

OTTAWA - Late last Friday night, while other citizens were watching movies, drinking beer, indulging in wild excesses of the flesh and otherwise enjoying themselves in their simple Canadian peasant fashion, the Honorable Member for Spondulik was alone in his office in Centre Block. thinking about what he was

The Honorable Member had fought seven bureaucrats that day and nobody had noticed. not even the bureaucrats. In the Commons chamber during question period he had risen in his place not once, not twice, not thrice, but 27 times. He was armed with a barbed question which would have pierced the very vitals of the ministry he hated most but, having failed to catch the Speaker's eye, he had never had the opportunity to hurl it. He had met two delegations and attended three caucus committee meetings.

Now, to while away the last hour before the Peace Tower bell announced the arrival of Saturday, he turned to the correspondence of his constituents and, circumstances being as they were, composed the following letter.

Dear Constituent.

I have your letter, the tenth of your series, dealing with the plight of the White Tailed Bobtits who dwell in the same swamp in which you chose to build your house. You feel that the government, whom you seem to confuse with me, should immediately remedy the Bobtits' problems on their nesting grounds.

It appears I must now and finally answer your complaint. I judge you have become pensive and moody as a result of my failure to react.

You should know that I regret having to reply at all. I have little, indeed no feeling for the White Tailed Bobtit. Approximately 98 per cent of all earth's species have become extinct over the millenia and if it is written that the White Tailed Bobtits shall now join that great silent majority I, for one, am not prepared to stand in the path of progress.

Even if I shared your extravagant affection for these birds, there would remain a few items to which I might give prior concern. Among these I would list flood, fire, famine pestilence and disease, not to mention docks, harbors wharves and railways and my own habit, quaint as it may be, of seeking more than five hours slumber of night.

Despite a reluctance which may by now be obvious even to a person of your peculiarly insensitive nature, I have nevertheless wreaked on your behalf. Seated before some old dried coffee stains in the West Block cafeteria this morning I found myself in company of one of the less lunatic hirelings of the appropriate department. He sees your problem in quite a different light. In Saskatchewan, the White Tailed Bobtit is menacing the oats, the barleys, the wheats or whatever it is that gladdens the heart of prairie voters and the department is now engaged in developing a poison to eliminate them.

I mention this not to be helpful to you. I don't want to be. I mention it in the faint hope that you will depart from whatever wretched hovel you have raised for yourself among the swampbirds and take up residence in Saskatchewan where a different MP can have you.

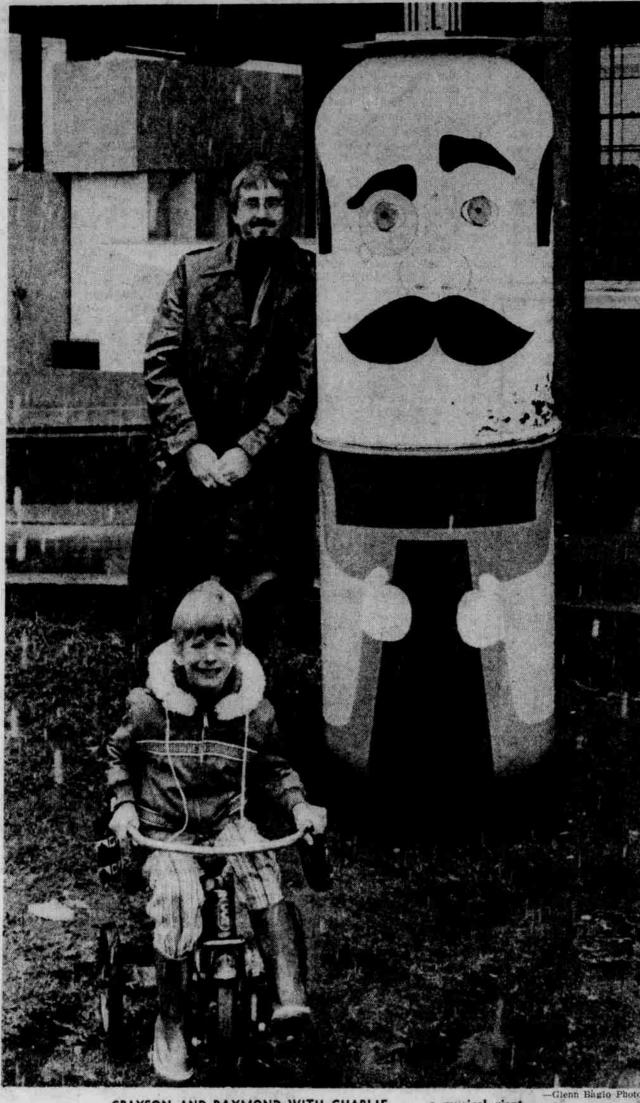
Please keep this letter and read it when next your urge is furor scribendi.

