

Canadian Legion Shows Base of British Liberty

Magna Carta Week to be Observed June 12th to 19th will be Sponsored by Canadian Legion. Special Need Today for Thought to Guard Freedom of the People.

The Canadian Legion throughout Canada is sponsoring the special observance of Magna Carta Week, June 12th to 19th. The Timmins Post of the Legion is taking special interest in the event and is planning special methods of observance, so that the real lesson of Magna Carta may be brought home to all. It is a truism to say that it is the base of all British freedom, but its deeper meaning is not so readily recognized. In the hope that Britishers of every origin will learn the deep significance of Magna Carta and the need for special thought and care about that charter to-day, The Legion is actively sponsoring and supporting Magna Carta Week.

Here is one review by the Legion as to the meaning and scope of the Great Charter and the fidelity with which it should be guarded to-day:—

Magna Carta Week

June 12th to 19th, 1938.

This week we remember with thanksgiving a great event in our history. On the 15th of June, 1215, the barons of England, leaders of the English people, compelled the King of England to give to his subjects a Great Charter of their rights. Sealed with the Great Seal, it became the law of England; it was and is the foundation upon which our liberties and laws, our political and personal freedom, rest to-day.

The Liberty of the Subject: That is the principle of government which was first cradled and nursed and grew in England; the principle upon which

are founded the Common Law of England and the British Constitution itself. It is the basis of law in all British countries, the law which many millions not of British birth obey, and millions more who are not even British subjects. The legal system of the United States is founded upon the Common Law of England.

Of the nations which fought in the Great War the British and the Americans were pre-eminently free people and lovers of peace; they looked upon war as an enemy to liberty, and liberty was so dear to them that they had never exacted military service from their peoples.

It has become the fashion nowadays to talk of the great war as though it was a catastrophe for which nobody in particular, and everybody in general, was to blame; a piece of madness which resulted in loss to everybody and gain to nobody.

This is hardly the correct view. If we gained nothing we at least saved and defended something very dear and very precious, something we must still be forever vigilant to defend—the laws and liberties of England, handed down to us from the days of Magna Carta, and which we are proud to call our own. Our losses in blood and treasure were terrible indeed, but we preserved for ourselves and our children a system of government under which we may choose our own rulers and change them when we see fit, and a system of laws which allows us to do as we

please, to go where we please, to say what we please, so long as we do not harm our neighbour.

One would say that such a system of law and government, developed over several hundred years, proved to be practical, workable and efficient, could have no enemies and would be in no danger.

It is in constant danger both from without and within.

The danger from without is the more plainly to be seen, though hardly the more formidable. Let us consider it first.

There are other theories of government, and other systems based upon far different principles than the liberty of the subject, and there are many men to be found to defend them. Liberty, they argue, is not the only blessing to be enjoyed by the citizens of a state, nor even the chief one. Unity under authority is more desirable and more necessary if the state is to be strong and to withstand and conquer its enemies. The totalitarian system, or government by a dictator, which now prevails in many European countries, is based upon a policy which restricts free speech, free assembly and a free press. It teaches that obedience to imposed authority is true patriotism; to oppose or dispute that authority is treason. The state is supreme and the head of the state knows what is best for the people better than they know themselves. They cannot choose; they must submit, on pain of death. In return they will be taken care of in the way that a loving parent looks after and protects his children.

There is something to be said for the "strong man" theory of government, if it were possible to get a man who was strong, wise, and just, and who would live forever. There is little to be said for it when the supreme power is seized by men as ruthless as they are ambitious.

Such a system is opposed to our own institutions, traditions and temperament. It is not likely, so far as we can now see, that even an attempt could be made to seize the reins of government in Canada by unconstitutional means. But we must be on our guard. Perhaps some day, when public affairs are going badly and the people are impatient, some strong, resourceful able man, lustful of power, may gain office by lawful means and then by unlawful means retain it. We must be jealous of our right to choose our rulers, and no less to turn them out if they no longer suit us.

