

FEATURES

"The question is not where did civilization begin, but when will it?"

Lest we forget

By DAVE JONES

On November 11, 1918, the First World War ended in the long prayed for Allied victory. The world went mad in a frenzy of joy. At long last the millenium had arrived and the "war to end all wars" was over. The cost of preserving the world for democracy had been high - 9,998,771 dead and 6,295,512 seriously wounded - but if this had really been mankind's last conflict, we might today count these numbers as small indeed. However the illusion soon dissipated:

It soon became apparant that the world was little different and man was no closer to perfection. As in the past, the settlement following the First World War contained the seeds of future strife. After a twenty year truce, mankind entered an even more vicious struggle in which civilization reached the new heights of Buchenwald and Dachau, Hamburg and Hiroshima. And again, as with most wars, the settlement contained the seeds of a new conflict. The world is again divided into two hostile camps. Yet this time there is a growing possibility that our next conflict will indeed be the war to end all wars. Only wars of extermination have close to enduring peace, and a war of mass extermination would certainly achieve this objective.

With the above prologue, I must now find suitable sentiments for Remembrance Day, 1961. There are usually two easy courses open to the writer of this

type of article. One can always follow the popular courses, probably popular since the beginning of wars, and men. This is to write of the glory of death for one's country, right or wrong; of fighting the "just war", if such a thing exists and of heroic sacrifices to bring about the Western paradise of today. Or if this style seems a bit sour, the writer can always turn to the opposite extreme and discuss the sad if unimportant fates of brute armies off to die on the orders of stupid or selfish leaders.

Neither these courses seem desirable or sufficient for my purposes. The first is unrealistic and the world seems little changed. Yet, we can say that the soldier who believed in his cause died in vain? I, for one do not feel myself to be in a position to judge. And further, on this Remembrance Day, in the midst of world crises, we would do well to remember these dead. They died in

THE CREEPING DEATH They Called It Rog

Throughout the spring of 1962, the rumour was circulated that They were going to detonate an Omega Bomb, the bomb to end all bombs, the ultimate. The world was electrified. Letters of protest were sent through the regular channels, but to no avail. Scientists from abroad warned of the dangers involved. Little was known about the potential of the bomb, about its effects, about methods of controlling its fallout, about the amount of fallout to be expected, if any.

Finally, the day for the test had arrived. It was May 1st. The powers-that-be thought that it would be a fitting way to conclude the annual celebrations. After a display of fireworks on the evening of May 1st, the bomb would be fired many miles from the capital city, but it was expected that the cloud, under the glare of many highpowered spotlights placed about the area, would be seen in the city and that it would serve as a triumphant finale to the festivities.

After The Blast

Everything went according to plan. The citizens had raged through the city, cheering tumultuously, following the blast. A magnificent, multi-coloured cloud had arisen in the classic mushroom shape, and under the strong illumination provided by the authorities, its beauty could be seen plainly by all. It had been em-

phatically successful, the view from the city had been superb, and the citizens joyously settled in for a long night of celebration. The state declared the succeeding day to be a holiday to mark the event. People rose late the next day, for the celebrations had been prolonged, and they wished to get maximum rest on their coveted holiday. A few early risers noted, however, that the morning mist was much thicker than it normally was, and that as the morning wore on it got progressively thicker instead of burning away. Rather heavy fog, they thought. The state scientists had been happy on the evening of May 1st. They reported that the winds had been in the right direction and that the people need fear no ill effects. Overnight, however, a catastrophe occurred. The winds shifted, and heavy currents carried the radioactive fallout back onto the capital. Horror-stricken scientists reported the radioactivity over the city to be greater than anything they had conceived possible.

Flight From The City

The news quickly reached the governmental headquarters. The situation was desperate: nothing could be done to avert the calamity. A public announcement would throw the people into panic. The senior officials of the government soon decided on a course of action. They would flee to a special headquarters to the west, built for such an emergency, and would remain there until the effects of the fallout on the citizenry had been determined. "Too bad," murmured a few, "if the populace is doomed, it will have been an enormously expensive experiment. The efficient central bureaucracy will be severely decimated."

By noon on May 2nd, the number of those dead and afflicted

by a strange new disease had risen to alarming proportions. People were clamouring for information, for help, for advice. At six o'clock in the evening, it was announced on the radio that the city had been blanketed by an entirely new phenomenon, radioactive fog. They called it rog.

Chaos ensued in the city. The dead were beginning to clutter the street. The thoroughfares were soon jammed by the multitudes, anxious to flee to the country. Some tried to load their few possessions into any handy means of conveyance, others fled in blind terror. Not in a hundred and fifty years had the city witnessed such an exodus, not since 1812, when hearts in the capital had been chilled by another menace of almost equal magnitude. Pandemonium reigned throughout.

The Rog Rolls Away

On the third day, the rog dissipated into the atmosphere, but its toll had been enormous. Only one third of the populace of the capital had managed to escape the terrible plague that befell the citizenry. When the survivors were allowed to re-enter the city, their zest for life had suffered a severe set-back. The capital was but a bleak echo of its former self. Ruin abounded everywhere, the old furnishings of the city had been burned to avoid contamination, all was desolate.

Viewing the debacle, the directorate realized the folly of their actions and decision which had led to such disastrous results. They were impressed, horrified, perhaps even contrite, but human memory is such a fickle thing that it would be rash indeed to say that they had all learned a lesson which would control their actions and decisions for the rest of their lives.

This was concluded the world's first experience with rog.

The Third World War

The time has come, the time is near
In which our cherished lives so dear,
Will be swept away with one fell swoop
To leave us in a human soup
Of arms and legs and bloody gore
And civilization will be no more.

Yes our fellow man and friends
Will be the cause of a deserved end
And when we see the missels soar
Our civilization will be no more.

Atomic war is the real end
There is no escape from it my friend;
And there you sit and wonder why
Our cherished civilization must die.

Yes it must the answer comes
And when it does you cannot run
For radiation, shock and fire
Will sizzle you into a wire
Of charred and burning soot and ashes
With which our civilization clashes
To cause for us the deserved end
Brought by our friends and fellow men.

Is there a way to change our fate
To rid the world of eternal hate
To save our lives we so dearly love
Or must they perish like Noah's dove?

The answer lies with you my friend
Because it's you who'll cause the end!

B. A. Class of '64.



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