

LET'S FACE THE FACTS

No. 7

**Address to the Men and Women
of Canada**

BY

The Rt. Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING
Prime Minister of Canada

**over a national network of
the Canadian Broadcasting
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tion of the Director of Public
Information for Canada**

Text of the Prime Minister's address over the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation national network Sunday night follows:

LABOUR AND THE WAR

TWO SIGNIFICANT ANNIVERSARIES.

Some days ago I received from one of the working men holding a responsible office in the Trade Union movement a letter in which he suggested that on the Sunday before Labour Day, as a former Minister of Labour, I might be willing to give a national message to the workers of Canada.

A day or two later, I received a letter also from the Director of Public Information, inviting me to be the speaker for tonight in the radio series known as "Let's Face the Facts." The writer of the second letter suggested that as this date corresponded with the first anniversary of the war, a talk by myself on its events and lessons might be welcomed by the people of Canada.

My purpose this evening is to endeavour to meet both those requests. I shall try to summarize the facts which stand out after one year of the war, and to relate them to the world situation as we know it today, and to the alternatives which the future may hold in store.

A WORD TO AND FROM LABOUR.

I need scarcely say that I felt much honoured that from one who holds the position of Secretary of the Labour Council in one of the leading cities of the Dominion, I should have received the particular invitation I have mentioned. From my early years, I have been deeply interested in the problems of Labour. One reason I believe, is that Labour's main concern along the path of life, has been a continuous struggle against adversity and poverty. Labour, too, represents so overwhelming a proportion of mankind that it is almost synonymous with Humanity itself.

The plain picture of the ordinary man, working with the strength of his arm and the skill of his hand to feed, to clothe and to shelter his fellows, has always seemed to me to represent Humanity in one of the noblest of its moods. To improve conditions of Labour is to better the human lot on this earth. That, I suppose, is the motive which most of us have closest to our heart when the enthusiasm of young manhood and the realization of the duties of citizenship begin to mould our conscience and our conduct. It is one of the tragedies of life that amid the complexities of the struggle for existence, the enthusiasm and the realization are so often lost. To my mind, the measure of human greatness is the degree to which we continue to hold to the end of our days, an enthusiasm for human betterment.

Let me then talk to you tonight of this war not only in relation to the broad aspects to which I have referred, but in its relation particularly to Labour. Let us consider together what the winning of this war may mean to Labour. Let us ponder what the loss of this war will certainly mean to Labour. Let us think to-

gether for a few minutes of what Labour has done, and can do for the winning of the war. In this throughout, let us face the facts.

A YEAR OF WAR IN REVIEW.

On this day one year ago, a world that had watched with anxious but hopeful eyes, while men of good-will laboured with all their strength for peace, saw war, with indescribable savagery begin the devastation of Europe. During the months that have since passed, freedom fleeing from many desolate lands, has followed peace into exile.

At the end of a year, silence and darkness have fallen upon Poland, Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland. We mourn, too, the tragedy of a broken France. With her withdrawal from the conflict, we lost a gallant ally. With the entry of Italy on the side of Germany, we faced another treacherous and rapacious foe.

The few nations of the continent of Europe that have not already been subjugated, either tremble or bow before the might and violence of the aggressor.

Fire and slaughter have spread to Africa and the near East. There is an ominous glow on the horizons of the middle East. In many parts of the world, the thunder of the storm is heard, even though the lightning has not yet struck. Ships have battled on all the seven seas. From the skies, over the continent of Europe and the British Isles, aerial warfare continues to rain death and destruction. Millions of innocent, peace-loving, plain, ordinary, simple men and women, who have asked nothing more than to live their lives in the quiet of their own homes and the shelter of their native valleys, have been dispossessed, robbed and enslaved.

Many nations had fondly hoped to find security in scrupulous neutrality. They found, instead, that neutrality was only an invitation to invasion, pillage and enslavement. The souls and minds of the men of many lands to which the world is indebted for art, science, literature, invention, religious thought and most of the other precious gifts of human life are imprisoned in the bondage of a barbarous and inhuman conqueror.