Yours sincerely

The Honorable Member for Spondulik left the draft letter to be typed by his secretary on Monday. She never mailed it but she made a multitude of duplicates for distribution to other MPs who read them with joy and gratitude. A few copies are being framed. Political opponents now go out of their way to shake the hand of the MP for Spondulik who has, at last, made his mark on this Parliament.

#### Alderman to speak

Ald Michael Harcourt will speak on Kitsilano development, including the Arbutus connector and future zoning. at the Kitsilano Ratepayers Association annual general meeting at 8 p.m. Thursday at Kitsilano Community Cen-



CRAYSON AND RAYMOND WITH CHARLIE . . . a musical giant

## Big Charlie's the kids' friend

Mr. Big, at Vancouver's pre-school for exceptional children, is a tough-looking guy called Charlie.

To the tip of his hat, he stands 12 feet tall, - but even the smallest kids can punch him around.

Charlie is a sound sculpture. Lean on him a little and he begins to chime. Spin him around and he sounds like a small-town Sunday.

"Everything here was made from scrap metal and stuff that was donated, or stuff that we managed to scrounge. says John Grayson.

"Charlie is built from dome covers from a radar installation on the DEW line.

"His hat - that's what makes the chimes - is made of aluminum rods, capped with stainless steel.

"He makes a nice sound now, but if we could have afforded brass caps instead of steel, you wouldn't believe the music he would make.'

Earlier this year, Grayson. now a CBC production assistant, designed and built in a corner of the pre-school playground what is called Environment of Musical Sculpture for Small People.

Retarded children need intense sensory stimulation to teach them things other children learn normally.

"There are some kids here who are hardly able to move. Perhaps they can roll over and that's all." Grayson said. "If they roll over on that mat over there, they will pro-

Designing sound sculptures for small people presented particular problems for John Grayson, who is 6 feet, 6 inch-

duce a sound."

"I came down here and talked to the teachers and even measured some of the kids. Everything here is built to be operated by kids 24 inch-

es to 36 inches tall. "Lots of the things have private little sound compartments, spaces kids can crawl their own," he said.

"This one here, for example, is made from ice-block freezing containers, used by the fishing industry. It's galvanized on the inside, so there is no danger of rust, or sharp

"I was in there putting in some screws and got stuck. Fortunately, somebody was

nearby to pull me out." All Grayson's sound sculptures, which are worked by pulling knobs and levers, or pushing pedals, are based on basic acoustic principles.

They produce a wide range of sounds: percussion, woodlove them.

"I really hope I can get involved in designing equipment for the new activity centre," said Grayson.

"We had a lot of fun with our magical, musical playground.

Will you help John Grayson and The Vancouver Sun make a better life for handicapped children through the House of Hope?

