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The Strongest Memory is Weaker than the Weakest Ink."

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1941.

Japan Takes The Plunge

Japan's declaration of war on the United States and Britain came as no great surprise. According to an Ottawa dispatch, the Dominion Government had expected such a declaration for months, but the exact nature of the start of the fighting could not be known in advance. It could, however, be anticipated. Characteristically, the declaration was preceded by an attack by Japanese planes on the U. S. defense bases at Hawaii and Manila, following which President Roosevelt promptly ordered the U. S. Army and Navy to carry out "undisclosed orders prepared for the defense of the U. S."

Britain, of course, was immediately involved, in accord with Prime Minister Churchill's assurance that Britain would declare war on Japan within an hour if she attacked the United States.

Japan's pro-Axis leanings have been known and counted on since the outbreak of the war. The chief effect of her declaration of war will be to bring the United States actively into the struggle, both against Japan and Germany, for the latter's close alliance with Japan cannot be ignored.

The Canadian troops stationed at Hong Kong are now in an active theatre of war. With them is an undisclosed army of other British forces and powerful units of the British Navy. There is no doubt that the British and United States authorities anticipated Japan's move and are prepared to meet it at sea, where Japan's strength chiefly lies.

One thing Japan is known to be short of is oil. A high U. S. authority recently stated that the U. S. Navy could defeat the Japanese Navy by chasing it round the Pacific for three months, without firing a shot. The inference was that by that time the Japanese ships would run out of fuel. Be that as it may, there is no doubt as to Japan's vulnerability in other respects. Tokyo, for example, makes an ideal target for an air offensive. The seven million inhabitants of Japan's capital live in an area the size of Chicago, half their million homes being built of wood and paper. The city's three main highways are only 40 feet wide; its four inadequate railway terminals are choked even by holiday traffic. Water reserves are inadequate and fire fighting equipment is antiquated. Yokohoma, Japan's greatest seaport, has been under blockade for some time, with gasoline no longer available to civilians.

Russia, despite the drain on her manpower on the western front, has maintained a strong army on her eastern borders in anticipation of a Japanese stab in the back. Japan's declaration of war does not take her unaware. Indeed the element of surprise—an important factor in the successes of Hitler's armies in overrunning Europe—is completely lacking in this latest Axis manoeuvre. If, as is generally believed, Japan's action was taken as a result of Nazi pressure, then it indicates, more strongly perhaps than any other incident of the war, that Hitler's situation is becoming desperate.

Mr. Thorson's Attitude

Newspapers throughout Canada are contrasting the statements of Prime Minister Churchill, announcing sterner conscriptive measures for recruiting the manpower necessary to defeat Hitler, with a speech made on the previous day before a gathering of young men in Montreal by the J. T. Thorson, Minister of National War Services. Mr. Thorson devoted his oratorical talents to deprecating the idea of full compulsory military service, as tending to decrease rather than increases the "sum total" of our war effort. Elsewhere in today's issue we quote some trenchant comments from the Montreal Gazette on Mr. Thorson's attitude. To this may be added the following concluding passage from an editorial in the Toronto Globe and Mail:

"Even if Mr. Thorson had been meticulously careful about his data, there will be many Canadians who will reject him as a thoroughly unsafe guide about our war program. Before the war he was one of the chief bellwethers at Ottawa of the strait sect of isolationists; he was unwearying in sapping and mining by resolutions and pronunciamentos for the weakening of the British connection, and he was a persistent champion of the fatal policy of appeasement and the disastrous pact of Munich. Is he not the same Mr. Thorson who when the King Ministry sponsored a modest program of rearmament was one of the few English-speaking members who opposed it and scouted the notion that it was in any way necessary? Mr. Thorson has been so utterly and provenly wrong about so many vital issues that the Canadian people have ample excuse for deciding that his opinions about the sort of war program which is essential for victory are not worth listening to

"But withal it is rather a sorry spectacle that a Canadian Minister in this grave hour, when the Government of our Motherland is forced by sheer necessity to summon a multitude of young women to the battlefront, should stand up and tell in so many words an audience of presumably red-blooded young Canadian men, citizens of one of Britain's daughter States, that he sees no need for any alteration of recruiting methods which leave abundant loopholes for the slackers and the laggards to evade their obligations, wherever the fate of human freedom is being decided."

