LET'S FACE THE FACTS

No. 21

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Address to the Men and Women of Canada

BY

MR. PERCY J. PHILIP

Until September, 1940, Chief of the Paris Bureau of "The New York Times," and now Canadian correspondent of that newspaper

> over a national network of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Sunday night, Dec. 8, 1940, at the invitation of the Director of Public Information for Canada

Following is the full text of the radio speech delivered by Percy J. Philip in the series "Let's Face the Facts" on Sunday night, December 8:

Good-evening:

I am going to talk to you about those people who have already lost the war in which we are still engaged. There are many millions of them — Poles, Czechs, Dutch, Belgians, Danes, Luxemburgers, Norwegians and French —all of them decent ordinary people like ourselves, who are now living each day, and go to bed at night, fearful of heart and hungry of stomach wondering what is going to happen to them next, and when they will be able to work and to laugh again happily and freely—for they are in prison. I shall speak to you especially of France where I lived for twenty-four years and which I left only last September. I would sincerely like to be

able to tell you that the German occupation of all these countries has brought happiness to their peoples, for happiness in human life is to be welcomed from whatever direction it may come. But it is not possible to believe that these people in Poland and Lorraine who have been thrust out of their homes, in many cases into miserable concentration camps, to make room for Germans are, or can ever be, happy; that these freedom loving French, Danish and Norwegian peasants and those stout burghers of Antwerp and Amsterdam who lived by trading all over the world, and did good in the world by their trade, are now, as Herr Hitler thinks they should be, pleased at the prospect of living in the new world which he is going to make in the Nazi image.

In the Nazi image!

BAVARIAN PASTORALE

One autumn day, three years ago, I was driving through a very There lovely Bavarian valley. There was a jolly little trout stream bubbling down through the meadows from the hills. The sun was pleasantly warm and there was a delightful freshness in the air. It was pretty good to be alive and a pretty good place to be alive in. I stopped the car to enjoy it. and as I was sitting on the bank of that little stream drinking in the bird-song and the cool smell of the grass and the trees. I heard a harsh voice behind me shout an order. It was a harsher voice than a countryman would ever use to call his dog or to demand a stronger effort from his horse. Dropping suddenly into that peace it made me start. I turned and saw four men walking across a field. They were young, strong men-farm workers I thought. And then I saw a fifth man behind them. He wore a blue and , green uniform and carried a rifle. These four men were German political prisoners and the fifth was their Nazi guard.

What was their crime? They had believed that life should be lived in a different way from that in which Herr Hitler conceives it. They had possibly said what they thought, just as you do when you think that your Government does not do as you think it should. They may have wanted to worship in the way their fathers had done, in a way Herr Hitler disapproves of. And there they were going to work in the fields with a man with a rifle hebing them

man with a rife behind them. I suddenly felt sick. That lovely little valley disgusted me. I got into my car and did not stop until I reached the bridge at Strasbourg and came again into France.

THE FRANCE THAT WAS.

France; what a pleasant land it was to live in. There every man and woman had certainly freedom enough to say what he and she liked, to criticize what they didn't like. There was perhaps a little too much of that freedom and not enough self-imposed discipline. But then every French man and woman felt that France was not as good as it should be. They were all impatient for improvement.

There were those who thought that Communism was the right remedy. Others wanted the Kingdom back again and were pretty vociferous in demanding it. There were those who saw moral, and every other kind of restoration in Fascist discipline. And then, of course, these doctrinal differences were narrowed down by many of their partisans into rather violent quarrels about whether the "200 families" or the leaders of the Left Popular Front were the worse enemies of their country.

WHERE GERMANY GOT AHEAD

Behind all this quarreling there was really a common desire to serve France, but, in that critical moment, no strong leader arose to unite and direct all these seemingly contending forces. The men of the Third Republic who had survived the last great war were not up to the task. They fumbled and hesitated. That was where Germany got a head — much more than in any other way. From the sorrow and misery of the defeat of 1918, and from the confusion and hunger of the years that followed, the German people turned, reluctantly, but finally, under the compulsion of propaganda and fear to the leadership of that phenomenon, Adolf Hitler.