Donations received:	
Margaret, Jim and Ford	30.0
A Happy Volunteer Kevin, Dean and Todd	. 5.0
Mr. and Mrs. J. McKain.	20.00
Mrs. F. Owen	10.00
D.K	5.00
Two OAP's	10.0

Hard-Hearted Hannah	10.00
H. J. Rayner Mrs. A. M. Harrower	25.00
Mrs. A. M. Harrower	5.00
Christine and Cathryn	F-00-0
Bowden	25.00
Kathy Beechingr	3.00
Mrs. Conville	2.00
Gwen and Bill	10.00
Pensioners	2.00
- Mrs. Olive Thompson	5.00
H. P. Hughes	5.00
Cheryl, Marni	
and Natalle	15.00
M. Reynolds	10,00
Mr. F. Scribner	10.00
Sicamous	5.00
Michelina Ogg	10.00
Mrs. E. Haapenan	5.00
In Memory of Teddy	25,00
Anonymous	5.00
Anonymous	20.00
Anonymous	2 (10)
Anonymous	2.00 5.00
Anonymous	10.00
Anonymous	2.00
Anonymous	5.00
Anonymous	8.00
Anonymous	5.00
Аполутоия	25:00
Anonymous	1.00
Anonymous	1.00
Total \$2.5	33.00

# Private firms deny new rates cheaper

dustry rejected Friday claims that auto insurance coverage will be better or cheaper under the government-owned Insurance Corp. of B.C.

Officials also rejected ICBC figures showing its rates to be substantially cheaper than the range of rates for about 160 companies in 1972-73.

David Bird, executive vicepresident of the B.C. Automobile Association, said the ICBC comparison is like comparing apples with oranges because of the method of arriving at premiums.

BCAA and the other insurance companies are witholding detailed analysis of Autoplan's rate schedule until Monday because they want time to study it.

"We tried to do a press release on it today and there is just nothing we can pin down because of the way it was done," said Bird, "The rating criteria is quite different." Autoplan will do no better

and probably worse than the job done by private industry was the consensus of the firms surveyed by The Van couver Sun.

"There are a lot of people who are going to pay more," said A. E. Warrick, division vice-president of Unigard Mutual Insurance Co. "The main winner is the young driver who hasn't a lot of speeding convictions."

Warrick said his company has had an opportunity to study only two rates, which were disclosed as basic figures by ICBC general manager Norman Bortnick on Fri-

The rates show that for a 1970 standard-sized car driven by an adult over 30, insurance costs \$127 for pleasure driving and \$154 for pleasure and business, he said.

quoted by Bortnick and they compare with what the industry is charging at the moment," Warrick said.

These rates affect 50 to 60 per cent of the driving public and are indicative that the average motorist will have to pay more under the government scheme, he said.

At first glance it appears that rates won't change appreciably but the average motorist will pay more because of being "overcharged" on driver's licences, he said.

Under the Autoplan rates anounced Friday by the ICBC, motorists will pay two charges: a basic vehicle insurance premium plus a flat \$10 perium for driver's licences for drivers with good records.

Industry officials cited as hidden costs under Autoplan:

· Everyone under Autoplan gets the benefit of being accident free. Officials said that, despite the lack of statistics. the bad drivers still exist and will eventually force up rates.

• Many drivers who weren't penalized before for their driving offences will be charged extra by Autoplan. Under the government plan all drivers with driving violations exceeding five points in the last five years will be assessed higher rates which in most cases wouldn't affect drivers insured with private companies.

Violations are automatically tabulated on Autoplan's insurance form whereas private companies didn't have access to motor vehicles branch rec-

· Each driver pays a minimum \$10 licence premium in addition to the general vehicle insurance. The licence premium rises quickly with the number of infractions to where licence holders with 20

demerit points or more pay a maximum of \$410 simply for a driver's licence:

· Collision and comprehensive insurance under Autoplan is compulsory for cars and trucks built in 1967 or later. Motorists with cheap cars are compelled to buy a high class of insurance and pay accord-

John Todd, branch manager of Sun-Alliance and London Assurance Group and a member of the advisory board to the Insurance Bureau of Canada, the organization currently sueing the provincial government for its monopoly insurance plan, said:

"They haven't done anything wonderful. What they have done is to look at the underage driver and say, 'we want your vote,' and gave them cheaper insurance."

Todd said the ICBC can't provide cheaper insurance because its costs are higher than that of the private companies. He implied that the ICBC will be forced either to raise the rates or be subsidized by the government because of its escalating costs.

