THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

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"The Strongest Memory is Weaker Than the Weakest Ink."

FRIDAY, MARCH 19, 1943.

N.S. and N.B. Succeed—We Fail

While we find it impossible to obtain the cost of improving our wharf, providing a marine railway or floating dock, not to mention a new Car Ferry, Nova Scotia succeeds in landing Twelve Million ($12,000,000) for wooden ship building and a new steel ship industry. There is no use asking how our neighbouring provinces succeed where we fail. They have live wire Federal representatives and Provincial Governments—we haven't.

New Brunswick was in danger of losing her headquarters for naval purposes. Her M. P.'s, Provincial Government, City Council, Board of Trade got busy raising cane; result a Federal appropriation made of $350,000 for the purpose of proceeding at once "with the construction of naval barracks and training quarters on three Britain Street properties."

It is lamentable to think, for example, that the directors of Bruce Stewart & Co., have to send their secretary cap-in-hand and on bended knee to beg in vain a few crumbs that might per chance fall from the rich Federal table.

It is time for a change.

Lend-Lease Is Mutual

When one thinks of lend-lease transactions, even in this country, it is likely to be in connection with the extensive aid supplied to Britain by the United States. The help in this direction was intended at the outset as a defensive move, for it was hoped that it would ensure the defeat of Germany without direct American participation in the struggle. Lend-lease activities have since spread, however, over the entire Allied group and have become highly reciprocal.

The monthly letter of the Bank of Commerce, which devotes several paragraphs to this subject, cites some interesting figures. Exclusive of direct U.S. shipments to American forces abroad, 60 per cent of exports in 1942 valued at $7,800,000,000 were under lend-lease arrangements. Less than half of these were for the United Kingdom, while over one-quarter were allocated to Russia and about one-third to other fronts, mainly in the Middle and Near East.

In the two years since the U. S. Lend-Lease Act was passed total shipments under it are valued at over $6,000,000,000. But according to one American official source, all the accommodations and facilities are supplied on the spot for United States troops in the British Isles, without dollar payment on America's part. The British treasury takes care of financing barracks, airfields, hospitals, supply depots, roads, bridges, boats, field telephones, coal and great quantities of other supplies, including over 1,000,000 tons of shipping, more than 1,500,000 tons of building materials, and millions of articles of clothing.

The United States is pouring both men and weapons into the southwest Pacific, but in a large measure America is spared the task of procuring and transporting food and clothes for its forces there. Australia now devotes a considerable part of its funds to reciprocal lend-lease aid. American fighters receive milk, fresh meats, fruits and vegetables, field rations, canned meats, uniforms, etc. The Australian people are undergoing rationing to supply American troops. New Zealand is enduring civilian shortages of eggs and milk because of quantities supplied to United States Forces.

Canada joined substantially in this program last year with her Aid-to-Britain policy, though this had the distinction of being devoid of any implication as to repayment for the shipments of an estimated value of $1,000,000,000 yearly, about half of total exports in 1942. The title given to this aid, however, scarcely described it. As in the case of lend-lease in the United States, it contributed to the outer defences of North America, as well as to those huge shipments of war supplies made by Britain—about three-quarters of her armament production—to all the battle fronts, including Russia.

An Economic Waste

Mr. J. H. Harris, financial critic of the Progressive Conservative group in the Commons, in his speech on the budget discussed the increase in the postal rates on first-class matter, and had this to say:

"I believe the Government should have had enough courage to impose further taxes upon third-class matter, being careful to exempt literature for the blind, school examination papers, and other items which directly affect the welfare of the state. All the welter of unnecessary circulars should bear its full share of the cost of our mail service. Over fifty per cent of the third-class matter, which is the portion of the mail that breaks down the constitution of our letter carriers, finds its way to the desk of the individual to whom it is addressed, where it accumulates until in his spare time he finally drops it into the waste paper basket. That part of our third-class mail could very well afford to bear a greater share of the cost of our postal service, in the interests of the economy of Canada. It is an economic waste, and should be curtailed if it cannot bear its fair share."

The Ottawa Journal concurs with this criticism, adding:

There was always a great waste of paper and labor—and patience—in this branch of the postal service, and all those factors are accentuated now when both paper and labor are restricted commodities.

The newspapers are rationed in their consumption of newsprint—but vast quantities of paper are used freely in ways which can have no possible bearing on public information or public morale. New magazines, printed in Canada on paper made in Canada, come upon the market with great frequency, and most of them of the trashy "pulp" type; a look at the magazine rack in any news-stand shows how little this business has been disturbed by the paper shortage.

