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OTTAWA REPORTS

On Donald Gordon's warnings against the disasters of inflation which only strict observance of price ceilings can prevent.

"If the dam breaks, God help us," declared Donald Gordon, Canada's lusty and forthright director of that newest and biggest economic experiment of modern civilization, war time price controls, before the Weekly Newspaper Association Convention in Toronto. Delivering one of the most powerful public addresses of the whole war, Gordon was appealing for continued support for the policy of controls—warning of the ruinous devastation of homes and human happiness which would ensue upon the breaking down of the ramparts built against inflation, in telling the manufacturer, farmer and workman that continued group pressure for higher prices and higher wages would precipitate the deluge.

"On every side the pressures to which I refer are making themselves felt," he said. "Labor is militant and demanding wage adjustments all along the line. Notwithstanding the wage ceiling many thousands of wage increases are being demanded and as one wage adjustment after another is made it is reflected immediately in the costs of production which, in turn, means the pressure on the price ceiling is rapidly becoming insupportable.

"Food prices are creeping steadily upwards as the agricultural industry insists upon, and obtains, higher prices under the emergency of curtailment of essential supplies. With few exceptions business and industry keep their eyes on profit margins and jealously protest any move to limit or control them. Black markets are commencing to develop. . . . Generally speaking our courts deal leniently with offenders. . . ."

Paragraphs like these can only be described as among the most potent and thought provoking of the whole war, not excluding all the utterances of the Prime Minister and his Cabinet colleagues. It seemed odd to this columnist that Mr. Gordon did not delve slightly into the detail of the working of the price control system and show the housewives, many of whom will remember spiralling prices of the 1919-20 period, just what price controls have effected. It is all set forth in the Labor Gazette, an official publication issued by the Federal Labor Department, but, of course, not widely read.

At the beginning of June, 1943, says the current Labor Gazette, the Canadian cost of living index was 17.6 per cent higher than in August, 1939, the last pre-war month. For the similar period during the last war the advance was 49.3 per cent.

Since the establishment of the price ceiling the index has advanced 2.6 per cent., that is between October 1, 1941, and June of the current year.

For the comparable period during the last war, between October, 1916, and June, 1918, the advance was 28.6 per cent.

Since August 1939 foods have advanced 31.9 per cent; clothing 20.3 per cent; home furnishings and services 16.7 per cent; fuel and light 14.2 per cent; rent 7.4 per cent; and miscellaneous 6.8 per cent.

Canada's cost of living, he said

say, has increased only 2.6 per cent since December, 1941, while that of the United States has gone up 13 per cent.

The average of retail prices in 69 cities in Canada for certain staple foods and fuel at certain dates between 1914 to 1943 are also included in the Labor Gazette's official analysis, and some of the contrasts between June 1920 prices and those of June 1943, are as follows:—

	June 1920	June 1943
Pork	40	32
Bacon	60	45
Lard	38	18
Eggs	54	41
Milk	14	10
Butter, dairy	59	36
Butter, creamery	66	39
Bread	9	7
Canned tomatoes	21	14
Beans, dry	12	6
Potatoes	118	52
Sugar	22	8
Coffee	61	44
Cocoa	30	19

A few weeks ago a Winnipeg newspaper published comparisons of clothing costs as between 1920 and 1943, some of which were as follows:—men's suits, which were \$55 in 1920, averaged \$35 in 1943; shirts, \$1.95 in 1920 and \$1.10 in 1943; socks, \$1.50 in 1920 as against 65 cents in 1943; women's stockings, \$1.75 to \$2.75 in 1920 and 69 to \$1.35 today; shoes, \$11.60 to \$20 in 1920 as compared to \$6 to \$12 today; and women's dresses, \$20 to \$60 in 1920 and \$8 to \$40 in 1943.

These prices of today contrasted with those of 1920 show where the saving of over a billion dollars effected by price control has gone—into the family budgets all across the country.

Milkweed Leaves Are Badly Needed

Three cents a pound for hand prepared milkweed leaves will be paid by the Department of Agriculture in a Government-sponsored project of the National Research Council to secure large quantities of the rubber producing plants for experimental purposes, it was announced recently at the University of Western Ontario, London, Ont.

The price, advises The St. Thomas Times, will be paid for leaves which have been stripped by hand and well dried. An alternative price of \$30 per ton will be given for milkweed which has been cut by binder and stooked in sheaves.

VOICE OF THE PRESS

Living Costs
In the United States, the cost of living rose 24 per cent, and the cost of food 46 per cent, between January, 1941 and May, 1943. In Canada the cost of living went up 12 per cent, and the cost of food 18 per cent, in the similar period.
—Edmonton Journal.