When Meighen Tried To Enlist

Pictures in the newspapers recently of Senator Arthur Meighen's two handsome sons, who are now overseas with the Canadian forces, remind veterans of the last war that Mr. Meighen tried very hard to get into uniform. The story is retold in the *Northern Miner*:

In 1915, when he was well in his forties, he was offered the appointment of captain and quartermaster in the newly formed battalion of the Grenadier Guards in Montreal. He was then a member of the government occuping the post of Solicitor-General, and was doing extremely important work in connection with the many war problems of the Dominion. Sir Robert Borden, the Prime Minister, and the other members, flatly refused to allow their cabinet colleague to resign for the purpose of joining the army and Mr. Meighen was forced to forego his desire to serve with the Canadian front line troops.

— EDITORIAL NOTES —

Mr. Mackenzie King's "alibi buttons" for non-enlisters are not proving popular. What young fellow with any guts would care to attend a dance with an advt on his lapel announcing him to be "physically incapable."

* * *

What can our unenlisted manly youths think when they learn girls in the Mother Country between the ages of twenty and twenty-five are to be called up for military services. All girls who were twenty and not above the age of twenty-five on the date of their registration will be affected.

* * * *

Here is a single point in favour of conscription —a rose by any other name smells as sweet—which opponents deliberately overlook: why should patriotic sons and daughters have to do the fighting for shirkers who choose to stay at home in "cushy" jobs, enjoying the fat things of life at the expense of their brothers and sisters in arms?

* * * *

There is dire need among youngsters overseas for such fortifying nourishment as pure chocolate, Mr. Arthur Sampson, a hardy member of the Merchant Marine, told the Optimist Club at its weekly luncheon meeting in Montreal. "The last time I was in London, I tried to get some chocolate for the kids; there was none to be had," Sampson declared simply. "Your efforts on behalf of British children will be appreciated more than you'll ever realize.

* * * *

New Brunswick department of agriculture estimates an increase in acreage broken by fall-ploughing. Zero weather during last week-end put an end to the breaking of the land. Up to that time farmers had been ploughing in many sections. A reduction in acreage in 1941 has been featured, the total being 878,000 acres compared with 908,000 in 1940. Wheat, oats, barley, beans, buckwheat, potatoes, hay and clover, show decreases, slight in some cases. Increases are shown in fodder. Corn and mixed grains and turnips had the same acreage.

* * * *

The grave closes today over the remains of one of our finest citizens in the person of Mr. Isaac Carter. He will be greatly missed, for though no orator, or participant in public discussion, he was always ready to give the benefit of his business advice to all who sought it, and in Church, lodge and temperence affairs he was most assidious and consistent. It is a curious coincidence that in the same week another of the firm, Mr. Walter E. Burke should also be "called hence." Like his employer, Mr. Burke was an ideal citizen, but unlike Mr. Carter, he did take part in public affairs, and served his fellow citizens faithfully and well in the City Council.

* * * *

Will it come to us here that each region must provide all that is necessary for existence to economize in transport facilities? Lord Leathers, British Minister of Shipping and Transport, is putting into effect such a scheme of national distribution aimed at cutting out all wasteful haulage and insuring the maximum transport space for munitions in great Britain. Foodstuffs manufactured in the South will, generally speaking, be consumed in the South and Northerners will have to be satisfied with Northern products. Hotels will take supplies of local products. Householders will take coal from the nearest collieries. "All avoidable cross-hauls are to be eliminated," Lord Leathers told a gathering of the British Association of Refrigeration, "and the haulage of goods over long distances curtailed. In this way we shall insure that rapid development of our war industries shall not outpace the speed and capacity of transport."

* * * *

Herbert Spencer, English philosopher, died this date 1903; began life as a civil engineer; became assistant editor of the "Economist" newspaper, and while still holding that position published his first work, "Social Statics." This was followed three years later by his "Principles of Psychology," and then, after seven years, by "First Principles"; he was now fairly established as a philosopher, and "Principles of Biology," "Principles of Sociology" "Principles of Ethics" completed his series; though later he added a volume on "Education." He was pre-eminently a philosopher of a scientific epoch, who provided a working creed for its investigations. But his thought is not self coherent, and he never approaches a philosophical problem in the deeper sense. His influence has greatly waned, in fact, almost disappeared, save in countries like Japan which are still in the first flush of scientific progress as materialists after a past steeped in paganism.