He cited as the most burdensome millstone the \$20.5 million the ICBC has borrowed from the government for its startup operation.

He said Transport Minister Bob Strachan has estimated the ICBC premium income at \$150 million a year, but estimated 80 to 85 per cent of it will go to cover pay outs. Another nine per cent will go to the insurance agents as a fee plus heavy rent and salary expenses. On top of these expenses, the ICBC will pay regular re-insurance rates to a company outside Canada.

Where will ICBC get revenue to pay back that \$20.5

#### 'WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT'

## Autoplan has drivers wary

Greater Vancouver drivers are maintaining a wait-andsee attitude about B.C.'s new government auto insurance scheme, Autoplan.

In a Vancouver Sun phone survey Friday, most people said they are unsure whether the government plan will result in lower insurance rates.

"I think the plan will work out all right," said Robert Coulter, 419 Eighth Avenue

East, New Westminster. "But we'll have to wait for a little while until we find out

just what comes up," he added. Coulter also said he is concerned about what will hap-

pen to the plan if the NDP government is defeated in the next election. "What would the next government do with it - kick it

out?" he asked. Almost everyone polled felt government takeover of automobile insurance is a good

thing. "Anything's better than what we have today," said Mrs. H. R. Wheeler, 3915 Williams, Burnaby.

"I'm happy that the government is taking over auto in surance and I've always voted for the Social Credit party.' Terence McMahon, of 2059

Compton Court, Coguitlam, also was happy with the "I'm happy that insurance

money will now stay in Canada instead of going to the United States.

McMahon was critical of private insurance companies.

"I haven't had an accident in 15 years and my auto insurance rates have never gone down. As a matter of fact, they've gone up every year."

Using figures based on a Vancouver Sun story, McMahon said it looks like he will pay half his former insurance rate under the government scheme.

Ivan Hilton, of 947 No. 1 Road, Richmond, also was happy with the government take-over.

"I lived in Saskatchewan where there is a government insurance plan and paid less insurance than I do now in B.C.," he said.

Rex Owen, of 1822 Nelson, vancouver, was critical of government fuzziness in describing the new scheme.

"I'd like to see the government state clearly just exactly why they're taking over auto insurance, what is involved and how much it will

Owen said he is glad the government plan will result in lower rates for young drivers.

"I think young people in the past were unfairly penalized." James Roberts, of 1666 Fra-

ser Avenue, Port Coquitlan: didn't think the government plan would result in lower insurance rates for him. "But I'm glad that this plan

car to have insurance," he Don Pasmore, of 3955 Welwyn, Vancouver, said he

will force everyone driving a

is pessimistic about the prospect of lower rates. "Besides, I'd rather deal

with an individual than the government with my insurance."



### Allan **FOTHERINGHAM**

IT IS NOT TO SUGGEST THAT the fate of western civilization lay within the palm of the Hotel Vancouver convention floor last night. But as one who discovers large, significant conclusions amidst small, piffling trivia, there was some trifling evidence, shin-deep. The theory, you see, is that the in-

flamed masses of this portion of the realm who awake foaming in the middle of the night at the thought of socialism were all going to storm the hotel this weekend to clasp their benediction on the new messiah. Bill Bennett, who was to lead us back into the sheltered palms of semifree enterprise.

Particularly since the Liberal party, apparently moved by a new phase of the moon, is busily indulging in an act of public suicide. (The leader is off pursuing mallards on the Prairies, the past leader is publicly calling for a coalition and the man who was sought for the North Van-Capilano nomination has issued a public letter pleading with the party to turn belly-up and make love to Bill Bennett. In the circumstances, one wonders of the duckhunter who is the shootee and who is the shooter.)

