THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

Morning Daily (Founded in 1887)

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

TRURSDAY, MAY 31, 1945

How They Were Treated

Analyzing Liberal election boasts about the King Government's care for the well-being of Canadians who have served their country in battle, the independent weekly publication *News* comes to the following conclusions:

Prime Minister King's government, after three years of this war, was still refusing to allow a wartime cost-of-living bonus enjoyed by every Federal civil servant and to the wives and children of men on active service.

Prime Minister King's government through more than two years of this war rejected repeated public appeals to enlarge dependents' allowances for service men's families, refusing to pay the cost of food and clothing for more than two children in any soldier's family. And Mr. King's Minister of Finance Mr. Ilsley thought it no shame, in the third year of this war, to defend these economies by warning the Canadian House of Commons that Canada could not "afford" to pay for the adequate and decent maintenance of soldiers', sailors' and airmen's children.

Mr. King's government, during nearly four war years, until fear of public outcry forced an end of the practice, kept disabled and discharged service men awaiting tardy pension awards on a "compassionate" hospital allowance of $10 a month, docking the $10 monthly allowance by the amount of the interest on any victory bonds a soldier might have acquired while on service.

Mr. King's government, at the end of five years and eight months of war has not yet provided a safe and adequate modern hospital for the care of the wounded and disabled men from all parts of Canada sent to Canada's main orthopaedic centre for treatment.

It is Mr. King's government which, forced step by unwilling step to increase the civilian clothing allowance for discharged service men from the $27 maximum it first fixed to $35, to $65, to $100, is still chiselling on men discharged with insufficient allowances and refusing to pay them the difference it owes.

It is Mr. King's government which, having coldly denied the heirs of men killed in battle for Canada any right to the war service gratuity paid to men returning from battle, now belatedly reverses its own shabby ruling and, with a general election in sight, does by order-in-council the justice it refused to consider in parliament.

—And, incidentally, it is the same Mr. King's government which all through the war neglected to provide hospital facilities or a discharge depot for returning Prince Edward Island service men in this Province, but insisted on having them treated and discharged at Halifax.

Elections In Canada

The story of the increase in the popular vote (including rejected ballots) in Canada's Dominion elections since the turn of the century is told in this table:

1900—Nov. 7	952,496
1904—Nov. 3	1,030,186
1908—Oct. 26	1,173,856
1911—Sept. 21	1,307,528
*1917—Dec. 17	1,883,329
**1921—Dec. 6	3,119,306
1925—Oct. 29	3,168,412
1926—Sept. 14	3,273,062
1930—July 28	3,992,481
1935—Oct. 14	4,452,675
1940—March 26	4,572,531

*Khaki election.
**First election with women's franchise.

There are many errors by which voters can kill their vote in the Dominion election, June 11. If a voter writes his "X" opposite the wrong candidate, crosses it out and tries again, he kills his vote. The correct procedure is to ask for a new ballot.

In this election, too, any civilian who takes the serviceman's privilege of writing the name of his choice on a ballot, kills the ballot.

Four of the 18 Dominion elections held since 1874 have taken place on a Monday, which is the week-day chosen for the 19th general election to be held June 11.

Elections held before 1874 took more than a day to complete, the first Dominion election in 1867, for instance, taking more than six weeks for polling. Since the one-day elections started, six have been held on Tuesday, five on Thursday, four on Monday and two on Wednesday.

The 1872 election, held after British Columbia entered the Confederation, was a three-month affair. It took that long for the chief electoral officer to conduct the balloting from coast to coast. The first one-day election was Thursday, Jan. 22, 1874. The next was Tuesday, Sept. 17, 1878, and Tuesday scored five more in the intervening 71 years. Friday, Saturday and Sunday never have been chosen as election days.

