

### Old War Wound Will Keep Frost Away Until June

Premier Leslie Frost will be away from his desk until at least June 1, his office said.

The premier entered Toronto General Hospital last Friday for 10 days' rest. A wound in his left leg received during World War I had been bothering him.

Mr. Frost is expected to

leave the hospital within the next three or four days.

A nuclear scientist says the entire earth could be rendered dangerously radioactive with a few C-bombs. We hope it will be long time no C.

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## This Week's Sunday School Lesson

### MICAHAIH WITHSTANDS FALSE PROPHETS

(Lesson for May 23)

**Golden Text**—As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak.—1 Kings 22:14

#### THE LESSON AS A WHOLE

By J. C. Macaulay, D.D.

#### Approach to the Lesson

The great artist, Sir Peter Lely, once said, "I do not allow myself to look at a bad picture, for if I do, my brush is certain to take a hint from it." In a similar vein, A. J. Gordon has this in one of his sermons: "It is a sad fact that evil is far more infectious than good. Disease is contagious; health is not. If an invalid could only catch the robust healthfulness of the one who sits next him in the streetcar as readily as a well man catches the cholera or the smallpox from his traveling companion, what a happy circumstance it would be!" The Apostle Paul expresses the same general truth in an energetic statement. "Evil communications corrupt good manners."

Now exactly this was Jehoshaphat's problem. A good man himself, he nevertheless sought the friendship of the ungodly, especially the apostate kings of Israel, the northern kingdom. This practice led him into one predicament after another, from which only the mercies of God extricated him. Moreover, it did his kingdom no good, nor did it lay up good for his family. It gave his children a liking for the ungodly, till his son Jehoram took as his wife the wicked daughter of Ahab, Athaliah, who later nearly exterminated the royal line of David. It was a heavy and evil recompense for a little friendship with the world. The world gives poor returns for the friendship of the people of God.

Jehoshaphat, from all the records, strikes one as having been a jovial, big-hearted fellow, with a genius for friendship. He was no introvert, no hermit. In addition, he loved adventure, and plunged into it with zest. Such a disposition is admirable and attractive, but it needs watching. It needs discipline. It needs to be much under the control of the Holy Spirit. Without such a rein, it can plunge one into a lot of trouble. That is the story of Jehoshaphat. By all means let

us cultivate friendliness, and have all the zest in living that we can, but let us watch our communications, and see that the Holy Spirit holds the reins. Verse by Verse

1 Kings 22:1-4—These verses introduce the story of the chapter, with Ahab's invitation to Jehoshaphat to join him in battle against the Syrians, and Jehoshaphat's hasty consent.

Verse 5—"Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord today." On second thought Jehoshaphat decided that the Lord should be consulted. But that should have been first thought.

Verse 6—"Then the king gathered the prophets . . . Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead? . . . Go up . . ." These could not be the prophets mentioned in 18:19, but were Ahab's prophets in the worship of Jehovah under the image of the golden calf (or ox). So Zedekiah prophesied in the name of Jehovah (v. 11), but falsely.

Verse 7—"Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides?" Jehoshaphat felt lack of truth in the four hundred. There was a unanimity of falsehood, and a man accustomed to prophets of truth sensed the difference.

Verse 8—" . . . One man, Micahiah . . . but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me . . ." God had not left Himself without a testimony in the apostate northern kingdom, but those who spoke from Jehovah were not court favorites. The truth of God is not in favor with sinners.

Verses 9-12—These verses describe the scene enacted while Micahiah was being brought. The prophets were vying with each other to please the king.

Verse 13—"And the messenger . . . spake . . . let thy word . . . be like the word of one of them, and speak . . . good." The political courtiers of Ahab were ready with shrewd, worldly advice to the man of God. But men of God do not walk "in the counsel of the ungodly" (Psa. 1:1).

Verse 14—"What the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak." Micahiah was not receiving his message from men, but from the Lord. Compare Numbers 22:18.

Verse 15—"So he came to the king . . . And he answered him, 'Go, and prosper . . .'" Micahiah began by echoing the words of the four hundred.

Verse 16—"I adjure thee that thou tell me . . . that which is true in the name of the Lord." But something in Micahiah's tone and manner made it clear to Ahab that the prophet was mocking the spineless prophets. So the king put him under oath.

Verse 17—"I saw all Israel scattered . . . These have no master: let them return . . . in peace." Then the prophet declared both what he had seen and what he had heard in vision. Compare Numbers 27:16, 17. Of course it was pointing distinctly to the king's death in battle, but indicated that the Syrians would not follow up their victory.

Verse 18—"Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me . . .?" Despite the adjuration (v. 16), the king attributed the evil prophecy to the enmity, not the truthfulness, of the prophet.

