

LET'S FACE THE FACTS

No. 19

Address to the Men and Women
of Canada

BY

HONORABLE ADELARD GODBOUT

Prime Minister of The Province of Quebec

over a national network of
the Canadian Broadcasting
Corporation, Sunday night,
Nov. 24, 1940, at the invita-
tion of the Director of Public
Information for Canada

Text of Honorable Adelard Godbout's address over the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation national network Sunday night follows:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I was preparing my notes for this broadcast, I was told by the Director of Public Information for Canada that this was to be more than a national hook-up and that, through the facilities of the British Broadcasting Corporation and different like companies in the United States, an international audience could be reached, including France, our unhappy, yet beloved Mother.

It then seemed to me that we, French-Canadians and Acadians, should do our utmost to take advantage of this occasion, in order to tell France, as well as Canada, the Empire and the United States, how we stand in this war, hand-in-hand with our English speaking fellow-Canadians, united in spirit and deed with Great Britain and our sister-nations composing the Commonwealth. We rise as one and take up arms for the defence of Canada, our country, should she ever be menaced, intent upon doing our bit in order that England be saved, France delivered, liberty, peace and humanity again resplendent over the world and Hitlerism forever crushed.

OUR PRIVILEGED SITUATION

Furthermore, I reflected upon our privileged situation in Canada and the United States, which is such as to permit French-Canadians and Franco-Americans to act as a living link between the two great North American neighbors. For those of our blood, our very next-of-kin, who have chosen the United States as their abode and country, millions of French-Canadians and hundreds of thousands of Acadians, who have settled and

prospered in the eastern and central United States and as far south as Louisiana, have their word to say when it comes to the moulding of the internal and external policies of the Republic. In time of strife such as this, it is comforting to know how magnificently the United States is taking up the job and task of helping to make America safe for Americans; it gladdens our hearts to see our neighbors to the south work in perfect unison with Great Britain in establishing aerial bases for the defence of this continent, and that is why, as Prime Minister of this French Province of Canada and in the name of the French people throughout Canada, I say to the Franco-Americans: "Frères, votre appui moral et votre appui économique, nous les apprécions hautement. Nous représentons, vous et nous, une part insigne de la vie française libre. Nous rendons hommage aux institutions démocratiques qui reconnaissent aux peuples le droit à une vie spirituelle et culturelle qui leur soit propre. Une pareille richesse accroît d'autant la beauté et la grandeur de la vie nationale de chacun de nos deux pays."

I shall not excuse myself for using both French and English in this broadcast. Their Gracious Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, as King and Queen of Canada, have set an example well worth following and of which we are justly proud. French is all the sweeter on their royal lips. And, not long ago, with what joy have we not heard over the radio our language being spoken at the changing of guards, at Buckingham Palace, where our glorious *Vingt-Deux*, the very pick of the young manhood of this Province, stood in the limelight!

A little later, our Governor-Gen-

eral, His Excellency the Earl of Athlone, even before coming to Canada to take charge of his post, expressed in French his love of and his devotion to our country. Since then, many a time, His Excellency and his charming Consort, Her Royal Highness Princess Alice, spoke French to our people, thus endearing themselves more and more to each and every one of us. Even the Prime Minister of Great Britain, the Right Honorable Winston Churchill addressed the people of France in their own language, in a memorable speech over the radio. And our own Prime Minister, the Right Honorable Mackenzie King, has in more ways than one, shown his sympathy for the martyred people of France.

How could we not be moved, and very deeply so, by those outstanding proofs of ardent sympathy?

DELUSION IS DANGEROUS

The general heading under which the present broadcast is given is an exceedingly well-founded one. Does not "Facing the Facts" mean looking them square in the eye with that keen glance which penetrates men and things, so to speak, to the very soul? If there were a time when it would have been foolhardy, even dangerous to delude oneself, such a time is now, this very moment, which is perhaps the gravest in all history. The war is shaking the world to its depths, and one need not reflect long to realize that we are directly interested in the triumph of order over chaos, of justice over injustice, of honor over knavery, of liberty over enslavement.

Thank God! all Canada understands this; and we, the French-Canadians and French-Acadians,

closely united with our English compatriots, proclaim that blood will tell and are proving that claim by our deeds. We have raised ourselves up, and stand shoulder to shoulder for the defence of that Canada which has been founded, dedicated, settled and developed by our fathers, and for which throughout over three centuries we have gladly made tremendous sacrifices. This Canada now in labor, it is we who have rendered her fruitful, we who lighted up in her the spark of civilization. Confident in our strength and by that much the better resolved, we lift our cry: "Oh sacred fatherland of ours, thou shalt not pass into the hands of the barbarian!"

Then, furbishing our arms, we are preparing ourselves with the same courage as that our noble forbears displayed to fulfill the duty assigned to us.

MUST GUARD AGAINST INVASION

But such is modern war that though the seat of it be thousands of miles away, across the sea, it is soon discerned that once the enemy pierced the rampart there set up against him it would not be long ere he invaded this land of ours. Moreover, while seeing to the safety of our territory and our homes, we have realized that in the realm of national defence our front line is over there where our adversary is striking his initial blows. With what implacable cruelty has he thrown himself against France, our Mother! With what desperate fury is he now lashing out at Great Britain!

