

Ottawa wins a round in bout with Sun Life

by GEORGE OAKE
Southam News Services

OTTAWA — Sun Life Assurance Company of Montreal has postponed its decision to move the company's head office to Toronto and the bulk of the firm's 1,800 employees will remain in Montreal for at least two years.

The reversal in company policy came only after Prime Minister Trudeau and Finance Minister Jean Chretien put their prestige on the line in a personal attempt to persuade the company to stay in Quebec.

Events moved swiftly last weekend after Chretien announced Friday the company would hold a special board of directors meeting to consider the government's pleas.

Late Saturday afternoon the company issued a short statement saying it would delay making a decision on moving the head office to Toronto for three months.

A Jan. 27 meeting of qualified policyholders, originally intended to ratify the firm's move, will take place as scheduled, but no vote will be taken.

Sun Life President Thomas Galt said the company did not intend to move the majority of its 1,800 Montreal staff for at least another two years.

In a telephone conference call with reporters Saturday Chretien said he was "satisfied" with the firm's decision

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because it would have a stabilizing effect on other companies that might be considering leaving Quebec.

The finance minister said he and the prime minister had concentrated on "national" rather than "corporate" arguments in trying to convince the company to stay when a top-level secret meeting with Sun Life officials was held at Trudeau's residence here Thursday night.

Details of the federal arguments were not revealed but a Chretien aide said Sunday that to his knowledge the company received no promises of special treatment.

Galt noted Saturday that in the company's talks with Trudeau and Chretien both ministers said they believed real progress was possible in achieving agreement among the provinces for constitutional guarantees of minority rights.

In its original announcement, Jan. 6, Sun Life cited the language-education issue in Quebec as one of the main reasons for its planned departure.

As Chretien said Saturday, the most important development was that a large number of jobs would not be leaving Montreal. The symbolic victory won by the federal govern-

ment in at least delaying the Sun Life move will undoubtedly have a cautionary effect on other restless Quebec companies.

It will also give the government time to present its constitutional package, perhaps late in March, that could head off a corporate stampede out of the province if it meets with provincial approval.

Early this week Galt hopes to meet with Lise Payette, Quebec's minister of financial institutions, in an effort to solve the language of education issue that has distressed the 112-year-old company.

If the controversy has been neatly iced by the government's last ditch attempts at compromise, it is scheduled to thaw in three months time. Without concessions from Rene Levesque's government, or a consensus among all 10 provinces on the forthcoming constitutional package, the exodus of business from Quebec could continue, less dramatically perhaps, but slowly and surely.

New Quebec legislation that will induce companies to invest more of their profits in Quebec may also be an underlying reason for corporate restlessness in that province.

But for the moment the 44-year-old lawyer from Shawinigan Falls has won a round for federalism. The question remains whether the government can circle its wagons effectively before others decide to head west.

'Sex shop' starts suit against city

The owner of the Garden of Eden sex shop has begun legal action against the city for refusing a business licence in 1974.

In a report today to council, city solicitor Bob Dick advises council to hire White Rock lawyer Howard Thomas to continue the city's legal fight against Joe Payne of Victoria.

Land deal probe extended

An RCMP investigation into land deals here has been extended until February with commercial crime investigators probing files of the Fraser-Fort George Regional District last week.

RCMP Insp. Doug Linfield said the study of regional district files had to do with complaints made last year against former regional planner Chandler Suri.

Suri resigned in February after a three-month investigation by The Citizen disclosed he was trying to buy land in the region under a different name.

However regional board directors said Suri had done nothing illegal or unethical and slammed the press for bringing the issue to the public.

Linfield said the study of regional files was a routine facet of an investigation which started here in March. The investigation is also studying allegations made against city council and particularly Mayor Harold Moffat.

A BC TV documentary on the allegations resulted in libel suits being filed against the network by Wood, council and Moffat's friend, land developer Stu Wood.

Linfield said the RCMP investigations to date have not resulted in any material coming forth which would warrant a criminal charge being laid.

He said the investigation was initiated because of complaints reaching the provincial attorney-general's office.

More UIC tightening?

OTTAWA (CP) — Manpower Minister Bud Cullen raised the possibility today of the federal government tightening the unemployment insurance program and provincial governments clamping down on minimum wages to reduce what he called work disincentives.