Listen to how Mr. Winston Churchill describes him: "This wicked man, the repository and e m b o d i m e nt of many souldestroying hatreds, this monstrous product of former wrongs and shames."

In that Olympian language the British Prime Minister tells the whole story. He does not abuse the German leader and call him names. He describes, which is much more deadly, the kind of man he is: "this embodiment of soul-destroying hatreds, this monstrous product of former wrongs and shames."

The French, who always love a leader, were leaderless, and, while it may be a fine thing to feel that one is fighting for an ideal like Democracy, Liberty—whatever one cares to call it, it is an even better thing to feel that one is following a man whose stout heart and body are at the head of the column. When France was wavering in the last war, at the time Russia collapsed and before the United States came in, it was Clemenceau who by his personal magnetism and will-power rallied the country and gave us all victory.

NO CLEMENCEAU IN FRANCE

Alas, this time there was no Clemenceau in France, and Germany had Adolf Hitler. When that tremendous battle began on May 10th with the treacherous, immoral, everlastingly shameful invasion of Holland and Belgium, France didn't lack only airplanes and tanks and guns in sufficient quantities to stem that fearful avalanche of fire and steel which the Germans unloosed she lacked men of decision, of firm purpose and of inspiration who could rally her still uncertain but courageous soldiers and turn them overnight into victorious herces as Carnot did, as Napoleon did and as Clemenceau did.

It was for that reason that France fell. There are some people on this side of the Atlantic, a number of Frenchmen among them, who go searching for other reasons, like hens searching for grains of corn in a pile of straw, and crowing with satisfaction when they find one. That kind of industry is a waste of time.

LESSON FOR US

Let us who are still fighting look squarely at the facts. France lost the war because she was disunited, without discipline and

strong leadership, and because her army and ours were numerically far inferior to that great allied force which Foch commanded in 1918. On the other hand, the enemy was disciplined to the point of complete unity, armed to the utmost necessity by the tremendous labour-sixty, seventy, and even eighty hours a weekof the German men and women in the factories, and where not fanatically inspired, as many were and are, by that "wicked man" Adolf Hitler, its obedience unto death was assured by fear of the Gestapo. There never was a more powerful armed force in the world than that which crushed France in May and June and sent us scurrying home from Dunkirk.

It is for us who are still fighting this war, if we want to win, to learn a lesson instead of wasting time criticizing others and that lesson is surely that we will have to put everything we have of courage, of work, of skill, of loyal obedience and of sacrifice into the task of beating that tremendous force for evil which Herr Hitler has built up and holds ready to strike at us again.

We are still free—but these people of France, of Belgium, of Holland and all these other countries are living day after day in the presence of their conquerors. Can you imagine what their feelings are, what yours would be?

PARIS IN THE SPRING

An American friend of mine told me recently that on that June morning when the Germans occupied Paris he was walking to his office through the streets which were deserted except for German troops armed with rifles and machine guns. As he turned into the rue de la Boetie he saw a little old lady come out of her house. She had her marketing basket on her arm-just starting out to do her morning shopping. As she came towards him he saw her stop and look towards the end of the street. There was surprise and alarm in her face. Probably she had never imagined that this could happen to herjust as you do not believe that it can ever happen to you. Timidly she came towards my friend. She had probably never before in her life accosted a stranger. "Monsieur," she said, "Is that a German soldier?"

Just where the street on which she lived enters the Champs Elysees there was a young German soldier standing beside a machine-gun. "Yes Madame," my friend answered, "That is a German soldier."

Suddenly, disconcertingly, the tears leaped into that little old lady's eyes and started pouring down her cheeks. "Merci, Monsieur," she whispered, for her native politeness did not desert her, and she slipped back into her home.

That was nearly six months ago. Since then that little old lady has seen the German soldiers march every day up the Champs Elysees with their band punctually at twelve o'clock. She has seen them in cafes and in shops—buying up everything with phoney money to send home, until now there is nothing left for anyone to buy. She has had to stand long hours in line outside the provision shops to get a ration of bread, three quarters of a pound of meat a week, a quarter of a pound of rice a month, two ounces of butter every eight days and the ground chestnuts and maize which must now do service for coffee.

