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

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 4, 1946

No Housing, No Terminal

Probably never in our history have our interests suffered so greatly as they have in the Parliamentary session now concluded at Ottawa. We seem to have been able to get nowhere on vital issues—no settlement over provincial claims, no housing scheme, no car ferry, no terminal for Borden. We are represented by four elected members and four senators, besides having numerous friends and supporters from other provinces, yet, with the probable exception of one senator they seem to carry little effective weight in the counsels of the Government. Indeed, the Hon. Mr. Howe directly and positively resents the advocacy of our claims in the House, describing it as "yapping"; and it is readily understood that such a term applied to our advocacy indicates that the speaker holds us in contempt. It is to him more than any other member of the Government we must look to have our interests adjusted, yet we are, and have been all along, seemingly at logger-heads with him. We have not succeeded in getting him to appreciate our position, our needs, our rights. He has been more than apathetic, he has shown hostility. Whose fault is this? Has anything been done to win him to our side, or have we deliberately set out to oppose him? Our situation is serious enough, and likely to become worse unless we get the Government as a whole, and Mr. Howe in particular, to change their attitude. Take housing for instance; we are the only province which has failed to take advantage of Government assistance, and are now left out in the cold, not even been permitted priority for a scheme which the City Council has approved. This, in large measure, is due to the differences that have occurred between the Provincial and Federal Governments as to whose prerogative it was to organize and develop a local organization, with the result we have two, neither of which has accomplished anything worthwhile so far as housing is concerned. In days past it used to be the custom of politicians at election times to urge the electors to return a government in line with that in Ottawa. The electors dutifully did so provincially at the last three elections, but today we are, as we have indicated, worse off than ever before. Not only has the housing proposals proved a tragic flop, but now we have reason to believe that the proposal to provide new terminals at Borden has for the present, at all events, been abandoned. The new car ferry when at long length it does reach our shores, will be minus the kind of landing stage necessary for its accommodation, and will have to connect with terminals which are fast going to rack and ruin. What excuse does the Federal Government offer for such a state of affairs? That no tenders were received. Is it not only possible but probable that the specifications submitted were such, that no contractor could undertake the work except on a cost-plus basis? As it is, the prospects are that the Island workmen now located at Borden will have to transfer to Tormentine or lose their jobs, and some million dollars expenditure be lost to the Island. Is that another attempt to transfer the headquarters of the ferry to the New Brunswick side, similar to that during the Bell regime, when the proposal was made that the car ferry should daily begin and end its operations at Tormentine? This would have meant, of course, the loss of the population at Borden, for the officials and employees would have found it more convenient, even necessary, to have their homes where they slept.

What are we going to do about all this? The Federal Government does not worry, New Brunswick does not worry, and up till now Prince Edward Island has not worried sufficiently to bring effective pressure to bear at Ottawa with the result we are left in the lurch.

What About Markets?

Recently concluded agreements with Britain have assured markets for several years for a variety of Canadian farm produce. The wheat farmer, as well as producers of meat, eggs, poultry, dairy produce and several other commodities have now been relieved of any uncertainty in connection with marketing.

But what will happen after 1948 or 1950? That depends largely on the outcome of impending world trade talks. In an article entitled "Agriculture and World Trade Negotiations," published in the August, 1946, issue of the Economic Annalist, Dr. L. Lorinez draws a picture of the intricacies of post-war trade relations as they affect post-transition farm produce markets.

Before the war, the United Kingdom and Germany absorbed the bulk of the world's live-stock product exports in addition to large quantities of other agricultural commodities. The percentage of world imports taken by these two countries (with Britain's share shown in parentheses), was as follows:

Beef, 18 (71); Butter, 93 (78); Cheese, 63 (52); Pork and Bacon, 87 (79); Eggs, 82 (57); Wheat and Flour, 41 (33).

