

Auto Insurers Competitive, Lawyer Tells Commission

By RAY LOGIE
Sun Staff Reporter

VICTORIA — An insurance industry lawyer told a royal commission here Tuesday it has no choice but to conclude there is free and open competition in B.C.'s car insurance industry.

Douglas McKay Brown, QC, presenting the final argument for the All Canada Insurance Federation, told the royal commission on auto insurance that to conclude otherwise would be wrong in the face of industry evidence introduced since the commission opened hearings in May, 1966.

All Canada represents the majority of B.C.'s 200 insurance companies.

"Any finding by this commission that there is not a reasonable amount of price and other forms of competition in the industry would, I submit, ignore reality," Brown said.

"Whatever recommendations this commission makes to the lieutenant-governor in council, I would ask that such recommendations be based on the evidence introduced that the industry is competitive."

Brown was summarizing evidence introduced with All Canada's massive three-volume

brief submitted to the three-member commission last year.

Earlier during Tuesday's hearing, counsel Charles Locke, QC, representing the B.C. Insurance Agents Association accused the industry of failing to solve problems which exist within it.

Locke charged that the industry had failed to eliminate delays experienced by motorists in obtaining insurance on the assigned risk plan.

He also told commissioners that some companies cream the market by accepting only safe risks and that tight market conditions in the past have resulted in good drivers being placed on the assigned risk plan.

The assigned risk plan is a co-operative industry organization reserved for drivers with a bad accident or conviction record who are unable to obtain car insurance on the open market.

Locke suggested the commission recommend government intervention to correct these abuses.

Locke urged the commission to recommend to the government that court procedures in accident cases be streamlined,

licence suspensions be more rigidly enforced, compulsory automobile insurance be studied and research be undertaken to discover a way in which "homicidal, sadistic and suicidal" drivers can be detected before an accident occurs.

Locke, however, said that although the government should supervise the insurance industry, it should not control it.

"There is no place for government in a competitive car insurance industry," he said.

The commission resumed hearings Tuesday, after a two-month adjournment, to hear final summary arguments by industry counsel expected to conclude next week.

Brown told the three commissioners that in spite of the existence of car insurance rate-fixing organizations, intense price competition does exist.

He said that many of B.C.'s 200 car insurance companies are classed as independents who ignore rates set by the two major rate-fixing organizations — Canadian Underwriters Association and the Independent Insurance Conference.

WATER CUT Resort Has Pioneer Holiday

Sun Staff Reporter

SECHELT — The residents of Redroofs, a tiny resort near here, began Canada's second century almost as their fore-runners began the first.

For the entire holiday weekend, people in its 57 homes were without water.

For a few hours Saturday evening they were also without power.

So they trooped to a nearby creek with makeshift buckets for water and in the twilight hours of July 1 turned to candles and kerosene lamps for light.

"It was pretty much like pioneer days," said Redroofs Trading Co. owner Jim Cooper.

Redroofs is supplied with water by a two-inch plastic pipeline from Trout Lake, three miles away.

RCMP here said Tuesday the pipe was cut through in four places by an instrument such as a hatchet or machete.

B.C. Hydro officials said the power outage was caused by a faulty connection.

Island Police Like Drunk Driver Law

Sun Staff Reporter

VICTORIA — Police officers here have had no problems enforcing the new 24-hour roadside suspension law aimed at drinking drivers, Police Chief J. F. Gregory said Tuesday.

"The system has worked very well in the months we have had the law," Gregory said in an interview.

"We have had no problems with enforcing the law, although it is not really an enforcement issue."

"We are simply asking the public to co-operate and we've been getting wonderful co-operation."

Under the new provincial law being tested on Vancouver Island, a police officer has authority to suspend a motorist's driving licence for 24 hours if the driver has been drinking.

The law came into effect here April 5 on a trial basis. As of Saturday all of Vancouver Island was included in the program.

It will be extended to Greater Vancouver in early August and will be in effect throughout B.C. by the beginning of September.

Attorney-General Robert Bonner has said.

Gregory agreed with Bonner who Tuesday opposed a proposal by Vancouver Police Chief Ralph Booth that vehicles of borderline drinking drivers be impounded, as an alternative to the new suspension ruling.

Booth said Friday: "It is questionable whether we could adopt this new policy, with our vehicle."

He said he would like to see legislation that would allow city police to move a vehicle (by impounding it) and send the borderline drinking driver home by cab.

Bonner replied that he saw no purpose in Booth's proposal.

"The car is not the offender; the driver is," he said.

Gregory used the same words to express his views on the proposal.

\$1,000 OPENS LABOR FIGHT

A spokesman for the B.C. Federation of Labor said Tuesday a cash collecting campaign to combat use of injunctions in labor disputes is off to a flying start.

John McNevin, assistant secretary-treasurer of the federation, said a cheque for \$1,000 has been received from Local 170 of the Plumbers Union.

McNevin said the cheque represents the first response to a federation request to all affiliated unions that they donate \$1 or more per member to the anti-injunction fund.

RUPERT ROW Union Eyes Fish Plant

Sun Staff Reporter

PRINCE RUPERT — The Deep Sea Fishermen's Union is today considering declaring a local fish plant unfair.

Vince Dixon, business agent for the Deep Sea union, said Tuesday shoreworkers at Atlin Fisheries Ltd. are still refusing to unload boats manned by Deep Sea crews.

The Deep Sea union crew members are fishing on halibut and trawl boats belonging to members of the Prince Rupert Fishing Vessel Owners' Association.

The Atlin shoreworkers, members of the rival United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union, have refused to handle association boats because they have been declared unfair by the UFAWU.

Dixon said the Atlin shoreworkers refused Tuesday to unload a 33,000-pound halibut owned by an association member.

It was later unloaded at Royal Fisheries, one of two local fish plants where rebel UFAWU shoreworkers have been crossing their own union's picket lines.

Miniature Train Nearly Derailed

Police are considering delinquency charges against two young pranksters who came close Friday to derailling Stanley Park's miniature train with 100 passengers aboard.

Police said the boys, aged 10 and 13, placed a log on the track at a turn but engineer Cliff Bishop, 37, saw the obstruction and stopped the train.

Park officials said a collision with the log could have caused injuries to the passengers.

Publisher Dies
ROCHESTER, N.Y. (AP) — Erwin R. Davenport, 91, who with the late Frank E. Gannett founded the Gannett group of newspapers and broadcasting stations, died Tuesday at his home in Miami Beach, Fla.

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DOG FOOD ROMPER	15-oz. Tin	11 for \$1.00
CREAM CORN STOKELY FANCY.	14-fl. oz. Tin	5 for 89¢
BEANS WITH PORK VAN CAMP.	14-fl. oz. Tin	6 for 99¢
DESSERT TOPPING MONARCH, 9 1/2 oz. Aerosol		39¢
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