

Education and Defence

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IT has been said that the struggle between communism and the western democracies is a struggle for men's minds. In such a struggle, the mind of man is the object of attack, and also the weapon of attack. The eventual winner will be the side that makes the best use of the minds of its people.

If this hypothesis is valid, and there is good reason to believe that it is at least partially so, it follows that education, the development of man's intellect, is of major importance in any programme of national defence.

In this day national defence is not the responsibility of the armed forces alone. It is a responsibility shared by every citizen and every institution of national life, and the results of failure to create an effective defence will fall upon the nation as a whole. Education for defence cannot, therefore, be treated solely as a problem of the education of the armed services. The people must also be trained to take their part in national defence. This is especially true in a democratic system where the verdict of the electorate must be sound, if we are to defend and develop that form of government. Thus, education for defence must be aimed at developing an informed and thinking people and an alert and capable defence service.

Our people must know what we are struggling against and what we are striving to maintain. They must know about communism, what it stands for and what it is in practice. They must realize that democracy is not a divinely-inspired con-

dition of normalcy, but is a trust and a heritage from our ancestors that may demand some sacrifice, if we are to enjoy it and pass it on to coming generations. Our forebears fought to preserve the democratic way of life. They suffered and died to develop it for us. We must continue to protect and develop it as our historical charge.

In any defence the first measure to be taken is to know your enemy. It is fortunate that the communists have been the most voluble set of revolutionists in history; there is no reason not to know about them. There can be no doubt about their aims and methods if we will take the trouble to learn about them. The communism of Marx and Lenin is the product of intellectuals, but it is an utopian concept that has required drastic alteration when put into practice in the Soviet Union. The rigid dogma, the monolithic structure of the communist party and the doctrine of infallibility do not provide a favourable medium for the development of new ideas. Communist education must mold the minds of its adherents in the party form where all truth comes down from the select few and deviation is the unpardonable sin. This rigidity is a major weakness in the communist system and constitutes an advantage that the West must exploit. Our attack must be based upon better training, more flexible methods and the spur of individual initiative.

The education of a people for defence is not a simple task but it is one which, if resolutely and intelligently undertaken,

can be done. It should start in the schools and be continued into adult life. It is essentially a matter of inculcating a political awareness in the people. The natural tendency towards pre-occupation with national, rather than international, problems must be changed. Nations cannot live in isolation in a shrinking world. Our country is becoming an increasingly important member of the world community and our citizens must be prepared to pass intelligent judgment on their country's course in international affairs. Intelligent judgment can only be developed by careful study of the world's problems.

This study should start in the schools and our curricula should be designed to provide a broader training in current world problems. Our youth should be trained as future citizens as well as they are trained to be future mathematicians, plumbers or stenographers. In doing this we do not need to use the methods of the Hitler Youth or the Young Comsomols—the democratic method is as applicable to training in citizenship as it is to teaching geometry or history. One reason for the appeal of Communism to youth is that it has been portrayed as dynamic, that is it has been presented to them against the background of a supine democracy which has made little effort to convince the restless minds of the young that it has its major virtues as well as its apparent weaknesses. Democracy has been coasting along with a big lead and has not recognized the challenge until it has become a real threat, instead of an annoyance.

II

THE emphasis so far in this paper has been on the education of the civilian in defence because no service can be effective or, indeed, exist without the support and understanding of the people. The problem of education in the services can be broken down into three broad categories (a) physical training, (b) technical training, and (c) psychological training.

The first category, physical training, is the form of education which is usually associated with the services in the public

mind, drills, the physical jerks, the route marches that produce the fitness and the team spirit that are the basic equipment of a fighting man. Despite the mechanization and technical advancement of modern forces, the fitness of the individual is still a most important factor in war and it cannot be neglected. A fighting man today must be prepared to live and fight in the Arctic, the desert or a muddy foxhole. He must fight in the frigid, dazzling, oxygen-deficient atmosphere of 50,000 feet above the earth or in the steaming jungle. He must be able to stand the rigours of destroyer duty on the North Atlantic or in the typhoon-whipped China seas. He must march long distances without adequate food or rest and face enemies who are at home and inured to conditions that are foreign to him. It is very apparent that physical fitness is a prime requisite of members of the defence forces. Physical training therefore plays a large part in any programme of defence education and receives constant attention by the services.

Under the classification of technical training is grouped a large number of widely varying requirements. They range from marksmanship to the highly technical duties of electronics technicians. In this category also are the staff and professional training that is becoming increasingly important in the complex forces of today.

