THE WAR WEEK—Commentary on Current Events

Plans Declared Complete For Canada-U. S. Defence

"Complete plans for the defence of Canada and the United States are now in existence." — Mayor F. H. La Guardia of New York City, Chairman U.S.-Canada joint defence commission.

Committed by their Prime Minister Mackenzie King to an all-out war effort, Canadians last week saw gigantic preparations being made in the capital to step up the training of young men for the army, navy and air force; and to speed the manufacturing of mountains of war material for Britain. In more detail, the 1941 objective of the Dominion Government's military plans were: 1. To provide 25 Canadian air squadrons for overseas service, graduates of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan; 2. To increase the present strength of men in the air training plan to double what it was in 1940; 3. To increase the Canadian Navy to double its present number of ships; 4. To manufacture destroyers and long-range bombers and concentrate on producing weapons not obtainable in the United States; 5. To send overseas the Third Canadian Division now training in Canada with complement of corps troops for the three divisions, an army tank brigade and a Canadian armoured division; 6. To recruit for the active army 40,000 to 80,000 men; 7. To put 200,000 additional men and women to work in war industries; 8. Diversion of a great part of Canada's peace-time industry to war production.

The Canadian Army

Pointing towards these objectives, the compulsory military training period for young men of 21 was extended from 30 days to 4 months. (First period to begin March 20 — from 6,000 to 6,500 to be called up each month). And every reserve militia unit in Canada, except the ones with battalions already abroad, was notified by defence authorities that it must prepare for mobilization for overseas service.

Legislators Re-convene

All these projects — and how they were going to be paid for—occupied the minds of our members of parliament this week as they gathered once again in the Dominion House of Commons, and in the Ontario Legislature. The session at Ottawa was expected to last through till May, or maybe later; the session at Toronto, it was forecast, would be "long in debate and short in contentious legislation."

Canada the Pivot

In an address at the University of Toronto last week, Professor R. A. MacKay of Dalhousie University, Halifax, declared that Canada was taking the place of France in world strategy and had become the pivot "around which the present world war was being staged." Further, he said, Canada had become Britain's second partner in the war against Germany and the principal partner of the United States in defence of the Western Hemisphere. "We are allied now with both Britain and the United States . ."

Corroborating this statement Mayor Fiorello La Guardia of New York City, Chairman of the joint U.S.-Canada defence commission told the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee that "complete plans "for joint defence of Canada and the United States are now in existence. These plans, he said, embraced tactics, questions of territory and co-ordination of forces.

Bill Passes U.S. House

By a vote of 260 to 165, the United States House of Representatives last week passed the momentous "Lease-Lend" bill, empowering President Roosevelt to lease, lend or otherwise transfer the sinews of war to embattled Britain and other nations whose defence he should deem vital to the defence of the United States. The bill was not expected to fare so well in the Senate where the legislators, it was thought, were more anxious to put a curb on the President's impulsiveness, by passing a number of restrictive amendments.

Aid More Immediate

All sorts of rumors were current last week as to the President's plans for provision of immediate aid to Britain. Final passage of the "Lease-Lend" bill early in March would mean that merchant ships, bombing planes, tanks and infantry rifles would be transferred to Britain as soon as possible. But in the meantime, it was expected that the President would do something more spectacular, following Wendell Willkie's recommendations—trade American destroyers for British battleships; or destroyers for land bases in the Pacific. (The Bill does not prohibit provision of American ships in British convoys).

Japan and Canada

United States' entry into the war, now viewed as a strong possibility, would also mean Japan's, according to the terms of the Tripartite Pact signed last year by Germany Italy and Japan. A new front in the second world war would be opened up in the Pacific, — with Canada's west coast as a springboard for attack and a new area to be defended. The war would be brought much closer to Canadians.

Inching Southward

A hint to "watch Japan" was thrown out, in London last week, by informed diplomatic observers surveying Tokyo's activities in connection with the Thailand-Indo-China dispute. Japanese troops were reported to be ready to land at Saigon, French Indo-China, only 646 miles from Britain's eastern stronghold, Singapore — in which direction the Japs were undoubtedly inching. The Phillippines were also menaced. At the same time a little farther north, the Japanese began a new drive against China after effecting a surprise landing on the coast of Kwangtung Province. They hoped shortly to cut off the route over which large quantities of Chinese war supplies had been moving from Hong Kong to the interior.

Acute dissension was known to be raging within the ranks of China's war leaders. Edgar Snow noted authority on China, writing in New York's "PM" told of calamitous events happening behind the Chinese front. He declared that the "appeasers" with Chiang-kai-Shek were fast gaining the upper hand, might, if not stopped in time, come to terms with Japan. Stories of Chiang's falling-out with his Communist armies came from other quarters. "Time" said: "The clique of Chinese generals who hate and fear their Communist allies have gained a victory in the forcible disbanding of the Fourth Route Army. But it is no victory for China. What has kept the Communists fighting for Chiang is the fact that they fear Japan more than they fear Chiang Kai-shek. If Japan (or Russia) could convince the Communists that they have less to fear from Japan (or Russia) than from Chiang Kai-shek, China's jig would be up."

