

September 26, 1939

The Editor,
New York World Telegram.

Sir:

I have read with utter amazement certain statements made by Hugh S. Johnson in an article entitled "Canada at War" in your issue of today.

General Johnson begins by saying: "Canada today is a good preview of what may happen to a great American, Anglo-Saxon democracy when it goes to war. Its democracy is abandoned. It has barely sampled war, but Magna Carta is already in the ash can and the Bill of Rights is out the window".

This is such a gross exaggeration of the facts that I can hardly understand how a man of General Johnson's position could allow himself to write in this way. Naturally war entails certain restrictions on peace-time liberty but they have been limited as far as possible and public opinion will be on guard against any unnecessary extension of them.

To show the extent of the inaccuracies in this article, let me examine in detail a few of the statements made.

(1) General Johnson says: "Freedom of speech, press and radio is gone."

The facts are as follows: There is no restriction whatever on freedom of speech beyond what is contained in the ordinary law in peace time. The press is censored but only to the extent necessary to prevent the publishing of information inimical to the successful carrying on of the war. In particular, the press is still perfectly free to criticize the government.

As for radio: Radio in Canada is in part a government monopoly but the privately owned stations are no further restricted than the press.

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