

REFERENCE PAPERS

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LIQUOR AND BEER RATIONING IN CANADA

Introduction:

In a radio broadcast of December 16, 1942, the Prime Minister detailed the situation pertaining at that time, in respect of liquor and beer consumption in Canada. He said:

"Since the outbreak of war, there has been in our country a steady increase in the consumption of spirits, wine and beer. It is estimated that in dollar volume, the annual outlay is now practically double what it was before the war. . . .

In the twelve months immediately preceding the outbreak of war, the quantity of spirits, both domestic and imported, released for sale in Canada amounted to over three and a half million proof gallons. The corresponding figure for the third year of war was nearly five million proof gallons. This figure represents an increase of $37\frac{1}{2}\%$.

During the twelve months immediately preceding the outbreak of war, the amount of domestic wine made available for sale was just over three million gallons. In the third year of war, it was nearly four million gallons. This represents an increase of more than 25%.

The most reliable available index for increase in the consumption of beer is the increase in the use of malt for brewing. In the year prior to the outbreak of war, almost 140 million pounds of malt were used. The corresponding figure for the third year of war was over 232 million pounds. This represents an increase of over 60%."

The Prime Minister thereupon announced that legislative enactment had been made with a view to limiting the production and consumption of liquor and beer. This enactment is incorporated in P.C. 11374, dated December 16, 1942, cited as the "Wartime Alcoholic Beverages Order, 1942."

The Prime Minister said:

"By order-in-council under the War Measures Act approved by His Excellency the Governor General to-day, the government has taken further important steps to curtail substantially the distribution and consumption of alcoholic beverages as a means towards achieving a total war effort. The Department of National Revenue has been directed to reduce the quantity of beverage alcohol, both domestically manufactured and imported, to be released from bond and made available for sale. The limitation is based on the quantities released for sale in the twelve-month period which began on November 1st, 1941. For the twelve-month period which began on November 1st of the present year, the quantity