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THE QUESTION MARK?

In older days the cartoonists pictured Russia as a bear and that animal gave a popular conception of the land of the regime of the Czars. Two youngsters were overheard discussing an old-time cartoon. "Why do they make Russia a bear?" asked the one. "Because Russia is a pig!" answered the other. "Then why not make it a pig?" "Because a bear is bigger than a pig, and Russia is big like that," was the conclusive answer that showed an intuitive knowledge of pigs and bears and Russia. One of the United States cartoonists recently pictured Russia as a bear, but gave the bear the complete form and appearance of a question mark. That brings the Russian up to date.

If Russia is not an actual question mark to-day at least it is the sign of innumerable questions, and they are questions to which there are many answers, most of them based on the hopes or fears of those who speak. This week Russia is as much a subject for question and discussion as Rudolph Hess was a few weeks ago. And the answers in both cases may be classed as equally questionable.

Probably the chief question is: "How long can Russia hold out against the Nazi invader?" Hitler has boldly announced that he will subdue Russia in a month. Others give him two months and a week, but the general authoritative opinion is that Hitler will be facing final defeat unless he can conquer the land of the Soviet in the next three months at most. If the Russians can hold out for three months, or even for two months, the chances are all in their favour for final defeat of the Hun. The Russians have the same advantage that the Chinese have over the Japanese—an immense territory and an immense population. Japan today is further from conquering China than she was two years ago. The realization of this is being forced upon the Japanese more and more every day. The destruction of any material part of Russia will take more than a month from the physical limits of the immense size of the country and the way the industries are carried on in widely separated centres. While immense destruction can be done by the German air force, even this form of damage will be limited by the great distances. The conquest can not be made solely, or even chiefly by the use of the air force. On account of the great distances concerned Germany will have to establish new air bases in conquered territory before moving further inland. On account of the terrain of the country, the lack of adequate highways and other means of communication, the invasion of Russia will present much greater difficulties than encountered anywhere else in the long list of lands invaded. The fifth column in Russia will be of less strength to Germany than in any other of the invaded countries, for Russia knew the proper procedure to take to cripple the fifth column. The Encyclopedia Britannica estimates Germany's total armed forces at around seven million men, while Russian forces on the same basis may be placed at more than double that number. In addition to this it is well to remember that Russia can use all her forces to defend the Soviet territory while a considerable portion of the German military might is necessarily tied up in the territory already overrun. There is every reason to believe that the German air strength, both in numbers and quality is vastly superior to that of Russia, but air force alone can not conquer a determined country as has been amply proved by the case of Britain itself. Russia has a navy that ranks next to Germany and though there will be little likelihood of the navy playing much direct part in the war it will have considerable value in keeping the way open for commerce and supplies. Study of the statistics available suggests that Russia has a better chance against Germany than China had against Japan. This fact, however, brings up other questions. Will Russia fight? Is Russia equipped to fight? Has Russia the same troubles that hampered her in the last war? Has Russia enough skilled generals left after all the many "purges" to organize and direct a successful defense? And above all, the question suggests itself:—Has Russia been sold out by her leaders to the enemy? In the scorn roused by the treachery of Hitler to the Russian people, there is tendency to forget the settled policy of double-dealing and selfishness that has dominated every move of Russia in recent years. Poland and Finland are stern examples to the world—that Russian gangsterism is no whit different from that of the Huns. The record shows that Russia has been assisting Germany in many ways up to recent days. It is no altruistic attitude on the part of Russia that has severed the partnership. Hitler in his need required the food and oil that Russia could supply. It may have been a feeling akin to desperation that has tempted him to attempt to steal from his erstwhile partner. But this lesser crime of Hitler's does not wash white the sins of the Soviet. There is a possible question

to be considered:—Is the whole story told by believing only that Hitler has shown treachery to Russia? Is it not worth at least a thought to consider the chance that Stalin may not be showing treachery to the democratic nations he openly hates? Already Russia has offers of help from various sources. One mighty aid handed to them already has been the freeing of some fifty million dollars of Russian funds in the United States. That would be a juicy plum to fall into the wide mouth of Hitler.