Days and dates of the 20 Dominion elections since Confederation follow:

1867, Wednesday, Aug. 7 to Friday, Sept. 20; 1872, Saturday, July 20 to Saturday, Oct. 12; 1874, Thursday, Jan. 22; 1878, Tuesday, Sept. 17; 1882, Wednesday, June 20; 1887, Tuesday, Feb. 22; 1891, Thursday, March 5; 1896, Tuesday, June 23; 1900 Wednesday, Nov. 7; 1904, Thursday, Nov. 3; 1908, Monday, Oct. 26; 1911, Thursday, Sept. 21; 1917, Monday, Dec. 17; 1921, Tuesday, Dec. 6; 1925, Thursday, Oct. 29; 1926, Tuesday, Sept. 14; 1930, Monday, July 28; 1935, Monday, Oct. 14; 1940, Tuesday, March 26; 1945, Monday, June 11.

War Costs In Lives

Terrible as has been the cost of sixty-eight months of war in human lives, it is some consolation to know, in the words of Prime Minister Churchill, that for the British Empire the toll was only a little more than a third as large as that of the Empire in the fifty-two months of the First Great War. Empire armed forces suffered 1,123,315 casualties during the war just terminated in Europe, including 307,201 killed. These figures are not conclusive, however, for they run only from Sept. 3, 1939 to the end of February, 1945, leaving out of account the last two months of intensive fighting before Germany's capitulation. For Britain's civilian population the casualties totalled 60,585 killed, 86,175 seriously injured and upwards of 150,000 slightly injured. Canadian casualties for the war period ending V-E Day—May 7—totalled 102,875, made up of 37,206 dead, 53,066 wounded, 3,709 missing, and 8,834 prisoner or interned. The totals by services are 2,399 for the Navy, 79,744 for the Army and 20,702 for the R. C. A. F.

In Berlin last week a Russian general estimated the death toll of his country in this war at 12,000,000 split about equally between the army and the civilian population. This appalling figure can be at best a rough guess for it is probable that the exact cost in human life of the war to Russia will never be known.

The cost to Germany has been placed somewhere between ten million and fifteen million in all categories. The Russians have placed the toll of German army dead on the eastern front at more than five millions, though this figure, at the moment, seems rather high. This would put the German losses in dead and wounded at better than 10,000,000 in the armed services alone. The civilian dead in Germany as a result of air raids must approach the million mark.

How many millions of civilians died in German concentration camps is unknown. It will be a long time before the liberated countries can complete a census and have any idea of what their death toll is. Poland had a pre-war population of 35,000,000 but it is believed that upwards of 10,000,000 died or disappeared.

The burden of human suffering and misery which these figures represent is altogether incalculable.

—EDITORIAL NOTES—

Feast of Corpus Christi.

* * * *

Tomorrow the end of the wettest May for years. The new moon is on the 9th June—two days before the election.

* * * *

"First priority home goes to Pacific volunteers," says C.P. Ottawa correspondent. How come?

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The work of the Charlottetown Free Dispensary will be reviewed at tonight's annual meeting in the City Hall. There should be a large and representative attendance.

* * * *

From tomorrow the regional oil controller will take over the handling of all applications for gasoline ration books. Till the present the provincial authorities have handled the A. A. books.

* * * *

It will be like old times being able to stop on the road and have one's tank refilled at any time needed, instead of on restricted days at restricted hours. Freedom is beginning to make itself felt.

* * * *

Mr. Bracken, with three sons under Arms, is being accused by a Quebecker with being the father of a slacker, because one son, married with six children, got postponement in consequence of being employed on essential work in a war factory!

* * * *

Strangely enough, to the many people who have been counting on the strength of the C.C.F., it is now apparent that that party has been falling back badly, from month to month across Canada. This trend has been particularly apparent in Ontario, where the C.C.F. is going to lose seats to all of the other parties. So far has this trend gone, that the C.C.F. can be certain of no more than 25 or 30 seats throughout the whole country, although they may receive as many as 40, depending on how the vote actually goes. As far as can now be ascertained, it is now certain that the fight in the Federal election is going to be a straight two-party contest between the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives, complicated by the fact that the numerous other candidates running for the smaller parties will absorb a small portion of the vote. The votes which these small parties receive, while they will not be enough to take many seats, will distort the picture in many ridings so that unexpected wins and losses will be normal on election night.