A much more imminent and insidious danger is that hidden and creeping disease known as communism. It is more likely to infect the body politic than we sometimes think. Communism is a very plausible theory of government and national and social organization; its strength lies in the unfortunate fact that it can point to many imperfections in our present system. Greed and dishonesty in individuals, unwisdom and self-seeking in public men, too often give rise to abuses, and the emissaries of revolution are quick to use them as arguments for a new order of things, and an overturning of the old.

We are witnessing to-day an experiment in communism on an immense scale; its progress is being followed by all the peoples of the world, and many thousands sympathize and hope for its success. Humanitarians, idealists, peace-lovers, good and noble men whose heads were in the clouds and whose feet were hardly on earth, hoped to find in the new Russia the New Jerusalem. Hardly any of them can be deceived any longer. There never was much pretence that there would be full liberty of the subject, or rather the comrade. All were to be equal units in a great world-state, which do everything for them and to which they would surrender everything. But it is evident to all that a tyranny has been established in the U.S.S.R. beside which the dictatorships are enlightened democracies. "Liberty," said Mussolini, "is a stinking corpse." In Russia

the stench rises to high heaven. Even had the experiment been wholly and completely successful, the object achieved would not be an example which we or any other free men would be willing to follow. It has been pointed out often that the bee-hive furnishes the perfect example of a communist state functioning perfectly. There we have a nation perfectly organized where all are equal; all serve the state; all have their duties which they punctually perform. But they have no individual life, no family, no freedom, no fun. Poets sometimes long to be birds with a bird's freedom to come and go, to mate and nest. But a poet or any other man would shrink from the communistic life of a bee with horror. It is that life and that ideal which we are invited to accept and for which we are to give up the worn-out idea of the liberty of the subject.

Certainly we are not likely to make the change with our eyes open? But are we keeping our eyes open? The subtle propaganda of communism is working everywhere amongst us, its missionaries—and communism is a religion to its devotees and has thrust out all other religion—are everywhere. Many honest, simple-minded Canadians, generous enough to give their support to any cause which promises the benefit and the betterment of humanity, would be surprised to know that communists or communist sympathizers are in control or seek control of clubs and societies whose professed objects are peace among the nations, social welfare, the betterment of social conditions, and other praiseworthy achievements.

Not many of the ordinary rank and file in our country would consciously become converts to either absolutism or communism. They would, if they thought about it, say that they were satisfied with the ancient liberties handed down from King John's time, and that they were satisfied that those liberties were in no danger.

But they do not think about it. They take it all for granted like the air they breathe. And that is the danger from within against which we must guard even more carefully than against the dangers from without. The greatest of these dangers is the one which has so often defeated us in business, in play, even in love—the danger of under-estimating the adversary.

We are so accustomed to the blessing of personal and political liberty that we think of it, if we think at all, as one of nature's gifts, like the fresh air and the sunshine. It is not this at all, but a hard-won reward of centuries of effort, often threatened in the past, and now so firmly established that we forget its origin.

Let us take an example: before long we shall have an election campaign of some kind or other. The air will literally be filled with the arguments of the politicians, who will take the stump and pick up the gauntlet and point with pride and view with alarm. We shall all be interested at least and perhaps a little excited and a trifle indignant with the tactics of the other side. But would any of us ever dream of quarrelling with a friend or neighbour—with anybody—over politics? We will argue and talk and offer our opinions to all who are willing to listen to them, and to many who are not—but as for quarrelling! The man who would do so would be avoided like a poor loser at games.

That is because we are so used to liberty of speech and thought that it seems the most natural thing in the world that everyone should be entitled to his own opinion, and to declare it to all the world if and when he feels like it. But in some countries, where liberty of the subject is distrusted, that right is regarded as dangerous. A man who says what he thinks is likely to have a government spy report his words at the city hall. His name is placed on the list of "Disaffected." He is watched and followed; his unguarded words are "taken down and used in evidence against him"; his letters are opened and his telephone tapped. He learns, if he is wise, to say nothing, to ask permission before taking any step; to guard against suspicion, and to suspect everybody. The accused would be presumed to be guilty until he proved himself innocent; there would be no Habeas Corpus Act to save him; he would be liable to be cast into prison and left there without trial on the charge of being a Grit or a Tory as the case might be, and he would find there others guilty of outspokenness—priests of religion, perhaps, and ministers of the gospel, guilty of proclaiming religious truth.