This year that has just ended was one of the blackest years in human history. These things are not the visions of a prophet of evil, they are not the imaginings of a horrid dream, they are the facts before our very eyes. Let us face them squarely.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WAR FOR CANADA.

Exactly one year ago, it was my duty to speak to you of the great decision which the people of Canada would be called upon to make of a call to duty which Canadians in their hearts had already answered. Speaking on that occasion I used these words:

"There is no home in Canada, no family, and no individual whose fortune and freedom are not bound up in the present struggle. I appeal to my fellow Canadians to unite in a national effort to save from destruction all that makes life itself worth living, and to preserve for future generations

those liberties and institutions which others have bequeathed to us."

The world knows how nobly and with what unanimity the people of Canada answered that appeal. No one today can deny the truth of the words that there is no home in Canada, no family and no individual whose fortunes and freedom are not bound up in the present struggle. How true these words are will be even more apparent when we consider the next outstanding fact to which I would draw your attention.

Today, the nations of the British Commonwealth alone champion in their full strength, the rights of free men. Britain stands majestic and undaunted. To her have rallied those who once caught her accents of liberty, and learnt from her the lesson of obedience to the law. In this hour of supreme peril, there have come also to her side men of Norway, of Holland, of Belgium, of Czechoslovakia, of Poland and of France. These men are not the ghosts of brave lands that are dead. They are the souls of brave lands that still live, and will, once again, rise in the full dignity of their freedom, and the renewed vigour of indomitable youth. Nevertheless, we and they fight alone.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LABOUR DAY.

Let me now speak of another anniversary. Tomorrow, Labour in Canada will celebrate in complete freedom a day, which by Act of Parliament, has been set apart to honour the place which Labour has gained and holds in our national life. It is deeply significant that such a celebration is possible at the end of a year of total war in Europe.

The position of Labour in Canada, its dignity and its freedom, can be fully appreciated, only in the light of both history and geography.

Canada, and likewise the United States, have been peopled largely by men and women of British stock. They brought with them to this continent not only British law and British respect for law, but other fruits of the struggles in Britain for religious and civil freedom. Above all, they bore in their hearts and minds the determination to maintain and extend their freedom in the new land which beckoned them to its shores.

The ancestors of our French-Canadian fellow citizens also were of those who sailed the seas, and left their native land for a continent whose broad horizons offered larger opportunities of human happiness. They brought with them skill in the arts and trades, a great capacity for work, a love of home and the simple joys and a sustaining faith. Upon these ancestral foundations, the men and women of British and French stock built their new freedom.

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BASIS OF FREEDOM IN CANADA

As the years passed, the adventurous and the oppressed, from every country in Europe, came amongst us, seeking a new homeland where life and human personality were held as sacred things, where tyranny and slavery could be nothing but a far-off memory, where the state existed

for man and not man for the state.

The frontiers of freedom, like the frontiers of settlement, have steadily widened. They, too, have had their forts which consolidated the victories of the past, and protected the onward march of the future.

We have cause for gratitude, for the freedom recorded in our romantic history. We can be equally thankful for the security which geography has given us. We have grown to nationhood in a land separated by the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, from the threat of a sudden invasion of its shores. The British navy, and for the last one hundred years, the navy of the United States patrolling the waters of its oceans, have given to our own rising national power a further sense of safety.

Time and space have worked for Canada. To the inheritance of free political institutions, thus assured and safeguarded by historical association and geographical position, democracy on this North American continent owes its existence today.

LABOUR DAY: A LIGHTHOUSE OF DEMOCRACY

Now what is this democracy to which we so often refer? To me, democracy means that state of organized society which recognizes the right of its members to equality of opportunity. It means the power of the many in increasing measure to develop in complete freedom their latent strength and talent. It means the freedom of the many to enjoy under the protection of those laws which they themselves have made, an adequate and just measure of the fruits of their own labours.

