

Canadian Corps Head and Editors Discuss Problems

This is the eleventh in the series of articles written exclusively for the weekly newspapers of Canada by Hugh Tompkins of The Verges News-Record. He flew to Great Britain as a guest of the British Council and was given an opportunity to see what is being done in Britain, Ireland and Portugal in wartime.

Twelve Canadian editors sat around the outside edge of a horseshoe-shaped table in an upper room of a large mansion in the south of England. Around the walls were military maps, nearly all of them showing portions of England and Scotland on a large scale, though some were of the continent of Europe. There were charts on the walls, too, showing types of aircraft, British and enemy craft. Such charts are common in England now. Sometimes, they're handy to have around.

Outside the window, I could see the slate roof of a garage, most housing military cars. On the roof was a dovehouse and a weather-vane on top. The pigeons came and went. Beyond that, there were clipped hedges around a formal garden. There was no sign of bomb damage here.

This was the headquarters of the Canadian Corps in England. The lean, alert man with the closely clipped moustache, who sat in the centre of the room, facing us all, was Lieutenant-General A. G. L. McNaughton, leader of the Canadian Forces Overseas. He was talking frankly to his fellow-Canadians. He answered all our questions, even when military secrets were involved, adding a caution when something was not for publication.

With these few exceptions, this is what he said: "I hope you will return to Canada and tell the people there the things you have seen and heard," he said. "Talk freely to the officers and men and give your impressions, frankly when you return home. I welcome the Press as colleagues who help to form public opinion and have never attempted to do work for the Press, as they are capable of writing their own story and have shown discretion. We are all in the game together to subdue the menace from Central Europe. I do not object to criticism."

Better equipment the Great Need
Asked what is the most urgent need at present, General McNaughton replied: "Put every emphasis on the production of weapons and equipment. We need technical improvements such as can be worked out under the direction of the National Research Institute and others who work under Mr. Howe. Then these improvements must be put into production quickly."

This will be a long war and we must use our wits and the intensiveness for which Canadians are noted. There must be full steam ahead on the production of machines and arms and new weapons. So far there hasn't been much necessity for a heavier flow of reinforcements, as we have had few casualties. It is hard on the troops not to let them see more action, but Canadians are overseas not just to fight, but to win the war. It is harder to keep up morale in reinforcement depots than in the units themselves.

"The men in Canada are being well trained now," General McNaughton declared. "They need not feel they are second class troops because they are still in Canada."

The First Division was gathered in almost record time. Basic training of that Division was dropped because fighting was still going on in France. That was a disadvantage which has never been overcome. "Some of the best training in Canada, including the learning of trades. The new Divisions, particularly the Third, concentrated on basic training first and now they are learning rapidly in England. It is much more difficult to take basic training after advanced training has been completed."

New Equipment Perfect
More and more skilled tradesmen are needed by the Army and they cannot be taken out of industry. The trade schools are therefore worth their weight in gold. Repair shops are vitally necessary. None of the mechanical equipment was actually defective, but there were some faults in design at first because of the sudden jump into production. Instead of having the usual two years of testing, the manufacturers sent experts over and corrected the faults. The new stuff is exactly as we wish it.

For the past year, Canadian troops have been arriving in Britain fully equipped. Our Air Force, Navy and industrial development have enlarged. General McNaughton would not say how many should go into the army and how many into industry. We should survey our man power first. We want no flash in the pan and not put all our goods in the show window now. No one wants to break up a Division which has been once formed. Someone must decide what is to be our maximum war effort.

The General believed there would have to be an invasion of the Continent. That was one of the favor-

ite topics for debate in England at that time. He said there was no doubt about it. A well organized nation cannot be brought to its knees by missiles and bombs alone. The Air Training Scheme is still Canada's greatest effort, but bombing from the air has its limitations. In a week at the end of the last war, over 200,000 tons of missiles were used. In 2500 yards on the front and more could have been used. Air power cannot drop enough bombs and infantry cannot get there fast enough after the bombs are dropped to be of the maximum use.