Belated Arrival
A new German gun, with a longer range than others that shelled Britain's coast from Calais in the past, is reported in London to be in action. Its inventor, however, will be saddened by the thought that he got to the party just as it was breaking up.
—Windsor Star.

The Day's Round
An old colored woman explained how she kept content with her hard lot by saying: "When I works, I works hard; when I sits, I sits soft; when I starts to worry, I goes to sleep."
—Ottawa Citizen.

On the Food Front
The Army declares that our soldiers are better fed than the civilians. Next thing we know, the boys will be writing us some cheery letters to keep up our morale.
—The New Yorker.

Three Opinion Ages
Opinions change. When you are young you are sure you are right. When you are middle-aged you begin to wonder whether you were ever right. When you are old you know you were wrong—but there isn't much you can do about it.
—Owen Sound Sun-Times.

Sneak Goals
We learn that football is played a good deal in Japan. And of course there is keen competition to score a few goals before the kick-off.
—Peterborough Examiner.

Soviet Women Farmers

With all able-bodied men in the Soviet fighting forces women have taken their places in farming throughout Russia and in the last two years 700,000 women have learned to run tractors and combine harvesters.

The Book Shelf

THE HUMAN COMEDY
By William Saroyan
The Human Comedy is a story of an American family in wartime, and in particular of Homer Macaulay, the fastest messenger in San Joaquin Valley. The story abounds in unforgettable scenes. Homer running the two-twenty hurdles; little Ulysses imprisoned in the bear trap in Covington's story; old-time telegraph operator Willie Grogan, with a bottle in the desk drawer to fuz the sharp reality of the everflowing messages of love and hope and pain and death; Spangler, with a love for the whole world; Homer's older brother Marcus singing, as the troop train in which he sits hurtles away from home. The Human Comedy captures, but does not overstep, the modesty of ordinary human beings. It is a very simple novel. It is a very great achievement.
The Human Comedy—by William Saroyan.
George J. McLeod, Limited—Price \$3.00.

Norse Seaman Saves Comrades From Seas

Swimming 500 yards in the January waters of the Atlantic to get hold of a loose lifeboat, and then rowing it single handed back toward the sinking ship, were twin deeds which recently earned an unnamed Norwegian second mate a double award from his King and country, reveals The Montreal Star. For at the Norwegian Legation, Hon. Daniel Steen, Norwegian Minister, presented this 25-year-old unnamed sailor with the St. Olav Medal and the War Medal. Because he has a father, mother, sisters and brothers living in Norway, his name cannot be mentioned, nor his picture taken. In making the presentation, Mr. Steen said that the award was for "personal gallantry" of the second mate, who had rendered a great service to King and country. "In His Majesty's name I present these medals, as a sign of his own gratitude, as well as that of all Norwegian people," he said. Asked to tell his own story the sailor pieced it together, with much questioning. His ship was between the Azores and Bermuda, he said, and one dark night, shells started to fall on the vessel from the

port side. Then a few minutes later, they started to come from the starboard.

"I knew then that we were being shelled by two submarines," said the second mate. "Then there were four shots fired, and these included a direct hit on the gun stand."

"After that the incendiaries started to go, and the ship caught fire," he recalled.

One of the lifeboats broke away and the unnamed sailor jumped overboard into the January sea, and swam for it. He reached it successfully, climbed aboard and rowed the heavy boat to the ship where he picked up 18 of the crew.

Busy Coast Guard

Patrolling 6,000 miles of British coastline, the Coast Guard in 1942 saved 1,000-odd lives. Their duties include a lookout for sneak raiders, enemy minelayers, ships in distress and Allied airmen who have baled out.

Re-education Of Nazis Is Believed Doubtful

This significant statement is made by "Newsweek" Magazine, New York: "The report of a Catholic leader just returned from a visit to Nazi prison camps in the U. S. casts considerable doubt on the hope of educating the Germans away from Nazi theories after the war. He visited the camps to determine what could be done for the prisoners but found the majority arrogant and unwilling to be aided, Catholic and Protestant alike. Many interpreted any kindness as a sign of 'democratic weakness.' In view of this attitude, the prelate is doubtful about the education process, pointing out that while the coming generation might be schooled in democracy, the present generation, which has a life expectancy of from 40 to 50 years, will still dominate the home environment."

SIDE GLANCES

By Galbraith



"I don't like fishing either, but if I hang around the house too much my daughter-in-law keeps thinking up little jobs for me to do."

REG'LAR FELLERS—Pinhead's Finish

By GENE BYRNES