Other nations importing large quantities of foodstuffs were Belgium, Holland, France and other Western European countries. Before the war, all these nations derived large incomes in foreign currencies from their investments abroad, which enabled them to fill the gap between export earnings and much higher expenditures for imports. During the five years 1934-38, the European nations imported goods valued at 7,525 million gold dollars, while merchandise exports totalled only 5,800 million gold dollars. The 1,725 million gold dollar excess of imports over exports was largely covered out of investment income. From the 1,725 million total, the United Kingdom accounted for 1,011 million, France for about 300 million, and The Netherlands, Italy, Belgium and some other countries for the balance.

All these countries have now lost, or are losing, most of their foreign investments. As a consequence, they must increase their exports and decrease imports. The question is, however, where to find markets for these exports.

Present creditor nations, the United States and Canada are large, rich countries that need little in the way of imports. At the same time they have also made plans to increase their exports to an impoverished world, several times to pre-war levels in some cases. Unless they can do this, there will be unemployment. The wheels of industry must turn at full speed to produce larger individual incomes than before the war, if heavy debts incurred during the war and on account of recent social legislation are not to result in taxes so heavy that living standards will suffer seriously.

How to find markets for the additional goods turned out, in a world where every nation wants to export and most nations must watch what they spend abroad, is the 64 dollar question that the forthcoming International Trade Conference will have to answer.

— EDITORIAL NOTES —

It was pleasant having the Hon. Angus L. Macdonald, N. S. Premier, here on a family visit with the Governor. Hope Premier Jones took advantage of the opportunity to win his support for our claims.

* * * *

When Lord Rowallan, Chief Scout comes here, Premier Jones will be able to talk "shop" with him, for like the Premier, the Chief Scout is an outstanding cattle breeder.

* * * *

France went republic this date 1870. After the disaster of Sedan, the ministers, Jules Favre, Gambetta, and Tronchu, proclaimed the Third Republic, and a fortnight later the Prussians besieged Paris, which surrendered, through famine, four months later. France lost Alsace and Lorraine, besides having to pay an indemnity of $1,000,000,000.

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The Russian Government has placed contracts valued at more than £100,000 with a Belfast engineering firm. The contracts are in connection with the Soviet Union's third Five-Year-Plan and the equipment is for boiler plant for power stations. Some has already been delivered and the firm is now busy on the execution of the balance of these Russian orders.

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Higher entrance salaries and a policy which would make the Civil Service a "career service" are advocated in the Civil Service Commission's annual report tabled in the Commons by State Secretary Martin. Other recommendations included a probation period to find out if an employee should be retained; permanent status if the work is of a continuous nature and the employee's services are satisfactory; regular advancement and special additional advancement in cases of special merit and establishment of standard regulations for overtime.

* * * *

Welwyn Garden City, Britain's great communal experiment in the creation of completely new towns with homes, industries and amenities evenly balanced, is holding an exhibition at which Welwyn's 80 industries are being represented. The exhibition is appropriately named "Welwyn Garden City Can Make It", and covers products ranging from steel bridges and steel framed structures to almost microscopic springs. The factory zone in Welwyn is situated to the north-east of the town so that the prevailing wind carries away from the residential areas the little smoke that is produced, and forms a salient into the urban mass which enables the most remote worker to reach his factory in a matter of minutes. The total area now open for industry is 400 acres. Among the more novel wartime contraptions which emanated from the workshops of Welwyn were the "walkie-talkie" apparatus; "Mortimer" — which listened electronically for sources of German mortar fire; the guiding mechanism of both the "Queen Swan"—a crewless launch which helped to beat the German E-Boats, and the "Rascal"—which flung explosive-filled machines against the Nazi West Wall.

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It is a mistake to assume that any considerable difference exists between the Nazi and the Communistic philosophies. The nature of both philosophies is essentially the same and likewise the methods of achieving their aims identical, whereas the difference is purely formal. The basis of both philosophis is the belief that struggle is the most essential function of life and that no serious issue can be settled without fighting it out and destroying the opponent. The difference lies merely in the criterion as to who is to be regarded as friend and who as an enemy, but from a moral point of view it appears to be of no consequence. The Nazis believed that one race only should rule the world, while all the others should be subjugated and eventually exterminated. The Communist doctrine proclaims the same principle, with the only difference that the conception of master race is replaced by the conception of the proletariat. Neither Nazis nor Communists displayed any scruples in the selection of means to achieve their ends. And both promised their respective followers that as soon as their aims are fulfilled a paradise would descend upon the earth—in the first case for the members of the Nordic race, in the second for the proletariat. What, then, is the difference?