Verses 19-25—Here we read of the strange council in Heaven, and of the clash between Micahiah and Zedekiah.

Verse 26—"Take Micahiah, and carry him back unto Amon." Probably the false prophets got their salary from the public coffers, but the true prophet was jailed for his pains. God's servants need not expect their reward from men.

Verse 27—"Put this fellow in the prison . . . until I come in peace." This act of Ahab's was really a defiance of the word of the Lord, a challenge to the Almighty.

Verse 28—"If thou return, the Lord hath not spoken by me, Harken, O people." Micahiah was willing to commit his case to the test of fulfillment, and called upon all to bear witness.

His Majesty rather than to please God. Some, indeed, have faithfully served in this office, even when it meant offending the monarch. It is said that John Knox once told Mary Queen of Scots in a sermon that she was "just a pretty piece of painted clay." There can be no doubt that he dealt faithfully with her. Bishop Andrews did not deal so pointedly with James (VI of Scotland and I of England). During this king's one return visit to his native land, the good bishop preached on a state occasion. Afterward the king asked some of his Scottish lords (theologians all of them!) what they thought of the sermon. To which one of them replied, "Yer Majesty's bishop can be a learned man, but he canna preach." And after reading some of the labored, pointless sermons which the bishop preached before the king, I am inclined to agree.

Ahab's preachers were bread-and-butter preachers. They aimed to please. They never raised their voices in denunciation of the idolatries of the king and the nation. They never demanded the destruction of the calves of Dan and Bethel. They never called upon the king and the people to return to the pure worship of Jehovah, the God of their fathers. They never exhorted the king to put away the "whoredoms" of his wife Jezebel. All that was left to Elijah and the few who had no place in the royal entourage. So now, instead of giving the king a faithful "thus saith the Lord," the four hundred organized a pep meeting to send the king out to battle in good humor.

But Jehoshaphat saw through the farce, and called for a real prophet. In deference to his royal visitor, Ahab called for Micahiah, who began by ironically mimicking the other prophets, and ended by giving the faithful word of the Lord—no rosy prospect for Ahab, but indicating that the defeat would not be a national calamity, since the Syrians would not follow up their advantage. The army would be scattered, but not decimated.

As a reward for his faithfulness, Micahiah was jailed—or, as some interpret the passage, returned to jail—until Ahab should return in peace. In a word, Ahab challenged God to carry out the prophecy—and He did. Now, as then, truth is not necessarily with the majority.

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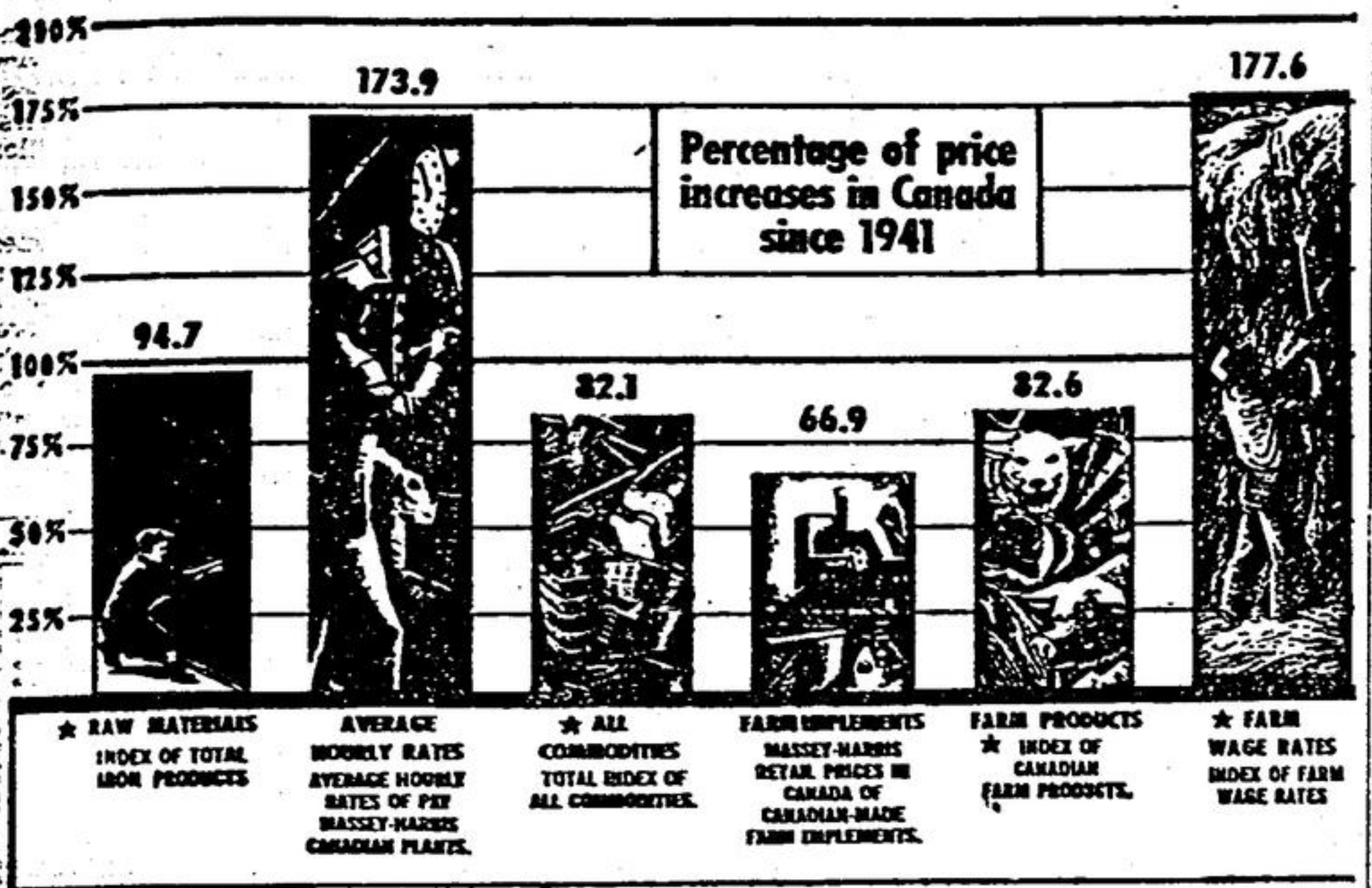
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## INDEXES SHOW IMPLEMENT PRICES AT LOW LEVEL OF INCREASE