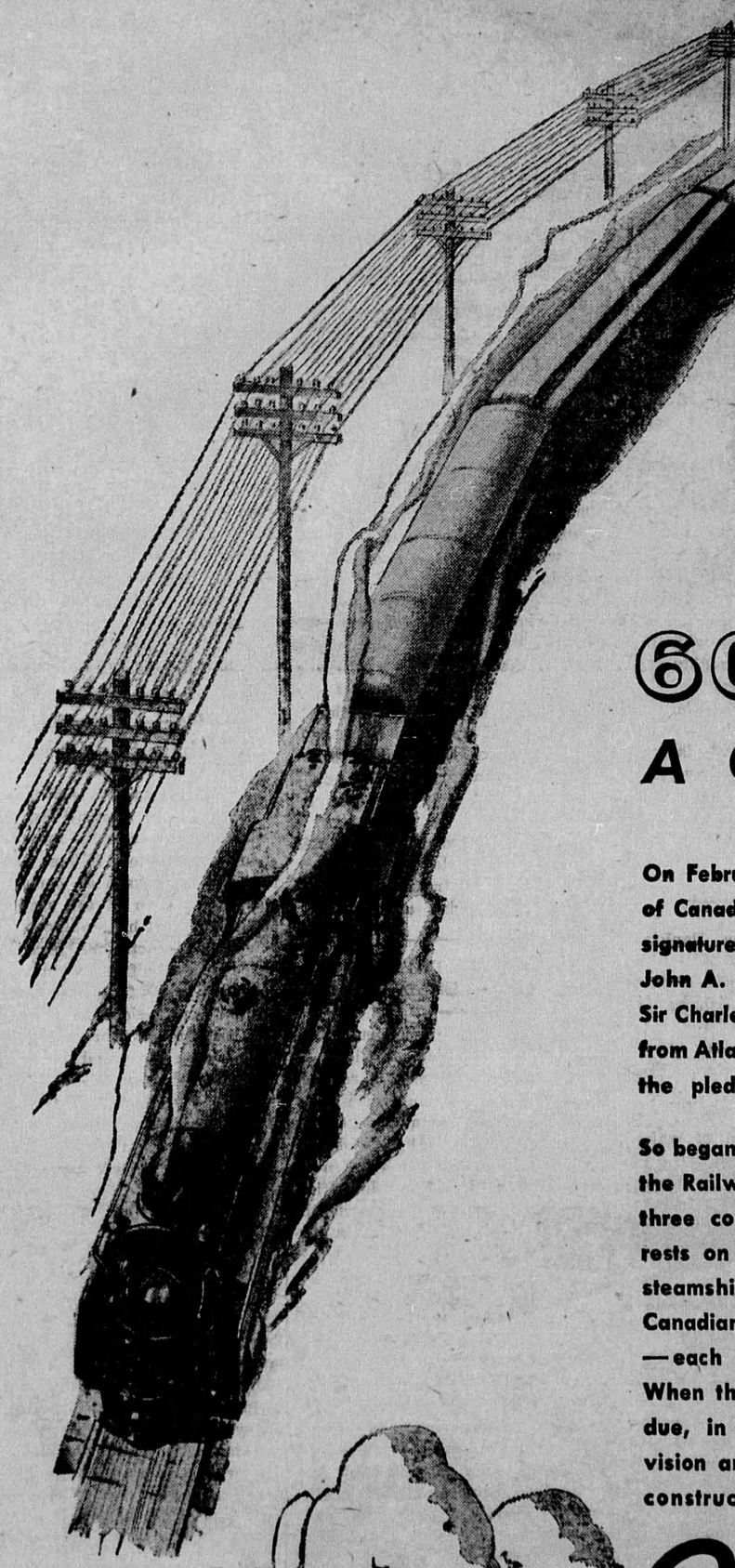
"A nation does not have to be invaded in order to lose a war."
—Dorothy Thompson.

Goes to Brazil

Jean Desy, former Canadian minister to Belgium and the Netherlands, is being named to the newly-created post of Canadian minister to Brazil.

1881 ••• 1941

THE MARQUIS OF LORNE, K.T., G.C.M.G.
GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF CANADA, 1878-1883



60 YEARS AGO

A Charter was signed

On February 15, 1881, the Marquis of Lorne, then Governor-General of Canada, signed the charter of the Canadian Pacific Railway. That signature consummated the vision of great Canadian statesmen — Sir John A. Macdonald, D'Arcy McGee, Sir Georges-Étienne Cartier, and Sir Charles Tupper—that the new Dominion of Canada should be linked from Atlantic to Pacific by a trans-continental railway—and implemented the pledge under which British Columbia entered Confederation.

So began a new era in Canadian unity . . . and Empire solidarity . . . for the Railway expanded into a system spanning two oceans and linking three continents. Today — as in 1914-18 — a proud responsibility rests on our transportation and communication systems — railway, steamships, freight, express, telegraphs and engineering shops. Canadian Pacific officers and employees everywhere are co-operating — each in his own field — towards the common goal . . . VICTORY. When that goal is reached — and it will be reached — this will be due, in no small measure, to Canada's contribution, and to the vision and foresight of the men who, sixty years ago, planned the construction of the first Canadian trans-continental railway.

Canadian Pacific

LINK OF EMPIRE

RAILWAY • STEAMSHIPS • EXPRESS • HOTELS • COMMUNICATIONS • SHOPS