

# THE CANADIAN C.O.

Vol. 1 No. 1

August 1942

Montreal, Canada

## CANADIAN C.O.'s MOVE WEST

### A PRAYER

Almighty God, who in Thy providence, dost not suffer us to evade life's sternest trials, give us an untroubled heart as we face an unknown future. Grant us day by day such measure of thy Holy Spirit that when the times of our proving come, the same Spirit shall speak for us in right words and sustain us by its serenity.

AMEN

- Willard L. Sperry.

### The C. F. F.

Eight pacifists have joined the Corps of (Civilian) Canadian Fire Fighters for service in the United Kingdom. Several others are known to have made application. 400 officers and men will make up the Corps. They may be sent anywhere in Great Britain, Northern Ireland, or the Isle of Man. At least 270 will have been called by the end of August. Some are already in England.

The purpose of the Corps, a civilian organization, is to extinguish fires, thereby protecting life and property, to carry on salvage and rescue operations, and to do any other work for which it is equipped.

Members of the Corps do not bear arms or train in the use of them. They take an oath of allegiance to the King and swear to obey the orders and regulations of the Corps.

When experienced fire fighters join the Corps they are ranked according to the length of their service. Inexperienced men are ranked as Junior Firemen with pay equal to a private's in the army.

C.O.'s who want to know more about the Corps should contact a local Fire Chief. The Fire Chief interviews each

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"Go West, young man, go West" is the new command from the Dominion Government to the Canadian Conscientious Objector. From camps and home C.O.'s are being sent to British Columbia as recruits for the B.C. Forest Service. Patrolling forests and fighting fires will be their main job.

All alternative service work camps which have been established in the other provinces are being closed and the men in them sent to B.C. The Dominion Government has agreed to send 1000 C.O.'s to B.C. and to pay the cost of the project. The B.C. Government is to establish and operate the camps through the B.C. Forest Service. The Honourable Wells Gray, Victoria, B.C., is the provincial minister who is in charge of the project. Already campers have gone from *Wagaming* in Manitoba, *Waskesiu* in Saskatchewan, *Banff* in Alberta, and *Montreal River* at *Sault Ste. Marie* in Ontario.

Since Canadian C.O.'s are called to service for the duration, these men will be in B.C. for an indefinite period. Men will be granted leave every six months, if it is not during the fire season. It is understood that leave will be for one week and that the C.O. will pay his own transportation costs at Civilian rates. The usual 50¢ a day will be paid the men, out of which they buy all their necessities, other than food.

The following excerpt is from a letter sent by one of a group of 43 who left Toronto recently. It provides a description of life, work and prospects.

"We travelled by special coach all the way. We played some bridge, discussed religious matters, listened to recordings and got off at various stations. Every night we went into the diner for dinner. It was a swell change after sandwiches on the train. It cost me a dollar more for meals than the government gave me but it was worth it.

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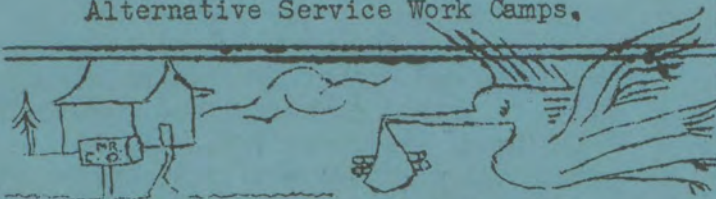
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## A Child Is Born

With this first issue of the Canadian C.O. a child is born into the family of Canadian news sheets. We will neither compete with nor duplicate any of our older friends. Ours is the quiet job of keeping Canadian pacifists posted on what their isolated fellows and groups are doing.

We are born of a demand for such news. We are here to meet that demand. News is to be our meat and drink, articles of a general nature our dessert.

"The Canadian C.O." is not the voice of an organization. It is the voice of a fellowship of men and women, linked by invisible ties of conviction and action. It is your voice. It aims to speak for you and to you, Canadian C.O.'s.

We will come to you every two months - more often if the need arises. You must come to us with news. Write us about your camp, your fire fighting, your job, your action. Will you?

Thanks, friend.