Notes By The Way

A forest fire which has destroyed two million feet of standing timber and has been menacing five million feet of felled and bucked timber, has been raging in the Campbell River area. According to officials of the Elk River Timber Company, the fire was started as a result of smoking on the job in defiance of orders. —Vancouver News-Herald.

A miner who has made himself a sudden fortune in the Yellowknife district has confirmed the execution of the pioneer. "It's a great country" he says, of the Yellowknife. "If you have a stake of not less than $5,000 you can make millions there" That clinches it. A pioneer is a man who sets out to make a fortune not with a stake of $5,000, but with nothing. It doesn't matter really, whether he makes the fortune or not. Not many pioneers ever did. But to produce a pioneer, there must be a chance of making a fortune with nothing but your head, your hands and a strong back for capital. — Calgary Albertan.

Few things in this mortal world equal a good blueberry pie. Present day tendency is to skimp on fruit, turning out a dessert in which top and bottom crusts almost hold hands. The price of berries may make that understandable but a housewife would do better to skimp on dresses or perfume and fill her pies to overflowing. Fill your deep dish lavishly with the best berries you can find. Add a pinch of salt, plenty of sugar, flour or cornstarch (not too much) for thickening, a squirt of lemon to unlock every last bit of goodness and shove in the oven. Some pies are better for a slab of cheese on top or a generous pouring of thick cream. But eat blueberries.—Minneapolis Star-Journal.

Terrorism in Palestine is not likely to lessen the daily flow of adventurous young men to a little office in Victoria street, SW London. Every day, dozens of them find their way there—to the recruiting centre of the Palestine police. They want to join the toughest civil constabulary in the world. Since the centre opened in April, more than 8000 men have tried to join. Only 230 have succeeded. The reason for the very low rate of acceptance is the very high standard, physical and mental required by the authorities. A high proportion of the applicants are ex-servicemen who find the ways of peace humdrum after wartime service. All recruits are required to learn Arabic or Hebrew —or both —London Daily Mail.

If you are thinking of traveling by plane from London Airport you would do well to remember that the Air Ministry's constabulary take a very poor view of last-minute kisses. The Manchester Guardian advises. Fond farewells between travelers and their wives and families are now limited to a place especially provided for these embraces and must be made at least half an hour before the aircraft is due to take off. The passenger may kiss his wife (or anyone else's) in the "clear" tent or on a roped-off enclosure of the airport. Beyond these limits he comes into the domain of the customs officials—who discourage close embraces because of the facility they provide for passing currency and dutiable articles to passengers whose baggage has already been cleared.

The old idea of the diplomatist as a suave, impassive gentleman whose manners were perfect, even if his morals were dubious, has received some rude shocks during recent years. Today angry words are spoken and tables thumped, while statesmen do not try to conceal their annoyance from each other. Partly this change is due to the social revolution which has taken place in nearly every country since 1914. Ministers and diplomatists are no longer chosen exclusively from a narrow class trained to conceal their real thoughts behind a mask of rigid politeness. Partly it is due to the development of open diplomacy, and to that extent is all to the good. But the change is not wholly good. Indeed, more than one international conference since the war might have been more successful if the delegates had paid more attention to their manners.—Manchester Guardian.

This is the time of year to think of buttered ears. We mean ears of corn, of course, but we also have in mind the appendages on the sides of the human head. Corn on the cob is a delectable gastronomic thrill that must be enjoyed amid just the right conditions. It requires the abundance of all "price Nelly" papers. No true gourmet would think of doing anything other than seizing the cob, already well slathered with butter, in both fists. The grip must be firm, for the butter is slippery. It will, of course, run down to the elbows, but that is part of the game. It may and probably will drip into the ears—the human ears—but who worries about that? True, someone has invented prissy little gadgets with tines to be thrust into the ends of the cob and handles that can be grasped daintily. But what genuine lover of corn would descend to such effete refinements? No, give us our fists and our good chomping teeth and watch us "eat our length." —Windsor Star.

