

WILL SIR SAM RETREAT WITH HONORS OF WAR?

All His Enemies and Friends Agree That There is a Great Future Awaits Him Three Thousand Miles Away---Big Things May Come His Way if the Royal Commission Brings in a Verdict of "Not Proven"

(By H. F. Gadsby.)

Ottawa, May 2.—Major General Sir Sam Hughes is in the Government, but not of it. That is to say, the Militia portfolio has been taken away from him and the chances are a hundred to one against his ever getting it back again. When Sam took on the job of War Lord some five years ago candidates were plenty, and the war hasn't had the effect of making them scarcer—the spending is very good just now. Everything has been done to let Sir Sam down easy and not to put anybody else's nose out of joint. What I mean to say is that Sam found Hon. A. E. Kemp on the job and making a very good fist of it at that, took over the department from his hands for a period of forty-eight hours, resigned according to schedule and thanked his predecessor gracefully in public.

Then Premier Borden, following Premier Asquith and British precedent, took over the War Office and said he would do his best with the hot potato. The Militia Department took a sort of three-cornered route to get to Premier Borden, but it had to be done that way so as not to offend Acting Minister Kemp or invite R. B. Bennett to come poking around. Rumor has it that in the cabinet reorganization which will follow Sir Sam's withdrawal, R. B. Bennett and Nickel of Kingston are to be asked in, but the time is not ripe yet.

Must be Vindicated.

Sir Sam has to be vindicated before anything is done. He will probably be allowed to retreat with the honors of war. All his enemies, most of the candidates for his job, and not a few of his friends, agree that there is a glorious future ahead of him some three thousand miles away where it will be easier to carry a future as great as Sam's without getting black in the face.

Nothing will be too good for Sir Sam after the royal commission has brought in a verdict of "not proven." Peerages and Field Marshalships are the slightest blessings that should happen to him.

Meanwhile the fact that Sir Sam is out of the Militia Department is not to be taken as evidence. It is merely a sign that public opinion is suspended while Sam devotes his time to establishing before the royal commission his innocence of certain charges which George Kyte did not make, but which Premier Borden, his colleagues in the cabinet and the Conservative press generally did make by implication—namely, that Sir Sam had his share of the graft. They went to it so heartily that it almost looked as if they had the cap waiting to fit it on Sir Sam.

George Kyte's charges were to the effect that Sir Sam's name on documents ratifying fuse contracts with mushroom American companies after substantial companies, both Canadian and American, had offered to make the same kind of fuses from seventy-five cents to a dollar less per fuse, and had guaranteed delivery, had a colorable look, especially in view of the fact that the two mushroom companies were months behind in their deliveries.

Still another charge was that these favored companies got cash advances amounting to 15 per cent. of their contracts, whereas reputable Canadian companies could not even get a chance to go ahead without a bonus. Still another charge was that Sir Sam's soul-mate, Col. John Wesley Allison, was the friend of frenzied financiers in the United States, who divided millions in commissions before the contracts got fairly started. Mr. Kyte said nothing about dividing profits before they were earned, so when Sir Sam denied that charge he was hitting a straw man.

The operations of Sir Sam's friend, Col. John Wesley Allison, brought the Major General into strange company—such as Benjamin Franklin Yeakum, the railroad wrecker, and Eugene Lig-

nanti, the flute player. All these queer people seemed to horn in when they heard there was sugar around.

Blame Can be Divided.

As a matter of fact, anything the Kyte charges can show against Sir Sam they can show equally against the old Shell Committee and against the Government. Although the blame can be divided like ancient Gaul, into three parts, it was the Government that shouldered the whole of it on Sir Sam by granting a Royal Commission on the ground that it was his honor that was slanted at.

Of course Sam may object to getting it all, and this is probably the reason why suggestions are already afloat that the Meredith-Duff commission be pruned to the same size as the Davidson commission.

That is to say, it will not be a case of defence on the part of the Government counsel and attack on the part of the Liberal counsel, but both these gentlemen will be there to "assist" the commission.

Evidence will be put into their hands and the Commission may ask questions about it if it likes. In other words the inquiry will not take the form of a law suit with harsh expressions and sometimes angry. It will sound more like "In the Gloaming," with the soft pedal down. Sir Sam has come back to face the music, but it won't be loud music that he faces.

A Melancholy Spectacle.

Sir Sam's speech in the House was received with mixed feelings. His best friends said he might have done a great deal better, and his worst enemies called it a melancholy spectacle. Instead of making a crisp ten minute statement and sitting down or taking the war into Africa and drubbing Kyte and Carvell for a hot half hour, the Major General chose to make a long address, in which he gave five minutes to the Kyte charges, another five to Col. J. Wesley Allison and an hour and a half of statistics in which he repeated those labors of Hercules, performed by him in organizing the Shell Committee and breathing courage into its members.

This was old stuff. The House had heard it before, and yawned frankly. Fully three-quarters of the members read their newspapers. Hon. Thos. Crothers, being a bit of a critic, fell asleep from time to time. The cabinet looked thoughtful—it had the appearance of waiting to be convinced, willing to cheer if there was anything to cheer for, but resigned to disappointment.

Here was a minister by way of being impeached or something like that. Where was his fiery indignation? Was he suffering from clergyman's throat? Had his four lawyers talked all the bounce out of him? True he was denying everything, but why was he lobbing them over instead of hurling them as charges ought to be hurled? What this crisis needed was more pep, and Sam wasn't there with the hot stuff. In short, Sam committed the unpardonable crime—he bored the House stiff.