## "Lord We Are Few..."

So runs the hymn. So is the congregation. So are we pacifists. That's why this paper, by keeping us informed of each other's endeavors to be of use to mankind in these critical times, may help us all by showing ways of service open to pacifists.

"What on earth are you up to?" asked a friend. Briefly, we are acting out our convictions.

Our pacifist action takes different roads.

Pacifist action has led some to labour in Alternative Service Work Camps in National Parks and elsewhere.

Pacifist action has removed some from their normal life to alleviate the sufferings of war abroad.

Pacifist action has found many at home and at work, living out their active good will, trying to make life easier for those with whom they come in contact from day to day.

Pacifist action is the theme of this news sheet. We aim to keep you posted on what Canadian pacifists are doing and can do in the various fields of service they have found.

## The Distaff Side.....

It is the intention of this paper to reserve space for articles contributed by women C.O.'s. We feel that their pacifist stand can and is being expressed conscientiously in many different ways, seeking to ennoble life and relieve human suffering.

Let us hear, women pacifists, any ways you have discovered of being true to your convictions constructively and helpfully.

### THE C. F. F. ....Cont'd from Page 1

applicant and recommends those suitable to the War Services' Board. An applicant is called for a medical examination. If of Category "B 1" or better he receives an application form. Application and medical report are reviewed, and if accepted the man is called to Ottawa for a brief training period. Any one wishing to enroll in the Corps should act at once. Although the number of applications received is greater than is required at present there may be a further demand shortly.





# South of the Border.....

When the Second World War began, the position of the pacifists in Canada was challenged almost immediately. South of the border, American pacifists were already facing up to future problems. As a result, by the time the United States had adopted the policy of Selective Service, a strong pacifist minority had instigated fairly stable legislation providing for conscientious objectors.

Theological students were exempt from service in the U.S.A., but not in Canada. Nevertheless, several students from Union Theological Seminary, New York, refused to follow the procedure of national registration. They were promptly sentenced to one year of imprisonment. Several pacifist clergymen in the United States have waived their exemptions thus taking their chances as objectors along with other pacifists.

There are a few cases of others, who, having registered, object to any form of conscription. These people have declared themselves willing to perform any kind of constructive work as volunteers - but not as conscripts. However, as legislation provides only for conscripted objectors, several who refused to be conscripted are now in jail.

The large majority of C.O.'s accept the procedure of entering a Civilian Public Service (C.P.S.) work camp. Latest reports show 43 such camps in operation with varying numbers of pacifists in each. Each man provides \$35.00 monthly for his own support. Those unable to do so are supported by such pacifist church groups as The Society of Friends (Quakers) and Mennonites. Some C.P.S. camps are endeavouring to reduce living costs by cultivating land and thus utilizing their own food products. Co-operative enterprises in camps also aid in reducing expenditure as well as improving conditions.

The steps taken in organizing a C.P.S. camp are very interesting. Capable and sympathetic men, most of whom are pacifists, are chosen as directors. These, along with representatives of the Friends Service Committee proceed with arrangements. First of all a prospective community site is selected. Through private interviews and public meetings it is necessary to determine whether the community inhabitants are willing to have a camp of conscientious objectors established in their neighbourhood. To organize the new camp, a few experienced C.P.S. men volunteer to leave an established centre, to mingle with rookies who have been caught in the draft, and to begin C.P.S. life afresh in the new location.

For 9½ hours daily the work of C.P.S. men is largely soil and water conservation, reforestation, and forest fire fighting. The men also aid in any valuable community enterprise. A few men have been employed as male nurses in a Chicago hospital. They work on the same basis as the men in camps.

Earnest attempts were made by American C.O.'s to directly associate themselves with the suffering in other nations. Volunteers were requested for Quaker operated Ambulance Service in England and China. The volunteers far exceeded the number required, and then the plan was finally abandoned through no fault of its sponsors or the C.O.'s. Many C.P.S. men contribute money to help feed the starving people of occupied Europe. One of the meals each week is termed a "frugal meal." The amount of 14 cents per person, which is saved in this manner is sent through the American Friends Service Committee to needy people in occupied France. Some prefer to contribute cash rather than to eat the "frugal meal".