CRUELTY OF CONQUERORS.

That is not all. She has no coal to keep her warm. Gas and electric light are restricted to a few hours a day. Even worse she can get no news from those of her sons and nephews who are among those two million French prisoners of war in Germany or from those of her family who live in the unoccupied part of France. Just think of the cruelty of that decision. Since July 29 no letters, telegrams or messages of any kind can be sent from one part of France into the other and hundreds of thousands of families have been living without any news whatever of their nearest and dearest for over six months.

And now Hitler has piled this new monstrous outrage on conquered France. As he did in Alsace, he has turned seventy thousand good Lorrainers out of their homes, pell-mell with a suitcase and thirty dollars of all their possessions. Their rich farms, their industries, their businesses built up through long patient years have been stripped from them to be given to Germans so that, forsooth, the problem of the Rhineland shall be settled forever.

What nonsense. Joan of Arc was from Lorraine and she wasn't German. And then didn't Hitler build his whole career on the alleged injustices to Germany of the Treaty of Versailles? How then can he justify this far greater injustice than was ever done to Germany?

HITLER'S NEW WORLD

To make a new world? Hitler's new world. Is that how it is going to be made? If it is, it will be a world filled with new bitter hatreds, far deeper even than those Hitler has nourished in his heart and instilled into his people. Its statesmen's policies will be dreams of vengeance and its ambitions will be violent and evil.

Oh yes, there was plenty that was wrong with the old world. It was just as men make it and they are always imperfect workers. But we did seem to be getting somewhere and surely the interest and fun, and perhaps even the meaning of living, is not so much in accomplishment as in the effort to make the world a better place to live in, imperfectly of course, for life is always changing its forms, but all together, helpfully and with faith, hope, and charity.

What impertinence it is for this man who never did an honest day's work in his life — a failure from the Munich bread-line — to think that he can shatter the world to bits "and then remould it nearer to the heart's desire." sowing dragon's teeth of hatred, spoiling the life of that little old lady in the rue de la Boetie and of so many millions of others.

These four men going to work in the Bavarian fields, with an armed guard behind them because they had dared to think for themselves,—that is what Hitler's new world would be like.

And how is he getting on with his conquered countries? From Norway to the Pyrenees there's nothing but ill-will, resistance and sabotage. The Fuhrer has not won a single heart. Even those Aus-trians who welcomed him into their country now rue the day. The Norwegians, Dutch, and Belgians, who hoped against hope that they might avoid being drawn into the conflict, are living only for the time when their compatriots fighting in our armies will return victorious. The French? Oh what a thorny difficult problem that is to understand, with that duality of aim which there is within the Vichy Government. On the one side it is sought to make a cleaner, better, healthier France and on the other there are those who in their anxiety to "co-operate" with the Germans are willing to bow very low, to connive at, even to copy, their worst methods.

FRANCE FIGHTING ON.

Let us avoid getting into a discussion and take note of only a few facts. Does it not seem that it is the former of these efforts which is gaining strength? Marshal Petain who stands for decency and uprightness in the new regime is now being cheered when and wherever he goes around the unoccupied territory and the shouts of "Vive la France!" ring out louder, more encouragingly each time he does or says something in protest against Nazi encroachment on the terms of the armistice. The people have begun again to sing the Marseillaise, which is, of course, forbidden in German occupied France. Marshal Petain, holding the Tricolor to his breast, has become for those who cheer him the symbol of eventual liberation and recovery.

What is happening in Paris? We hear that the University has been closed following some student demonstrations when over 120 young people were arrested. That does not sound like co-operation between the youth of France and the Nazis. At night the workers in the industrial suburbs tear down the German posters from the walls and chalk up ribald comment in the Parisian manner. That doesn't sound like co-operation between the workers and the Nazis.

Those who used to think that we could not win the war, and built the Vichy Government on that false supposition, are now in the minority. Some of them are seeking vainly to justify themselves, trying to get some concession out of the Nazis which will restore their fading popularity with their own people. But they have got nothing. Hitler and his friends do not give. They only take. Mussolini is discovering that. Laval may do so in time. It has always been the Fuhrer's boast that he did not admit co-operation. He demands submission.

