

With Our Weekly Newspaper Representatives Overseas

By Messrs. E. P. MacLean and C. J. Allen, Official Delegates of the C. W. N. A. with the Canadian Press Party who toured the United Kingdom

THE FOOD SITUATION (By E. P. MacLean)

We found cheese everywhere in Britain. And plenty of it. It was available at almost every meal in hotels and some of it was good and some of it was not so good. Personally, I saw more cheese in a week in Britain than I had seen in British Columbia in two months. As I like cheese, I found it a pleasant substitute for the innocuous things that were served as "vegetables" for dinners. Cheese is rationed in Britain, they tell me, but the ration is generously interpreted by the grocer.

Bacon for breakfast was a rumor which could be depended upon to get everyone out of bed in a hurry. It was not always good bacon, but it was bacon and a change from the ever-present mushrooms and dried eggs served in our London hotel. But the supply was another thing. Frequently the fourth person to enter the breakfast room found that the supply of bacon was already exhausted.

Breakfast was really one of the tough meals. Porridge was available, but there was no sugar and the milk was about the blueness of an Okanagan sky. There was one lump of sugar for your tea or coffee, and as I am not interested in sugar for my beverage, I found a little relief for my porridge by breaking my lump of sugar up into small pieces, and scattering it over the porridge. But it did not go very far. Then you had a choice of mushrooms or an egg, sausage—with no meat in it but something that tasted like sausage—or dried eggs scrambled—and that is really something. I did find some people who said that when properly prepared the dried eggs were not too bad, but all Britons seem to be in agreement that they must be prepared in small quantities and in a private home if they are to be eatable. I remember the look of the waiter one noon when after looking over the menu, in a moment of dumbness I ordered an omelet. His look told me I had made a mistake, but I thought I would carry on through the experience of a dried-egg omelet. Never again. Getting back to the breakfast, you finished up with the inevitable roll and—perhaps—about three quarters of a teaspoon of marmalade or jam. There was butter—about as much as would cover the nail of your little finger and about as thick.

The food situation seemed to build down into this. There was plenty to eat but it was very flat and monotonous. To paraphrase Tennyson, "It is a land where all things always taste the same." Lack of seasoning and lack of sugar make a tremendous difference. Things that in peacetime are considered delicacies soon became nightmares. Take, for instance, the mushrooms. And the pheasant, the grouse, the guinea hen, the venison we ate at dinner. No more of those please for me for many months. The sweets were something wonderful to look at but something like Judy O'Grady and the Colonel's lady they were all the same under the skin.

Fruit, of course, was non-existent. The best that can be said of the British food situation, is that the diet is a healthy one and the supply is ample. But there is no pleasure in eating there—even in the swank hotels. The average home has a pretty slim time at mealtime, if my observation and information are correct. The best meals we had were those in the army, navy and air force messes where we found the food generally very good indeed and a wide variety of it.

Overheard in the breakfast room of a London hotel, one waitress addressing another in a loud whisper which could be heard in every corner of the room: "If he loves me as much as he says he does, why should I have to share him with somebody else?" Love affairs apparently meet the same snags in wartime Britain as in Canada.

A Wing Commander from Toronto one morning asked me if I would do him a favor when I returned to Canada. "Go into Murrays and order a double order of griddle cakes and maple syrup and eat them for me."

Travelling in Britain is an experience. The trains are as crowded as they are here. There are very few diners and everyone packs their own sandwiches and thermos bottles. If you want a drink of water on a train or a cup of tea at one of the stops, you must have your own cup, as we found out to our sorrow the first day

IN BRITAIN Actually china is becoming a problem. Seldom do you see a meal when all the pieces are of spotted china.

Dollars and Cents in Desert Plants

Chemist Believes Farms Can be Developed in U. S. Waste Areas

NORMAN, Okla. (CP)—The pot of gold at the end of the rainbow that hangs so spectacularly over southwestern deserts may prove to be in the "waste" plants that farmers have ignored for decades.

Dr. A. C. Sheard, University of Oklahoma, chemist, says that vast waste areas can be developed from these dry wastes if farm families are willing to make their living from cactus, mesquite, devil's claw and a host of other native plants now considered without value.

"The goal country of Sicily formerly imported American cactus to produce fruit," says Sheard. "Now they have orchards of cacti that produce nine tons of fruit per acre. The fruit runs as much as 14 per cent sugar. Mexico utilizes cacti in much the same way."

Sheard says the spiny variety of cacti could be used as fodder while the big-fruited kind are suited for sugar.

"The joboba produces a wax resembling whale oil, used in pharmaceutical preparations," says Sheard. "The devil's claw is a good food plant. Its small young pod is edible and could be prepared the same as okra."

"Even the scrubby mesquite has been developed in Hawaii as a source of kiawe bean meal, similar to cottonseed meal. The mesquite fruit pod is richer in sugar than the sugar cane or the sugar beet. Gum mesquite might even replace gum arabic for pharmaceutical uses."