Every Labour Day is a lighthouse of democracy. As its rays revolve, we see beneath them the freedom and the well-being which we have achieved. As its light flashes tonight, we catch a glimpse of the land of our dreams. We can see the Canada we have longed for and worked for, a land in which men and women, regardless of race, creed or class, can live their lives without fear. For we have cherished the realities of freedom which are also its ideals; the right to think, the right to speak, the right to organize, the right to work, the right to worship.

We believe in the right of men to enjoy the fruits of their honest labour. We believe in the sanctity of humanity, and in man's progressive capacity to take upon himself more of the attributes of Divinity. However much we have failed in what we have done, nevertheless in our innermost hearts I believe we have given a "value immeasurable and eternal to the humblest of human lives."

DICTATORSHIP AT WAR WITH DEMOCRACY

France until recently was of this household of democracy. So also were Denmark, Norway, Holland and Belgium. Within the space of a single year, we have witnessed the extinction of democracy on the continent of Europe. Beyond the confines of the British Commonwealth of Nations and the United States of America, democracy scarcely survives in

the world today. That is the next great fact which we have now to face.

We have not needed Hitler and Mussolini to tell us that dictatorship is at war with democracy. In a world of narrowing distances, there is no longer room for those two systems to survive side by side. Sooner or later, the one will extinguish the other. Light will fade into darkness or the darkness will vanish before the light. As has so frequently been said, it is just as true of the world today as it was of the American Union in Lincoln's day, that society no longer can continue to exist half-slave and half-free.

EUROPE'S MIDNIGHT HOUR

Recently I re-read the little poem entitled "Abraham Lincoln walks at Midnight". It seems to me to reflect the tragedy and the hope of this zero hour. It pictures that great figure restless upon his native hillside, contemplating the sickness of the world, the bitterness, the folly, the pain and the black terror that have come upon the homesteads of men. Listen to these words:

"He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn
Shall come:—the shining hope
of Europe free;
The league of sober folk, the
Workers' Earth,
Bringing long peace to Cornland,
Alp and Sea."

Europe has reached that midnight hour. Whether Labour Day in Canada a year hence will witness the spirit-dawn of a Europe free, or the night of Naziism casting its gloom in deepening shadows over this North American continent, will depend upon the strength, the will, and the untiring work not of one democracy but of all the democracies that have survived. In their combined effort, no force can be greater than the truth in Labour's heart, and the strength of Labour's arm.

If we lack the vision to see the peril and the strength to meet it, we, on this North American continent, like the nations of Europe, may come to disaster in one of two ways. This continent might be dominated through actual invasion and conquest. On the other hand, if we fail to carry on the struggle in Europe until tyranny is destroyed, disaster will follow no less surely even though not one Nazi soldier were to land upon our shores.

The triumph of the Nazis in Europe would involve for the peoples of this continent the substitution of fear for freedom, and of economic domination for social progress. It would spell the doom of democracy in the new world.

THE ADDED STRENGTH OF THE NAZI MENACE.

In considering the fate of the democracies, there is another grim fact which we must face. It was unthought of a year ago. It bears immediately both on the possibilities of invasion, and upon the perils of competing industrial standards. This fact is that Nazi Germany has added to her own resources those of the countries she has subjugated. She has acquired a vast supply of the materials and equipment of war, which, at the outbreak of war,

it was expected would never be used at all, or if they were would be used against her. All France, as we know, is in the control of the enemy; the whole western seaboard of Europe from Norway to Spain is in German hands. All the ports and airfields of this continental coast line, once in possession of friendly or allied powers, today provide the bases from which the enemy pursues his course across the skies and seas. In addition to the resources of their own land and of France, the Nazis have seized and now possess the resources, the equipment, and the manufacturing plants of Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Denmark, Norway, Holland and Belgium. Let me give a fact or two in detail.

Including the conquered areas, the Nazis now have capacity for producing 42 million tons of steel annually, as compared with the capacity in British countries of 17 million tons, and the capacity of the United States to produce 51 million tons.

