

Britain Evolved Big Smoke Screen To Save Industry

Vital Part of Wartime Defence Developed from Early Emergency Use of Lowly Orchard Heaters

LONDON (CP) The common orchard heater became a vital part of Britain's defences in 1940-42, and led to the development of a vast smoke-screening plan which would turn 20 or 30 towns at a time into "Little Pittsburghs" to mislead the enemy.

Early in the war fruit growers were asked to lend some of their orchard heaters for war purposes the only smoke producers then available. Normally a safeguard against frost, the heaters were turned to saving the lives of civilians, protecting industry and obscuring port activities.

When the smoke screen plan got under way late in 1940 the chief emphasis was on protecting inland industrial cities. Later the principal attention of the smoke screen scheme was given to the ports, for after 1942 German planes penetrated less frequently to the interior.

Months before D-Day the British and Americans who shared in the preparations for screening invasion ports had built up a smoke weapon so effective that despite the heavy concentration of shipping in British ports before D-Day, no serious naval casualties were caused by German planes.

Replaced by Oil Burner

The primitive orchard heater was quickly superseded by a burner on the same principle, cheaply constructed and specially designed for screening. It used a light diesel oil. This, in turn, was displaced by the Haslar generator, a mobile, mechanical kind much larger than its forerunner and more efficient. The Haslar consumed a crude fuel oil which produced a yellow, greasy smoke, not unlike the worst London fog.

After the Haslar came the Esso, an American product, which was considered a great improvement in the screening technique. It used a special oil. Chemical smoke was used sometimes too.

Originally smoke screening was done only at night, but daylight camouflage of this kind was ready at certain ports since late in 1942.

Although some Britons complained that smoke soiled their clothing and household furnishings, the screening of an area ordinarily did not interfere with the normal life of the people.

Chemical smoke was more unpleasant than oil smoke, and in some instances civilians were advised to wear gas masks out of doors.

The Germans also smoke-screened their ports and inland cities, on a much larger scale than the British did, principally with chemicals.

Do Not Create Henhouse Slums

Overcrowding of poultry is the source of many evils. Chilled, damp and ill at ease, poultry obliged to pass the winter in a congested, poorly ventilated henhouse soon lose their resistance to disease. In their weakened condition, they are increasingly prone to be attacked by parasites.

When weak, they will probably go hungry. In an overcrowded henhouse there is rarely enough space for every bird at the mash hopper where only the hardiest can find room for their beaks. Consequently, feather picking and even cannibalism become more prevalent.

Yet even the worst laying house can be improved by the admission of more sunlight and by better ventilation and insulation. For every 50 hens, there should be at least 10 feet of feed hoppers.

To be comfortable and healthy, each bird requires from 3 1/2 to 4 square feet of floor space, which should be planned for before winter begins. If the present laying house is not large enough to allow this space (for each bird) then lower birds. Cull out the weaklings and retain only the healthy layers. The healthy layers make money and they make more when they are housed comfortably.

"TORPEDOES" OF THE PAST

In England and Western Europe cigar-shaped "stones", commonly found in clay pits, have long been familiar objects. The term belemnite, which was early applied to them, suggest a dart or thunderbolt. The Royal Ontario Museum has on exhibition a few of these torpedo-like structures. They actually represent the fossilized remains of a portion of the internal shell of an extinct type of shellfish, closely related to the modern squid and cuttlefish, and more remotely related to the devil fish and peery nautilus. These fossils at times reach a length of eighteen inches with a diameter of more than an inch.

Like the modern torpedo, the belemnites were streamlined for quick action. They were probably as deadly in their attack on their unfortunate victims as are the similar shaped, man-made weapons of to-day. They lived in great numbers in the seas at the same time the mighty dinosaurs dominated the lands, and along with the dinosaurs, they have been extinct for fifty million years.

The Week at OTTAWA

By H. L. JONES Canadian Press Staff Writer

OTTAWA (CP) With the world food picture as it is, it is not surprising to find wheat and bacon keen subjects in the Dominion parliament and to find meat rationing still a live issue. At the week-end the government had opened the war-restricted channels for wheat exports, moved to send more bacon to Britain and had stuck by its guns on meat rationing despite continued strikes, though revising coupon values.

The 14-bushel per acre limitation on wheat deliveries is being lifted for the current crop year. Trade Minister Mackinnon told parliament, despite the fact Canada expects a short crop. The move will probably provide 150,000 more bushels for export.