NOTES BY THE WAY

Between the Canadians who want to see how things are being done in Britain and the Britons who want to see what Canada is doing, it is no wonder that the transatlantic air liners and bombers are kept busy. — Brockville Recorder and Times.

Why so much indignation because a British Minister said that we do not intend to invade France? After all, Hitler said the same thing for years. I am Sir, your obdient servant, A. P. HERBERT. House of Commons.—London Times.

Birmingham Warship Week was an unqualified success, and the fact that more than £10,000,000 was raised is an achievement that redounds to the credit of the city. It has to be remembered that in all these efforts Birmingham has consistently set itself a more and more difficult task. To obtain £10,000,000 in a week was an accomplishment that has not been previously equalled. — Birmingham Post.

For reasons which are obscure, a "revolt" is in progress in England against what is called "the murder of the English language", Rt. Hon. Viscount Samuel in his presidential address "on style" to the English association, uttered a protest and singled out the word which he regarded as most objectionable of all the new words which have come recently into the language— bus. Viscount Samuel deeply regrets that the army is using such words as "embussing" and "debussing". "Janus" in The Spectator makes the charge of murder after reading an invitation to study "busology". One hundred and twenty years ago someone in France coined the phrase "voiture omnibus", meaning carriage (French) for everyone (Latin). In course of time voiture dropped out but omnibus stuck. In entering England the "omni" was discarded and what Janus describes as the perfectly meaningless "bus" came into daily use. Now says Janus, to a Latin termination made into a principal noun someone has tacked a purely Greek suffix —"ology", and to the front of it an "em" or a "de". The main point, which seems to have been overlooked, is whether the new word does its stuff. If so, the agonies of the pedants will matter not at all. — Winnipeg Free Press.

And here we completely overlooked the real seat of blame in this gasoline shortage business. Yes, the driver. We hereby challenge anyone holding a driver's permit to keep a strict accounting of every mile driven in the course of a week together with the purpose or in many cases the alibi for traveling said mile. If every driver within earshot can do that accurately and tally it up with a clear conscience at the end of any week, then we'll cheerfully concede the practicability of this voluntary gas conservation scheme as it exists, and eat our best chapeau into the bargain. — Galt Reporter.

In the heart of Copenhagen are — or were at latest reports — two large ponds that in Winter were prevented from freezing by heating them artifically with the condenser pipes of the municipal electric light plant. Large numbers of waterfowl that othetwise would have migrated were thus induced to pass the Winter in Copenhagen. A similar use might with advantage be made of one of our Central Park lakes. As it is wild bird life is practically non-existent in the parks from November to March, and the domesticated water birds suffer dreadfully from the fact that their native element is frozen solid. — New York Sun.

He was going home and it was dark. His road from the station was a lonely one and he was hurrying along as fast as he could when he realized suddenly that a man behind was following him purposely. The faster he went the faster the man followed until they came to a field. "Now", he said to himself, "I'll find out if he's after me", and he entered the field. The man followed him. He circled around and his pursuer dodged after him. He crawled under a hedge. Still the man was after him. At last he turned and faced the fellow. "What do you want? What are you following me for?" "Well, sir, it's like this. I'm going to Mr. Brown's house and the station agent told me to follow you because Mr. Brown lived next door. Tell me something. Do you always go home like this?" — Chuckles.

With customary frankness, Mr. Churchill served notice on the nation that more discomforts were to be expected as Britain drives on even more vigorously with the prosecution of the war. And while the British people face that prospect, we on this side of the ocean have reason to ponder. Despite increasing restrictions, over there, we are still a long way from reality. There are still those who act as though the war were no concern of theirs. Recruiting is by no means as brisk as military authorities would prefer. And conscription remains a political bogeyman when it should be examined honestly in the light of the war effort. Actually, conscription is hardly the proper word. It suggests a sweeping draft of manpower for military service. Hardly anyone asks that. Those who demand a change call for selective service, a system whereby war service would be compulsory but under which the individual would serve in the capacity for which he is most fitted. Halifax Chronicle.

