

WEATHER

Sunshine and a few cloudy periods today. Canada's high-low Monday: Hope 63, Inuvik 46 below.

Gov't bares car insurance plan



President and Mrs. Richard Nixon greet Prime Minister Trudeau at the White House Monday night for state dinner.

Trudeau invites Nixon to pay visit to Canada

Canadian Press

WASHINGTON — Prime Minister Trudeau Monday night invited President Richard Nixon to visit Canada at his earliest convenience. Trudeau added during an exchange of toasts at a White House dinner, which ended the first day of the prime minister's two-day visit here: "I can't guarantee there will be no trouble. I can't guarantee it for myself." The reference related to a Nixon comment about his earlier days when he visited many countries which had become trouble spots around the world. Trudeau told the white-tie-and-tails crowd in the state dining room that he believes Canada and the U.S. "are the kind of friends who do tell the truth to each other." He said the truth was told during the high-level talks between him, Nixon and U.S. officials earlier in the day and that is the way it will be in the future. "We know we will always have the helping hand from the U.S.," he said. In his talks with Nixon, Trudeau explored the "rationale" behind the proposed American counter-missile system called Safeguard. That subject, along with a number of other matters, was discussed in a 90-minute private session and later in a larger group of the two leaders joined for another 45 minutes. The group included External Affairs Minister Mitchell Sharp and U.S. State Secretary William Rogers. Spokesmen emphasized the discussions were general on the counter-missile system rather than dealing with any threat to Canada by the possibility of hydrogen warheads exploding over Canadian territory.

It was a busy day in a rainy Washington for the prime minister. He attended a state department lunch tendered by Rogers with a broad mix of political, diplomatic, government, newspaper and other representatives. There, in a light-hearted reference, he pointed up one of his concerns — western Canada crude oil exports in the future. Nixon's views on NATO and his recent European tour, the Arab-Israeli situation, student unrest, east-west relations, oil and international wheat price problems all figured in the discussions. But most interest centred on the modified counter-missile system announced by Nixon on March 14 as a successor to the one called Sentinel.

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Best behavior PM keeps cool

By GEORGE BRIMMELL Province News Services

WASHINGTON — How's the PM doing in the big time. Relax... He's doing just fine. Prime Minister Trudeau was holding his own in very fast company Monday. He was on his best behavior, putting forward a very decorous front and creating a favorable impression on every hand. If anything, his reputation as a swinging playboy, or as a mildly eccentric and exciting character, has suffered on his trip to Washington as President Nixon's first head-of-government guest. Still, the urge to slide down a bannister, or cut up in some fashion, may become irresistible. Who can tell? But on the first day's performance, Canada's dashing leader, much the object of respectful admiration, was the very picture of a proper minister. In his public appearances, at the White House and the state department, he'd get straight A's for deportment. He was confident and cool, quiet and reserved — but friendly and at ease, and apparently enjoying himself immensely. He seemed to be impressed by the honors being accorded him... but not too impressed. He exuded a quiet confidence and conveyed the impression he knew exactly what he was about on this mission: that he was going into his talks with the president.

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Secret talks in Mideast

New York Times United Press International

WASHINGTON — King Hussein of Jordan and Foreign Minister Abba Eban of Israel have held at least two secret meetings in recent months to try to arrange elements of a Middle East settlement, according to reliable sources, but their efforts were unsuccessful. These neutral sources disclosed that King Hussein was dissatisfied with the terms that Israel had offered and had broken off the meetings for the sake of Arab solidarity. He is understood to have insisted from the outset that any tentative understandings would have to be made known through Dr. Gunnar Jarring, of Sweden, the United Nations representative for the Middle East, to ensure that other Arab governments would be properly informed. But this never became necessary.

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In operation by summer?

By ALEX YOUNG Province Victoria Bureau

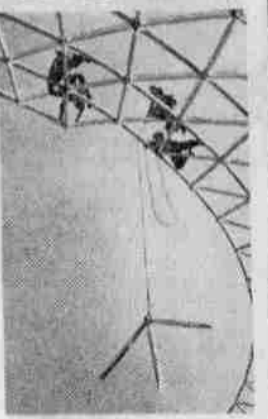
VICTORIA — B.C. is to get a new and compulsory auto insurance scheme providing basic compensation for all deaths and personal injuries caused in road accidents, regardless of who is to blame. In addition, the plan will require all drivers to be covered by minimum public liability insurance of \$50,000, which will permit suits for recovery of death and injury damages above and beyond the basic no-fault benefits. After introducing legislation Monday proving for the new scheme, Attorney-General Peterson said the government hopes to put the plan into effect this summer. Peterson said he expects the plan will cut premiums, possibly as much as 25 per cent.

The plan places more emphasis than existing car insurance on compensation for human injury and less on benefits for repair of vehicles. In an apparent effort to promote safer driving, the legislation also proposes to increase the minimum age for a driver's licence from 16 to 18 unless the licence applicant is a certified graduate from an authorized driver training school. However, Peterson said, the increased age section of the legislation will not be brought into effect until there are enough authorized training courses available — and he would not predict when this might be. Other highlights of the new insurance legislation: The government is empowered to enter the auto

insurance business if it feels the insurance industry is not providing coverage at proper rates. The "tort" or fault system is virtually eliminated on collision damage to a vehicle, with the owner being unable to recover any more than \$250 through small debts court action from the person responsible. Collision insurance is still permitted but, because no recovery of damages above \$250 will be allowed, it will be costly — in fact, insurance companies offer it. Because the overall public liability insurance will be compulsory, companies selling it will not be able to cancel policies. High-risk drivers will pay higher rates, as at present, but all rates for all categories of drivers will be "flat rated" — that is, a driver in one area of B.C. will pay the same rate as a driver in his same category who lives in another area. Rates will be subject to control by a government board, with power to act against discriminatory rates, on complaint by individuals who allege they are being discriminated against. The compulsion in the scheme will be enforced under a provision in the legislation stating that anyone convicted of not having insurance is liable to a fine of not less than \$250 or a jail sentence.