* * * *

Walt Whitman, American poet, died this date 1892; was a successful editor having occupied the chair in *The Long Islander, Brooklyn Eagle,* and *Boston Freeman* respectively; in 1855 he published *Leaves of Grass,* a collection of unrhymed irregular verse of striking power; in the Civil War of 1862-5 he acted as a volunteer nurse, and left his impressions and record of his experience in *Drum Taps;* best known for his *Song Of The Open Road;*

Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,
Healthy, free, the world before me,
The long brown path before me leading wherever I choose.
Henceforth I ask not good-fortune, I myself am good-fortune,
Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone no more, need nothing,
Done with indoor complaints, libraries, querulous criticisms,
Strong and content, I travel the open road.

Notes By The Way

At no time in human history has so much responsibility devolved upon newspaper writers to be prudent so as not to create differences of opinion among the Allies who are charged with the grave task of establishing permanent peace. If they create schisms, they are playing into Germany's hands.—St. Thomas Times-Journal

We can enjoy the Canadian Winter; we have endured the English Winter philosophically. But when we have a Canadian Winter followed by an English Winter disguised as a Canadian Spring, we feel that Nature has gone too far, and that jokes on the subject are out of place. What we should like to see in Canada is something to compare with the matchless beauty of an English Spring. (Peterborough Examiner).

What we ought all to remember is that, except for butter and sugar, Canada is now better fed than ever before. Our production of food has increased enormously during the war, in spite of labor and other shortages, and although much of our output is exported, quite enough food is left here to meet all reasonable requirements. Of all the world's countries, Canada has at this moment probably the least reason to complain about its food position. —Brockville Recorder and Times.

The destruction of great libraries and millions of books during the five years of war has been appalling. Europe's devastated bookland stands a tragic witness to the Nazi determination to enslave mentally and spiritually the peoples of the countries which they over-ran and pillaged. Books are the creators of mind and character, they are essential to the rehabilitation of the peoples of the Nazi-ravaged lands. The restocking of Europe's lost libraries, the adequate provision of books for educational purposes, will be a tremendous task—but it is one that cannot be neglected. It is one of the urgent priorities of reconstruction.—(The Halifax Herald).

Great Britain wasted no time whatever in acting to restore full civil liberties when it was officially announced that the German menace had been removed and the war in Europe ended. Home Secretary Herbert Morrison rose in the House of Commons on Wednesday, May 9, to announce that the government's right to imprison persons without trial had been rescinded, and that the privileges of the individual under the laws had been put back into force. It was a move that gained force and value because it was made so speedily and spontaneously, for it came on the government's own initiative one day after V-E Day, and while the people of the British Isles were still on holiday in celebration of that victory. It is an excellent pattern. — Memphis Commercial Appeal.

We may teach Germany that she has lost a war, and that she will lose another if she starts it. We may impress upon the children the awful cost of war in lives and money. But the schools cannot bring about the complete reformation which must be brought about in the German mind if we are to have no more wars. In the final analysis, the church will have to do the job. Germans will have to be Christianized, and this is the duty of the church. Its leaders will have to be inspired men, capable of securing the confidence and respect of the masses—and there will have to be a larger number of them than there are at present, for the job is going to be a tremendous one. The armed forces and the statesmen will have to restore order out of chaos in Germany—but it will be merely of a temporary character unless it is followed up immediately by a strong revival of moral teaching.—Guelph Mercury.

When, in February, 1941, the Cunard-White Star liner Georgic slipped into New York after ten months of absence, members of her crew insisted that she bore a charmed life. She had been at Narvik, at Brest and at St. Nazaire, a frequent target for Nazi bombs, but as one of her sailors said, "They can't 'it 'er. They tried enough but they couldn't so much as scratch 'er ruddy back." This was luck which couldn't last. Five months later as the Georgic lay at Suez, a lone German bomber, dodging searchlights and anti-aircraft fire, dropped two bombs, both of which hit her, leaving her a twisted and burned-out hulk on the beach. But not even this was the end of the vessel which, when it entered trans-Atlantic service in 1932 was the largest motor ship under the British flag. The hulk was towed to Karachi, India, and there sufficiently repaired to return to England. There she spent a year in the yards of Harland and Wolff, her builders, while 5,000 tons of broken decks were cut away and new fittings added. Now she is in service again, described as one of the finest troopships afloat, ready to do her part in the big movement from Europe to the Orient. Remembered by many as one of the happiest craft in the Atlantic service in pre-war days, she will carry with her the good wishes not only of many who travelled on her but also of those along the water fronts who admired her graceful lines and considered her, on her regular appearance, an ornament to any port.—New York Sun.