On the eve of a federal-provincial manpower ministers meeting in Victoria, Cullen also told the Montreal

Payne successfully battled the city for two and one-half years to the Canada Supreme Court to finally get an order May 17 forcing the city to grant him a business licence to operate an "adult boutique" here.

Thomas was the city's lawyer during the case.

Payne said after winning the fight he would sue the city for damages even though he decided after the case not to open the shop. He said he was seeking a franchisee to operate the store here but no store has ever been opened.

Payne is suing the city for "wrongfully" withholding a business licence to operate the "boutique". Legal documents signalling commencement of the suit were registered in the Supreme Court of B.C. in Victoria Dec. 20.

No amount of damage has been specified in the suite.

Charge RCMP, posties demand

MONTREAL (CP) — The Canadian Union of Postal Workers recommended today that charges be brought against Mounties responsible for illegally opening first-class mail.

Jean-Claude Parrot, president of the 23,000-member union, told the McDonald royal commission into illegal RCMP behavior, that illegal mail openings have unjustly tarnished the reputation of his members.

The McDonald commission has been told by RCMP witnesses that first-class mail was opened by the Mounties who received co-operation from some postal employees.

Chamber of Commerce that immigration can be reduced if businessmen help train Canadians for jobs being filled by foreigners.

Although the unemployment insurance program was tightened considerably last year, Cullen said the government believes it should be further reviewed "to see if there are steps that we can take to bring it back closer to insurance principles."



Citizen photo by Dave Milne

Ferry grounded

High and dry, the Isle Pierre ferry sits docked due to low water levels on the Nechako River. The ferry, which is current-driven, links some residents on the north side of the river with their jobs at the Takla

sawmill on the south side. Closure of the ferry means more than 50 miles of driving to cross the river at Prince George and to travel back on the south side for these workers.

B.C. TEL STRIKE-LOCKOUT

Pickets stay up at new school

by JAN-UDO WENZEL, Citizen Staff Reporter

D.P. Todd, the new secondary school under construction in the Tabor Boulevard area, is still being picketed by the Telecommunications Workers Union.

"Prince George is the only school district in B.C. scabbing for B.C. Tel and it is unfortunate that construction is being held up and students may have to continue on shift," a TWU spokesman said.

The new secondary school is slated to open Feb. 3 and in an effort to keep to this date School District 57 had asked B.C. Tel to complete the telephone installation despite the strike-lockout.

The TWU then posted pickets and when it was found the district had pulled all other workers off the job to avoid problems, pickets were also posted at the school district office. They were withdrawn Thursday on legal advice.

Students scheduled to attend the new school are now on shift at Lakewood and John McInnis secondary schools.

School board officials were unavailable for comment today as they were in a meeting. The number of students on shift is about 2,000 a school official said last week. The TWU rejects charges that its actions are the cause for delay in completion of the

school as not being completely true.

"Certainly, our pickets are delaying the work, but we are locked out. The main delay occurred long ago when the government delayed the funds for building the schools," a union official said.

The company removed the lockout notices Friday from its doors and posted a letter stating anyone wishing to work could come back to work as long as he complied with the company's demand of a number of conditions.

These conditions include the employee's signature he would give up the right to strike, be

productive and would not damage any company property.

"This is an insult. We have worked for B.C. Tel for a number of years and now the company starts to demand a letter of allegiance," a union official said.

A company spokesman here said a number of calls inquiring about returning to work have been received. But so far nobody involved in the strike-lockout has returned.

Meanwhile, the industrial inquiry into the dispute by Mr. Justice Henry Hutcheon starts today in Vancouver. The judge has two weeks to

Women, blacks new astronauts

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. space agency today chose six women, three black men and an Oriental to be among the 35 astronauts who will fly U.S. space shuttles in the 1980s.

Among them is Kathryn Sullivan, a post-graduate student at Delhousie University, Halifax, Miss Sullivan is a U.S. citizen whose parents live in Cupertino, Calif.

This is the first time that women and minority-group members have joined the astronaut corps. The group of 35 is the largest list of astronauts ever selected and the first group named since 1969.

The large number of new astronauts reflects NASA's belief that by 1985 it will be launching as many as 60 space shuttles a year, each with up to seven crew members.

Other women named Monday are Anna L. Fisher of Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif., a physician; Shannon W. Lucid of Oklahoma City, a post-doctoral fellow in biochemistry at the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation; Judith A. Resnik, member of the engineering staff of Xerox Corp.; Sally K. Ride, Stanford, Calif., a research assistant in the physics department at Stanford University; Margaret R. Seddon, Memphis, Tenn., a physician.

