

Antagonism Toward CCF Cools Over Last Decade

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REGINA (CP) — A decade in office has cooled antagonism toward Saskatchewan's CCF government and the brand of socialism it has implemented.

Once a target from all sides, the provincial administration in a period of relative political calm observes its 10th anniversary as North America's only socialist government.

There still are major differences. But much of the bitterness that characterized Saskatchewan policies after the CCF victory in the provincial election, June 15, 1944 has disappeared.

OPINIONS CRITICAL
Before and immediately after its election, opponents of the CCF charged it would socialize everything in sight, including the land. Critics said the party would drive industry out of the province. Business men were worried.

The CCF, although it maintains it still holds to the Regina Manifesto which advocates public ownership and state development of natural resources, has a long way to go in both fields.

The 18 government-owned enterprises it has established did \$45,000,000 worth of business last year. By way of comparison, Saskatchewan's share in Canada's gross national product for 1953 is estimated at \$1,200,000,000.

Except for minor development by government enterprises, the CCF has left exploitation of the province's rapidly developing oil and mineral wealth largely to private enterprise.

WIN THREE ELECTIONS
Elections have given the CCF a mandate in three provincial elections in which public ownership was a major issue.

Asmundur Lopston, Liberal leader in the legislature and a main critic of the CCF, while contending the government enterprises have failed in every undertaking where they had to meet private competition, said in an interview it would be "only fair to retain any enterprise which tends to give service at a fair rate."

Private capital, which Premier T. C. Douglas says is Saskatchewan's prime need, has been flowing into the province in greater amounts each year — \$458,000,000 last year compared with \$243,000,000 in 1948.

The premier, a spark plug in the socialist movement since it assumed the name of Co-operative Commonwealth Federation in 1932, said in an interview the change in attitude towards his government has come from within and without the party. He said while opponents' attacks have cooled in the last 10 years, party members who at times have plugged for more extensive socialism have been sobered by experience.

IMPLEMENTED PROMISES
Another reason for the change was that the government had done only what it said it would do—not what critics claimed it would.

The premier has reassured private companies that oil and mineral deposits will not be expropriated.

Mr. Douglas said capitalism has nothing to fear from the CCF, providing it considers the interests of Saskatchewan citizens. Only one industry, a small box factory at Prince Albert, had been expropriated under the Crown Corporations Act.

Liberals say they may be able to defeat the CCF in the next provincial election, which may be held in 1956. Progressive Conservatives say they expect to make gains in the next election, but name 1960 as the year for their big bid.

Social Credit, which has been able to elect only two members to date to the legislature, is an unknown quantity in future political wars. Social Credit won two seats in 1938 and lost them in 1944.

Present standing in the 53-seat Saskatchewan legislature is CCF 42, Liberals 10 and Progressive Conservatives 1.