Canada has asked the Australian Government for permission to mass-produce the newly developed Owen submachine gun, which experts have declared is generally superior to the Thompson gun. Lieut.-Col. Moore Cosgrove, Canadian Commissioner in Australia, says he has been much impressed by the weapon's simplicity. Australia is therefore sending sample guns and drawings to Canada, to enable production at a Toronto machinegun factory, reported the world's biggest. The new gun, invented by 27-year-old Evelyn Owen, who was released from the A.I.F. a few months ago to complete his tests, has a rate of fire that does not permit the ear to distinguish separate explosions. It is lighter than the Thompson gun, its barrel can be changed in three seconds, and it fires clips of 30 bullets at a time. Most amazing is the economy of its production; it costs only $30 to make. — Australian Clipstreet.

Minard's relieves aches.

Two Views Of "Total" War

(Montreal Gazette)

Yesterday Winston Churchill promised the British people "definite curtailment of amenities, further inroads on comfort and convenience, another instalment of toil and sweat," as he announced conscription of men up to fifty, boys down to eighteen and a half, and single women of twenty to thirty. Only one dissenting voice was raised when he finished; Thomas Horabin, Liberal M.P., for North Cornwall, said: "There will be disappoinment that the Prime Minister has not gone much further in organizing us for total war"

How much further could the British Prime Minister go? Well, he could conscript married women for the armed forces; they are exempted, even when childless, although of course they are subject to conscription for industrial work. Also, he could draft single women for "lethal and combatant duty," now reserved for volunteers as far as women's units are concerned. He didn't promise not to do any of these things, for as he said, "the crisis of manpower and womanpower is at hand and will dominate the year 1942."

Last time Canada's wartime Prime Minister made a public statement on manpower policy was November 12 of this year. Rising to protest with great bitterness against a news story that he had discussed conscription with Mr. Churchill, Right Hon. W. L. MacKenzie King went on to reaffirm that "so far as I am concerned, without any consultation of the people on that subject, I do not intend to take the responsibility of supporting any policy of conscription for overseas service."

* * * * *

Thus the men of Canada are left on the same footing as the women of England. Only volunteers will be used for "lethal and combatant duty."

To support this position, Mr. King told the House of Commons on November 12 that "the question was submitted to the people of Canada at the last general election, an election held in wartime, and in which the leaders of all political parties made their statements to the electorate, and the people of Canada decided against conscription for overseas service." This is a distortion of fact, but let that pass; the point is that Mr. Churchill happened to answer it yesterday, when Emmanuel Shinwell interrupted him to ask if the Government planned "boys of nineteen" overseas.

Said Mr. Churchill: "If the House release the Government from its undertakings, that will be so." He referred to the Chamberlain promise that conscripts under twenty should not be sent abroad, and were Mr. Chamberlain alive he would be the first to approve the procedure. On April 27, 1939, it became his duty to reverse a pledge given by his Government and reiterated only a few months before by Earl Baldwin, the pledge against peacetime conscription. He did it with these words: "Nothing could be more stupid, more likely to lead the Government into disaster, than that the Government should refuse to change its mind when changed conditions require it." Chamberlain today is damned as an appeaser; what term shall we apply to war leaders who will not go as far in December 1941 as he did in April 1939?

* * * * *

Night before last in the city, Hon. J. T. Thorson quoted Churchill's courteous tribute to Canada at Mansion House last September, and smugly added: "You see, Mr. Churchill does not belittle Canada's war effort. It is only within Canada that her war effort is belittled." Mr. Thorson erred. When he rose in the House of Commons yesterday Winston Churchill named no land but his own, but by inference he painted a contrast with Canada that cries with a loud voice. In his calm outline of what the British people must do, and his certainty that it would be "accepted with cheerful and proud alacrity," he made horrid mock of the interpretation Canada's Minister of National War Services has put on the phrase "total war."

The Poets' Corner

LIFE LAUGHS ONWARD

Rambling I looked for an old abode
Where, years back, one had lived I knew;
Its site a dwelling duly showed,
But it was new.