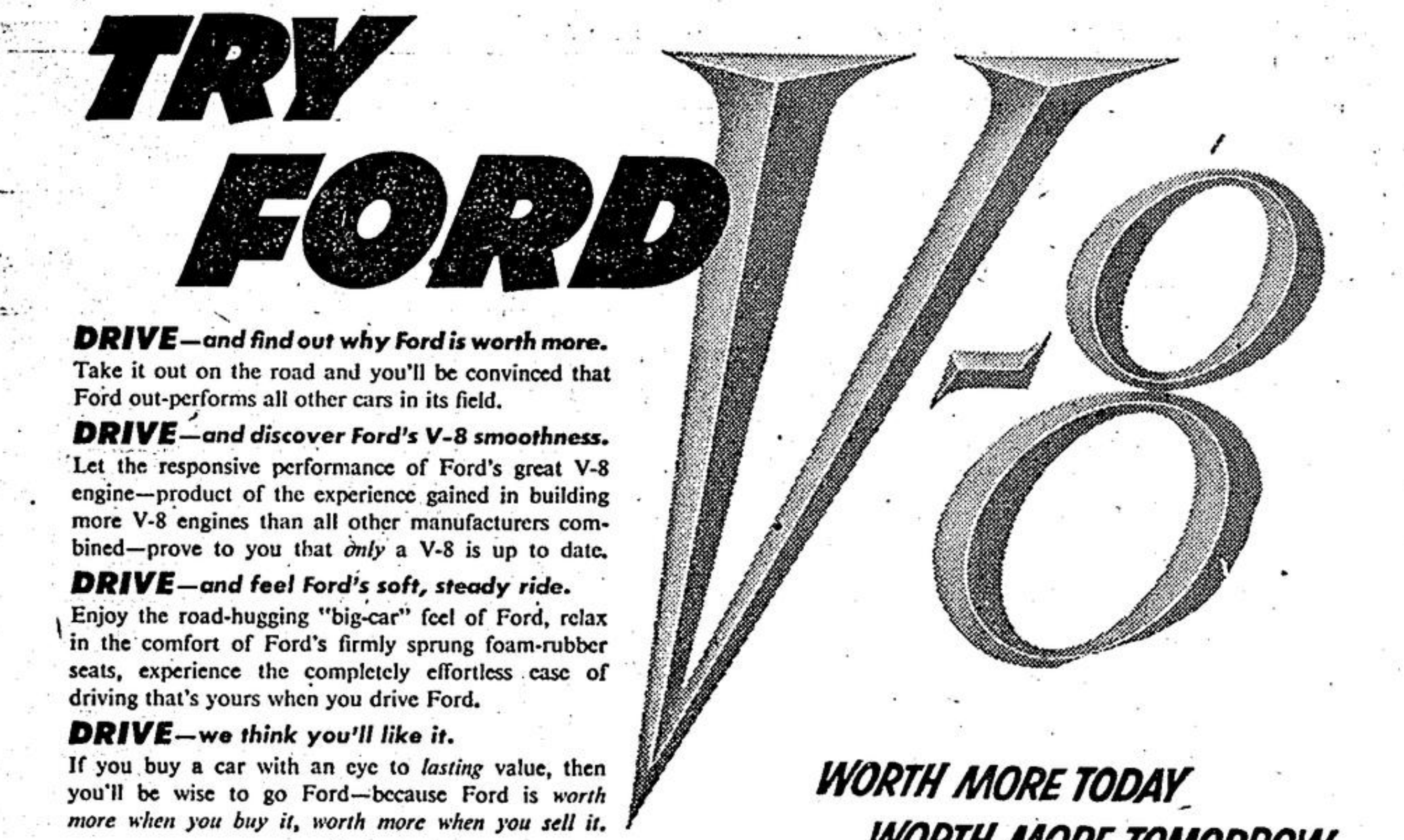
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