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# The Prince George Citizen

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## FIRE HITS CITY PLYWOOD MILL



Prince George firemen hose down the charred ruins of the steam treatment building at North Central Plywood.

## Worker sees blaze, hears blast

by DIANE BAILEY  
Staff reporter

An early morning blaze destroyed the steam treatment building at North Central Plywood, leaving only two charred end walls standing.

Firefighters were called to the scene just after 5:30 this morning.

"When we got here we could see the smoke from the other side of the bridge," said assistant chief Bill Shaw, motioning at the twisted mass of smouldering rubble being watered down by firefighters.

"This whole thing was shooting flames 30 or 40 feet in the air."

Shaw estimated it took about half an hour to bring the blaze under control. He said the concrete wall of the main

plant, which runs alongside the treatment building, helped stop the fire from spreading.

"Actually the fire wasn't as bad as we thought because the building was isolated," Shaw said.

"There is a hell of a lot of sawdust on the roof of the main building. They are just washing it down right now."

The cause of the fire is being investigated. Bruno Rositano, who was in charge of the clean-up crew on duty at the time, said security reported a "hot" burner and he went into the building to shut it off.

Rositano said he left, then returned to check the burner. It was after he left the second time that the fire started.

"It wasn't too long after I left that it burned."

Rositano also said he heard an explosion after the fire started burning.

Plant maintenance supervisor Norm Hoare said it was difficult to gauge the damage.

"Everything in that building is a total loss."

Steam treatment is used to soften the logs for peeling.

Supervisory personnel at North Central could not be reached before deadline to comment on how the fire will affect operations.

But Rositano said the steam treatment is not as important now as it is in the winter when the logs are frozen. In warmer weather the logs can be softened sufficiently by just pumping water over them, he said.

There were no injuries in the blaze, although one firefighter hurt his knee.

## Pope's mass turns violent in Santiago

**Citizen news services**

**SANTIAGO** — Police firing guns, tear gas and water cannon battled with anti-government protesters at an open-air mass celebrated by Pope John Paul, who watched in dismay as clashes flared within 50 metres of him.

Today, Chilean authorities reported that about 260 people were injured.

The violence broke out Friday in a Santiago park, where an estimated 600,000 people heard the pontiff urge political reconciliation in Chile and renunciation of violence.

The Associated Press reported Dr. Raul Guzman, head of Santiago's central first aid station, said today 220 people were treated for fractures and bruises and eight of them were sent to an intensive care unit.

The police said 38 troopers were injured, four seriously, and three people were wounded by gunfire. Witnesses had said a priest was among those hurt and police said earlier a journalist was one of those hit by gunfire.

The Red Cross said it aided about 600 people — mostly victims of tear gas, which the wind carried to the papal altar.

The Pope appeared shocked, pressing his hands to his forehead and gazing out at the crowd. Vatican security guards rushed to the altar.

"The search for the common good requires the rejection of all forms of violence," the Pope said from the altar.

Opponents of President Augusto Pinochet's right-wing military regime have demonstrated repeatedly since the Pope's arrival on Wednesday.

The ceremony Friday night was to beatify Sister Teresa of the Andes, a Chilean nun who died in 1920 and is credited with several miracles. Beatification is the final step before sainthood.

But the Pope also intended the rite, billed as a mass of reconciliation, as a call for talks between the Pinochet regime and Chileans who want him out.

Protesters virtually took over a section of the congregation, setting up barricades and causing disruptions from the time the Pope appeared.

Police in vans circled the protest area, firing tear gas canisters. Women were seen falling to the ground, apparently because of the gas.

Priests on the altar wiped their eyes and children cried and

choked. Vatican officials said the Pope was not harmed.

Protesters shouted slogans against Pinochet, calling him and his secret police "murderers." They also threw rocks at police and set bonfires.

Some battles between police and hundreds of protesters erupted only 50 metres from the Pope, who skipped over parts of his prepared homily to end the mass faster.

Priests who had assisted the Pope during the mass came down from the altar to calm the crowd and to stop organized columns of masked protesters, many wielding clubs, who were provoking the disturbances.

Policemen had to duck behind the papal altar to avoid flying rocks.

## Ship crew's strike shuts grain port

**PRINCE RUPERT (CP)** — A strike by 12 Filipino crew members of Panamanian-registered grain ship has halted loading of grain at this north-coast B.C. city.

The crew members of the ship, owned by the Hong Kong-based Unique Shipping Agency, walked out Thursday afternoon to protest low wages and local unionized longshoremen refused to cross their picket lines, halting the loading of barley at the Ridley Island terminal, which has one elevator.

Three ships were waiting to load Friday and another three more expected to arrive during the weekend. As well, the grain elevator was full by Friday, preventing rail cars from unloading.

The walkout has not affected other port operations such as coal and lumber shipments.

## FOREST MINISTER CONFESSES

## 'I flunked my first cabinet test'

by KEN BERNSOHN  
Staff reporter

When Bill Vander Zalm says you're the new Minister of Forests, "You start to hyperventilate," said Dave Parker, named to the position Monday.