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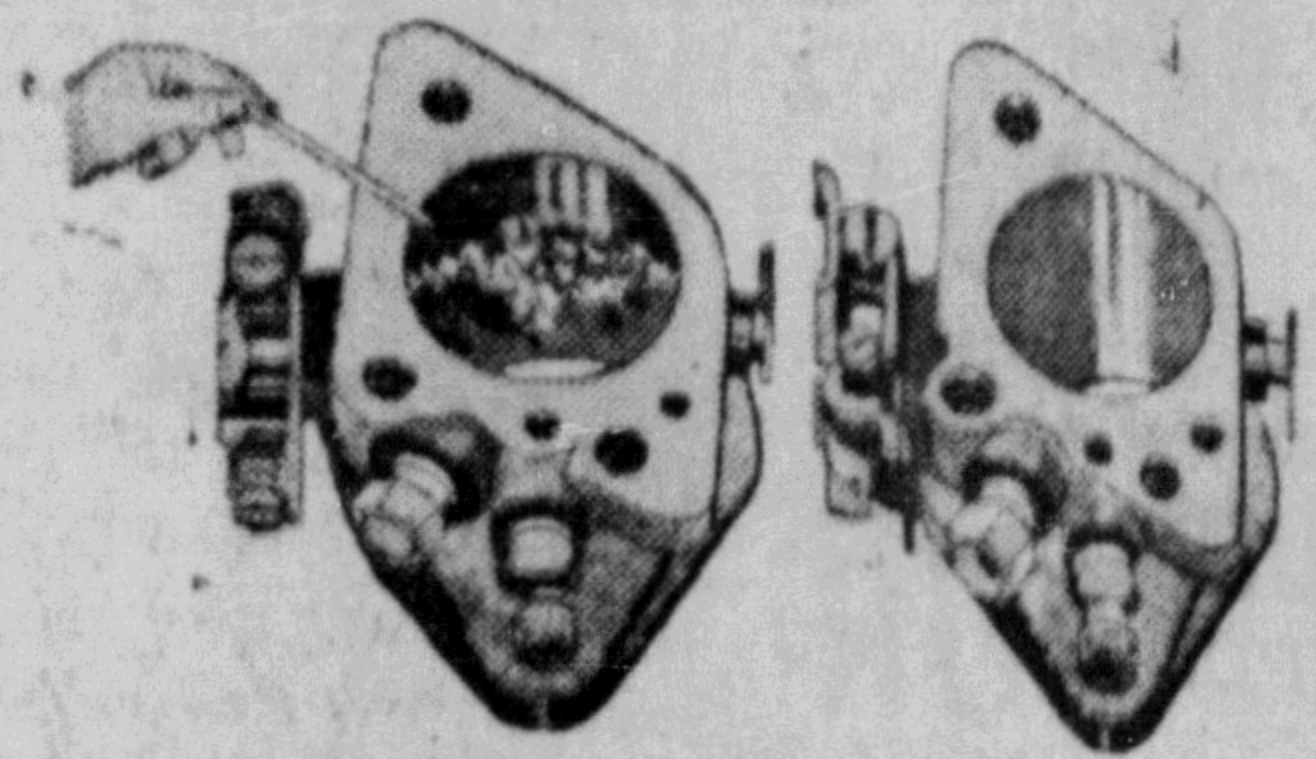
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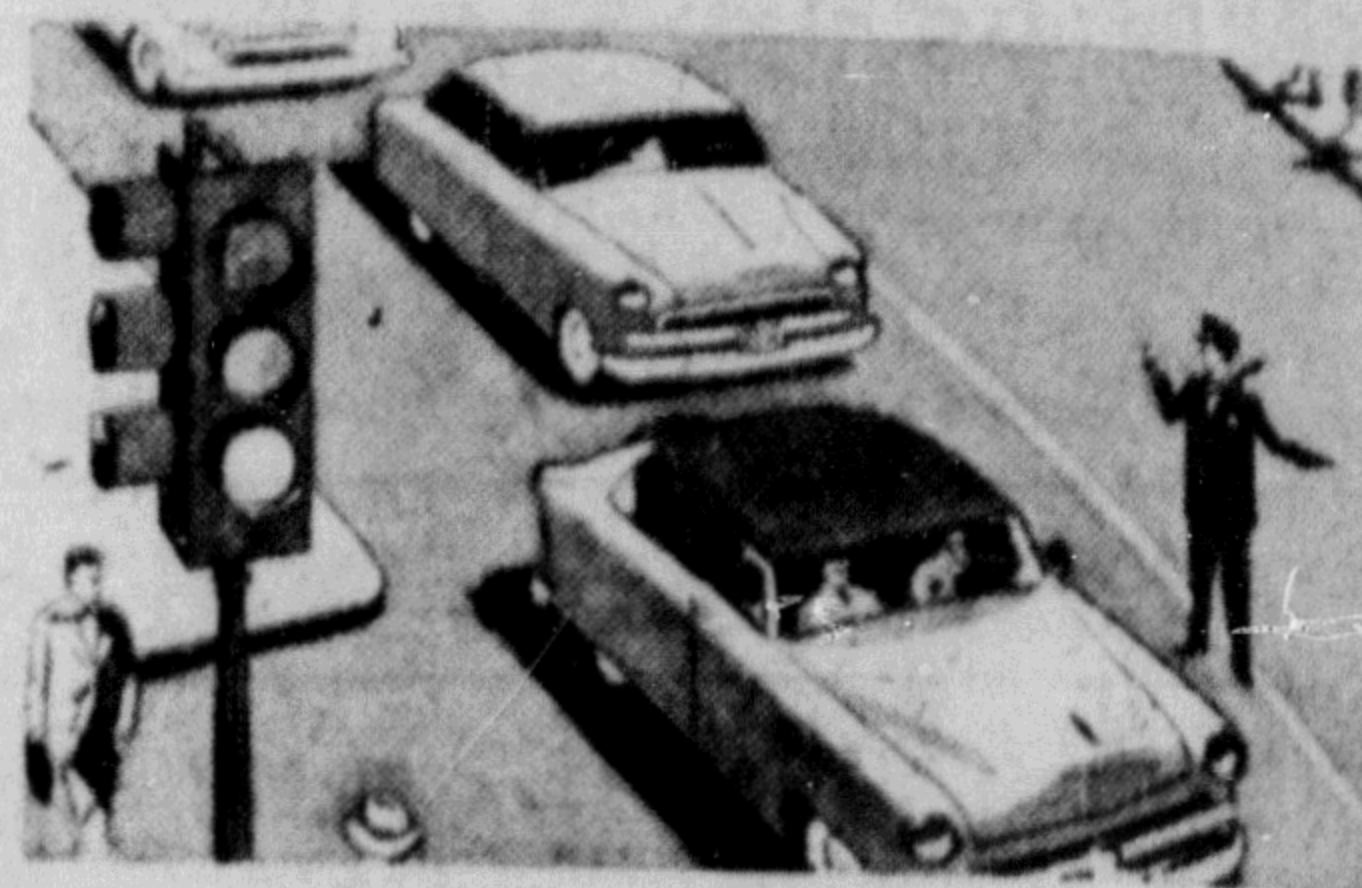
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