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

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 1941.

Bureaucratic Propaganda

Responsibility to the people is the basis of our democratic system of government and the thing which chiefly distinguishes democracy from totalitarian rule. Are we in danger of forgetting this distinction with the growth of our bureaucratic organizations at Ottawa? These organizations may be necessary, but the duties of government officials, high or low, should be strictly circumscribed, and in no case should they be permitted to usurp the functions of elected representatives.

One matter with which our elected representatives should be seriously concerned at present, is the Siros report and its prospects of adoption or rejection at the forthcoming Ottawa conference. A criticism of this report was recently made by Hon. Arthur W. Roebuck, M. P., for Toronto and a former Attorney General for Ontario. Whether one agrees or disagrees with Mr. Roebuck's contentions, he obviously had a perfect right to speak, and in doing so set an example which might well have been followed by other parliamentarians. No official reply has been made to Mr. Roebuck's speech, but at Toronto the other day a Mr. R. W. Fowler, one of the secretaries of the Siros Commission, undertook to "pinch hit" for his superiors.

Mr. Fowler made some remarkable statements. He declared that if the provinces failed to adopt the recommendation to transfer provincial debts to the Dominion, as recommended in the Siros report, "the nation's war credit would be jeopardized." He declared that "at the present time seven or eight of the nine provinces are at the end of their borrowing powers and refunding will be necessary and default by these provinces in the next two years seems inescapable if nothing is done." Addressing himself particularly to the people of Ontario, who might think that the recommendations imposed additional burden on them, he stated: "The fact so often forgetting is that we are paying out every year millions of dollars to assist people and improve conditions in other provinces and we are making those payments in the least efficient and most wasteful fashion." He declared that "the British North America Act has been a pretty good old boat, but I think the engine needs overhauling." He asked, "Is it sane or sensible that we should impose new levies in wartime through a tax system that in peacetime was already inefficient and inequitable?"

What is the purport of these statements, except to stampede public opinion? And on whose authority does an official of a Federal Commission undertake to brand "seven or eight of the nine provinces" as being on the verge of default? With regard to Ontario paying in taxation to help other provinces, Mr. Fowler ignored what was conceded even in the Siros report, namely that a large proportion of Ontario's taxable wealth is derived from other provinces through concentration of industry and finance. But the point is not the accuracy or inaccuracy of his statements, but his right to speak at all in a semi-official capacity, as an employee of the Siros Commission and propagandist for its report. This is the kind of bureaucracy that the people of Nazi Germany have to put up with; in Canada it is entirely out of place.

Parliamentary Check-Up

When Parliament reassembles next February, one of the first acts of the Government will be to set up a special committee of the House of Commons to examine war expenditures and to seek in every possible way to make the war effort more efficient.

This committee will sit in camera and will report, as occasion requires, to the Government, the individual ministers or senior officials, or to the public.

In adopting this course, which was suggested by the Opposition Leader, the Government will be adopting British practice both in the last war and the present one. The present British select committee on national expenditure, notes an exchange, was created on December 12, 1939, and so far thirteen public reports have reached Ottawa. In addition, many confidential reports have been made to the Government and very often, as the committee reports, the various departments act themselves to remedy weakness revealed by the committee, thus making formal recommendations unnecessary.

The British committee, it is everywhere conceded, has made an immense contribution to Britain's fighting power. Its reports have won enthusiastic praise from all parties, all newspapers, from the very departments and services which have been most severely criticized.

The appointment of a House of Commons committee on war expenditure is, therefore, a development of importance and there will be general interest in the achievements of the British committee, since the Ottawa committee undoubtedly will model its procedure on British practice.

It is the responsibility of the British committee "to examine the current expenditure defrayed out of moneys provided by Parliament for the defence services, for civil defence and for other services directly connected with the war and to report what, if any, economies consistent with the execution of the policy decided by the Government may be effected therein." In a word, the committee has nothing to do with policy. It has much to do with how policy is carried out.

The committee sits continuously regardless of whether Parliament is in session. Between De-

ember 12, 1939, and April 18, 1940, it held 127 meetings, examined 233 witnesses, visited plants and camps and so on. It is much more difficult, as the committee points out, to detect undesirable trends than to recognize well-established errors.