One of the editors asked whether the young man with a good education should go into the Air Force rather than the Army. General McNaughton said educated men were needed in all branches of the service. Even if they enlist as privates in the Infantry, they will be found by a rapid index system and put at the work where they are most needed.

Most Mechanized Army
The Canadian Corps has a sufficient supply of mechanical transport, and has two R.C.A.F. squadrons attached to it, which is more than the average. There are twelve as many Engineers as in the last war. There are five regiments of long range guns, and armored division, survey and meteorological sections and a thoroughly balanced force. The Canadians have far more mechanization than the British and Engineers to keep the roads open.

We are now on interior lines with a water barrier and can take the offensive in any direction. An invasion of the Continent is easier than an invasion of England. The Germans may attempt an invasion of England and it may be that the best time to strike back will be after that but not necessarily. The Germans have 25 times as much coastline to guard as we have, which gives them an impossible task. The Russian campaign has been as gold, frankincense and myrrh for us. There is no need for Canadians to tell Americans what to do; they know their own show and we need not tell them.

At that time, the Russian armies were still in retreat. Petrograd was surrounded and Moscow was threatened. But even at that, the General did not believe that Russia was going to be knocked out of the war. He was so heartened by their performance, even in those days, that he was willing to base plans for the future on the fact that they would continue to fight. We can give them mechanical assistance to add to what they are producing in the Frank-O-Corps. The Russians must have been prepared with enormous mechanization and there was no need to be greatly surprised at their stand. They are careful not to let even their allies know any more than possible.

Shipping Conditions Improve
It is a scarcity of shipping alone which has held back Canada's Army overseas. Every possible ship has been used. Ships are now getting across the Atlantic much more quickly. The change is amazing. The North Atlantic is rapidly becoming a corridor for the safe transit of troops and supplies.

The General felt no anxiety about the morale of the Canadian troops during the coming winter. They had much more interesting training ahead of them. The men have an extraordinarily high standard of intelligence and crime is far less than in the last war, only a small fraction. He was not anxious about the troops this winter. The scheme of education helps to put in their spare time and proves beneficial as well.

Not long before that, there had been an expedition to Spitzbergen Island in the Arctic. The inhabitants had been taken off and the coal mines destroyed so that the enemy could not use them. The Canadians ran that expedition. It was useful in many ways. Britain, Norway and Russia all asked for it.

A Dagger at the Heart of Berlin
In the end, the Canadian Corps is a dagger pointed at the heart of Berlin. In fighting value and range of action, we have an edge on the German panzer divisions. The 5th Canadian Armoured Division is stronger than any the Germans have. The three Canadian tanks were never being overused. They would be severely tested before going into action. There was no need to doubt their quality, nor the quality of any other Canadian-made equipment. Bren guns from Canada are as nearly perfect as any gun ever turned out and they came through their trials with flying colors.

Summing up, the General said that Canada's great problem was the development of its manpower to the best advantage. It might be that the recent census would help. There is a big job to be done. As the editors rose to leave after spending nearly two hours at the Corps Headquarters, General McNaughton shook us each by the hand again. We departed, feeling that we had met one of the greatest of all Canadians and one who had been perfectly frank and outspoken. Under his direction, the Canadian Corps can

National Parks as Wildlife Sanctuaries

All Canada's national parks are wildlife sanctuaries. They serve as natural museums where visitors can enjoy the benefits of first-hand acquaintance with creatures of the wild living unafraid and unmolested. In this way the parks not only make a noteworthy contribution to wildlife conservation, but also offer an unequalled opportunity to study ecology under favorable conditions.

Wildlife adds materially to the pleasure of the park visitor. However charming the scenery, its beauty and interest are increased a hundred-fold by the sight of wild creatures in forest, the song of birds in the trees, the whirr of wings skimming the surface of the water, or the leap of a trout from deep eddying pools. These add life to the scene and are an essential part of the national parks idea.