An attempt may be made to land on the moon from a rocket-ship of 1,500 to 2,000 tons within the next 15 years. That is the view of Mr. M. W. Wholey, a mechanical engineer and a member of the British Inter-Planetary Society, who are "prospecting" for a suitable landing place. He told a reporter that the first astronauts would be equipped with oxygen apparatus and special suits to protect them from the intense ultra-violet and cosmic rays and the enormous changes of temperature. Snow-shoes four or five feet long would help them to walk more easily on the slithers of rock which, owing to the low force of gravity, would be disturbed at the slightest touch. Describing the conditions an astronaut would be likely to encounter, Mr. Wholey said: "On climbing down to the ground he would be conscious of an amazing sense of lightness, as the force of gravity is one-sixth of that on earth. "The sun would be unbearably bright, exhibiting its corona in its full glory." — London Daily Mail.

A Canadian Looks At Britain

II

Currency control is an important matter for France, with the franc so sadly depreciated in terms of the dollar or pound sterling. You begin to realize why when you pay four hundred francs, or four dollars, for a meal in the train that consists of hors-d'oeuvre, made up solely of chopped vegetables, a plate of potatoes and peas, some extremely watery ice cream, black bread, and cofee, which must surly have been made from acorns. There was no milk, no butter, and no sugar. A bottle of saccharine water was served for sweetening.

The sweeping expanse of the farmlands of nothern France, with herds of cattle, acres of oats and and wheat, belied the scantiness of the repast, for it certainly compared unfavourably with the quantity and quality of what the restaurants serve in Britain, no matter how monotonous. And at four hundred francs! Here, surely, was the first token of inflation.

That evening another Canadian and myself decided to have dinner at a little restaurant in Montparnasse. It was not a very attractive-looking spot, and when we were told that cabbage soup, boiled vegetables, and a bit of dessert with more acorn coffee would cost us two dollars each, things did not look too good. Then it was that my friend asked for le patron, and mentioned the name of a mutual acquaintance.

With a sweeping bow we were ushered upstairs. There, for the first time since leaving Canada, we saw luxuries that would tickle the fancy of the most fastidious gourmet—hors-d'oeuvre of every variety, onion soup at its best, thick delicious steaks, vegetables smothered in butter, strawberries and thick yellow cream, and cofe, real coffee. And wine and spirits of every sort under the sun.

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But when the time came to pay the bill, it amounted to something like fifty dollars! For, of course, we had stumbled upon a black market restaurant. And in Paris, for those who can afford the price, there are scores of such restaurants. Whereas in London, so far as I am aware, there have been but one or two instances of black marketeering in food in the restaurants, and punishment has been swift and sudden.

France's recovery from the occupation may seem an accomplished fact in a black market restaurant; but in Paris itself, and in the larger towns, people are starving because the black market has made equitable distribution of food impossible. England's austerity is preferable to that.

On another occasion, a man stopped us on a street corner and asked us whether we had anything to sell. We asked naively enough what it was he wanted. 'Dollars. Have you any American dollars, or pounds sterling? I'll give you plenty for them,' he assured us. When we asked him what he meant by 'plenty', he offered two hundred francs for a dollar, or eight hundred francs for a pound note. When told that we had none, since it was forbidden to take foreign currency into France, he said he would pay at the same rate for travellers' cheques.

In Paris the shops are full of goods—luxury goods, that is, for those who can afford the price—things that cannot be had in London for love or money. The same thing is true in Brussels. And the women of both these Continental cities still appear as ever smartly dressed, although clothing is supposed to be rationed.