Many are asking the question, "Should the free nations help Russia now that she has been apparently forced into the fight against Hitler?" The answer to that one seems clear enough. If Russia, for any reason, can not hold out more than a month against Hitler, it would be folly to rush her aid that would be really aid to Hitler. If Russia has the power and the spirit to hold off Hitler for two or three months, it might be helping to shorten the war to help the Soviet after a time. It will take a couple of months to prove the good faith of Russia. Such good faith takes a lot of proving. In the meantime, there is the advantage for Britain that some of Hitler's energy and material must be directed against Russia, whether it is all bluff or sheer brutal treachery. Time fights on the side of Britain and her allies, and in the meantime Russia can do something to prove her spirit and her good faith by destroying, before moving back, all the material for which Hitler appears to have risked all.

DEFENCE OF THE NORTH

One of the excuses put forward by some newspapers for neglect of the defence of the North is to say that any money spent to defend the North would be robbing the people of Britain of help. The Northern Tribune of Kapuskasing seems to have the silly idea that there would be some virtue in the people of Canada allowing themselves to be bombed because that would mean, in the strange reasoning of the Northern Tribune, so many fewer Hun bombs there would be to fall on the gallant little island. Under the same reasoning Canada should send its whole navy overseas so that these defenceless shores might absorb some of the torpedoes that would otherwise, perhaps, strike closer to Britain. Also, by the same reasoning, every man in uniform on this side of the ocean should be nearer the scenes of battle, no matter how defenceless Canada might be left. Of course, the truth is that the greatest service Canada can give the Empire is to look to its own defence at the very least and relieve the Motherland of the anxiety of having any part of its area defenceless and unguarded. It would be an unnecessary added horror for the people of Britain to know that any part of Canada was being bombed. Canada might well make further sacrifices for the great cause, but these sacrifices should not take the form of neglecting its defences. Instead some political expenses should be dropped—that unnecessary railway station in Montreal, for one. Another might be the avoidance of such luxuries as census-taking in war time. There are no doubt hundreds of places where the sacrifice of political perquisites for the duration of the war would provide welcome millions for defence and other war purposes.

A conference of those interested would show that the defence of the North is not only a vital necessity, but that its cost would not be very material. The chief danger seems to be in the establishment of air bases in the far North. Planes patrolling the area would make this practically impossible. The chief work could be done without any new expense. Moving some of the air training depots further north would do the trick. The air fields (some of them superior to those in the unsuitable areas of the south) are all ready for use. It is not apparently the lack of money that stands in the way of the defence of the North, but rather the lack of appreciation of the situation and the absence of desire to attend to a necessary duty.

PRISONERS OF WAR

In an editorial article The Sudbury Star says that there have been rumours that a massed break from one of the prison camps in Northern Ontario may be expected. Usually a newspaper deserves no commendation for giving publicity to casual rumours, but in this case The Sudbury Star is doing a public service in making known the reports that may be more or less public property. Before the last break from a prison camp in North-western Ontario there were general reports that the soldiers on guard at this camp felt there was something in the air. Soldiers on leave from that particular camp could not summons a single look of surprise when they were told the news of the escape. Most of them were good enough soldiers that they did not blurt out that the very air of the camp suggested just such an event, but it was not difficult to believe that the matter created no astonishment in the minds of those who had been on the scene. There is a general belief in Canada that prisoners of war are used with altogether too much foolish leniency. The prisoners are given a measure of liberty of action that neither international law nor the attitude of the prisoners themselves merit. There is one Northern Ontario prison camp from which there have been no escapes. Perhaps, there is only the one. But in any event at this one camp the prisoners are rightly used. There is no privilege or comfort required by international law that is not given the prisoners. There is no brutality, no abuse, no special harshness. But the prisoners are kept strictly in their

place. They are treated as a prison of high standards and modern methods would use thugs and murderers who were awaiting trial or sentence. It would be well if all the prison camps realized the class of men under their care. Most of them are fellows who now strut with pride because they murdered women and children and defenceless civilians from the air. Some of them are fellows who kicked and fought their fellows in effort to rush the lifeboats when their ship was torpedoed by their brother Huns. They are in no ways admirable, and their bold and surly attitude makes them no more likable. There might be some excuse for kindly treatment if they were gallant enemies. But they are nothing of the sort. They are simply low-minded fellows, ready to take advantage of any leniency, and to believe kindness shown them a sign of weakness—which it may be. They should be watched and guarded and kept in their place as undesirable prisoners of war, and the escape of any of them should mean exemplary punishment for the laxness that made it possible.

GRAVEL AND SAND—AND PLACER

The Amherstburg Echo asks the following pointed question:—"If the government can reduce the railway fare to soldiers why doesn't it accede to popular demand and allow the men who have offered their lives to protect that same railway free transportation?" Perhaps, if all newspapers keep on asking pointed questions in this matter the government may eventually be forced to meet the popular demand that the soldiers be given a fair deal in this affair of free transportation on leave.