I went where, not so long ago,
The sod had riven two breasts asunder;
Daisies throve gaily there, as though
No grave were under.

I walked along a terrace where
Loud children gambolled in the sun;
The figure that had once sat there
Was missed by none.

Life laughed and moved on unsubdued,
I saw that Old succumbed to Young:
'Twas well. My too regretful mood
Died on my tongue.

—Thomas Hardy.

HOW TO COMBAT Rheumatic Pains

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WORDS OF CHALLENGE

A Thought A Day For A People At War

"And I do believe that the people of Canada and the people of every other democracy must put forth everything they have if nazism is to be destroyed." — Colonel George Drew.

C. C. F. Pussyfoots

(Evening News)

It looks as if the C. C. F. is going to adopt the same pussyfooting attitude on the conscription issue as the Liberal Party. Privately, many English-speaking members of the Liberal Party are reported from Ottawa to be of the opinion the time has come for compulsory selective service for overseas as well as home duties.

But all are silent as far as the public is concerned, dominated by Mackenzie King who has yet to be sold on the idea of risking losing support from Quebec. The silence is striking.

On the other hand, the C. C. F., reiterates its opposition to conscription of manpower before 'there has been an effective conscription of finance and industry.' adding "the most urgent need in Canada today is to produce the equipment and materials needed to arm those who are already in the fighting services."

This is merely begging the question. The Russian campaign has shown how necessary it is to have vast reserves in manpower as well as equipment. The British have shown the same thing, having conscripted men up to 45, including skilled men, for army duties and replaced them with women.

If the C.C.F. has any foggy notions about this war not being a TOTAL war, then their leaders ought to take a trip to Britain and interview No. 2 Britisher, the great Ernest Bevin, an outstanding English labor leader. Mr. Bevin is now talking of conscripting women for industrial work—to make sure he has reserves of workers to back the reserves of soldiers.

When the C.C.F. her talks about producing to quip the soldiers we already have, it is talking about a limited war—a comfortable one in which we will all get rich and have to bear no more sacrifices than to get eight cigarettes where we used to get ten for our dimes.

Only the Conservative Party has members who come out frankly and talk about conscription—and for the benefit of the C. C. F. followers, they are talking all-out conscription, for that is what is needed today. Conscription of manpower is only a small phase of TOTAL WAR. Conscription In Canada must become what it is in Britain—one hundred per cent.

The Conservative leader has personally pledged himself as favoring compulsory selective service and there is no doubt that he will pledge the party to that stand as soon as he is formally in a position to do so. In the meantime, there is no doubting the party's position right now.

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Unfitness To Govern

(Globe and Mail)

A front Page editorial in the current issue of Saturday Night expresses in a nutshell the responsibility of a Government on the question of compulsory service. It says:

"The real question about compulsory service is whether it is necessary in order to secure beyond all peradventure the continued freedom of Canada. A Government which has no views on that question is not fit to rule Canada; and a Government which has views on that question but refuses to communicate them to the people because it is afraid the people might not like them is still less fit to rule Canada.

This, we believe, reveals the nakedness of Mr. King's declaration that he would not invoke selective compulsory service for overseas without consulting the people. As Saturday Night says, a question like this cannot be separated from all other questions relating to Canada's policy in the war. The Prime Minister and his Government are on record for a total effort with the backing of the people. They accepted the responsibility, but balk at a specific application of the terms with the frank admission that they fear the ballot box. If an elected Government is anything, it is a body chosen to act for those it represents during its term of office. To have an election or referendum on a point involved in its general obligation would surely be an acknowledgment of incapacity. It is the particular weakness of the referendum, Saturday Night points out, that the Government in power must necessarily adopt an attitude of having no great interest in the question one way or the other. We do not know that the Government is neutral on compul-defense implies that the principle is favored. But would it make this known in taking a referendum? If so, why contradict itself by refusing to act without a referendum?

What ever way the question is viewed, it is not to the credit of the administration that it fears to make a total effort total, or explain how it can be total without selective compulsory service. The only word that applies is cowardice.

HOW ABOUT ARMY TANKS?

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