The countries in which that sort of thing is a matter of course are not barbarous or backward countries. Their peoples have been civilized and cultured for many centuries. In the confusion of the post-war years they have

WIN SCHOLARSHIPS IN MUSICAL COMPETITION



Winning first prize for original musical compositions in a contest held by the Canadian Performing Right Society, Eldon Rathburn, LEPT, 21, of St. John, N.B., will receive a scholarship covering a year's tuition and maintenance at the Toronto Conservatory of Music, from Lord Tweedsmuir. Second place in the compe-



petition was won by Leonard Basham, RIGHT, 20, of Vancouver, B.C. Clermont Peplin, CENTRE, 11-year-old French-Canadian boy from County Beauce, Que., was awarded a special juvenile prize to encourage him in following his musical education.

P. J. O'GORMAN
M. R. A. I. C.

ARCHITECT

Literally thousands of people thronged the building throughout the afternoon and evening, with the municipal department employees acting as guides.

The new hall was lavishly decorated with flags and bunting and in the evening a gay street dance was held with floodlights from the roof of The Advance building illuminating the scene. "Rube" Richardson, genial station master at the T. & N. O., did the calling off for the square dances that proved decidedly popular with the crowd. Music for the occasion was supplied by Timmins Citizens' Band, who also took part in the afternoon proceedings, along with the Porcupine District Pipe Band and the Boys' Band. Each received warm applause from the crowd.

Following the opening ceremonies, the Timmins branch of the I.O.D.E. served tea on the main floor of the new building, with the new Timmins orchestra under H. F. Schroeder rendering an excellent programme.

Must Impound the Cars of All Drunken Drivers

Toronto, June 4.—The new Ontario regulations which require police to impound cars of motorists convicted of drunken driving will come into effect on June 7, the provincial authorities notified police forces last week.

Cars may be impounded for a period of three months automatically upon conviction. During this period the convicted person will be required to pay storage costs to the police. These charges, it was said, would run about \$18 a month.

Mines Minister Opens Town Hall

(Continued from Page One)

Bill Roberts, Mrs. Paul Piche, Mrs. McDermott, and Mrs. Brunette poured tea. It was regretted that Mrs. K. Eyre and Mrs. W. Wren were not able to be present at the event, and Mrs. J. Keene second vice-regent of the Chapter, substituted for them. Mrs. Arthur Booker convoked the tea, and was assisted by Mrs. Dorschner, Mrs. T. E. Pritchard, Mrs. Art Moran, Mrs. Rogers, Mrs. A. P. Carriere, Mrs. G. Morin, Mrs. Dorway, Mrs. E. Robinson, Mrs. H. Lang, Mrs. W. P. Lawry, Mrs. Theriault, Mrs. T. J. Lawlor, Mrs. Holtz, and Mrs. R. P. Anderson.

During the afternoon, Gracie Larcher sang a solo to the accompaniment of Schroeder's orchestra. A delightful afternoon was enjoyed by the Chapter members, the visitors, and the citizens of the town, at this important event in the history of Timmins.



Greetings Timmins

We extend congratulations on the occasion of the formal opening of your fine new Municipal Building. This structure stands as a monument to the indomitable pioneers who opened up the great Porcupine camp. It reflects the spirit of enterprise of those who came after to build your gold camp into Canada's largest town.

Proud are we to know that the telephone has been associated with the town since the early days . . . it has carried the cheery voices from one friendly Timmins home to another . . . it has helped the merchants to give better service to their patrons . . . it has made possible the quick call for aid in time of need . . . it has linked Timmins with the rest of the world so that people of the Porcupine may talk with loved ones in distant lands.

Timmins, we salute you and accept your challenge to keep pace with your progress. We strive to serve you in ever increasing measure.

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