The Leamington Post and News had a typographical error in its columns last week that was both inaccurate and inadequate. It referred to a great city as "battle-scarred London." If ever there was a city "scarred" by battle, but still "unscarred" that's London.

Expect to Produce Lignite This Fall

That Ontario is definitely convinced of the commercial possibilities of its lignite deposits lying to the north of Cochrane in the Onakawana area adjacent to the Abitibi River is the information given to The Northern Miner by W. G. Nixon, Industrial Commissioner for the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway. Financial support for the experimental work now being done is provided by the government and the present indications are that production on a relatively small scale will begin in the present fall, with larger developments to follow.

The raw lignite runs 50% carbon and states Mr. Nixon, material averaging 37% to 40% is being used in Saskatchewan and North Dakota, where transportation problems which are incident to the Onakawana deposit do not exist. Tests of the Ontario material made by the Department of Mines and Natural Resources at Ottawa, indicate that the content can be brought up by 15% which would increase very importantly the economic value of the fuel.

A test is now being made in North Bay of a method for producing the higher grade material and a shipment of the raw lignite has been delivered for the purpose. The machine designed for the removal of the excess of water is a glorified autoclave which will develop a pressure of 400 pounds. When practical applications have been made of the system a series of larger scale units will be constructed and commercial production will be achieved.

There is a keen interest in the North country in the experimental work now being done on the Onakawana lignite. Mining companies are naturally interested in the possibilities of a fuel supply which lies close to their doors and which would not be interrupted by international situations which might develop. The provincially owned T. & N. O. Railway is, of course, another interested party as experimentation has been done on the development of a fire box which would give satisfactory performance on steam locomotives. One of the first practical tests to be made at North Bay, headquarters of the line, will be on a specially designed locomotive fire box.

At the present time certain experiments are being made in Chicago on Ontario lignite, in connection with briquetting. This process is almost essential in relation to storage facilities and for the use of the fuel in railway work. So far the results of this work have been highly encouraging. Mr. Nixon reports.

The Ontario deposits of lignite in the Onakawana area are very large, running into hundreds of millions of tons. They have been extensively tested by drilling, test-pitting and shaft work. There is no question of the extent; rather the location has been a handicap.

Use Old Gold Rush Route to Freight Supplies to North

Machinery and Supplies Going to New Northern Airport.

(From Air Services, Dept. Transport) Reminiscent of the gold rush days of '93, the Stikine River, the town of Telegraph Creek and Dease Lake in Northern British Columbia are today thriving with renewed activity occasioned by the movement of a flotilla of power barges, tugs, stern-wheelers, and flat-bottomed boats freighting over

800 tons of machinery, equipment and supplies to the site of the new airport to be constructed by the Department of Transport at Watson Lake, 430 miles inland. This is one of a chain of aerodromes under construction in Northwest Canada for defence purposes. The joint defence commission of the Canadian and United States Governments recommended the construction of this chain of aerodromes for the rapid transfer of fighter squadrons to Alaskan bases in case of emergency. The aerodromes will be available for civilian use, but in an emergency for hemisphere defence they would be ready for use by the Royal Canadian Air Force and U.S. Air Corps. Transportation of this freight to Watson Lake which lies within the Yukon territory, immediately north of the British Columbian Boundary, necessitates extensive use of the river and lake transportation as well as a 72 mile portage and a final haul of 25 miles over a road being constructed through the bush.

During the past few months one stern-wheeler, three power boats especially adapted for use in shallow water and forty barges measuring fifty-five feet by nine were constructed at Vancouver. These were shipped in a knocked-down condition to Dease Landing, where they are being assembled and some are already in operation in freighting supplies up the lake. These river boats as well as the 800 tons of aerodrome-building machinery, airport equipment and supplies for the construction crew at Watson Lake, were shipped north from Vancouver to Wrangell Island where they were unloaded. From Wrangell Island the 430 mile transportation problem began.

Local water transportation facilities were used to move the large consignment of freight destined for Watson Lake along the 163 mile stretch of the Stikine River to Telegraph Creek. Transportation by trucks over the 72 mile road to Dease Landing at the head of Dease Lake was the second step. Trucks included in the consignment for use at Watson Lake and assisted by local transportation facilities, have already moved a considerable part of the consignment to Dease Landing. The 72 mile Government road between Telegraph Creek and Dease Landing was originally a pack trail, built during the early days of the gold rush, to circumnavigate the unnavigable stretch of the Stikine River and the magnificent but little known "Grand Canyon of the Stikine." This original pack trail has since been developed into a truck road by the joint efforts of the Provincial and Dominion Governments.