To avoid confusion and overlapping, the committee divided itself into sub-committees, each taking on one or more departments—army, navy, air force, supply, home defence; trade, agriculture and economic warfare; co-ordination and so on. Several horizontal inquiries were carried out to check up on general practice. These inquiries were made by a committee-at-large, embracing representatives from all the sub-committees.

EDITORIAL NOTES

That was a mighty weighty contribution our Board of Trade, after a year, made to the discussing of the Siros report! Shades of Nelson Rattenbury, what is to become of us!

Captain Harold Messervy laid the community under a deep debt of gratitude for his splendid address on the war and its reactions. No one is better able than he to discuss the subject authoritatively, and he did it well.

There is great need for a Recreation Hut here for our soldiers, sailors and air force who are wandering about the streets with no place of their own to go. Aren't there sufficient public spirited citizens among us to start a movement or set it into action? In Amherst they have one, in Moncton another. Why can't we have one here? * * * * *

Evidently many youths are more anxious for the security of Federal Government service than for the security of the Country. The Civil Service Commission announces there were 5,500 successful candidates in the commission's examinations for clerks held October 10. Of this number no fewer than 2,500 live in Ottawa and vicinity.

Wilkie Collins, novelist, born this date, 1824. His outstanding successes were "The Woman in White," and "The Moonstone." Had much aptness in framing melo-dramatic stories on the basis of a secret withheld till the denouement; was a friend of Charles Dickens, contributed to "Household Words", of which Dickens was editor. He essayed to be a dramatist and wrote "The Frozen Deep" in which Dickens and other celebrities appeared: "The true way to render age vigorous is to prolong the youth of the mind." "Keep young by keeping with the young." * * * * *

The number of fur farms in operation in the Maritime Provinces in 1939 was 2,572, a decline of 425 from the preceding year. The revenue derived totalled \$1,421,707 compared with \$1,799,046 in 1938. Each of the three provinces reported a smaller number of farms, with Prince Edward Island recording a decline of 112, Nova Scotia 117 and New Brunswick 106. At the end of 1939 the number of fur-bearing animals of all kinds retained on the farms of the three provinces was 34,970 and the value \$912,547 compared with 48,586 valued at \$1,480,227 at the end of 1938. Silver fox and mink were the principal kinds. The new types of foxes, platinum and white-face, were also represented with a total of 90 valued at \$214,435.

The national thrift campaign, to be launched in a short time, will urge upon Canadians a careful budgeting and restriction of purchasing for things not really needed so that they will be in a better position to pay heavier taxes, buy more war bonds next summer, and throughout the year purchase more of the stamps and certificates. February will be war savings month. Once started budgeting for income taxes, it is hoped that the budgeting habit can be extended so that thousands of persons will undertake instalment purchasing of war savings certificates. There will be the biggest campaign the country has yet seen launched in February with the objective of raising war savings purchases to at least \$10,000,000 a month. The big war loan campaign which may be for a billion dollars will come just when budget payments are ending for income tax. Citizens will have to continue budgeting to meet these war loan commitments. The war loan drive will require a tremendous nation-wide organization. Instead of salesmen working for banks and bond houses a in the last two loans, they will be working for patriotic committees established in every community. Provincial committees will be formed and then regional committees and then county committees, with directors and sub-directors putting on all the pressure they can.

Whether are we drifting? It used to be the proud boast of the Canadian judiciary that it knew no politics—once a lawyer was promoted to the bench he severed all connections with public political life, and did not even enjoy a vote in elections. But according to Canadian Press despatches this glorious record is to be set aside, and a judge is to leave the bench to become a Premier, and arrangements made for his return to the bench at the war's end. Leader-Post says that Premier Patterson of Saskatchewan has been suggested as a possible Senate appointee and that Mr. Justice T. C. Davis of the Saskatchewan Court of Kings Bench has been suggested as a possible successor as Premier of the province's Liberal Government. A Senate vacancy was created by the death of Senator H. W. Laird (Con. Saskatchewan). The Leader-Post elaborates thusly: "Among the present members of the legislature Hon. J. G. Taggart (Agriculture Minister) is considered to be possibly next in line in the event of Mr. Patterson resigning. It could develop into a contest between Judge Davis and Mr. Taggart. Rumors are circulating that Mr. Taggart may get a federal appointment, possibly Minister of Agriculture, while Mr. Gardiner (Hon. J. G. Gardiner) would continue for the duration of the war as head of the War Services Department. With the end of the war this portfolio would disappear. Mr. Gardiner might then return to agriculture. Judge Davis would resign as Premier and be reappointed a judge and Mr. Taggart might return to Saskatchewan as leader of the government..."

