

W.W.II - French. Canadians C

" - Mr. King's leadership

" - Public Information ✓

WHY WE NEED A BOARD OF INFORMATION AT ONCE

C155828

1. Modern wars are won and lost on the Home Front

In present-day warfare the role of the civil population is actually as important as that of the armed forces. This is so because:

(a) Modern wars are wars of resources. Success depends largely on the supply and transport of raw materials in vast quantities, on the rapidity and technical skill of their manufacture, on the maintenance over a period of years of peak efficiency in every farm, mine, factory and office.

(b) Modern wars are wars of Morale. Success is largely a matter of psychology, and all the warring governments find themselves compelled to "play to the gallery". The confidence of their own people, the sympathy of neutrals, the demoralization of enemy peoples are no longer incidental objectives, but have become primary war aims.

The morale of the civilian population in Canada should have been, from the first day of war, the concern of a special ministry or at least of an outstandingly strong board; instead, the Home Front has been left to take care of itself.

? No.
Ant. 47
Canada's Cabinet

2. Morale will not appear automatically

It may be that the experience of 1914 has led the authorities to think that the people of Canada will spontaneously develop the necessary attitudes of whole-hearted enthusiasm and self-sacrifice. There could be no greater error; 1939 is not 1914.

Since 1914 aggression against weaker nations has become a commonplace. The invasion of Belgium raised a fever of indignation and horror; the invasion of Poland brings a shrug of the shoulders. Scarcely anyone is genuinely horrified or shocked by it; we are quite used to such things.

Since 1914 war itself has enormously lost caste. Powerful, pervasive and steady influences in the churches, the women's organizations, the labor unions and the universities have given rise to profound doubts whether war is ever necessary or justifiable, and whether it ever accomplishes anything.

W.L.M. King Papers, Memoranda and Notes, 1933-1939
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