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Port Moody

Flames destroy school

Port Moody Secondary School burned to the ground early today despite efforts of three fire departments. Firemen from Port Moody, Coquitlam and New Westminster fought the blaze for four hours but couldn't control the fire and the building collapsed in flames. Police tried to keep back crowds as loud explosions from laboratory oxygen bottles ripped huge chunks out of the burning building. Cause of the fire — which apparently started in paper towels in a basement storage area of the two-storey school — was not known. Students playing basketball in the gymnasium of the 634-student school on Port Moody's main street escaped only minutes before flames reached that part of the building early in the fire. The school was built in 1951.

Ike weaker, losing ground

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former president Dwight Eisenhower grew weaker Monday and lost ground in his struggle for life. The five-star general was conscious but "requiring continuous oxygen and other supportive measures," bulletins issued by Walter Reed Army Hospital said. He said he knows personally of two cases in recent years of patients being detained "to vegetate" in Riverview — one, a woman, for 41 months, and another for a year. "I sincerely feel there is not enough protection against such things now," LeCours said. "... it is a deplorable situation." The patient who was detained in Riverview for 41 months, he said, received no proper treatment or medication and came out of the institution sicker than she went in. "She might have stayed there forever if I hadn't interceded," he added, "yet there was no reason for her."

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MP committee recommends nation retain NATO links

Canadian Press

OTTAWA — The Commons external affairs and defence committee was reported Monday to have adopted a recommendation that Canada maintain its membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. A committee source said the vote was in favor of maintaining the status quo, "apparently meaning that Canada's

present contribution to the 15-member alliance should remain unchanged. Exact wording of the recommendation on NATO was not divulged. The committee, which returned Saturday from a two-week European tour, met in closed session Monday to hammer out its report to Parliament, scheduled for tabling Wednesday.

The vote on NATO was reported to have been almost unanimous in the 30-member committee with only two or three members opposed. In addition to the NATO clause, the committee's report is expected to contain recommendations endorsing Canadian participation in peacekeeping operations and disarmament initiatives and calling for greater civil defence efforts.

Makes life possible

Scope spots water on Mars

New York Times

NEW YORK — Astronomers at the McDonald Observatory in Texas said Monday they have obtained the first "absolutely conclusive proof" that water exists in the atmosphere of Mars. Although the water content appears to be very low, the observations seem to dispose of the argument that the air of Mars is so dry that life could not exist there. The astronomers said the observations are consistent with the long-argued theory of migration of water vapor from the Martian pole emerging from winter to the pole about to enter winter. This movement was thought to account for the "wave of darkening" that some have taken as evidence of vegetation. The darkening of the Martian landscape begins in

spring around the fringes of the polar cap that is melting. The darkening moves toward the Martian equator at about 28 miles a day, as though spring began in the Arctic and moved south. It has been argued that melting of polar frost adds enough water vapor to the air to enable plants to flourish, although non-living processes could also account for this color change. The observations were described Monday in telephone interviews with Dr. Harlan Smith, head of the McDonald Observatory, operated by the University of Texas, and by Dr. Ronald Schorn of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, operated by the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena. Another member of the observing team was Dr. Stephen Little of the University of Texas.

Since the turn of the century a number of scientists have suspected that the white polar caps of Mars were covered with dry ice (frozen carbon dioxide) rather than frozen water. Smith believes the new observations show that "at the least an appreciable amount" of water ice must be present in the caps. In the Texas observations the observatory's 82-inch reflecting telescope channeled light from Mars into a large spectrograph which revealed the relative intensities of the light's constituent wavelengths. At several hundred points in the infra-red portion of the spectrum there was absorption at wavelengths characteristic of water vapor. This indicated that the light had passed through water

vapor in the atmosphere of Mars. Although the observatory is 6,800 feet above sea level in desert country, and although the observing was done on two unusually dry nights this month and last, there was still 20 times more water vapor in the earth's atmosphere overhead than in the Martian atmosphere under observation. It was found that air in the southern skies of Mars contained, on the average, enough water to cover the surface to a depth of two thousandths of an inch. Air over the northern hemisphere was half as moist. The total humidity of the Martian atmosphere is now estimated, from the Texas observations, to be sufficient to produce one cubic mile of liquid water.

Premier bows to opposition; drops mental health change

Province Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA — Premier Bennett withdrew a section of a proposed government amendment to the Mental Health Act when it came under heavy fire Monday from both sides of the legislature. The section, described by the Opposition as a step taking mental health legislation back to the dark ages, would have given the health minister or anyone designated by him power to detain indefinitely a patient in a psychiatric unit. Sacred backbencher Ernie LeCours (Richmond) startled the legislature when he said there is already insufficient protection for mental patients in B.C. and then launched a sharp attack on Riverview Provincial Mental Hospital.



ERNIE LECOIRS ... attacks Riverview

He said he knows personally of two cases in recent years of patients being detained "to vegetate" in Riverview — one, a woman, for 41 months, and another for a year. "I sincerely feel there is not enough protection against such things now," LeCours said. "... it is a deplorable situation." The patient who was detained in Riverview for 41 months, he said, received no proper treatment or medication and came out of the institution sicker than she went in. "She might have stayed there forever if I hadn't interceded," he added, "yet there was no reason for her."

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