A survey of American camps shows that innumerable occupations and religions are represented. Life in camp is democratic. Nearly all of the camps publish a paper of camp news as well as general news about pacifists. In the recreational sphere camps have athletic teams, educational programmes, musical get-togethers, library facilities, and hobby groups. Regular religious services are conducted in camps. C.P.S. quartettes and speaking groups have appeared before audiences making the pacifist attitude better understood by the public.



## Waskesiu Men Aid Red Cross

On July 9th a money order for \$107.44 was forwarded to the Canadian Red Cross Society by the men of Waskesiu A.S.W. camp Number 1. This total was collected within a period of three months from a total of forty-six Alternative Service Workers receiving 50¢ a day, one anonymous worker contributing his entire wages of \$51.50. The money was collected by means of a one day campaign and a counter coin box.

## Extension Courses

All of us, wherever we may be, are exceedingly glad to hear that the boys in camps will be able to enjoy the privilege of continuing or commencing studies through extension courses. Through the efforts of Dr. Meyers, Secretary of Christian Education, the principals of some of the theological colleges, arts colleges, and secondary schools have consented to allow the boys in C.O. Camps to study through these extension courses.

Gestures such as these are truly appreciated, realizing as we do that education constitutes perhaps the greatest bulwark of freedom.

## ADDITIONAL READING....

We are grateful to the Peace Section of the American Friends Service Committee for the information about the following News Sheets. Others will be mentioned as they are brought to our attention.

Peace Action. (National Council for Prevention of War), 1013 - 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

The Conscientious Objector. (War Resisters League), 2 Stone Street, New York, N.Y.

The Peace Digest, a quarterly review of the World's Literature of Peace. Van Nuys, California.

The Conscientious Objector, (Central Board of C.O.'s), 6 Ensleigh Street, London, W.C. 1.

## Entire Surrender

"Science seems to me to teach in the highest and strongest manner the great truth which is embodied in the Christian conception of entire surrender to the will of God. Sit down before fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever and do whatever abysses nature leads, or you shall learn nothing. I have only begun to learn content and peace of mind since I have resolved at all risks to do this." . . . . . Huxley.

### DISTRIBUTION OF CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

### IN ALTERNATIVE SERVICE WORK CAMPS AS WE GO TO PRESS, AUGUST, 1942

<u>Name of Camp</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Number of A.S.W. Men</u>
Montreal River Road	Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario	None
Petawawa	Chalk River, Ontario	33
Riding Mountain National Park	Wasagaming, Manitoba	None
Prince Albert National Park	Prince Albert, Saskatchewan	23
Lac La Ronge Road Construction	" " "	None
Jasper National Park	Jasper, Alberta	35
Banff National Park	Banff, Alberta	38
Kootenay National Park	Field, British Columbia	43
Kananaskis Park	Saebe, Alberta	15
Green Timbers Manning Depot	New Westminster, British Columbia	689
	TOTAL	876

Note: The 689 in Green Timbers Manning Depot includes those who are already there as well as those who are on their way there. From this Depot the men are sent as soon as they arrive, to the Forest Protection Camps on Vancouver Island and on the British Columbia Mainland, to do forest protection work and fire fighting.



## We asked.....

The origin of this publication can be traced to the point when Gordon Stewart, of Montreal, worked himself into a lather over an idea, and started things moving by sending out a circular letter to several representative people throughout the country. The principal question he asked was "Do you think it would serve a useful purpose to have a newsletter regularly distributed reporting new developments, ideas for action, or accounts of experiences of interest to C.O.'s?" The impetus needed to carry things a step further was given by answers such as:-

"I think your idea of the paper linking us all together as a tangible expression of our fellowship, is excellent. It has been needed for some time. It should offer a medium for the expression of a good many of us concerning developments in our thought and experience."

Ontario.

"If some one would take the responsibility for such a newsletter, and if the individuals concerned would contribute their ideas to it, the circular would bind the group together, and give it the unity which is so much needed."

Saskatchewan.

"I've wished for a long while that there was some unifying voice among pacifists in Canada. Your idea of a publication seems to be a definite, positive step. I'm all for it and would like to do all I can to help."

British Columbia.