The trade structures of the Canadian Forces list some seventy to two hundred different trades. Training must be given in all these skills, and the training must be thorough, but as condensed as possible because courses must be designed for the time when emergency conditions may require the training of as many men as possible in as short a period as can be accepted. All training must have this adaptability to wartime use even in times of peace, otherwise the entire schooling system would have to be altered at a time when its smooth operation and expansion is vital. A major condition affecting the trade structure of the services results from this need to save time, and a high degree of narrow specialization has developed. It is no longer practical to teach one man all about a highly complicated piece of equipment such as an airplane; to do so would take years of

training. Instead, a large number of mechanics are trained to service individual parts of the aircraft. By this means it is possible to shorten the time spent on training individual tradesmen but it adds many administrative problems in employing these specialists.

WHEN a recruit joins the service he is first subjected to a battery of aptitude tests to determine his suitability for training as a tradesman and to determine in which grouping of trades he shows the greatest aptitude. He then receives a short indoctrination course, and a basic trade training course, after which he becomes an apprentice tradesman and receives on-the-job training in the field. Trade advancement training is carried out in the field to provide the theoretical background to match the increasing practical skill of the tradesman. Regular trade tests are held to assess the progress made and to recognize the increased skills by awarding a higher trade grouping with its attendant increase in pay and opportunity for promotion. After a period of employment in his trade and satisfactory progress, a man may be selected for advanced training at a specialist school, with industry, or with some other service. In the services, more than in civil life, formal education is a continued process throughout the careers of members of the forces.

Included in the technical classification is training in such diverse trades as pilots, cooks, divers, gunners, machinists, navigators, meteorologists, and a great number of other specialists that go to make up the armed services, and in all this instruction constant efforts are made to employ the most modern instructional methods and aids to instruction. Only by taking advantage of every such means can the necessary training be carried out in the minimum of time.

The training of officers after their basic individual training progresses through the specialist schools and the staff colleges. In the latter, the object is to school the individual to fit as a member of a large staff which must work as a diverse and complicated team. The highest form of this staff college training is at the National Defence College where selected senior of-

ficers from the three services, and representatives from other government departments and from industry are brought together to study the defence of the country in its broadest aspects. The war-making potential of the country and its foreign policy, the capabilities of friendly and hostile nations, the formulation of a national and a global strategy, are all dealt with at this college.

The third category, psychological training of members of the armed forces, is aimed at creating a team spirit, an *esprit de corps*. It is carried out throughout the entire service career of serving members. It is at the heart of the problem of creating a fighting service and is, at the same time, the least formalized and possibly the most neglected phase of training in the services. It is a form of training that the communists recognize as of crucial importance and one to which they devote much effort with excellent results. Some forms of psychological training, as practiced by others, are repugnant to the liberal democratic mind and it may be this is partly the reason that we in Canada have never made a truly analytical approach to this vital form of training. It is a field in which much work can be done and one in which we do not need to adopt the totalitarian methods to attain a large measure of success. History can show many examples of the value of morale—and morale is compounded of a lot of things. Our defence forces must know why they are needed, they must know whom they may have to fight and why, they must have a belief in the justice of their cause, they must have confidence in their leaders, in their equipment and in their own ability. All of these things can be achieved without resorting to false propaganda or distorted facts. The task of psychological training is one that is being given increased emphasis in the defence forces today. Psychological training, which is a polysyllabic term for morale building, is a weapon that we cannot neglect.

III

EDUCATION of the defence forces is not perfect by any means. The military tend to be conservative and to

cling to tried and proven methods, but with the stirring changes brought about by the last war, education is being given more emphasis than ever before. The best civil practices are being adopted and new methods and concepts are under constant study.

Canada may have to face many years of uneasy, tense peace, if not all-out war. Her people must be prepared for the strains that such a period will bring to them. There may be cycles of tension and relaxation of international pressure. We must learn to live without reacting too violently to the tensions, and relaxing too completely during the lulls. We must accept that we, together with our allies, may have to maintain a defence posture for many years that will discourage any aggressor from open war or that will enable us to win that war if it comes. We must avoid bankrupting our system by too great an ex-

penditure of national effort on armament over a protracted period of tension but not open war. So rapid is the technological advance of the day that armament becomes obsolescent in a surprisingly short period of time. Thus, if our level of armament is too high during peace, we either cannot replace it with new weapons as they are developed, or we face a very real danger to our system by diverting too large a proportion of our national effort to the supply of armament. We can lose the struggle with communism just as surely by reducing our standards of living, and enslaving our people to support a disproportionately large armament programme, as we can by losing a major war to Russia. The greatest problem in education for defence that is facing the Canadian people today is that of determining, in concert with their allies, the dividing line that separates too little armament from too much.

So Little Time

More business than usual, now
And for a generation,
No time for normal aims
And less for veneration;

More business than usual, more
Nickel and steel and copper,
That freedom stand, unbent,
All hands into the hopper.

More business than usual, then
Factory, mill and mine must
Rush defences, guarding
The nobler hopes of men.

Thus more business than usual
Become business as usual,
With freedom as our guide,
Restoring faith in ourselves?

Business as usual? Never
From sword to pen we'll transfer,
But each together wield,
In Earth's great new endeavour.

S. E.