Sheard's list includes the canagale plant, which produces tannin; the tree of heaven, source of cellulose and alanthin, an insecticide; the sunflower, which produces an oil similar to cottonseed oil and the yucca, a source of fibre and soap.

How To Construct Milk Cooling Tank

Spillage of milk is almost invariably the result of bacterial action. While the number of bacteria in freshly-drawn milk depends chiefly upon the care taken in cleaning and sterilizing the utensils and equipment with which milk comes in contact, the length of time milk will remain usable is also dependent upon the temperature at which it is held. Hence the importance of prompt and thorough cooling of milk on the farm.

Various methods of cooling milk have been advocated, but for the fluid milk trade it is generally accepted that best results are obtained by placing the cans in a well-insulated tank filled with ice water, and circulating the water to speed up the cooling process. While the ice may be placed in the tank in blocks, the greater convenience of mechanical refrigeration units is leading to their widespread use. Whichever form of refrigeration is used, it is important that a well-insulated tank be provided, otherwise heat will leak into the tank so rapidly as to decrease its efficiency and increase the cost of operation.

IN CO-OPERATION with the Division of Bacteriology and Dairy Research, Science Service, the Architect at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa has prepared detailed plans for the construction of an insulated milk cooling tank which may be used either with natural ice or with mechanical refrigeration. Copies of these plans may be obtained free of charge by writing to either the Architect or the Division of Bacteriology and Dairy Research, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa.

MORE FALL FAIRS LIKELY IN 1944

Based on reports received by the Agricultural Societies Branch of the Ontario Department of Agriculture, there is likely to be a slight increase in the number of agricultural fairs held in Ontario during the year 1944, says J. A. Carroll, Superintendent of the Branch. Last year 225 fairs were held in the Province and some societies which did not hold fairs last year have fixed dates and are planning to revive their activities this year. The official list of dates is now being compiled and it is expected to be complete as soon as the various district meetings of the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies have all been held, which will probably be about the middle of June.

"Gen" Big Word In Language Of Canuck Airmen

"Intelligence" May Mean Life or Death, Success or Failure to Flyers on Hazardous Bombing Operations

BY FRANK FLAHERTY Canadian Press Staff Writer

WITH THE R. C. A. F. IN ENGLAND (CP)—Of all the new words brought into the language by this war none is more packed with meaning than "gen." It came in by way of the air force and is short for "intelligence."

Fighting forces have had intelligence departments as long as there have been wars. The fighting men are usually careful to explain that intelligence in the military sense has nothing to do with normal intelligence. Their business is to collect all information which may be useful to the force.

In the bombing operations carried on by the R. C. A. F. bomber group intelligence passes right down the line to the individual airman, something which rarely happened in other days. It comes to him in his briefing before an operation and along with it come his orders. He calls it "the gen" and since the thing thus described means life or death, success or failure, it is natural that he should use the word in other connections for the "load-on" on any particular matter or situation.

The bombing crews get their gen on the afternoon before a raid but the gen starts a long way back and is a compilation of the observations and deductions of hundreds of men, aircrew men, weather experts, secret agents, veterans of hundreds of hours of flying and many raids who hold command or staff posts.

In the pre-raid gen all members of an air crew are told the "target for tonight." Then they are given exact directions as to the route to be flown there and back, the time of arrival over the target. They are told where enemy fighters and anti-aircraft fire are to be expected.

CHIEF HEADQUARTERS

At headquarters of the R. C. A. F. bomber group one of the large halls of an ancient castle serves as the Operations room. It has large maps and many telephones connecting it with bomber command headquarters, with other groups in the command, and with the Canadian stations under the group.

The "target for tonight" is set at bomber command headquarters and that part of the gen is known to few before it is passed on to the bomber crews. Canadian bomber group like other bomber groups also has its meteorological staff, keeping tab on the weather and its intelligence staff which keeps abreast of the latest reports from the territory to be bombed, which collects and passes on the information brought back by its own pilots after raids.

Connecting all groups and stations is a special "scrambler" telephone line over which secret information including the "target for tonight" is passed. The words are scrambled so that if anyone tapped the line he would hear nothing but a jumble.

Over these scrambler lines the commanders of stations in the Canadian group hold a conference after they get word of the target for tonight. They thresh out the best course to follow in reaching the target, argue the relative importance of danger at different points. Finally they all agree on what should be done to hit the target and what information the bomber crews need. The gen for the night is settled.