The Poets' Corner

JUNE MORNING

Aglow far-flung the crimson-bosomed morn,
Weaving gold threads across the Eastern sky;
Each dreaming stream rose-tinted from on high
Feels the strange magic of a day new born.

What earthly artist could have pictured this,
A morn in June with heavenly glory fraught?
What mortal breast conceive the wondrous bliss
Of earth redeemed, to glowing life new-brought?

—F. M. MacArthur
P. E. I. Hospital.

Are Japs Abandoning Southern China?

(By DeWitt MacKenzie, Associated Press Foreign News Analyst)

Strange things are afoot in Southern China — developments which seem to presage the Japanese abandonment of many of their ill-got gains in that part of the continent but which are so startling that one hesitates to accept that view.

The Chinese successes in the Nanning sector, close to the French Indo-China border, continue to pile up. Indeed the Japs are showing weakness in their corridor through South-Central China as far north as the great Yangtze River which pours eastward from Chungking until it reaches the sea north of Shanghai. Recently, too, numerous troop trains have been moving from the southern zone towards northern China—or maybe Manchuria.

One natural thought, of course, is that the Mikado's forces are concentrating in the north as a precaution against the possible entry of Russia into the war. Then, too, they might be consolidating in Northern China and Manchuria for a final stand when Japan Proper is knocked out.

* * *

The Japanese hold on this coastal area has become increasingly tenuous. Their predicament has grown worse recently through British victories which have knocked them out of Burma and not only have reopened China's back door for passage of supplies, but have created a great threat to the Malay Peninsula, Thailand and French Indo-China.

This big area not only has ceased to be a profitable source of supplies, because of the blockade, but it is becoming a trap. It may be that the Japs have decided to write this off as an asset, salvaging what they can for use in Northern China.

But of course they couldn't afford to withdraw all their fighting forces—even if they were able to do so, which is doubtful. French Indo-China, Thailand and Malaya must be defended for their nuisance value. That probably will cost the enemy close to 350,000 men who comprise the garrisons.

But that's only part of the story. What is true of this Japanese-held territory on the continent must also be true of the Dutch East Indies. These rich islands, bulging with the supplies which Japan needs for prosecution of the war—also are cut off by the Allied blockade. They no longer have much value to our enemy except in a nuisance way—their defence will delay our progress towards victory.

* * *

The picture as a whole, then, seems to indicate a tacit admission by the Japs that they are beaten in the areas we have been surveying. They will leave their defence to the "suicide" armies which will be cut off from the motherland. Meanwhile they will concentrate in Northern China and Manchuria for a finish fight.

That appears to be the trend, though I think we should regard the position with reserve until we have further developments for guidance.

The French - Arab Fight Is Dangerous

(By Dewitt MacKenzie, Associated Press Foreign News Analyst)

It is a tragic circumstance — with all the trappings of a cynic's holiday — that, while the United Nations labor in San Francisco to create a world peace-structure, a bloody clash at arms should be going on among countries represented at the conference.

The fighting in Syria between French troops and natives could develop into an upheaval involving many countries if it were allowed to run its course. Great Britain and the United States are using their best offices to try to halt it.

What's happened in Syria is this: When Syria and its little neighbor, Lebanon, were taken from Turkey at the end of the last war, they were placed under French mandate. However, the peoples of both these middle eastern countries have through the centuries been fiercely independent and they continued to press for their liberty until France finally promised it.

The second Great War intervened, but June 1, 1944 finally was set as the date when Syria and Lebanon should receive full sovereignty. Britain guaranteed their independence. However, France continued to maintain troops there and has been negotiating for special privileges.