The three blacks are Air Force Maj. Guion S. Bluford Jr., Dayton, Ohio, stationed at

Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio; Air Force Maj. Frederick D. Gregory, Hampton, Va., currently at the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Va., and civilian Ronald E. McNair of Marina Del Rey, Calif., who works for the optical physics department of Hughes Research Laboratories. Gregory was selected as a shuttle pilot.

The astronaut of Oriental extraction is Air Force Capt. Ellison S. Ohizuka of Kealahou, Hawaii, currently at the Air Force test pilot school, Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. He was born in Hawaii of Japanese-American parents.

'Malaise' described

MONTREAL (CP) — Pierre Peladeau, organizer of the Montreal hearings of the Task Force on Canadian Unity, said today there is "a malaise in Canada that is felt very deeply here in Quebec."

Peladeau, president of the Quebecor Inc. publishing chain, told the opening of the task force's Montreal hearings that the basis of the problem being studied by the commission was the election of the Parti Quebecois.

"This was a shock that took some people by surprise," Peladeau said.

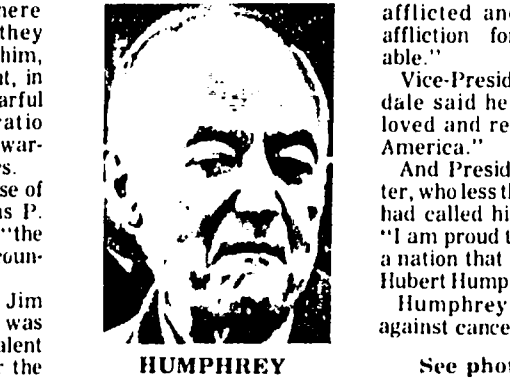
HUBERT HUMPHREY

'Happy warrior' mourned

WASHINGTON — There were years in which they laughed at him, jeered at him, and even spat at him. But, in the end, there was only tearful praise for Hubert Horatio Humphrey, the "happy warrior" of American politics.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill called him "the most genuine liberal this country has ever produced."

House Majority Leader Jim Wright of Texas said he was a man with "a special talent for providing comfort for the



HUMPHREY

afflicted and, on occasion, affliction for the comfortable."

Vice-President Walter Mondale said he was "the most loved and respected man in America."

And President Jimmy Carter, who less than a year before had called him a loser, said: "I am proud to be president of a nation that loves a man like Hubert Humphrey so much..."

Humphrey lost his fight against cancer Friday.

See photos page 5

TODAY

Ben Wicks

'Do we have to hide if Anita Bryant comes to town, Dad?'

FEATURED INSIDE

- City deliberations over the proposed community plan have been postponed for a week. Page 3.
 - Anita Bryant's visit to Toronto sparked protests by those who criticize her stand against the rights of homosexuals. Page 7.
 - The Mohawks, Spruce Kings and Midget Kings were all double winners during the weekend. Page 13.
 - The Dallas Cowboys rode over the Denver Broncos in the Super Bowl. Page 13.
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THE WEATHER

A south-westerly flow of moist Pacific air over the Central Interior is expected to bring Prince George cloudy skies with a chance of snow and mild temperatures today and Tuesday.

The forecast high today is -6, the low -11. The high Sunday was -8, the low -9, with no precipitation. On this date last year the high was -1, the low -9.

SNOW

NOW HEAR THIS

- City works crews were sent up to Cascade Street the other day when one of the men working on a gas line hit a water line and had water cascading down Cascade Street.
- Mrs. Marg Rahier wants to thank the anonymous benefactor who found her purse and mailed it back — minus only enough to cover the mailing costs. She says it proves there are some honest citizens in Prince George.
- Fraser-Fort George Regional District directors were recently discussing the issue of merchants along the old section of Highway 16 East getting subsidies because of road relocation. Mayor Harold Moffat said maybe downtown merchants should also think about asking for a subsidy because of the construction of Pine Centre. Al Holdner, director for Chief Lake, quipped that they already do. "It's brought more business to the city."
- The colorful Northern B.C. Winter Games programs hit the streets this week, but there seems to be a small problem. Nowhere in the book does it give the dates of the games. They are here Feb. 2-5.