It was with a spontaneous ardor that we sprang to the help of France. Now, thrust back upon the bastion of Britain, where the fight has reached its hottest, we are sustaining the shock, we are

unfolding our wings, we are harassing the enemy pending the moment sure to come when we will drive out of England, out of France and into the farthest ends of Germany those whose villainy is beyond the power of any word in any tongue to name. French-Canadians and Acadians, English-Canadians, Irish and Scotch, the same will to victory is animating us all.

FRENCH-CANADIAN CHARACTER

There is no more peaceable race, no race more given to feelings of honor, than the French-Canadian or the Acadian, wherever found in Canada. But it is precisely because we love peace, with honor, and because our courage is indomitable that we are accepting our full share of the burden. Let no one be mistaken as to the mettle of our people. To be peaceable in the sense that we are peaceable is far from being weak. To be master of oneself is far from being the egotist. We have the tenacity of the peasant, the cult of self-respect, the enlightened appreciation of our rights and duties, respect for those who respect us. We fear God, and not men. History proclaims our mettle. 1759, 1760, 1812 and 1914-18 are so many periods wherein are inscribed in letters of fire our love for Canada, our courage under trial, our instinct of liberty and defence, our wisdom in council, our temper in the fight.

Think of this! The four thousand and pioneers, come from old France to this new one, struggling against the forest, the blood-thirsty Indians; caught in the vise between the sea and land troops of the old England and the new; subjected to an allegiance

imposed as much by the fortunes of war as by the designs of Providence; detached from the mother country, France, so completely that no touch with her was possible in either culture or commerce; ruined from top to bottom and a prey to a thousand divers insurmountable difficulties; this little band of pioneers, I say, has blossomed into the race of French-Canadians and Acadians who have secured, one by one, the political liberties they now enjoy and powerfully contributed to the evolution of that Canadian and British constitutional law which elicits the admiration of law makers and the envy of peoples. Think of this, too! By our labors we have attained an eminent position in Canadian, Imperial, and American life. And finally, starting from the bottom of the ladder, and possessing nothing but our native qualities of courage and endurance, we have come to number a people of about four millions in Canada and some two millions in the United States.

FRENCH-CANADIAN LOYALTY

Where other races would have perished, we have survived and thrived. We have spread ourselves out like a fine maple deeply rooted in the soil, all of whose branches and leaves go on aspiring to the light.

The lot to which God called us, to be the makers of land and the producers of men, we accepted wholeheartedly. It takes long for some to realize the size of our task; but then, to produce a lasting good takes time.

It is possible that in the eyes of the critic, whether those abroad or those at home, we have not glittered or shone sufficiently. The risky doctrines of the century have not taken much hold on us.

Nevertheless, the mental, moral and material values we hold to are those which guaranteed our existence and on which we may rest our future lot in fullest confidence. When, therefore, Neo-Paganism is employed to demolish elsewhere that of which we recognize the quality and the price, our reaction is soon felt in a manner so evident that one would have to be blind not to observe it.

Being what we are, by right of birth, by education, by culture and by will, we could not but feel ourselves threatened when religion, the family, liberty, tolerance are endangered, for these elements affect not only our personal, national and political being, but also our future.

FRENCH-CANADIAN IDEALS

Under the aegis of British institutions, we are progressing towards our ideal, which is to serve to the utmost Canada, as well as the British Commonwealth of Nations of which we take pride in being an integral part.

Valorous race, loyal race, faithful and constant race, we say to France: "Mother, thou art not

dead. You live in our blood and in our minds. And you live in the minds of all those who understand you. We all know that the hordes of Hitler and Mussolini have not been able to tear out your soul and that you await but our victory, the victory of the British nations and their allies, to take again your place amongst the nations, bearers of light."

TRIBUTE TO BRITAIN

Great Britain, queen of the seas and the air, to you we say in turn: "Thy valor moves us to the core. Your serenity in the combat, under fire is worthy of thee. Thou art revealing to the world of what precious metal God and the centuries have formed thee. And because thou lovest Canada, Canada loves thee. Because thy king is our king, and thy cause of liberty our cause also; because the defence of Christian civilization rests henceforth upon thee, until the day when our united blows have laid low the genius of evil and given back to peoples the joy of breathing freely again, we hold out to thee the hand of brotherhood that

you mayest know more surely, if that were possible, that thou standest not alone to bear the destiny of the world."

And thou, Canada, our land, thou in whom we live our lives, we ask thee to listen to the voice of our hearts, which is firm and strong. It rings through space like a clarion: "It is to thee that we belong. Thou art the fundamental reason and the prime motive of the part we are taking in the struggle. We live to thy greatness, thy glory, thy happiness. Thou art the cause and the effect of our labors. We created thee, and then we worked with others to develop thy riches and to permit thee to grow stronger before the nations. To thee our work; to thee our arms; to thee our hearts! Let those who dream of destroying thee but come! Along with all Canadians, *a mari usque ad mare*, we form a shield against which nothing can prevail, oh, land where flourish French souls and English souls, the French language and the English language, in a splendid dualism where all the law is friendship."

*When you have read this speech it is suggested that
you pass it to a friend.*