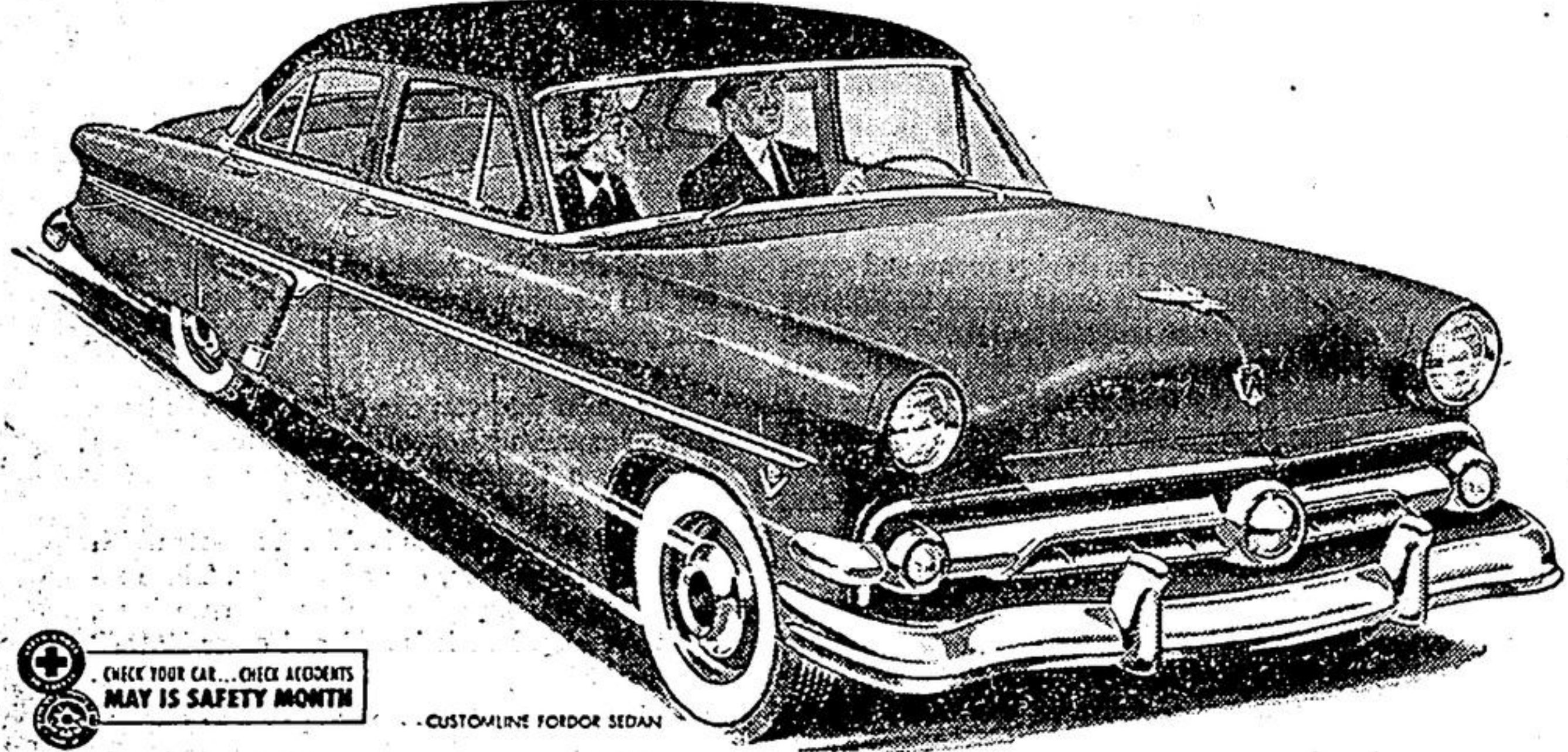


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