And the mails are full of printed matter which quickly finds its destination with the waste paper—it comes from Government departments, from commercial houses, from propaganda agencies of many sorts. The throw-away (and they are literally that) sheets for advertising purposes still are printed, to clutter up doorsteps and mail boxes. While all this goes on the newspapers are hampered in the presentation of vital news by restrictions upon their newsprint —restrictions felt the more sharply because in war the demand for fast and accurate information means increased circulation.

—EDITORIAL NOTES—

It does not promise well for us that Manitoba should have had a severe snow storm this week.

* * * *

Compulsory pasteurization of milk sold in the province of Quebec will not be subject to legislation this session of the Legislature as far as the government is concerned, according to Premier Adelard Godbout.

* * * *

The English Insolvents Relief Act passed this date 1761, under which a bankrupt was no longer treated as a criminal subject to all the pains and penalties reserved for malefactors; characteristic severity, however, clung to bankruptcy even until comparatively recent times as readers of Dickens will recall; a debtor had either to pay his debts in full or go to prison till he died; it remained so practically till 1883, though certain relief and modifications were provided in the act of 1861.

* * * *

The "poor rich men" of the United Sates have escaped the necessity of being satisfied with a salary limit of $25,000 per annum, as recommended by President Roosevelt. In place of the Roosevelt rule, the House of Representatives have provided that no ceiling be set on salaries over $25,000 below their level of December 7, 1941, the date the United States entered the war. Salaries which were below that figure then could not rise above $25,000 after taxed now, but the others, even though, like some movie magnates, the salary be $200,000 per annum, must not be interfered wih.

* * * *

Mr. Duplessis in Quebec Legislature charged that in putting liquor restrictions into effect Prime Minister King had overridden provincial rights, and that this fact was deeply resented in the province of Quebec. Blackmail was the term he used in describing Mr. King's action in forcing the restrictive measure upon the provinces virtually ordering them to accept what he offered. The system which had been imposed by Ottawa constituted an insult to the province of Quebec, a temperate province, said the Opposition leader, which did not want to run other provinces, but did not want the views of other provinces imposed upon Quebec.

* * * *

Here is a welcome instance of appreciated constructive criticism in the House in the Budget debate. Mr. Gordon Fraser, Progressive Conservative member for West Peterborough criticized the plan whereby payment of half the tax on investment income over $3,000 is deferred until a man dies. "It is just that much worse for the widow," commented Mr. Fraser. who urged there should be provision whereby the taxpayer could pay off the remaining half during the next year or two and at a time when the government needs the money and whereby it could be paid off either in a lump sum or in instalments. The Minister should give a discount for payment of that income tax, and it could be worked out on the expectancy of life principle, as it is in the case of insurance policies." "I will try to meet the honorable member on that," was the significant reply of Finance Minister J. L. Ilsley. "Thanks a lot," responded Mr. Fraser.

* * * *

When the Federal Public Accounts Committee turns to a probe of allowances and expense accounts of people engaged in the exacting war job it is really getting hot, writes an Ottawa correspondent. And the inquiry should not be restricted to the civilians. There are persistent stories of reckless extravagance on the part of members of the headquarters staffs of the three defence departments. Just why the examination should not be extended to these can never be explained, for up to date the project seems to be confined to the dollar-a-year men. There are dollar-a-year men who haven't cost the Government even that dollar since they arrived in Ottawa. We could name a few who have resolutely declined to charge either salary or living or travelling expenses to the federal treasury, so when and if the probe opens, care should be taken not to smear these unselfish persons. When the light is let in on the expense accounts though, it will be plain to all that this unselfishness has not been epidemic. There are people who because it is public money haven't the slightest objection to cutting a wide swath both on and off duty. It may be that this can't be prevented until there is a big millenial clear-up of human weaknesses. A searching analysis of the bills the Government has had to pay on account of the spendthrifts, however, might have a salutary effect.

Notes By The Way

Tenant at St Catharines was prosecuted for paying too much rent. It's illegal to tip the landlord.—Toronto Telegram.

Who could blame a woman for nagging her husband if he stalled around and wouldn't eat his horse hash? —Ottawa Citizen.

We'll go even farther than the prevailing suspicion. We don't believe either army in Russia is taking direction from Hitler. —Detroit News

A few more of these strange absences, when the British arrive, and some skeptic will be writing him up as "Rommel—Man of Myth?"— Detroit News.

Sir Stafford Cripps, Minister of Aircraft Production, yesterday said: "The other day when I visited a large factory in the North, I took the liberty of starting my speech with the word 'Comrades.' The chairman of the firm has now written to me telling me I should have used the phrase 'Ladies and gentlemn'." —London Sunday Pictorial.