ITALIAN MUD

The boys in Italy have to contend with murderous fire from long range guns, six barrel mortars, machine guns and rifles, but one thing that especially irked a soldier who wrote to Mrs. E. S. Gander, Broadview, Saskatchewan, was the Italian mud. In fact, he wrote a dirge on the subject:

Mud, Mud, Mud! I think my name is mud. The dictionary says mud is an emulsion, precipitation or suspension of dirt in water. But Noah Webster never lived in Italy! You've heard of the red mud of Arizona, the blue mud of Ethiopia and the yellow mud of China. You've heard politicians sling it, ponies kick it, and wagons stick in it, but you haven't seen anything until you have seen Italian mud! It's pasty and sticky, dirty and tricky, sloppy and beastly, slimy and filthy, sloppy and beastly, watery and wobbly. It runs and radiates, licks and irritates, teases and tosses, throws you for losses. It smatters and smears, drives you to tears, eases and oozes, squirts and squeaks, squeals and squeaks, almost even speaks. But, damn it, it's just plain mud!!

BRITISH SCOUTS DAY OF WORK

To raise funds to send a group of Scouts to Europe in the wake of the invasion to do relief work, every Scout and Wolf Cub in Britain did a day's work on May 20th, and turned the money earned over to the fund to send the workers. These workers will wear regulation army battle dress with Boy Scout badges.

Maybe Noah Laughed at These

Followman: "Anything the matter, sir?"
Inspector: "I've been waiting here over one hour for my wife. Don't you think you might order me to move on, officer?"
Mrs. Watts: "How is the girl getting on I recommended to you?"
Mr. Spotts: "Oh, she's a perfect sweetheart. I left her to straighten things up before the minister called, and she never even dined off the table."
Mr. Doubtful: "What would you say, my dear, if I were to give you the money for a new hat?"
Mrs. Doubtful: "I wouldn't say a word, darling, until I had the money in my hands, for fear you'd change your mind."
"Ah, Andrew," said the minister, "I hear that they've gone dry in your brother's village."
"They?" remarked Andrew. "My?"
"Why, man, they've parched. I've just received a letter from M'Tye, and, believe me, the stamp was stuck on 'er' a pin!"
Affable Traveler: "I'm a little stiff from riding."
Short-tempered Tradesman: "I don't care where you're from. Let's have a look at your samples."
Her Father: "I do hope you appreciate that in marrying my daughter you are getting a very big-hearted and generous girl."
Young man: "I do, sir. And I hope that she has acquired those fine qualities from her father."
Hoggy: "I hear that you bought a car cheap. How are you getting on with it?"
Green: "I'm just realizing how hard it is to strike a bargain."

LESS IMPORTS NOW OF FARM PRODUCTS

The farm value of imports of agricultural products into Canada is small in relation to the total value of domestic agricultural production and is important only in the case of a relatively few items. Imports of flaxseed which formerly were large have been sharply reduced in recent years and Canada has become a net exporter of this product. Corn remains important as an import item, but the imports were relatively low in 1941-42 and in 1942-43. Imports of dried and light peas have been significant in certain years. Among the fruits, Canada imports relatively large quantities of apricots, plums, prunes, and grapes, as well as of citrus fruits, bananas, and pineapples which are not produced in Canada. Imports of lettuce, which formerly were large, have been reduced to a small percentage of Canadian production.

NEW DELHI (CP) The food and fibre trade has multiplied its output of army loads many times since the outbreak of war, and now turns out 1,000,000 pairs a year, besides millions of rubber-soled canvas and other types of shoes. Fifteen per cent of the loads are made by village cobblers.

ADMIRAL SIR BERTRAM RAMSEY



Allied Naval Commander in Chief under General Eisenhower

The Effect of the "HOURS OF WORK AND VACATIONS WITH PAY ACT 1944" ON BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY IN ONTARIO

ON JULY 1st, 1944, the "Hours of Work and Vacations With Pay Act 1944" becomes effective in the Province of Ontario.

While it is the purpose of this Act to provide improved conditions for all workers employed in industry in this Province, it will be obvious that the provisions of the Act cannot be permitted, at this time, to interfere with the all-out capacity effort required in producing material for war.

The Industry and Labour Board, which will administer the Act, therefore, considers, in view of the present acute manpower shortage and the vital demands of war, that the application of the Act should be postponed and working conditions in force at present should not be arbitrarily changed.

The Board therefore authorizes the continuance of Existing Working Hours in all industries operating on priority War Material in the Province of Ontario.

Industries engaged in Agriculture, Horticulture, Fishing and the Production of Foods and Farm Products; Dairying Industries including cheese and butter; Firms engaged in the building and upkeep of roads, construction, transportation, textiles and other undertakings which can be considered essential to the full maintenance of the war effort, shall be considered in the category of War Industries insofar as their present working hours are concerned.

Preparation of the groundwork for the operation and application of the Act will go forward immediately but the Industry and Labour Board wishes it to be understood that these preparations will not be permitted to interfere in any way with existing working conditions in vital industry as long as the present crisis exists.

HON. CHARLES DALEY
Minister of Labour