* * *

There are a lot of other contrasts that make you wonder. But anyone that visits the Continent today and comes back to Britain realizes instinctively that with all its apparent drabness and austerity, life in this country rests on foundations much more solid than it does in Europe. Control, order, and a predetermined goal for which all the people are striving characterise the attitude of the British people today. They do not like life the way it is, and they do not like everything the Government does. But they are convinced that it is the only way out of a jam, and they are determined to pull through no matter what hardships.

In Europe, on the other hand, you see the consequences of chaos and confusion, of a lack of policy and direction in government. You see people ready to debase their own currency to support black market operations on a staggering scale. You see those with money living in the lap of luxury, and those without money on the verge of starvation. For much of Europe is still undergoing a kind of revolution, the inevitable consequence of war and enemy occupation.

In Britain, at least, while the food may be dull and the luxuries non-existent, nobody is starving. The poor are not the victims of circumstance, and there is little opportunity for the unscrupulous to flourish. I cannot help thinking that a people which definitely disciplines itself and goes without, has a prior claim for favourable consideration in the matter of foodstuffs, supplies, and financial aid from abroad.

* * *

Sometimes we Canadians and Americans grow a little tired of being told that we do not know what it is like to go through a war. People who lost loved ones in the recent conflict have reason to grow impatient at shallow comment of that sort. But there is one thing about which in North America we know very little indeed, and taht is the sort of conditions under which the womenfolk of Britain have had to live. For them there was not only anxiety for their loved ones, but the constant menace of bombs and robots and later the rockets.

Now those same women of Britain, after years af unparalleled strain, have to stand in line for hours to get such simple essentials as bread and meat. They have to worry and scrimp to save enough soap to keep the family from actually growing grimy. In the face of all this they are still cheerful, still agreeable, still anxious to extend hospitality to visitors from abroad. In fact, one of the things that staggered and embarrassed those of us who attended the Imperial Press Conference in London, was the knowledge that generous hospitality such as we have been shown, could only have been achieved at very grave personal sacrifice.

Britain is making a comeback—and a striking comeback. But it is only possible for her to do so because of the willingness of the little people, the men and women who live in the long rows of low, two-storey brick and stone houses in London and other great centres, as well as in the tiny cottages that dot the countryside, to endure and endure, and to content themselves with the hope that things may be better tomorrow. I think we ought to take our hats off to the British people, but particularly to the womenfolk. Without them the miracle of Britain's recovery could never have been accomplished to the degree that has already been achieved. (Broadcast in the BBC's North American Service.)

Coming Palestine Conference In London

As announced by the Foreign Office the 9th of September has been fixed as the date for the Palestine Conference in London, and the United Kingdom Government is already making the necessary arrangements for the accommodation of their Arab and Jewish guests.

Invitations have been sent to the seven Arab States, to the Arab Higher Executive and to the Jewish Agency. In addition, Azzam Pasha, the Secretary-General of the Arab League, is being invited personally through the Egyptian Government to attend in the capacity of counsellor to the Arab States and out of compliment to the Arab League.

The invitation to the Arab States and the latter's acceptance of it were already known. What is new in the Foreign Office announcement, apart from the date of the Conference, is the invitations to the Arab Higher Executive and the Jewish Agency.

Again, it had always been assumed that the Arab Higher Executive, which represents all the Arab parties in Palestine, would be invited. But it appeared less certain, in view of recent developments, who would be invited to represent the Jews of Palestine. It is now clear that the United Kingdom Government has decided to treat with the Jewish Agency, in spite of the disclosures implicating prominent members of the Agency in illegal activities. The United Kingdom Government's decision shows that the complicity of the few is not held to incriminate the others. Other things being equal, the Jewish Agency is the body which would be normally consulted by the United Kingdom Government, since it was recognized under the terms of the Mandate as the appropriate public body to advise and co-operate with the Palestine Administration in matters concerning the establishment of a Jewish home.