Dease Lake lies at an altitude of 2,750 feet above sea level and is nearly 25 miles long. The lake and the Dease River which connects with the Liard River, 140 miles downstream, is navigable, and the shallow-draught boats, equipped with tunnel-protected propellers, will freight all of the 800 tons of machinery, equipment and supplies to the vicinity of Watson Lake which lies 25 miles overland from the Liard. This overland journey will be undertaken by the trucks over a road now practically completed through the bushland.

In the meanwhile, work has been proceeding at Watson Lake for several weeks. Engineers and workmen and 15 tons of freight, including a portable saw mill, were flown in from Whitehorse. Trees have been felled and the buildings required for the camp have been constructed. The ground is being cleared of trees and scrub, and most of the preliminary work completed so that by the time the freight arrives via the Stikine, Dease and Liard River route, actual grading and leveling operations on the land will be commenced without delay.

Included in the shipment now on its

In The Editor and Publisher, the newspapermen's newspaper, of New York, there appears the story of a query sent to The New York Times: "Where's Lake Chaubunagungamaug? What is the correct spelling? What does it mean?" The bright young lady in charge of the Times library promptly gave the reply: "It is a lake in Massachusetts, near Webster and the full name is, Chaugogogomanchaugogochaubunagungamaug. It means, 'You fish on your side, I fish on my side, nobody shall fish in the middle.'" To The Advance it looked as if a rival had been found to that place so dear to the hearts of Welsh people—so dear that they can scarcely utter it. The Welsh name has been published more than once in The Advance, but to save hunting all through the files, the matter was looked up in Cassell's World Gazetteer. The whole story and the whole word is in this paragraph: "Llanfair, Village of Anglesey. Situated 7 m. N. of Caernarvon, it has a station on the L.M.S. Rly. It has gained notoriety from its full name, 'Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllsililogogoch.'" This is generally shortened locally to 'Llanfair Pg.' Population 992." Those who think that all the "big" things are on this side of the ocean must admit that at least in the matter of names little Wales has it all over mighty America. The lake Chaubunagungamaug in Massachusetts has a mere 39 letters, while the town Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllsililogogoch in Anglesey has an imposing total of 52.

Still stands the motto of the King:—

"Put into your task whatever it may be all the courage and purpose of which you are capable. Keep your hearts proud and your resolve unshakable. Let us go forward to that task as one man, a smile on our lips and our heads held high, and with God's help we shall not fail."

Fate has a funny way of evening up matters. Germany has Italy for a partner. And now Britain has Russia on her side.

bor of the Van Tents, admitted in a statement that he had set fire to the paper which lined the walls between two tiers of boards, and that when he saw the house in flames he had become frightened and left for Halleybury.

The statement, police said, also told of notices having been given Van Tent by the accused to vacate the house and that no attention had been paid to them. His son had intended moving into the house, if the Van Tents left.

"I regret very much the death of the girls and ask pardon for what I have done," was the concluding sentence in the statement, police said.

William Hoover, neighbor of the Van Tents, and among the first to arrive at the scene of the fire, told the court that when he arrived, Louise was still breathing when he removed her body from the ashes of the home. She died about 20 minutes later, he added.

Officials said that the trial of Devillers will be listed for the next Temiskaming assizes, October 6.

Devillers showed little emotion during the hearing.

Sixteen Boys at Court for Breaking Windows in School

Those Responsible Ordered to Pay. All Warned.

There were sixteen boys in Juvenile Court on Tuesday charged with throwing stones at Mattagami school and breaking a large number of windows. Some of the boys were found to be responsible, and these were ordered to pay for the damage done to public property. All the boys were given serious warning and told that any repetition of such costly tricks would have serious results for them.

Sense and Nonsense: Somebody will always offer a light to the man who wants to burn his candle at both ends.



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Committed for Trial on Four Murder Charges

Last week at Halleybury, Jerome Devillers, 77 years old, of Buck township, near Halleybury, who was alleged to have confessed to setting fire to the farm home in which four young lives were lost May 31 last, was committed for trial on four charges of murder.

Victims of the fire were the four motherless children of Henry Van Tent, Louise, 17; Coda, 14; Rita, 13, and Oliver 10.

Police said that Devillers, a neigh-

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