One of our Washington acquaintances reports that an army public-relatinos officer recently had a telephone call from a girl in the Office of War Information. She wanted a list of all Army officers nineteen years of age or less "You mean all ranks?" the army man asked. She considered this for a spell, and then said brightly. "No, just up to major generals." —The New Yorker.

Farmers are proud of their big barns. They put everything they have into them. But they are taking a big risk in doing so. It may be more expensive to erect a group of small buildings well separated around the farm, housing cattle in one, horses in another, one kind of crop here and another there, and implements somewhere else, but it would be an excellent form of insurance. A farmer might lose one building and contents, but he could not lose his all.—St. Thomas Times-Journal.

Visitors to Russia continue to be amazed at the speed and scope of Soviet construction and reconstruction behind the lines. In addition to repairing recaptured rail lines, the Russians have been able to build an entirely new railroad from Kotlas to the head of navigation of the Pechora River opening another supply route in the north to supplement Murmansk and Archangel. And railroads in the south, which carry Allied supplies from Iran have been double tracked in many places to increase capacity. Even more surprising is the fact that reconstruction at Stalingrad is already under way. Most of the railroads out of the city are in use, the harbor is being prepared for spring thaws, and the huge Stalingrad tank factory is being rebuilt. —Newsweek.

On Friday Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Sullivan, who lost five sons simultaneously when the cruiser Juneau sank, visited the Phelps-Dodge war plant in Elizabeth, N. J. and pleaded for increased production. On Tuesday almost a third of the first day shift walked out and was followed by a sixth of the second day shift, in protest because 100 girls were not receiving "equal pay for equal work." The union contract called for arbitration of disputes, which had not yet been attempted. Thus did these war workers, many of them deferred from a draft that promises to take fathers of dependent children show appreciation of the Sullivan family's sacrifices for democracy. —By Burton Health in NEA Service.

From Texas oil fields to Illinois, the world's largest oil pipe line has been completed, a distance of 551 miles. It is one of the largest transportation projects of the war. The line cost $35,000,000, and will have a capacity of 1,600,000 barrels. It will deliver 300,000 barrels of crude oil daily to rail tank cars for distribution in the Eastern States. Work is now in progress on a second 857-mile pipe line from Norris City, Illinois to the New York and Philadelphia refining areas. Engineers estimate that the completed line from Texas to the East will hold 4,000,000 barrels of oil —as much as all the wells of the United States produce in a day. —The Argonaut.

Early in the war the newspapers were kind enough to give the reading public explanations of the rank badge of the fighting forces. It would be too much to say that they have all been remembered, but the average layman at least knowns that some slight difference in rank exists between a group captain and a pilot officer. It is suggested that the press might now perform a similar service in explaining the gradations of the Ottawa hierarchy. We have controllers, administrators, directors and co-ordinators, but how they are to be regarded by the lay public is a mystery. Does a co-ordinator out-rank an administrator, or vice versa? Does a director's wife precede the wife of a controller in going to dinner? Are there graduations of rank among the officials, so that the co-ordinator of tin cans is senior (or junior) to the co-ordinator of cat food?—The Printed Word.

Mme. Chiang told an anecdote full of rich Oriental flavor the other day in Washington. About 2,000 years ago she said, there was a young Buddhist monk who sat cross-legged outside the temple, his hands clasped, chantin day after day, "Amita-Buddha, Amita-Buddha," because he hoped that he would thus acquire grace. At length, the old Father Prior of the temple came up, seated himself beside the monk, and began rubbing a piece of brick against a stone. This, too, went on day after day. At length, the acolyte could restrain his curiosity no longer, and asked the Prior what he was doing. "I'm trying to make a mirror out of this brick," the old man replied. "But," said the monk, "it is impossible to make a mirror out of a brick, Father Prior," "Yes," replied the other, "and it is just as impossible for you to acquire grace by doing nothing except chant 'Amita-Buddha' all day long, day in and day out." The moral? There are several possibilities. But in the rich American idiom, it might be this: You can't win a war by sitting on your hands. —St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

TRY AND GET THEM

It is estimated that the electric current in bolts of lightning would make them worth only 50 cents a dozen at usual electric rates.

How One Saving Began

(Globe and Mail)

Waste is where you find it. About a month ago there came out of Ottawa a most unusual admission of Government waste. It came dressed up as an economy measure. The story was of the admirable work of the salvage branch of the Army Ordnance in extending the lives of boots issued to the troops and reclaiming the discarded ones. Officials estimated a saving of $1,000,000 a year on the new boot bill of the army; much more than this through the salvage of leather and metal from condemned shoes.