Neither the Arab Higher Executive nor the Jewish Agency has yet announced acceptance of the invitation. Both are raising difficulties. But insofar as their objections may be due to the idea that the United Kingdom Government will insist on the federal scheme being taken as the basis of discussion, such diffidence is groundless. It has been made clear to the Arabs and Jews alike that the terms of reference of the Conference will not go beyond the general question of finding a solution aceptable to all parties. Such a solution, from the United Kingdom Government's point of view, must be just to both the Arabs and the Jews, towards both of whom the United Kingdom Government has a dual obligation. It is not disguised that the United Kingdom Government's reference to date is in favor of the federal scheme, as worked out by the British and American experts, and the United Kingdom Government intends to lay the scheme on the table of the Conference and to consider any counter-proposals that may be made.

There will be no question of the Arabs and Jews sitting down at the same table together against their wish.

But the United Kingdom Government's ears are open to all valid arguments against this scheme. As regards the choice of delegates to the Conference, the Governments and bodies invited are free to submit any names for the approval of the United Kingdom Government. No names have yet been put forward publicly. The Arab Higher Executive appears to set great store by the inclusion of the Mufti in the invitation. The United Kingdom Government has not commented though the British High Commissioner in Palestine has explained the difficulties in the way of the Mufti's inclusion to the Arab leaders.

New Control Board British Iron And Steel

Conciliatory moves are announced in an industrial issue which has been causing the Government trouble since Parliament adjourned and before.

The Government have secured the assistance of the British Iron and Steel Federation in setting up a new Control Board for iron and steel on condition that the Federation will have nothing to do with nationalization. Secondly, the demand by the National Farmers Union for an investigation of anomalies in the Government's price fixing schemes has been granted by the Minister of Agriculture.

The Iron and Steel Control Board is being set up by the Government to tide over the period between now and the time when the important sectors of iron and steel are nationalized. The Government had hoped to secure the assistance of the iron and steel leaders in the extremely complicated task of sorting out those parts of the industry to be brought under public control from those to be left as they are. In this they failed.

* * *

According to the "Financial Times" the function of the Control Board will be to advise on reconstruction and development without reference to nationalization.

The agreement of the industry to co-operate, according to "The Times" is on the specific understanding that the Board will not be obliged to advise on nationalization but only on the control of production, distribution and price, and investment policy in the immediate future. The entire responsibility for working out nationalization thus remains with the Government.

The "News Chronicle" industrial correspondent goes so far as to say that the nationalization of iron and steel may not after all be put through during the present Parliament but that instead a new scheme for public control will be devised on the lines of a public utility. Present owners would keep their technical control, but would conform to an organized national production plan. The plan would be devised by a board representing the Iron and Steel Federation, big consumers and trade unions under an independent chairman.

* * *

At present there is nothing to indicate that the Government have abandoned their intention to bring iron and steel under public ownership. It is a fact, however, that no nationalization scheme hitherto effected or propounded by this Government has aroused anything like the opposition this one has.

In those circumstances it is significant, not only that even such a deadlock is not being allowed to hold up the measures necessary to modernize and develop this predominantly important industry, but that the full co-operation of its leaders with the Government in the work is assured.

That they are well qualified is not questioned by anyone. As Sir Andrew Duncan, chairman of the federation has pointed out, there has been no major labor dispute in steel for forty years and the industry is already well enough organized to have produced last year at short notice a national plan for scrapping, rebuilding and extending, a plan which is so well thought of that the Government is going to adopt it. The crux of the matter is the Government's conviction, expressed in the Commons debate in May, that public supervision cannot successfully be combined with the present private ownership and monopoly arrangements.

The Poet's Corner

THE WOOD, THE WEED, THE WAG

(To his Son)

Three things there be that prosper all apace
And flourish while they grow asunder far;
But on a day, they meet all in a place,
And when they meet, they one another mar.

And they be these: the wood, the weed, the wag.
The wood is that which makes the gallows tree;
The weed is that which strings the hangman's bag;
The wag, my pretty knave, betokens thee.

But mark, dear boy, while these assemble not,
Green springs the tree, hemp grows, the wag is wild;
But when they meet, it makes the timber rot,
It frets the halter, and it chokes the child.

Then bless thee, and beware, and let us pray
We part not with thee at this meeting day.

—Sir Walter Raleigh (1552-1618).

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