

Western separatist wins byelection

OLDS, Alta. (CP) — "I think it's the beginning of a new era," Gord Kesler said Wednesday night over the whoops and hollers of fellow western separatists gathered in a rented store front.

Kesler, an independent oilman and sometime steer wrestler, took 42 per cent of the vote in the byelection in the Alberta constituency of Olds-Didsbury on Wednesday. He will represent the eight-month-old Western Canada Concept party in a legislative session scheduled to begin March 1.

The federal government should take his election as a signal that Albertans want a say in their country's affairs, Kesler said.

He said his election shows that if Albertans don't get a voice in those affairs, "they are prepared to go for independence and he'll give them that voice and control over their own destiny."

For Prime Minister Trudeau, the lightning rod of western discontent, he had harsher words: "If we're all lucky, he'll have a heart attack within the next five minutes."

Social Credit Leader Rod Sykes, who saw the constituency fall after more than a generation in Socred hands, called the result "astounding."

Alberta NDP leader Grant Notley called it "a result that has shaken everyone."

Stephen Stiles, a lawyer who became the fir Progressive Conservative since 1971 to finish third in any Alberta election, said it was clear his party's government — which still commands a 73-member majority in the 79-seat legislature — has to communicate more effectively with the people.

Premier Peter Lougheed was at home in Edmonton, inaccessible and silent.

The final unofficial vote count showed Kesler with 4,025 votes. Social Credit candidate Lloyd Quantz had 2,682. Stiles 2,420, NDP candidate Myrna Jarboe 309, Liberal George Leussink 130 and Independent Adilsha Shivji nine.

The byelection was called after former Socred leader Bob Clark resigned from the legislature. About 73 per cent of the eligible voters cast ballots, a respectable turnout for a byelection that equalled the showing in the 1979 general election.

The result throws Alberta politics into a turmoil, with a general election no more than a year away. Opposition party spokesmen predicted Lougheed will call an election within six months. New Demo-

crats and Liberals said the Social Credit party, now the official Opposition with three members in the legislature, died with the loss of one of its last bastions.

"I'm going to be leader of the opposition within a year," Notley said.

The toughest comment came from Jarboe, the 42-year-old high school guidance counsellor who raised the NDP vote total in what even Notley concedes is not NDP country to 309 from 152 in the 1979 general election.

"I abhor everything they stand for," Jarboe said of the WCC. She said the result showed an "hysterical over-reaction" which benefited a "lunatic fringe."

Ray Speaker, Social Credit house leader, summed up the general interpretation that Western Canada Concept had tapped a strong protest vote among the common people of the rural constituency located about 70 kilometres north of Calgary.

"They're fed up with Trudeau, they're fed up with high interest, they're sick and tired of a budget that suppresses them and takes away their opportunity to pass on their farms to their sons," he said.

"My people would vote for them too."



Gordon Kesler, western separatist, kisses bear mascot after victory Wednesday.

The Citizen

Thursday, February 18, 1982 Prince George, British Columbia



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APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE

Canada Act clears major U.K. hurdle

by AILEEN McCABE
Southam News

LONDON — After more than seven continuous hours of debate, the British House of Commons gave approval in principle to the Canada Bill Wednesday night and voted 334 to 44 in favor of second reading.

The vote clears the way for the bill to be sent to committee of the whole, probably early next week, and leaves only one major hurdle — the House of Lords — between Canada and its new constitution.

RUSSIAN CREW

'Great sacrifice'

OTTAWA (CP) — The Soviet container ship Mekhanik Tarasov was speeding to the rescue of workers from the oil rig Ocean Ranger before it sank in the North Atlantic, says Ray Perrault, government leader in the Senate.

"Canadians should be grateful for the great sacrifice made by those who served on that Russian ship in their efforts to aid those on the Ocean Ranger," he told the upper chamber as officials continued trying to unravel the double tragedy which claimed more than 100 lives.

The rig, which collapsed with the loss of 84 lives, sent an international distress signal to which the Tarasov was responding before it sank, carrying at least 21 persons to their deaths, an aide to Perrault said Wednesday.

The information was confirmed by the federal Transport Department, the Senate leader told the upper chamber.

Meanwhile, in the Commons, Environ-

ment Minister John Roberts confirmed that the ill-fated Soviet vessel had been scheduled to carry a shipment of potentially dangerous uranium hexafluoride from Canada to Russia.

And Transport Minister Jean-Luc Pepin said survivors landed in Canada will have to answer questions from Canadian authorities on the loss of the ship.

Preliminary inquiries will be conducted under "casualty-at-sea" regulations, he added.

Roberts said the Soviet ship was supposed to pick up the shipment but was late and Eldorado Nuclear Ltd., the Crown-owned uranium company, sent the nuclear material to the Soviet Union on another Soviet vessel.

Opposition Leader Joe Clark immediately demanded details of any uranium trade between Canada and the Soviet Union.

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out to be the case and those who spoke against the bill were clearly concerned about the substance and propriety of the legislation.

Protection for Canada's aboriginal peoples was foremost on their minds and as representatives of the Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia Indians looked on from the public galleries, one after another MP pleaded their case.