* * *

Recently France moved in more troops, saying that was for the purpose of establishing bases for the movement of forces to the Pacific for the war against Japan.

Then the trouble started, for the Lebanese and Syrians charged that their liberty was being ham-strung. They demanded the withdrawal of all French troops. The French didn't comply and fighting has broken out in Syria.

Here enters another element — the newly-created Union of Arab States. This comprises Egypt, Iraq, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Lebanon and the Yemen. The Union estimates that this affects a population of some 80,000,000 Arabs. Of course not all the Arab peoples are members of the union, but there's not only a racial bond of sympathy but a strong religious tie, for the vast majority of them are Moslems.

One of the things which the Union opposes is western domination — and all its members now come within the "sphere of influence" of Britain or France. The general secretary of the Union is the Egyptian minister of Arab affairs, Abdel Rahman Azzam Bey, a tough fighter who wants complete independence for Arabs, not only in the Middle East but clear across Africa to the Atlantic.

* * *

The Union is giving its moral support to Syria and Lebanon. At this juncture moral support is about all the Arabs have to offer, since they lack substantial means to employ force. However, their unified opposition is in itself a serious thing and it obviously could grow into something much more grave. Moreover, the Arabs are likely to get the sympathy of other Moslem states even though the latter are not Arabic. Indeed, Indian Moslems already are voicing their sympathy.

One of the worst aspects of this situation is its threat to friendly relations between Britain and France. This threat exists partly because Britain has guaranteed the independence of Syria and Lebanon, and partly because the Syrian clash may become a bone of contention in Palestine. Britain already has her hands full there with the difficulties between the Jews and the Arabs over the question of the national home for Jews.

The Unforgotten Men

(Exchange)

The Liberal Government on May 7—the day before V-E Day—announced that the call-up of men for military service was to be immediately abandoned. No more men were to receive call-up notices and detailed instructions were given to those who had happened to be caught in the draft's last functionings.

Yet the Government, though announcing the abandonment of its draft policy, and declaring that service in the war against Japan would be on a wholly voluntary basis, failed to give full information as to what is to be done with the N. R. M. A. personnel, or draftees, who still remain in this country.

The number of draftees still in Canada was placed at 35,000 by Mr. Douglas C. Abbott, parliamentary assistant to the Minister of National Defence, in a statement made on April 5. Presumably the greater number of these men are still in this country. If the Government is consistently to follow a genuine "first in, first out" policy o fdemobilization, these men who were not "in" at all must certainly not be "out" until the men who have seen action in Europe have been returned to civilian life and its opportunities.

But the demobilization will be a very slow process. Indeed, if the war against Japan is taken into consideration, it may last for a year, two years, or even longer. Are all these draftees to be maintained in the country to await the return not only of the men who have fought for them in Europe, but the return of the men who are now to fight for them in the Pacific?

Or is the Government to adopt the alternative and to turn the draftees back into their civilian life, whether by frank demobilization, or under various protests? If this policy is followed, the draftees will be placed in a position of singular advantage. For they will not only avoid the sacrifices of war both east and west, but they will be early in inheriting the fruits of peace.

There is yet another unanswered question. What is to become of the deserters who have neither returned voluntarily nor been apprehended? Their number at the end of March was officially placed at more than four thousand. Does obolition of the draft also involve the dismissal of the charges against them? If not, what methods and efforts are proposed for their recovery through police action?

All these questions concern the fairness and equality of the war effort. They are all raised by the complex network of difficulty in which the Government has involved itself. Now that the Government is about to face the people at the polls, and is asking the people to remember the excellence of its wartime administration, these are all unclarified questions that might well be answered with prompt completeness.

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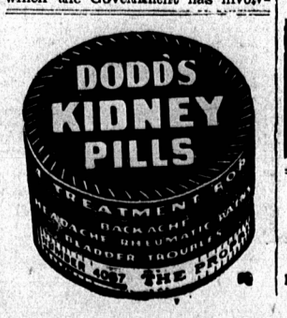
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