"Although there is a large number of pacifists and C.O.'s throughout the country the lack of contact between them makes one feel quite alone. I think that a newsletter regularly distributed would be of great service and interest to those of us in all branches of life."

Ontario.

"I might say that I am too old for military service, but I think that conscientious objectors should keep in touch with one another for encouragement and for the sharing of views."

Prince Edward Island.

"I would suggest that if the newsletter could be brought out a little oftener than every two months interest

would be kept at a higher pitch. There will be no dearth of material from these quarters at least."

British Columbia.

And so friends, with such encouragement the idea has advanced to this stage. From this point onward the idea must be nurtured into vigorous life by the contributions of the members of the fellowship wherever they may be. A few of us have given the thing a small push - it's up to you to keep it rolling with increasing momentum. Let's make variety really the spice of life - let's have our news and views in the form of prose, poetry, art, drama, humorous stories, and song.

Please don't be shy, friends.

## PERSPECTIVE

As we survey the scene of Canadian pacifism, we are struck once again with the immensity of our country. In order to dispel the almost inevitable feeling of segregation one from another which follows the realization of this physical condition, we must rally our mental and spiritual resources as our principal allies. In order that we may come closer together, perhaps we should first pause to consider the nooks and crannies of our society into which our fellowship must go. We are found as A. S. W. workers in camps, as civilian workers in industry, as social workers, as members of the combatant and non-combatant forces, as leaders in the pulpits, as women in homes, as liberals and conservatives in our religion, as citizens over the age limit for military service, as refugees, as students....and so the list runs on.

Inevitably sooner or later the need arises in each of these groups for some mechanism whereby news, plans of action, or new thoughts may be passed on throughout the fellowship. When such a need arises our only wish is that this newsletter may justify its existence through offering its services in so far as its policy will permit.

Are there any needs now, other than as a general newsletter for all groups? That is for those who are in need to decide. Do you boys in British Columbia

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# Pieces of Eight.....

At the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, January 20, 1942, eight pacifist students met together for possibly the last time. All had appeared before the Division "M" War Services Board as conscientious objectors. For two, it was the final university year and thus they must shortly find a place in the life of the country. One had spent four months the previous summer in an Alternative Service Work Camp in Prince Albert National Park. One, having been recognized as a C.O. felt he should actively express his sincerity, so was joining the army medical corps. Two, having been declared insincere in their objections by the War Services Board, had received military calls; had declined to report for duty, and were awaiting trial.

The eight had met before. There had been much discussion to clarify issues and to decide on action. All desired that contacts should not be severed as each went his separate way. A plan was presented and accepted by all.

A fellowship letter was to be started and forwarded to each of the group in turn. Each was to add to it his own thinking and experience and in this manner all were to retain the thread of contact.

Furthermore it was apparent that rough days lay ahead for them. Financial aid would be necessary for court cases, and possibly for their everyday needs. Therefore, there came into being the Fellowship Service Fund. A joint bank account was opened in the names of two of the fellows. To this account each of the eight was to deposit money as he was able. From it, any one of the eight could withdraw, if he were in need.

The letter was a partial success. The fund is growing. The whole plan is presented here as an experiment which can be recommended to other similar groups. It is both practical and inspirational.



Just to remind you to fill out the blanks on pages 7 and 8, and mail them right away.....

Thank you.

# Bonds.....for Relief

Non Interest Bearing Certificates (Series B) for remedial purposes have been available to the public for some time but as there may be those C.O.'s who have not yet heard of or investigated this road of service, we feel justified in publishing details concerning it.

The proceeds of the sale of Non Interest Bearing Certificates (Series B) will be used by the Government to finance expenditures to alleviate distress or human suffering due to war.

The purchase of these certificates may be substituted for the purchase of War Savings Certificates or Victory Bonds whenever persons are urged to invest in either of the latter.

These certificates may be purchased in any amount from One Dollar up. They are not transferable but are redeemable at par at the option of the holder upon application to the Public Debt Division of the Bank of Canada, Ottawa, at any time after six months from the date of issue.

There is no commission derived by anyone through the sale of these certificates and no interest accrues on them.

When making application for such certificates one should be sure to use the form for "Series B" Non Interest Bearing. "Series A" Non Interest Bearing is a loan for war purposes.