This is worthwhile economy. But, curiously, it did not begin as economy in the real sense; it was not undertaken with any idea of lightening the load on the taxpayer. It began as an emergency measure to which the army was driven by the scarcity of supplies—leather and metals. Until six or seven months ago the army had been condemning shoes, new ones, old ones, partly worn ones, by the thousands of pairs

When the salvage branch began operations it inherited about 100,000 pairs of "condemned" boots. Many of these were condemned long before their time simply because the repair shops had not been able to keep pace with the intake. So boots which might have gone back into service at a maximum outlay of $1.25 (labor and materials) were tossed away and the soldier was issued a new pair at a cost of about $5.

At a conservative estimate the salvage branch can save around $2 on every pair of bots it reclaims. even after the boots are beyond repair. That is a tidy sum. It is the more important as an indication of what has gone down the drain in the three years before material shortages compelled economy. Yet it is only one example of the kind of waste on which there has been no check whatsoever, except, perhaps, the limited control of a conscientious official here and there.

Boots are only one item, one of the smaller ones. What, then, are the possibilities of "crazy extravagance" in terms of a $5,500,000,000 Budget? Parliament, having deputized the War Expenditures Committee to act for it, may feel guiltless. But, so far as the committee's operations are concerned, the taxpayer's only hope of economies is the rapid and widespread development of material shortages. Even these are not to be relied upon. As they occur the tendency is for the public to go without so that the "essential services" can continue on the standards to which they have grown accustomed. and hang the waste.

Momentous Days Ahead

(Ottawa Journal)

Some weeks ago, when the Germans were reeling back in Russia, people began talking of an end of the war this year. The Axis was near collapse. Events of recent days, revealing still a terrific German striking power in Russia, must chill this optimism. Threatened German disaster in the Caucasus and Donets Basin has not come; the Russians are still far from the Dnieper; and the Germans are striking powerfully to recapture Kharkov.

Cabling the San Francisco Argonaut, Mr. Clarence Webster, a British journalist whose despatches are among the best to come from Europe, remarks on these things and says:

"Informed sources here are aware that in fact we are but on the edge of the real titanic nature of the struggle. . . . Hitler's proclamation, while Hitlesesque as usual in its pomposity, nonetheless reveals that will of the Third Reich to go to all extremes to avoid collapse and defeat. Goebbels and Goering backed him up, and although the press here guved all three and indulged in aptly flippant comment, it would be a pity if the people of the United States and this country failed to realize that behind the Nazi trio there still stands a solid German people trained in hardship and prepared for more suffering rather than go under in defeat by democracy. The arrogant and wilful attitude of many of the German airmen brought down on our own shores is symptomatic of the Nazi train of mind, and it is well that we should understand that it is not peculiar only to the members of the Luftwaffe."

Sensible talk, this. For clearly we stand at the threshold of momentous months; with all of us this Summer likely to be called upon to bear things harder than more taxes or getting on the Ruml Plan. Perhaps if we can get that truth in our minds our taxes and reduced living standards will seem a lot less tough.

Poison Gases In War

(Sandford Bilca in the Winnipeg Free Press)

Poison gases as a weapon of war were known and outlawed long before the Great War. There is evidence that an elementary form of war gas was used during the conflict between Sparta and Athens about 431 B. C.; and on occasion during the Middle Ages efforts were made to utilize a similar agency. In World War I asphyxiating gases were first used by the German Fourth Army on the Western Front in the spring of 1915. Canadian troops felt the brunt of it and many were victims of the chlorine cloud.

In mid-April of that year a deep salient bulged into the enemy lines in front of Ypres. The French 45th Algerian Corps of colored infantry occupied the left flank, with the First Canadian Division on their right. On April 22, after a day of heavy shelling, defending troops at five in the afternoon noticed a strange yellow-green cloud stealing on a light breeze from the enemy lines on the north-east of the salient. The deadly low-lying fog spread and drifted at a rate of six miles an hour upon the French native troops and crept on upon the Canadians.

Choking, blinded and clutching at their throats, French African infantrymen staggered back from the fatal mist, clothing discolored and faces ashen. Casualties were heavy. A dangerous gap was opened along the north-east of the salient. The fumes spread among the Canadians. Enemy shelling was intensified and, behind it, infantry advanced. Outgunned and out-numbered, beset by the chlorine fog, the First Canadian Division fought through a wild night. They doggedly held on for two days. Gas came over in shells and, at 4 a. m. on April 24, the enemy launched another gas attack. In the dim light a form of hose was carried over the German parapet. From it a huge, ever-widening mass of cloud moved slowly forward upon the Canadian lines. They had only wet handkerchiefs improvised as "respirators." Many companies received the full potency of the gas. It penetrated the handkerchiefs, filled the lungs and took a heavy toll. In the forward areas the gas-fog was so dense that visibility was reduced to a few yards.

