

DALHOUSIE Gazette

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Remembrance Day

Thirty years ago when the First World War drew to a close we said that it was the "war to end all wars" and that never again would we undergo the horrors of armed conflict and to this and in memory of those who had fallen for us Remembrance Day was proclaimed. Seven years ago, after making the world "safe for democracy" we renewed the pledge with deeper humility as we realized that the hope was not the father of the act and that hard work was necessary. On Sunday we will remember the dead of these two wars even as the proof of our failure of the promises made in their names is shown in the bloody hills and rice paddies of Korea.

Will we now merely place the names of the Korean dead on the roster of the fallen and in later years add the names of those who will fall should there be future conflicts

To those who sweated and fought beside them, who saw them fall, their lives suddenly obliterated or seep slowly into the mud in which they battled, there is no need for Remembrance Day for they will never be forgotten.

To those who lived and worked with them and loved them, who saw the joys and sorrows, their ambitions and shortcomings there is no need for Remembrance Day. Time heals the pain but the memory of love never dies.

Thus what can only be a gesture towards the realization of the significance of the dead of one war becomes when the dead of two or three wars are commemorated a mockery. What did they die for if the wars are never going to cease and those who fall in them merely added to the list of the battle dead of a fifty-year span.

Could a better method of remembering their dead be found than Remembrance Day. In our failure to make the peace work, even at the price of eternal vigilance, are we not heaping shame on their death? a shame that the forty-five minute ceremonies of Remembrance Day do nothing to eradicate.

What is the price of our dead.

French Information Centre Established at Dal

The French Department of Dalhousie University, under the leadership of Professor Paul Chavy, has just announced the establishment of a French Information Centre. The Centre is designed especially to assist teachers of French in the Atlantic Provinces.

The facilities and information available on the French language and culture, which the Centre will provide on request, fall into six classifications, the General Information Service, which will deal with any question regarding language, literature, history, civilization; the Books Service will make books available and will dispense important bibliographical information; the Record Service providing records made to order; the Exhibit Service will provide posters, folders, pamphlets and maps; the Film Service will provide the teacher with information about French films and the best way by which to procure them. Finally, the French Information Centre has in its possession a wealth of cultural material, such as photographs of monuments, paintings, etc.

A Real Old-Fashioned East Coast Welcome!



DEATH OF A COUNTRY

by George Havlovic

Ed. Note—George Havlovic, a Dal student and a Czech patriot, who escaped that country's fall to Communism, presents this exclusive article on the fall of his native country.

The expression, "A Rule of Law" does not mean very much to most Canadians, who have always enjoyed such a situation and take it for granted. But a man who has lived behind the Iron Curtain recognizes the tremendous importance of the "Rule of Law" because he has seen what happens in its absence. What is fundamental to present day Czechoslovakia is lack of security. No one, citizen or foreigner, is sure of his immediate future. All kinds of arbitrary action are undertaken by the government. The Communists daily subvert the constitution which they themselves drafted and put through Parliament on May 9, 1948. None of the freedoms set in the constitutions in fact exist. Communists are at liberty to break the laws, provided they are properly subservient to the party line. Noncommunists cannot be sure of safety even by keeping the laws. There is no law in the sense the word bears in civilized countries. The man against whom the information is lodged, is treated as an already condemned criminal. He is imprisoned, his property confiscated, his lodgings seized and awarded to someone else. Should he be proved innocent and released, which is of course a rare consummation, he cannot recover on these losses. Should he try, the authorities warn him, unofficially, that unless he keeps quiet, he may lose more yet. People released from custody usually prefer to sign a waiver for their losses. Prisons are overcrowded and conditions in them are very bad. Prisoners and even witnesses are subjected to torture of the kind that has often been described in the western press. The independence of the judiciary exists only on the paper. In reality, the sentences in a political trial are prepared by the communist party and dictated to the courts. There is no law, no justice, nor respect of human rights in Czechoslovakia today. Only the wanton exercise of power. After the first world war and under the leadership of Thomas G. Masaryk, the first president of the republic, Czechoslovakia was often called the social laboratory of Europe. After the second world war it became a socialist alchemist's den, where Russian doctrinaires and their disciples experimented in their own brand of socialism.

I—How it came about

On the 5th of May, 1945, with the American army under General Patton advancing rapidly against the city, the inhabitants of Prague rose against the German oppressors and turned their few captured rifles and machine guns against all the airplanes, tanks and artillery of the Nazis. As the battle continued, they broadcast urgent appeals for help, in both

English and Russian, asking especially for aid from United States aircraft, which had appeared over the city in the past from the airfield in rear of those now at their disposal. But nothing came and Patton's army halted half way between the frontier and the capital.

In the general ignorance of the Yalta agreement it is not surprising that the Czech people wondered if Roosevelt's America was betraying them as Daladier's France had done in Munich. We know today that Patton's army was halted on the line running through Pilsen by an order from General Eisenhower. We even know why this order was given; in response to a Russian appeal to the Yalta agreement and for important strategic reasons. Had it not been for the death of Hitler and the capitulation of Germany, Prague would have suffered the same fate as Warsaw.

Prague was saved from the same fate, first because the German garrison left the city in an attempt to reach and surrender to the Americans and secondly, because of General Vlasov, a renegade Soviet general, in the services of the Nazis turned his forces against his master at the end of the war.

II—New terror for old

The Red army reached Prague from the north on May 9 while other forces advanced from the east, occupied parts of Moravia and parts of Bohemia. The Russians made no distinctions between friend and foe. General Malinovsky's troops in Slovakia and Moravia ran wild over the country at their will. So-called liberation brought in its train the usual apparatus of NKVD, persecution of so-called "enemies of USSR" and Communist "People's Police" whose ranks contained many recruits who had served long sentences as common criminals. The country had merely exchanged the new Russian terror for the old German one.

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