SO, ALL FRESHLY SCRUBBED and newly naive, one shows up at the Social Credit leadership convention ready to believe the testimony of the Bennett Family Compact that a new dawn is upon us. That the troops are prepared to fight on the beaches, in the fields, in the cocktail bars. Well, anem. You may relax in your chair. Armageddon is in no danger of approaching before next Tuesday. Go fishing if you want. Valhalla is still some distance in the mists. The problem, perhaps, is that you

do not use a steamroller to crush a butterfly. This convention is badly in need of a Heavy. Garner Ted Gaglardi, slipping and sliding past the pillars out in the corridors like Humphrey Bogart in the London fog. lurks about but is not entered in the lists, shyly waiting for a draft that will not come.

IT WOULD BE WELCOMED. since Bill Bennett needs a dragon to

be slain, rather than the pussycats he will demolish in the ritual balloting today. He is caught on a twoedged sword. He is easily the most attractive. potentially - most - marmotley lot. He perhaps would do better, considering a discernible retroactive backlash at this gathering, if his name were Bill Schultz. Bill himself undoubtedly would be

ketable leadership material of this

much happier if fate so ordained that his father was laid up with a bad case of the flu this weekend in Kelowna. He might escape the sprinkling of the water. But Bennett the Senior, appearing outrageously healthy for a man of 73, is such an insatiable warhorse that he stands his ground at the entrance to every doorway, laying a still fascinating trip upon every reporter, fan, disciple, worshipper or historian who wants to dally. The future and unsure king has no chance in direct competition with the legend. Pity the son who must follow in the unfillable footsteps.

IT DOES NOT HELP WHEN THE predictable, rehearsed plan of Bennet devotee, fils et pere, Grace McCarthy takes over the party presidency. The last - minute candidacy of Ken Kiernan is a token symbol to give the appearance of a contest. The evening banquet has been progressing for some time when Bill Bennett, yet another stylish ensemble for each occasion, and wife make a public flurry with a late en-

Kiernan as supposedly neutral chairman makes an announced fuss about finding them seats and then - lucky coincidence - it is discovered it is Bill Bennett's attractive wife's birthday and Happy Birthday must be sung. It is as spurious as Frank Sinatra finding Sammy Davis at ringside at Vegas. Did anyone check to see if it was, say, Harvey Shroeder's anniversary? The heavy hand becomes oppressive and you can feel some delegates sink in resignation and recognition that the contest they came for is no contest.

HERB CAPOZZI, LOOKING like the world's oldest teen-ager, arrives to establish his bona fides and displays the best line of the week: The NDP cabinet ministers went out to Fort Langley and put their station wagons in a circle.

"They didn't want to go any further than Langley in case they fell

The admirable Mrs. W. A. C. Bennett, the only grandmother in the world permitted to beat me up on an elevator with a purse, accepted her gift with a superb, two-sentence speech that revealed her sly strength. "A good wife is supposed to stand behind her husband and push. I didn't push," she said, and

Now one does not intend to denigrate Bennett the Elder, but I have been recently to so many Last Hurrahs I feel I might as well turn into a late movie critic. He's now had more farewells than Martha Raye. At a weekend supposedly to launch a new onslaught on the future, the

whole atmosphere is looking back -Kiernan and McCarthy and Peterson and Bennett Sr. all stroking each other's memories. The whole head table is 1960ish with nothing of what the supposedly 1970ish Socred revolution was supposed to promise.

WHILE ALL THIS NOSTALGIC noodling goes on in one room. across the hall is what Bennett the Younger choreographed to attract the younger set. There's a non-stop bar and a great band and Peace River MLA Ed Smith, who seems to have achieved the best possible of all worlds in that he wears zippersided cowboy boots, has hired a girlie act that resembles something from Isy's with clothes on. They've got the bumps without the grinds.

At one stage one of them in hot pants, wearing roller skates, is dancing with the lead girl singer in chaps. I'm not sure what it means. but Agnes Kripps it ain't. There's a lot of drinking going on and whooping and piggy-backing, but the jury is out on whether this means political fascination. Jaycee partying is not really what I had in mind when I thought this crucial gathering might determine if the anti-socialist forces were coalescing under the

Mr. Barrett, newly set aright on the facts of life by Mr. Levesque can safely tarry over a good meal on the cobblestones of Old Montreal. No need to rush, Da Preem. The heather is not aflame.