In addition to steel, Germany has added enormously to her capacity to produce ships, aircraft, motorized equipment, armour plate and munitions.

It is a fact that the great tanks built in the arsenals of Czechoslovakia were used for the destruction of France, Belgium and Holland.

It is equally a fact that in Nazi hands the iron and steel, machines and munitions of France and Belgium today bring death and destruction to the British Isles.

Great Britain, Canada, and the other nations of the Commonwealth now fight some 120 million Germans and Italians who have acquired resources and control factories far in excess of the resources and factories of their own lands.

As a result of conquering most of the industrial nations of Europe, and smashing their state organizations, social institutions and trade unions, Hitler has masses of impoverished men and women numbering more than 80,000,000 forced by dire need to work for the lowest possible wages. However unwilling may be their obedience, however reluctant their contributions to the Nazi masters, they do represent a powerful addition to the effective strength of the enemy.

COMMON INTERESTS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE AND THE UNITED STATES.

It was the recognition of these facts which led the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom to declare recently in the Parliament at Westminster that the two great organizations of the English-speaking democracies, the British Empire and the United States, will have to be somewhat mixed up together in some of their affairs for mutual and general advantage. "Some months ago," said Mr. Churchill, "we came to the conclusion that the interests of the United States and of the British Empire both required that the United States should have facilities for the naval and air defence of the Western Hemisphere, against the attack of a Nazi power which might have temporary but lengthy control of a large

part of Western Europe and its resources.

"We have therefore decided, spontaneously and without being asked or offered any inducement, to inform the Government of the United States that we should be glad to place such defence facilities at their disposal by leasing suitable sites in our transatlantic possessions for their greater security against the unmeasured dangers of the future."

THE CANADA-UNITED STATES JOINT BOARD ON DEFENCE

The principle of association of their interests for the common advantage of Great Britain and the United States was thus stated by Mr. Churchill on August 20th. This principle had already been recognized in the relations between Canada and the United States, in an equally practical, and an even more immediate manner, in the joint declaration made at Ogdensburg, by President Roosevelt and myself a fortnight ago today. The declaration set forth the agreement reached on August 17th for the establishment of a Permanent Joint Board concerned with the mutual problems of defence in relation to the safety of Canada and the United States. As you are aware, the Permanent Board on Defence has since been duly constituted, and is at present engaged upon its studies of sea, land and air problems immediately related to the north half of the Western hemisphere.

The establishment of the Permanent Joint Board is the logical, I might even say the inevitable outcome of two significant declarations made on Canadian soil in August of 1938. The first of these was made on August 18th, at Queen's University in Kingston, by President Roosevelt in these words:

"The Dominion of Canada is part of the sisterhood of the British Empire. I give to you assurance that the people of the United States will not stand idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by any other empire."

On behalf of the people of Canada, two days later, in a speech at Woodbridge, Ontario, I acknowledged Mr. Roosevelt's declaration in these words:

"We, too, have our obligations as a good friendly neighbour, and one of them is to see that, at our own instance, our country is made as immune from attack or possible invasion as we can reasonably be expected to make it, and that, should the occasion ever arise, enemy forces should not be able to pursue their way, either by land, sea, or air to the United States, across Canadian territory."

These declarations marked the first explicit recognition by both countries of their reciprocity in defence.

THE SUREST OF THE SAFEGUARDS OF DEMOCRACY

The events of the two troubled years which have followed have served to emphasize, in both Canada and the United States, the necessity for reciprocal concern for each other's security. They have also allayed the fears of those who felt that closer relations with the United States would weaken Canada's ties with

the other British nations. The truth has been the exact opposite.

The declaration of Ogdensburg and the policy from which it sprang represent an increase, and not a decrease, in Canada's responsibilities. Canada and the United States have undertaken to share the burdens of maintaining their joint security; neither has shifted the burden to the other. We have recognized that our united strength will be something more than the strength of both acting separately. Reciprocity in defence involves reciprocal duties as well as reciprocal advantages. Canada gladly accepts both.