Application forms for Registered Non Interest Bearing Certificates (Series B) may be obtained usually through the post office.

PERSPECTIVE .....Cont'd from Page 5

and Vancouver Island camps feel that this newsletter could help to keep you knit together as you were at Montreal River Camp, until such time as you decide when and how to continue your "Northern Beacon" in spite of your being scattered to some 21 camps? If so, this newsletter is here as a service for us all, to be used or not, just as we please.

Another question which arises, is that regarding the frequency of publication. That is another matter which we all must decide in conjunction.

So there friends, the cards are on the table. The future plans are dependent upon you. What is the answer?



C.O.'s MOVE WEST . . . . Cont'd from Page 1

"The last two days most of us have been out with mattocks grubbing fire trails. I don't feel too badly and am eating enough for five. The grub is excellent.

"The camp is the Forest Service Station just outside New Westminster. There are three smart little houses for officers and a couple of tool sheds which are set near the middle of the forepart of the camp back from the highway. Then back of them is our establishment. On one side are twelve tents each housing four; on the other side are five cabins, a wash house and a small swimming pool. In the middle is a fine dining hall and kitchen.

"The morning we arrived we registered with the Forest Service. We have an aluminum disc to hang around our neck. On one side is "B.C. Forest Service" and on the other "Fire Fighter's Identification Number --."

"Tonight we learned of the camps we are going to for at least the next three months, where we will be acting as fire fighters with no leave until the fire season is over. I understand that my camp is about 10 miles from Alberni, and outfitted much like this one. That means showers with hot and cold running water, wash room, and electric light. We are going to be real keen on this unless, of course, we get caught in a fire, and get fried.

"Right now we are to have worship with a Mennonite minister in the district, so I'll close and let you know later of the new camp I'm going to."

Another letter from one of the chaps who has already been transferred from Green Timbers carries on:

"This sure doesn't compare with Green Timbers by a long way but maybe when it gets older things will develop. The camp has only been here for a month so there are no facilities yet, no electricity or running water, not even hot water for shaves so I think I'll grow a beard, but whatever you do don't tell my wife.

"The mosquitoes are in droves and we are being eaten alive. The chaps that have been here a longer time say that you got used to them.

"Of the bunch that came out from Toronto only 7 are with us and we are all in different cabins. I am with 4 Seventh Day Adventists, 1 Jehovah's Witness and two Mennonites and they all seem like swell fellows."

Another C. O. writes:

"Vancouver Island is fairly teeming with C.O.'s at present. As you perhaps know the B.C. Forest Protection Branch has brought in C.O.'s wholesale from as far away as Ontario, and established them in small camps of 25 to 35 for the purpose of patrol work and fire prevention. Not only is there a danger of the usual fires which occur every year but also there is a general uneasiness lest the Japanese scatter incendiary leaflets over our forests and burn out one of the major industries, logging and lumbering."

Calls to B.C. forest work will continue throughout the summer. Correspondents on the scene will write for The Canadian C. O.

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Please find enclosed ..... (25¢ for persons in A.S.W. Camps; 50¢ for all others) for a subscription to THE CANADIAN C. O. for one year.

Name..... Address.....

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THE CANADIAN C. O.  
POST OFFICE BOX 264  
MONTREAL, Canada.

Rev. J. H. Sherk  
Stouffville Ont.  
Markham

IF YOU ASK ME  
by  
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT.

Question: "How do you think our boys who have gone to war and risked their lives should treat conscientious objectors after the war?"

Answer: "I should think that the boys who go through the war, and who believe in what they are doing, would have a respect for a conscientious objector who had an equally strong belief that he should not kill other people. We have put these conscientious objectors to work in this war. They are clamoring for more dangerous work. Some of them are already doing work which requires great courage, but not the taking of another man's life. It would certainly seem a curious thing to me if a boy were not able to understand, having had deep convictions himself, that other people have a right to equally deep convictions and that they should be respected."

(From Ladies Home Journal)

ALP.O. MONTREAL P.O.  
OCT 23 1919

	Name	Address
Please send sample copy of next issue to: (Attach any additional names on separate paper)	1.....	.....
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