

# National

## Bourassa making overture for unity

QUEBEC (CP) — The Quebec government wants the current constitutional negotiations to succeed and is ready to be accomodating, Premier Robert Bourassa said as he opened a new session of the legislature Thursday.

Bourassa called Canada "a remarkably privileged country in terms of peace, justice and quality of life" and warned Quebecers breaking it up would be a long, complex and costly process.

"The Quebec government and the majority of this assembly deeply wish the success of the current constitutional discussions," he said in Quebec's equivalent of a throne speech. "The current government has demonstrated in the past its willingness to achieve a reasonable agreement. That's still our policy and we believe it is shared by the majority of Quebecers."

But Bourassa also sought to reassure Quebecers they would not suffer another defeat like the rejected Meech Lake accord in 1990 or the patriation of the Constitution in 1982 over Quebec's objection.

## Price index up slightly

OTTAWA (CP) — The annual inflation rate rose marginally to 1.7 per cent in February, Statistics Canada reported today.

That's up from a 21-year low of 1.6 per cent in January.

As well, the consumer price index, calculated from a list of hundreds of goods and services in cities across the country each month, rose to 127.1 from 127 in January.

Most of the increase in the index was attributed to a 2.2 per cent hike in clothing as Christmas season sales promotions ended.

Housing, food, and recreation increases also boosted prices, but these were offset by a drop of 1.1 per cent in transportation costs.

"We're in for a relatively stable inflationary period over the next little while," said George Saba, chief conqmist at Montreal Trust.

## ON ANY CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

# Albertans promised a referendum

**Southam News**

EDMONTON — Alberta's voters will have the last word on any package to change the Constitution, Premier Don Getty promised Thursday, at the opening of the legislature's spring sitting.

"The Constitution belongs to the people and we will not amend it without asking them and without having a decision by the people," Getty told reporters after introducing a bill that would require a provincewide referendum before the legislature could approve constitutional amendments.

"This is a very important part of our future constitutional plans. It is binding."

In the throne speech, setting government priorities for the spring sitting, it is clear Alberta does not want to repeat the disastrous Meech Lake constitutional process, which came under heavy fire for the secrecy surrounding those talks two years ago.

"My government will not introduce a constitutional amendment to this assembly without again consulting Albertans," said Lt.

## FIVE KILLED IN ARCTIC AIR CRASH

# Hercules verdict: Crew error

WINNIPEG (CP) — The military cargo plane crash that killed five people and put 13 survivors through a bone-chilling Arctic ordeal last autumn was caused largely by crew error, the Armed Forces said Thursday.

Engulfed in darkness, the crew seemingly ignored instruments that likely would have told them they were about to slam into the frozen tundra, said Lt.-Gen. David Huddleston, head of Air Command.

"Pilot error — crew error — was certainly a direct cause of this accident," Huddleston said after releasing the interim report of the

accident investigation.

"They appeared not to notice what was happening in the aircraft at the time the accident occurred," Huddleston said it's unclear why the crew erred and the investigation is continuing.

Capt. John Couch, pilot of the Hercules CC-130, was hailed as a hero at the time of the crash Oct. 30.

After tirelessly helping the other 13 survivors and giving up warm clothing to the passengers, Couch died of hypothermia hours before rescuers arrived.

Four other people died in the crash near Alert, N.W.T., the

world's northernmost settlement and site of an Armed Forces communications base.

The Hercules was on a supply mission from Edmonton via Thule, Greenland, when it slid into the ground and broke apart 20 kilometres southeast of Alert.

The survivors huddled for 32 hours in the plane's tail section and built fires to fend off the —22 cold.

All-terrain rescue vehicles were forced back by whiteouts. When the weather cleared, medical personnel parachuted to the crash site.

Huddleston said the accident has sparked a number of new measures, such the purchase of new high-tech search equipment. This equipment includes hand-held navigation systems to help rescuers on the ground find crash locations in poor visibility.

The 21-page interim report says the CC-130's navigational aids appeared to be working normally but the crew was unaware how close the plane was to the ground.

The pilot had decided to make a visual approach to Alert, instead of relying on instruments.