This fact has long been recognized by those charged with national parks

development in Canada. Wild animals living under natural conditions present to the park visitor a picture of animal life which never could be obtained within the confines of a zoo, or even at large where no adequate protection is afforded. No doubt one of the most fascinating features of these national parks is the opportunity they provide to study and photograph wild animals in their native habitat.

Wilderness invaded by throngs of human beings may seem a paradox, but there is really nothing conflicting between the idea of a wildlife sanctuary and a spacious area of natural beauty where hundreds and thousands of people may go each year in search of healthful recreation. Actually there is very little disturbance of wildlife in these parks, and it is remarkable how quickly the animals and birds have discovered that they have nothing to fear from man. Some of them have become tame to a point bordering on impudence. This is particularly true of the black bear, but here a word of caution. Visitors to the parks will be well advised not to feed or attempt to "pet" the animals. Kindness does not always bring kindness, and some of these animals have not yet learned what is expected of them under civilized rules of conduct.

Years ago Canada was the last refuge of many wild animals, but because of the advance of settlement in

this country the habitations, particularly of big game, were gradually taken over and the animal life, was being inexorably wiped out. The story of the plains buffalo is a case in point. A few years ago none but the adventurous, who was content to spend days and possibly weeks in the attempt, could see such animals as the mountain goat and the bighorn sheep in their native surroundings. Today, the visitor to the national parks may come across many of these animals, including sheep, goat, moose, deer, bear, elk, and, in some of the parks buffalo and antelope, without having to go very far afield.

Canada's national parks are truly accomplishing one of the most important aims which was in the minds of those who first conceived the idea of great natural museums of wildlife. These parks are in the best possible position to preserve wildlife because their mandate is to preserve comprehensive the whole complex of earth and water, hill and dale, forest and plain, rock and snow that go to make up a park. As long as the national parks are kept as wildlife sanctuaries they will continue to present a fuller picture of the primeval Canada and afford Canadians a chance to enrich their experience by unforgettable encounters with primitive nature.

There's neither interest nor return from taxes. The Allies must have our money to beat the Axis.

Norway's Girls Train for War

Hardy Groups from Homeland Learn Service Duties in Scotland

SOMEWHERE IN SCOTLAND, (C) Amid picturesque snow-blanketed and forest-fringed mountain country 50 Norwegian girls between 20 and 25 are undergoing rigorous training for service with the fast-growing Norwegian army and other Norwegian institutions established in Britain.

The group, known as the "Lofoten," the Finnish "Lofoten" incoming nurse, reached this country by various routes. Some were brought from Spitzbergen by the Canadian force which raided the northern archipelago last year, while others crossed the dangerous North Sea in fishing vessels and tiny dinghies.

At the training camp, once the home of Annie Lofoten, one section is learning to cook, drive ambulances, military cars and trucks and will be posted to the Norwegian army. Another is taking a nursing course and a third is learning shorthand, typewriting and general office work.

GOOD WHALE CATCH

Canadian whaling ships, operating from two stations on the British Columbia coast, landed 328 whales during the 1941 season as compared with 220 in the 1940 season, when whaling was resumed after a year's inactivity. The 1941 catch was likewise greater than in 1938 when 310 whales were taken.

Whales in Canada are used for the production of meat, fertilizer, and oil, with all the chief products. Wartime needs have increased the demand for these products and have given new impetus to whaling operations.

The 1941 operations produced a total of 566,505 gallons of oil, approximately 577 tons of fertilizer, and 271 tons of meat. Compared with 1940 these returns show a decided increase. Oil production advanced more than 201,800 gallons and fertilizer production was up by about 143 tons. Meat production was 90 tons greater this year than in the preceding season.

It is a far cry from the square rigged whaling ship of olden days to the modern steel whaling tugs armed with harpoon guns and fitted for present-day operations but some of the risk and romance remains. During the 1941 season on at least one occasion an infuriated whale attacked a whaler after being harpooned, and damaged the steel craft so badly that it had to return to port for repairs.



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