At the height of the concentration the effects of the gas were felt three miles from the point of release, still strong enough to cause streaming eyes, running noses, violent coughing and sickness. This gas attack was the prelude to the assault on St. Julien in which the gallant stand of the Canadians formed one of the epics of the war.

The range of aircraft so vastly increased since 1914-18 has widened the horizon within which a gas offensive can be operated. With the aim of spreading panic and breaking down public morale gas can be dropped on cities by bombs or sprayed on the objective by tank-equipped aircraft. To be effective spraying must be concentrated on the target from low-flying aircraft. Gas released in a spray from airplanes forced by the defence to fly high is too dissipated by the wind to reach its objective in strength; and there is the possibility of the spray being blown wide of its goal. Of the generally known gases, mustard and lewisite are the most effective for this purpose; but since the Great War the weapon has been made more deadly and new gase developed.

When Mr. Winston Churchill sounded his warning about the use of war gases, the Russians had intimated an expectancy of the weapon being used against them. Civilian preparedness is an essential defence against aircraft borne gas assaults. In Britain every air raid warden has had to undergo an extensive gas course. He has been taught how to identify every type. Wardens have carried out the very considerable task of fitting every man, woman and child with the correct size mask. Householders have had full instruction in preparing gas-proof rooms.

Provision has been made in the United States, Civilian Defence Director James M. Landis has intimated that free masks are to be distributed to civilians under a programme for production of 2,500,000 respirators a month. The initial output goes to the police, firemen, air raid wardens and other civilian defence personnel.

Of the Great War gases, "blister" proved the most formidable and presented the greatest problem. Individuals coming into contact with it can carry it on boots or clothing and thus contaminate others. Immediate treatment of a victim is vital if it has made contact with the flesh. Mustard is most insidious for, while the respirator provides full protection for the face and respiratory organs, the gas rapidly burns through clothing and even leather.

The British A. R. P. organization has been carefully trained to cope with gas spread by the dropping of lightly cased bombs, or sprayed by aircraft; the civilian population has been instructed in measures to be taken, and public confidence is backed by the knowledge that extensive facilities are available in every city, town and village to reduce casualities to an absolute minimum.

* * *

In the military field of operations the experience of World War I has emphasized the limitations of war gases. Potency of the weapon is related to the element of surprise and is dependent on the vagaries of wind direction and changes. In the first use of gas in 1915 the German Fourth Army aimed at capturing the vital key centre of Ypres and rolling up the Ypres salient. Gas was expected to assure easy capture of all objectives. It failed.

Commenting on the gas phase of that attack, Col. A. Fortescue Duguid in his official history of the Canadian Forces in the Great War, remarks:

". . . Poison gas had not brought complete success; the paralyzing surprise of its first appearance on the battlefield had passed and it was henceforth only another of the known horrors of war . . ."

To what degree the modern chemist has developed the deadliness of gas and facilitated the technique of its projection remains a secret. Therefore what measure of effectiveness the new gases would have in present-day military operations cannot at this stage be accurately estimated.

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New Insurance Books for the fiscal year 1943-44 will be exchanged by the Local Employment and Selective Service Office in your area for expired Insurance Books.

Do not send in your Insurance Books without completing forms enclosed with circular letter 625.

If you have not received this circular letter, get in touch with your nearest Employment and Selective Service Office.

Where it is necessary to quote the Employee's Insurance Number, use the number with the prefix letter shown on the front cover of the book: example P-49247, E-22454. Do not quote the book serial number printed on the inside pages of the book.

Protect the benefit rights of your employees by following closely the procedure outlined in the circular letter, and prevent delays by acting now.

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The Poet's Corner

A BLUEBIRD IN MARCH

Now the great Orion journeys to the West,
The Lord of Winter from the world withdraws,
And all his glittering house of cold dissolves.
Ice-storm and crust and powdery drift are gone,
And a soft hush of morning fills the world.
In rocky groves the sugar maples drip,
Till the sweet sap o'erbrims the shining pails;
The snow slides from the roofs in the warm sun;
Along spring-runs the first young green appears;
The willow saplings in the meadow lot
Put on their saffron veils with silver sheen
As if for some approaching festival;
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