The average yield per acre in western Canada this year was not large and most of the surplus from the 1945 crop would be marketed within the 14-bushel limitation, the trade minister said. In fact stocks of Canadian wheat in store or in transit at September 27th totalled 20,240,984 bushels compared with 40,211,130 in the corresponding date last year. However, the minister said there were some areas and many producers who would have wheat in excess of the 14-bushel limitation and the gates would be opened to provide Europe with the benefit of this extra wheat.

In making the announcement the minister said that since V-E Day more than half the wheat going to Europe has been Canadian wheat. And that percentage will be fully maintained during the present crop year despite the fact Canada may be left with as little as 75,000,000 to 100,000,000 bushels by next July.

Britain Needs Bacon

In the Commons the same day Agriculture Minister Gardiner disclosed he had received a plea for more bacon for Britain from the British food minister, Sir Ben Smith, via transatlantic telephone. Sir Ben had told him if Canada could increase her shipments it would be necessary to reduce to two ounces the weekly ration of bacon in Britain, which already had given generously from her low food stocks to feed hungry Europe.

The response was immediate and concrete. Mr Gardiner said Canada had agreed to increase her bacon shipments to Britain by 6,000 long tons during October and November in an effort to help Britain maintain her present three-ounce ration. The move would boost Canadian shipments of bacon from 11,000 to 17,000 long tons for each of the two months and increase to more than 45,000,000 pounds Canada's 1945 bacon commitments to the Old Country.

Next day the Canadian Meat Board instructed packing plants to rush to sea-board 90 per cent of all hogs slaughtered from now until October 20th. The immediate effect on domestic supplies was not apparent.

However, even if Canadians might expect to be a bit short on bacon for a time, they could expect slight revision of their own meat ration system.

Finance Minister Isley told the Commons that the coupon values on most of the cooked meats would be revised this week. But he warned that over-all Canadian consumption still must be kept within the target of 130 to 135 pounds per person per year.

Mr Isley's announcement stemmed from two meat conferences in the capital during the week at which a delegation of the Canadian Retail Merchants Association and another representing Montreal butchers met with Prices Board officials. It was the second concession in the face of continuing protests of the rationing system as wasteful and cumbersome, but each time the government has stood firm on the necessity of rationing.

Miners On "Holiday"

As the Commons adjourned for Thanksgiving, 7,000 western coal miners were still on a "holiday" protesting that the ration of 1 1/2 pounds per week was not enough for hard-working physical laborers. Their move posed a critical fuel problem for Canada with winter approaching.

The week proved a busy one for the Commons but busier days are ahead. Parliamentary representatives heard from Air Minister Gibson that tentative plans for Canada's post-war air force call for a force of between 15,000 and 20,000 men. And, though the minister said all plans were on a tentative basis until international and regional security commitments were known, the members were vitally interested.

They went home for Thanksgiving

with the government promise they will get the rest of the peacetime defence picture early this week. Defence Minister Abbott will give the details of the Dominion's plans for a peacetime navy and army.

And to top it off the Commons can look forward to the budget, Finance Minister Isley announced he will present on the night of October 12. It will be Canada's first post-war budget and rarely has one been awaited with more eagerness by business and taxpayers generally, who hope to find in it some relief from necessary wartime financial burdens. Official sources will guard the answers to taxation questions until Mr Isley is ready, but general anticipation is that there will be some scaling down of personal income tax, especially among the lower income brackets, and that taxes which act as a curb on business will be modified. Actual changes in taxation, if any, will probably not come into effect until the beginning of the calendar year 1946.

WAN IT A BEAR?

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. (CP) There are no supposed to be any tame bears in this district so it must have been a wild one frightened residents saw along the Niagara river gorge near Niagara Glen. Authorities had no explanation for a bear being so far south.

LAY RADIO PLANS

MONTREAL (CP) Plans to speed return of Canadian radio manufacturers to civilian production and for development in Canada of frequency modulation broadcasting and of television were laid at a meeting of the Radio Manufacturers Association of Canada.

WETAIRWAYS DELAY TRAINS

OTTAWA (CP) Authorities have asked citizens along the routes from Atlantic ports to curtail their weekend plans to passing troops at railway stations. The fruit, candy and cigarettes they dispense are welcome, but officials say the welcome disrupt train schedules.

NEW DIVORCE COURTS

CHARLOTTETOWN (CP) Prince Edward Island is to have its own divorce court. A proclamation has been issued setting up the court under Chief Justice Thoms Campbell. Previously Islanders got divorces through Parliament at Ottawa but there have been few.

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