That. I am sure, he will never get from the French people. The last man that I saw in France, when I left that country in September, was from Alsace. He had not had any news of his wife and children for five months he told me, as they were in Alsace when the Blitzkrieg began, and he was with the army. After the armistice he had been sent as a guard on the Spanish frontier at a little place in the middle of the Pyrenees. It was a lovely place. high in the mountains, but my wife and I were feeling pretty sick at heart, for we were leaving France after twenty-four happy years, leaving all we possessed and many dear friends behind.

But that Alsatian frontier guard, exiled from his home without news of his family in a defeated country gave us a grand, brave, au-revoir: "Tell them in England to hold on," he said, "Tell them we aren't finished yet. We have been beaten but we aren't conquered. We'll fight again and beat them yet, these Nazis." It was with happier hearts that we went on our way across the bleak dusty mountains of Spain and came eventually to Canada.

FRANCE NOT CONQUERED

And that Alsatian was only one of the hundreds of French people of every class and kind who said the same things to us during these three months we spent in France after the armistice. Women in shops and post-offices would lean across the counter and whisper how at night they listened to the London radio and General de Gaulle. There were officers and soldiers by hundreds that we spoke to and probably many hundreds of thousands more who had only one thought—to get out if they could, or, if they couldn't, to wait patiently for the day when they will be able to fight another battle.

Even within the Vichy Govern-ment I found before I left a different attitude among those men who had been quite honestly convinced in June that we could not win and that the best thing for France, and even for us, to do, was to make peace. They began to change their minds in August when they saw that the fighting spirit of the British peoples under Churchill's leadership was beating back the Nazi planes and preventing that vaunted invasion of England. They know now for certain that the Axis is not invincible and that we made no empty boast when we declared that we would fight on alone to victory.

Of course, there is very little that these people can do just now to help. They all have ropes round their necks. But in France they have begun rebuilding, organizing a little armistice army, forming a new National Service League of young people, putting a new heart and a new spirit into those who live in and those who can escape into the unoccupied zone, making provision against the day when the heavy hand of the Nazi occupying army and police may weaken and the chance may come to restore France to independence and dignity.

These people know that their only hope lies in our victory but also, none know better than they do, who see it day by day, the strength and power of the Nazi organization. It is still far from beaten. It is terribly strong. The driving discipline of the Gestapo, the fanatical allegiance to Hitler of great numbers of his followers.

the sense of personal strength, power and pride which every German, spoon-fed with Goebbel's propaganda, feels in the knowledge that his country now rules Europe from the Arctic Circle to the Black Sea and the Pyrenees are things that cannot easily be broken. If it is to be done, it can be done only by such courage as the workers of England have shown in going on with their jobs and their jokes day and night in the midst of death and destrucbuilding airplanes while tion. bombs crash around them, forging guns and filling shells in factories which are half aflame, by such courage as those sailors show who go to the sea in ships defying the deadly submarines, as those airmen of the Empire show when they gaily take their lives in their hands night and day in the de-fence of the skies of England.

THE WAY TO VICTORY

If it is to be done, it can be done only by the redoubled sacrifice and labour of those in the other parts of the Empire who are. until now, living safe from such savagery as has befallen Coventry, Birmingham, Liverpool, Southampton and Bristol.

If it is to be done, it can be done only if the people of the United States will make good in work and co-operation where it is most needed on all these encouraging words they have given us of approval of our determination to keep Liberty alive in this world.

This war in which we are en-gaged is not just another international war in the old sense. It is not even a doctrinal war between differing conceptions of how life can and should be or-ganized. It is a tremendous volcanic outburst in that everlasting inextricable conflict between good and evil in which humanity is engaged, in which all men fumble blindly, but in which surely, the only honourable role is that of the man who goes on fighting for the things he knows to be good his personal freedom, his right to work out his own destiny and help his children to theirs, his duty to God and his neighbour to keep alive those precious elusive things, hope and happiness, without which the spirit dies and life will become, as Hitler would make it, a dreary, degrading ser-vitude conceived in hatred and evil in which civilization will sink back into a new Dark Ages.

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