiles.

Don Pearson of Duluth, Minn. took the cup with 17 points earned in the 35 mile cross country race, the slalom, the 4.4 mile speed obstacle course. He is the new International Champion and drove a BOMBARDIER SKIDOO. Runner up was Wm. Bucklin of Lancaster, N.H. He was driving a Super Olympic Skidoo and his point total was 13. Tied for 3rd were U.S. National Champion, Steven Ave of Hurley, Wisc. and Germain Desmais of Val Court, Quebec. They piled up 11 points each, both using a Bombardier Skidoo. Sixteen following runners-up also drove Bombardier Skidoos.

We just received word that in the Grand Prix at Lancaster, N.H. the Bombardier again took all major trophies.

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EMPLOYEES' CHARITY FUND ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the members of the Kimberly-Clark Employees' Charity Fund was held in the Recreation Centre on February 10th.

Chairman, W. Baillie, in his annual report, stated that \$6,007 was collected and distributed during 1965, an increase of about \$300 over 1964. He reported a total membership of 450 representing approximately 83% of the Kimberly-Clark payroll.

H. Hamilton was elected to the Board of Directors to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of J. Duncan. A vote of thanks was extended to J. Duncan, one of the original directors, for his efforts on behalf of KC-ECF during his six years on the Board of Directors.

B. Hayes resigned from the Board of Directors in compliance with the constitution which allows only two directors from the salaried payroll. A replacement will be appointed.

For 1966, W. Baillie continues as Chairman, G. Ramsay was elected Vice-Chairman, J.K. MacDonald is Secretary-Treasurer and the Directors are R. Harris, Mrs. C. Buck, V. Hopper, J. Marcella and H. Hamilton.

MARCH OF DIMES COLLECTS \$126.14

This year the March of Dimes was conducted by the Ladies Auxiliary to the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 223, captained by Mrs. D. Coupal, assisted by Mrs. D. Ballentine, Mrs. J. Fisher and Mrs. J. Mercier. The collection was \$126.14 to which is added a cheque of \$400 donated from the Kimberly-Clark Employees' Charity Fund.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEETING THURSDAY

The regular monthly meeting of Terrace Bay Chamber of Commerce will be held this Thursday, February 17th in the large meeting room of the Recreation Centre at 7.30 p.m.