NOTES BY THE WAY

Hitler and Mussolini are said to have plans to restore Spain to a position of power in the Mediterranean. The Spanish people, after their recent experience of war, would probably prefer peace to power. But they are not being consulted. — Vancouver Province.

The very worst thing that could happen to law enforcement in this country would be for the imprudent, glib, and bold soldiers are immune from prosecution by the civil authorities and that the only tribunal qualified to try them is a military one. That idea extends to some extent and that it would be unfortunate indeed if it were to gain strength. — Peterborough Examiner.

Says the Edmonton Journal: "L. is of snow — and how heavy that snow shovel gets!" Out in this climate we can sympathize with Edmonton's harshness. Often these week-ends our golf clubs begin to feel burdensome, and digging in the garden, among the snow, and the weight of his trowel oppressive. — Vancouver Sun.

Among other things every British Army officer has now to satisfy competent authority as to his ability to drive an army motor truck and ride a motor-bike. He is given, if he lacks this accomplishment, three days to learn the truck-driving and two to pick up motorcycleing. This is a hard and fast rule, applying to all ranks up to Colonel. — The Legionary.

Communities in Western Ontario which depend on natural gas for cooking and heating have a bad season when the zero weather arrives. This comes from the fact that change anything else as all their equipment is for the use of gas, and the gas pressure falls off badly. They have the comfort which comes from the fire and the window and seeing a good pipe of cord wood. — Peterborough Examiner.

Let the facts speak for themselves. Since the Italian occupation of British Somaliland two large contingents of troops and military supply ships from Indian ports have negotiated the Red Sea route without incident, as well as a large number of vessels from British, Dutch, and other ports. If this is what happens when the Italians control the Red Sea, we only hope they test the grain for germination. That with the Royal Navy operating off Alexandria and Aden the waters of the Red Sea are just as British as, say, Lake Windermere. — Times of India.

Here in Canada, in wartime, there is some temptation to give a great deal of credit to the expense of unfavorable — to win the war every day of the week. It is urged by some that it is the duty of the newspapers to "play up" favorable news and "play down" reverses so as to bolster public morale. But such a policy actually leads to undermining public morale when people lose faith in the truthfulness of their news sources. In the Tribune's opinion there is only one rule, that is to report the news as accurately and truthfully as possible, whether it be good or bad. This principle applies also to the display of news and the "playing up" of stories. — Winnipeg Tribune.

Even since the war began, attempts have been made in certain quarters to represent Marshal Goering as rather the best of the chief Nazis. Tales have been told about his splendid character, how he is, aside from his queer political ideas, and the feeling has insidiously grown up that, if only we were to step in to power in Germany, things might be set to everyone's satisfaction. The story that has come out of Paris on the lips of Lady Drees, American-born news-woman, and that she should counteract this little bit of propaganda. Her recital of how the fat marshal pushed her aside in a Parisian cafe, and practically jerking out of her hand a coat, she was examining, is sufficient index of the man's character. One Nazi always a pig. — Windsor Star.

In the first 10 months of last year 27,360 deaths from motor accidents were reported in the United States, 1,610 more than occurred during the same months in 1939. If these figures are discouraging, imagine a probable total for the year 2,000 in excess of the 1939 total, there are some encouraging facts. One is that eight states had fewer fatal auto accidents in the 10-month period of 1940 than they did in the previous year. Another is that the increase in motor vehicle deaths was just about equal to the increase in automobile travel. If eight states even in the face of rising automobile travel, can attain better safety records, then the entire States ought to be inspired to do better. Safety itself is no accident. It doesn't just happen. It is brought about.