Couch and his officers saw the lights of Alert, but with virtually no visual cues on the tundra they may have thought they were closer than they were, Huddleston said.

The crew, he added, should have been watching the instruments — one of which would have started a flashing light when the plane got too low.

"They weren't doing anything which one would immediately suggest represented inattention," he said.

"That is why we have not finished this investigation. We want to find out what went wrong in the interaction of that crew."

## Phone rate reductions expected

OTTAWA (CP) — An application by seven of Canada's nine major telephone companies to restructure their rates for WATS and 800 services was approved by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission on Thursday.

The decision will result in rate reductions of about 20 per cent for most users, a spokesman for the CRTC said. Heavy users of the services include businesses, governments and public institutions such as universities.

At the same time, however, the CRTC turned down a request by Bell Canada to expand its WATS service to include U.S. destinations.

"It's generally very good news," George Horhota, president of the Canadian Business Telecommunications Alliance, said of the ruling. "It brings us more in line with U.S. rates."

But the new rates are still twice as much as is charged in the United States, he said.

## 'Dancehall cuties' stage a kick-in

WHITEHORSE (CP) — Lovers of the can-can want journalist Peter Lesniak's guts for garters.

More than 100 aficionados of the saucy French dance demonstrated outside the offices of the Yukon News on Thursday after editor Lesniak kicked the can-can in an editorial in the twice-weekly paper.

Lesniak described the Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous Can-Can Dancers as a "talentless group of thick thighed hoofers (heifers?)" and "rouged and gartered strumpets."

Lesniak said the dancers, all volunteers who do fund-raising for the annual Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous festival and other charities, are an embarrassment and "undermine years of hard work by the feminist movement."

The unsigned editorial blast angered the dancers, the festival office and supporters of the can-can, a tradition from the Yukon's gold-rush past.

Several protesters formed a spontaneous can-can line. Others carried signs saying It's time to can

Peter Lesniak and Honk if you can-can!

Newspaper owner Steve Robertson rejected demands that Lesniak come down and face the protesters, who began chanting "We want Peter — out of town!" and "Go back to southern Ontario!"

"I asked Peter to come down and he does not want to come down," Robertson said to a chorus of jeers.

Lesniak became editor of the News in 1990 and had worked previously in Yellowknife.

Lesniak's editorial itself was sexist, said festival entertainment co-ordinator Cathy Woods.

"I want you to ask him personally what he thinks of the description of thick-thighed heifers," Woods told Robertson. "If that — judging woman strictly on their physical presentation — is not a sexist remark, I don't know what is."

The paper's owner agreed to arrange a private meeting today between Lesniak and the protesters.

# High seas protest planned

ST. JOHN'S, Nfld. (CP) — Eight trawlers crewed by Newfoundland fishermen will sail for the Grand Banks on March 29 to protest foreign overfishing of scarce northern cod.

"This will be a peaceful and orderly demonstration at sea," union head Richard Cashin said Thursday.

"The purpose of it is to symbolically extend Canada's custody over the rapidly diminishing fish resource in the area and to ensure we avoid a potential environmental disaster."

Cashin, president of the Fisher-

men, Food and Allied Workers, first announced last month an armada would confront foreign ships in a cod war just outside Canada's 200-mile limit.

But the voltage has been turned down several notches on the demonstration designed to garner global support for stringent conservation of cod — the lifeblood of the East Coast fishery.

"We're going to package this so it can win the hearts of the yuppies of Europe and America who banned the seal hunt," said Cashin. "We're going to bury the hatchet on that for now."

The law will ensure full disclosure of information is protected while expansion of a "plain language" policy in government

documents "will make government services and procedures more accessible and more understandable to Albertans."

Without a legislative framework to illuminate it, the throne speech represents a stand-pat position for Getty and an administration slightly past mid-term in its mandate.

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Mike Talarico, Manager of Overwaitea College Heights would like to congratulate SANDRA PERRY on winning the 5 Minute Shopping Spree at the College Heights location. Mrs. Perry collected \$1035 worth of groceries and a \$150 Gift Certificate.

A special thanks to all those who entered and made our contest a great success

# Overwaitea COLLEGE HEIGHTS

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WINNER:  
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