Canada has indeed become, as I have pointed out before, the bridge which joins the new freedom of the North American continent with the ancient freedom of Britain.

May we not see in the means now being taken to secure the common interests of the British Commonwealth and the United States, not only the surest of the safeguards of Democracy, but a promise of peace and understanding, and an enduring contribution to the cause of freedom in the world.

FREEDOM OF EUROPE ESSENTIAL TO NORTH AMERICA'S SAFETY

So much for North American security from invasion. That, however, is not enough. Unless Nazism in Europe is destroyed, the threat of world domination by a ruthless foe will hang continuously over our heads just as, in recent years, the threat of invasion and domination has hung over the heads of the free peoples of Europe. To meet that threat, our own standards of behaviour and living would increasingly become those of the totalitarian states. Our democratic institutions, one by one, would disappear, and with them what we have won of freedom.

Unless the enemy is defeated and the enslaved countries of Europe restored to freedom, there will be no prospect of improving or even of maintaining the standards of Canadian life which Canadian energy and Canadian skill have won, no hope of enlarging the opportunities for the happiness of our own or succeeding generations. Free labour will have to compete with slave labour. Men who have hitherto had the right to choose where they would work, and at what they would work will find themselves in hopeless competition with conscript labour, automatic, soulless, driven by the merciless lash of a ruthless state.

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE TO FREE EUROPE

Moreover, failure to free the peoples of Europe from their present thralldom, will mean confining within narrowing limits the areas in which the democracies, should they survive, can hope to develop intercourse in trade or friendship. Many of the markets in which the workmen and the producers of the North American continent have sold their goods will certainly disappear. Overseas we will be forced to compete with those who know no standards, and with states that will sacrifice every standard. We, in North America, will be in-

creasingly subjected to competition from other regimented countries. In a vain effort to maintain our standards, we will be driven to trade almost exclusively with ourselves. As a last impelling alternative, slowly, certainly and inexorably, we too will become conscripts in the regimentation of the state, and the hewers of wood and the drawers of water for the new economic masters of the world.

To Labour, these facts have spoken and will speak with emphasis and conviction. Labour knows the stake in the struggle between dictatorship and democracy. Labour knows what it will lose in the defeat of democracy. It understands the difference between rule by force by those who seek a monopoly of power, and government by consent for the common good. It knows the difference between men who despise equality, and seek privilege, possessions and power, and those who believe in the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God.

LABOUR THE ALLY OF THE FIGHTING FORCES

In war, no work, no effort, can compare with the sacrifice of the soldier, the sailor and the airman. Their sacrifice is uppermost in the thoughts of this nation; it will live in its memories. But Canadians will remember, too, the debt they owe to Labour. In Canada, Labour has extended its hours, surrendered its holidays, and in its determination to increase and advance production, has taught the young and the inexperienced the intricacies of complicated trades. It will be the duty of the people of Canada, realizing these things now, to remember them in the hour of victory.

In the deeds of the men who on land, on sea and in the air offer their lives to save us, Labour is the partner and the ally. Hundreds of skilful hands, unerring eyes and strong arms helped to create the Canadian planes in which, on Friday last, our own Canadian fighter squadron made the skies of the British Isles, vivid with the swift adventure of their skill and courage. How proud Labour must feel to have worked for such men! Thus it is that with Labour rests the power to shorten the duration of war and thereby to save multitudes of human lives.

Every workman knows that every bolt, every piece of steel, every bullet, every machine part fashioned in Canada is a work for victory. Every workman knows that lacking the machines of war the bravest men in the world will avail nothing.

THE TWO GREAT BROTHERHOODS

My fellow citizens: A distinguished British journalist who recently visited us, said that he found Canada at war with Hitler and at peace with herself. We are at war, and we shall remain united in will and purpose. But we can only remain at peace with ourselves if shirking no effort, withholding no wealth, and sparing no sacrifice, we prove ourselves worthy of our two great brotherhoods—the brotherhood of the brave who fight for us, and the brotherhood of Labour that works for their victory.