One of the problems to which obviously we must give prompt attention is the enemy threat to our vital Atlantic communications. Germany is now concentrating largely on an endeavor to neutralize American supplies to Britain by an intensified bomber and long-distance fighter campaign. It is hardly realized by many people, that with Brest at their command, the German submarines and bomber planes actually start on their activities many miles farther West, and therefore nearer to Atlantic highways, than do our own naval and air bases. This is a tremendous handicap to us, and is due to Eire's refusal to allow us either naval or air bases on the South or West coast of Eire. The only possible answer to this threat is the use of long-distance fighters able to keep the air for many hours and carrying formidable payloads. We shall probably lose no time in turning out such aircraft in adequate numbers. The Germans have already acquired a long-distance fighter in their Me 110s. We must outclass that type decisively both in design and number. — Ottawa Journal.

Two of the most hopeful true stories we have ever read have come from the last two naturalization courts held in Halseybury. One was that of a man who told the judge that it was his children, who are attending public school in Kirkland Lake, who brought him and the old man, time of being a Canadian citizen, and giving them the same privilege.

PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open for the discussion by correspondents of questions of importance to the Charlottetown Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinions of correspondents.

THE CHARLOTTETOWN HARBOUR IMPROVEMENT

Sir,—In the consideration by the people of Prince Edward Island of the need for the alterations which the Federal Government proposes to make to the Canadian National Railway wharf in the Charlottetown harbour, there are two points which it will be well to dispose of at the outset in order to avoid any possible misunderstanding.

First, The repairing and extending of the Railway wharf to a length, width and depth sufficient to accommodate ocean going vessels was decided upon by the Public Works Department, not simply as a matter of convenience to the Port of Charlottetown or to Queens County, but to bring to those living in all parts of the Province the advantages that will accrue to the farmers, fishermen and exporters from a direct, quick and cheap means of reaching the British market during the war, and the whole outside world when peace returns. Also importers by lowering freight rates on incoming goods.

Charlottetown being a central point, headquarters of the Railway and with roads converging to it, it is felt that facilities to and from the vessels, of export goods and of incoming freight, for distribution throughout the Island, could be made more readily in this City than elsewhere. Furthermore, the cost to the Government of repairing and altering the Railway wharf, which in any event demands immediate attention, is only a fraction of the money that would be required for the erection of a new pier.

It is most important that this plan of the matter be appreciated throughout the whole Island. Then, if the Provincial Government, backed by the City and Town Councils of Charlottetown and Summerside, and by their respective Boards of Trade, make an insistent demand upon the Dominion Government that the contract awarded last year for an extension of the wharf, and the repairs and alterations to the Railway wharf, be renewed, there is good reason to believe that their request will be granted, particularly if stressed as a war measure of the first moment, viz., as a means of supplying the Mother Country with the highest grades of food such as the Island is especially able to produce.

Second, There is no conflict of any kind between the traffic expected to result from the docking of the large grain boats, and the ocean going vessels and of the large grain boats plying the St. Lawrence, on the one hand, and that which will result from the connecting of Kings County and Westchester, and by the Province of Nova Scotia, with the Province of Nova Scotia. Both will benefit not only our producers, shippers and importers, but will assist materially in the war effort. The Province offers very great possibilities.

Reading between the lines of "Producers' Letter," one imagines that the tests in some unexplained way that the Charlottetown harbour project will lessen the utility of the Wood Islands ferry. The very reverse should be the case, for by bringing prosperity to the farmers, fishermen and industries of Kings County, greater quantities of produce will be available for export to the Nova Scotia market.

In the matter of grievances both projects have an equally sorry story to tell insofar as Ottawa Government treatment is concerned, and they can well afford to join hands in an united effort to lodge at least some measure of understanding of this Island's requirements in the minds of those in the Federal Capital who control the shores and harbours of the Dominion.

With the above two matters disposed of, we will now be in a position to consider the many outstanding advantages that will accrue to Prince Edward Island from direct water communication with the outside world.

I am, Sir, etc.,
H. K. S. HEMMING.

The other was that of a man who told the judge that it was his children, who are attending public school in Kirkland Lake, who brought him and the old man, time of being a Canadian citizen, and giving them the same privilege.