"It's anticipation. In caucus we thought something different was going to happen," Parker said in an interview in Prince George Friday.

In his first five days in office, Parker's biggest surprise was learning. "When someone asks me what my opinion is, I have to remember they're not asking me what my opinion is. They're asking what the government opinion is."

Someone asked Parker what his opinion was on the 15 per cent export tax on lumber going to the U.S., and changing it to stumpage.

"I thought he was really asking what my personal opinion was, which I shared with him, not the government view."

"Now I understand this . . . quite

clearly . . . having just failed my first mid-term in Cabinet 100.

"The die has been cast by the federal government and the provinces including British Columbia that the stumpage system will absorb a portion or all of that import tax. That's what we have to resolve in the first couple of months."

About three dozen calls came in Monday afternoon to congratulate Parker and ask when various groups could meet with him.

"Actually the first discussions I had were about the Central Interior Loggers Association, and there was my old friend Howard Lloyd."

"I've worked with that sector more than with anyone else in my career and I have a lot of respect for them."

Parker has spent much of his career as a forester working as woods manager for forest companies. He looks the part, over six feet tall, broad shouldered, like he's more used to spending time in the bush than in an office. Wisely,

he's wearing a sport coat to the Northern Interior Lumber Sector convention. Parker would look as comfortable in a three piece suit as a duck would with false teeth.

"There was some confusion in the Minister's office because the three ladies working in there weren't sure whether they had jobs or not and weren't clear on what they should do because there had been rapid change. Once we talked about that for a few minutes and I assured them there weren't going to be any more upsets, everything just flowed."

As Parliamentary Secretary for Forests and Lands, Parker had met with the Forest Service executive before and was aware of the issues they were dealing with at the more than a half dozen locations the Forest Service is spread among in Victoria.

Parker was up to 1:30 Friday morning dealing with the backlog of material on the Minister's desk, then had to be up at 5:30 to go to Prince George for the Northern In-

terior Lumber Sector convention.

With that schedule, Parker doesn't expect to be able to spend much time with his wife, Dawn, or his children, Jennifer, 17 or Mike, 13.

"We discussed it and agreed it wouldn't be a whole lot different than when I was working in industry. We got together basically on Sundays. That's been the pattern all my working life."

Dawn, who teaches elementary school, will stay in Terrace.

"Jennifer has a number of extra curricular activities and she's really concentrating on her studies. Mike is a natural athlete, playing basketball, hockey and soccer. Everybody's active that really makes a difference, nobody's hanging around the video parlor."

"My wife said, 'move to Victoria, be in a strange neighborhood, you'll never be home. I'd rather be in a neighborhood I know and you'll never be home,'" Parker laughed.

## . . .and in Monday's Citizen . . .

One of Canada's largest lending institutions has just published a remarkably frank forecast about interest rates. See Monday's business page for details.

Also planned:

- A look at life in Shanghai today.
- Why the Police Academy movies are popular.

### Daylight time starts tonight

For those who thought they had finally figured out when daylight saving time starts . . . forget it. The rules have changed this year.

Instead of the last Sunday in April, daylight saving time now starts on the first Sunday.

Tomorrow, in fact.

We are following the lead of the United States, which decided the best way to gain an extra hour of afternoon sunshine was to legislate it.

So put your clocks an hour ahead tonight before you go to bed. Daylight saving time officially begins at 2 a.m. Sunday.

At 2 a.m. Sunday, April 5, most of the nation will switch to daylight saving time by moving clocks ahead one hour

**HERMAN**

"If you're that worried about catching it, sleep in the stupid kitchen."

## Free trade a long shot, Baker says

**WASHINGTON (CP)** — Progress is being made in Canada-U.S. negotiations for a free-trade agreement, but the countries are "a long shot" away from resolving some tough issues, Treasury Secretary James Baker said Friday.

It's going to be difficult to get a free-trade agreement "but I think it's worth a try," he said.

The interview was taped for Newsmaker Saturday, a Cable News Network program.

Baker is a member of the cabinet delegation scheduled to accom-

pany President Ronald Reagan to Ottawa for talks on trade and other issues on Sunday and Monday with Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and some of his cabinet.

Baker said the Reagan administration has increased the visibility of the trade talks since Mulroney gave Vice-President George Bush an earful on the subject in January.

Mulroney invited Bush and Baker to Canada at the time to tell them that Ottawa was displeased by the administration's neglect of trade and acid rain issues.

"One of the Canadian concerns was that the free trade agreement was not receiving the same visibility and emphasis in the United States that it was in Canada," Baker said. "Since that time, of course, we have increased that visibility and emphasis."

"It's a matter that's high on our agenda. It's very important to the United States and it would represent a truly historic achievement if we're able to get there."

"It's going to be very tough to get there but I think it's worth a try."

Baker did not specify unresolved issues but examples are Canada's proposal for a form of exemption from U.S. trade penalty laws and difficulties on both sides in defining trade subsidies that would be barred under a pact.

"There are some very, very tough issues still to be resolved," Baker said. "Are we making progress?"

"Yes, I think we're making progress. Are we home yet? No, not by a long shot."