

**THERE IS NO ROOM
FOR A GESTAPO IN CANADA.**

Hardly a day passes without there coming to light new illustrations of well-nigh chaotic conditions in the administration and enforcement of wartime controls. Frequently the orders of the boards in Ottawa are so badly framed that the consequences of their enforcement are nothing less than shocking, as in the recent conviction of a farmer and poultry buyer who was charged with having given his wife a ride in his truck.

Indicative of the absolute confusion into which the controls administration is falling was the prosecution and conviction last week of an Orangeville man who operated his produce vehicle to Toronto contrary to a regulation forbidding the driving of trucks more than 35 miles without a permit. In this case the owner of the vehicle secured from the Mayor of Orangeville, who is also the chairman of the local Prices board in that town, what he believed to be authority to drive his truck to Toronto. The Mayor gave him the temporary permit and the officials of the Wartime Prices Board in Toronto ruled that it was invalid. This ruling was upheld in police court, notwithstanding that the Special Crown Prosecutor admitted there were "extenuating circumstances." This is a mild description, indeed, of the disorder in the controls administration which this court case revealed.

Not only is there confusion but the methods being used by some government agencies are a threat to an individual's liberty to write his opinions in a letter to a relative. In another column on this page there is published to-day an editorial from the Vancouver Daily Province which speaks for itself. The serious feature of it is that the mail censors are not confining themselves to blue-pencilling military information that might be useful to the enemy if it got out, but they are seizing on statements of opinion in private letters which come under their scrutiny and are passing them along to other officials to become the basis for court prosecutions against the writers.

All these things—the confusion in the administration of the controls, the seemingly unjust prosecutions for infractions of the regulations and the espionage that is going on in the censorship of the mails is making a pattern of government in Canada that is rapidly becoming intolerable. Its continuation will lead to a condition in which no one can be certain that a word or act will not lead to his arrest.

We say these things must stop and we ask every editor in Canada who values individual liberty to join in telling the government that they must stop. There must be an end to the use of the military censorship as a weapon for espionage on what is written in private letters. There must be more sense to the orders of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, even at the risk of there being fewer orders from Donald Gordon and his satellite administrators and the other controllers in Ottawa. And their swarms of underlings throughout the country must be made to understand that Canada will not permit a Gestapo to flourish.

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149
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