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THE 1941 SEED PROBLEM

Sir,—It has occurred to me that at this season of the year our farmers throughout the country should seriously consider the problem of seed, for the spring of 1941, more particularly on account of the fact that there was so much bad weather during the late harvest and a considerable quantity of that grain was seriously damaged while in the fields.

There is a question of whether much of this grain will be fit for seed, and where there is any doubt in the minds of the farmers as to whether this seed should be used or not, I would strongly urge them to test the grain for germination. There are two methods by which you can easily test for germination. One is to take blotting paper, lay it in a dish, place 100 grains of seed on it, and cover with a glass plate. There are two methods by which you can easily test for germination. One is to take blotting paper, lay another piece of blotting paper over the grains, dampen the blotting paper and keep it damp for four or five days, and if your grain is fit to sow, it will germinate. Then you can readily see by counting the number of grains that have sprouted or germinated the percentage of the grain that is good to sow. Another equally effective is to take a dinner plate, put a little earth on and in the centre of the plate, dampen the earth or sand, lay 100 grains of seed on the earth or sand, then take a small plate or saucer and turn upside down over the grains that you are going to test. Do not use a glass dish to cover the grains, as the light must be excluded.

In many cases you will find grain that is darker in color and that you might be suspicious of as to whether it was fit to sow or not, but after you have tested it you might find it might be all right. Then again there are many farmers in your community who were successful in saving their grain before the storm came on, and it might be possible for you to dispose of some of your grain for feeding purposes and get a bright grain that has been saved. If there is no possibility of it having been damaged by weather conditions, this brings us back to the question of early grain. We have in this climate a short season and it behooves our farmers, when selecting any kind of grain to select a variety that matures early. In regard to oats, we have no hesitation in recommending Erbon oats. This oats has been tried out on eleven of the Prince Edward Island Experimental Farm plots. It has been tried out in comparison with Banner and Victory, two very good varieties of grain, and in view of it has surpassed either of the other two, in taking into consideration the fact that Erbon oats has less hull than the other two which when considered in connection with the average increase per acre, gives the Erbon oats about two bushels, three pecks more to the acre than the other two varieties. Then the big advantage in an early variety is this: That, in so many cases you have the early variety cut and safely housed before that late storm comes on and you are able to get your land plowed a better position to stand the rigors of winter than if the grain is left standing on the field, which is usually done with a later variety of grain. So that with all kinds of grain, look for an early variety, look for grain that is clear of weeds, especially wild mustard, so that when the spring comes up when the ground begins to yield the growth for the in-coming season, when you and your family, after having talked early, thereby assisting in your thing you can do to produce on account of the war, forgetting the difficulties that you have to contend with in regard to a lower price than you would like to accept, forgetting everything except Britain and her

need at the present time, and having taken those precautions which I have advised you you will be in a better position to assist indirectly in carrying on the war. While we may be in the back trenches, we nevertheless, are in the trenches, and it behooves us to do everything we possibly can. Though we may be making many, many severe sacrifices we must go on sacrificing, if need be, with the assurance that Britain will win the war. I am, sir, etc.

W. H. DENNIS,
 Minister of Agriculture.

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The Poet's Corner
 LONDON UNDER DOMINATION

I, who am known as London, have faced stern times before. Having fought and been traded for a thousand years and more.

I knew the Roman legions and the many-voiced Danish hordes. I heard the Saxon reves, saw blood on the Norman swords.

But, though I am scarred by battle, my grim defenders vow. Never was I so stately nor so well-behaved as now.

The lights that burn and glitter in the exile's lonely dream. The lights of Piccadilly, and those that used to gleam Down Regent Street and Kingsway may now no longer shine.

But other lights keep burning, and their splendor, too, is mine. Seen in the work-worn faces and glimpsed in the steadfast eyes and little homes be broken and death descends from the skies. The bombs have shattered my streets, my churches, have torn my streets apart.

But they have not bent my spirit and they shall not break my heart. For my people's faith and courage are lights of London town. Which shall still shine in legends though my last broad bridge were down.

—Greta Briggs in United Empire.

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