Labor MP Bruce George called the Nov. 6 constitutional accord which was signed by Prime Minister Trudeau and nine provincial premiers "a sordid cabal."

He said: "The Indians neither consented to this bill nor are protected by it. It is gravely defective in many respects."

George told his colleagues that they had a "moral and legal obligation" to the Indians and he urged them to vote against second reading, at least until the House of Lords has decided whether or not it will hear an appeal from the Association of Alberta Indians.

Even many of those who supported the bill, such as former prime minister James Callaghan, expressed concern about the fate of the native people under the proposed constitution. He suggested that "it would be helpful to us if the Canadian government could give us an authoritative statement on aboriginal rights."

Still others were concerned that the Alberta Indians had not yet exhausted the avenues of legal appeal and they pointed out how awkward it would be if the House of Lords decided to hear the case at the same time the Commons was dealing with the Canada Act.

The Alberta Indians are trying to prove that the British government is still responsible for their welfare under century old treaties.

Job program's value doubted

VANCOUVER (CP) — A new federal job-creation program is "a straw in the wind more than anything else," says economist John Helliwell of the University of B.C.

Economist Michael Walker of the Fraser Institute, said the plan is "not too earthshaking, is it?"

Employers would look at such a program cautiously, said Bill Hamilton, president of the Employers Council of B.C.

The federal government signed a job-creation agreement Feb. 8 with Ontario and is offering a similar plan to other provinces. B.C. Labor Minister Jack Heinrich said Wednesday a decision has still not been made.

Under the agreement, Ontario will spend \$4.5 million to provide 875 jobs for six months.

Helliwell said similar programs adopted across the country might provide relief for three per cent of Canada's one million unemployed.

He said the program sounds similar to relief programs used during the Depression of the 1930s, and added that such a program carried out on a large scale might threaten organized labor.

Walker said the money would be better spent on education to fill the growing demand for highly skilled workers.

"I wonder if we should be encouraging people to take jobs planting trees, or put

that money into training for computer programmers," Walker said.

Under the agreement signed with Ontario, Ottawa will add \$50 to the regular weekly unemployment insurance payments of \$190, and the province will add an additional \$60 for a weekly paycheck of \$300.

Recipients will be put to work on jobs suggested by the provincial government and employers.

Senator Ray Perrault suggested Wednesday that in B.C., this work could include projects such as reforestation, wharf construction and building fish ladders.

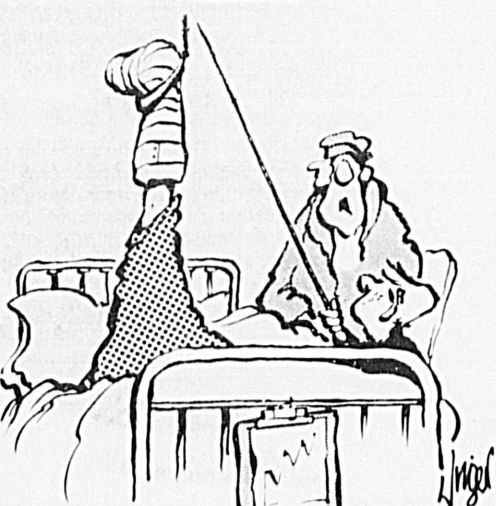


Citizen photo by Brock Gable

Igloo

Tracy Werk, her sister Christine and Erynn Johnson, explore an igloo built by the Werks' father behind their home in College Heights. Gordon Werk used a saw to cut out blocks of snow for the igloo, built as a Valentine's Day present for his daughters. It's the first one he's built, but he's pleased with the results.

HERMAN



"Don't play with Dad's pulley!"

FEATURED TODAY

Zimbabwe power play

Zimbabwe's Prime Minister Mugabe has dismissed Joshua Nkomo, his main political rival, from cabinet amid accusations that Nkomo was plotting a coup. Page 2.

Violence on the ice

Violence in hockey has resulted in another player being charged. Page 13.

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THE WEATHER

A Pacific storm has arrived earlier than expected, causing periods of snow and rain today.

Strong southerly winds are expected to abate by Friday, however rain and snow are likely to continue.

Expected high temperature today is 5, with an overnight low of -1 and high Friday of 4.

Wednesday had 5.3 hours of sunshine and no measurable precipitation. The high was 3 and the low -11.

Last year on this date the high was 10 and the low -1.

Sunset today is at 5:26 p.m., with sunrise Friday set for 7:22 a.m.

Sadrack says . . .



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NOW HEAR THIS

● How much snow is there? There's so much snow in one man's College Heights lot that he had no place to put it any more and began trucking it to the city snow dump.

● Small boy in a local department store was bugging his dad to buy him a copy of the little book that helps you solve Rubic's Cube. "You've already solved the cube and besides you can't read yet," said the exasperated father.

● While looking over samples of new report card forms soon to be tested in some elementary schools, school trustee Graham Farstad asked why there were so many different forms and what some of the things on them described. Trustee Roy Stewart had that figured out. "It's actually an intelligence test for the teacher," he said.