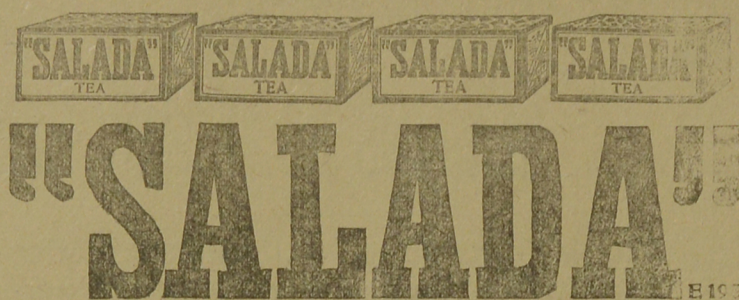
Sir Sam is Nervous.

As a matter of fact, the Major General is not himself. He appears to be on the verge of a nervous breakdown. He did not create that "happy atmosphere" which he used in replying to the Carvell charges a couple of months ago. Whether he felt that his audience was cold—heaven knows it was big enough, the galleries being crowded—or whether he felt that he was surrounded by members of his own party who had their thumbs turned down, the fact remains that the Major General was in poor form. He tried all his old tricks, but with only half a heart.

As a result, he put nothing over. As the actors say, he couldn't get it across. Even his bluster, which is Sam's long suit, seemed to fall with a dull, sickening thud. He interrupted himself at the proper places for uproarious applause, but the applause failed to connect. He took a sly fling at the great and good Mr. Flavelle, when he mentioned sausages, and at Sir Thomas White, who is credited with putting the gerat and good Mr. Flavelle where he is.

Nothing doing. The House never turned a hair. It was "show me" and naturally it got on Sam's nerves. He tried the pump several times, but his pathos broke off near the handle, and he raised no water. He aimed to overcome his audience with emotion, but overcame only himself. Ever and anon he waved the old flag—but he waved it feebly. The old flag, as Geo. M. Cohen says, has saved many a bun show. Sam believes in giving it a chance.

In short, it was Sam's off day. He will probably do better in the commission.



The Tea That Never Disappoints

MAYOR AND ALD. McLELLAN LOCK HORNS ONCE MORE

(Continued from page 2.)

A short time ago Ald. McLellan had informed the speaker that the Street Committee favored the purchase of a team of horses but he did not dream that the committee would go ahead and buy a team without consulting with the City Council and having the matter fully discussed.

Later he had been requested by Ald. McLellan to attend a meeting of the Street Committee, which was being held after some other meeting. He could not attend the meeting as he had promised to attend a social in aid of the Belgian Relief Fund and take part in the program.

His Worship went on to speak of a conversation with Ald. McLellan. The latter had said he could not recall the words. His Worship could. He remembered that Ald. McLellan wanted a cheque. In University avenue he had been approached by the alderman, who had asked for a cheque. He told the alderman he was not ready to issue a cheque. Ald. McLellan had then said that the horses had been bought and was told that there was plenty of time to consider the matter and to get the opinion of the Council.

The following day Ald. McLellan again had asked if a cheque could be issued for the amount of \$525 to pay for a team of horses bought from Mr. W. A. Clark, who wished to go away after a more horses. The alderman was told that the mayor could guarantee that Mr. Clark, if he wanted to go away, would not have to wait for the cheque. Ald. McLellan then became abusive and wanted to know if that was the way he, as chairman of the Roads and Streets Committee, was to be treated.

His Worship had replied that he was treated just as any other chairman was treated.

"Are you going to issue that cheque?" Ald. McLellan had shouted. "That is my business" had been the reply and not "None of your business" as Ald. McLellan had inferred the Council.

There had been some further conversation as to where Mr. Clark was to buy the horses, one in Toronto and one somewhere else. This conversation was over the telephone and had been ended by His Worship hanging up the receiver.

"Ald. McLellan was trying at all times to misconstrue my words," said His Worship. "He was trying his best to get me to put my head into a noose but I did not put it in."

Moore Residence Again.

"Ald. McLellan has accused me in connection with the erection of a residence for ex-Ald. Moore. I want to ask Ald. McLellan who wrote the cheques which were given to me from time to time while building operations went on?"

Ald. McLellan—"Mr. Moore, I presume."

Mayor Mitchell—"Who filled them in?"

Ald. McLellan—"Oh! Who filled them in? I believe I know."

Mayor Mitchell—"Yes, you know! I did not. You know who wrote those cheques. You have said that a pistol was put to my head to make me pay back five hundred dollars. I saw no pistol. No person ever put a pistol to my head."

Ald. McLellan—"That was figurative. You received a lawyer's letter."

Mayor Mitchell—"As far as that is concerned, it is not true. With the assistance of Mr. Moore's attorney I was done out of a certain sum of money in that building operation."

Ald. Everett in the Chair.

Ald. Burnett objected to the statement of the Mayor and Ald. Wilkinson stated that he was out of order in speaking from the chair.

Ald. Lemont—"Ald. McLellan has attacked the mayor. Surely the latter has a right to reply."

Ald. Walker—"I pointed out that Ald. McLellan was out of order in his reference. His attack was scurrilous."

Mayor Mitchell admitted that he was out of order in speaking as he had and at his request, Ald. Everett took the chair.

McLellan had referred to the "gutter," a disgraceful expression to use toward any citizen of Fredericton.

Ald. McLellan said he had referred to the "gutter" tactics of Ald. Walker and not to any citizen.

The mayor went on to say that the team could have been purchased for less money, even the Moore mare could have been, had Ald. McLellan attempted to get a lower price. Instead, he had jumped at the first price of \$300. A transaction among Ald. McLellan, Mr. Clark and ex-Ald. Moore had been carried out, the city practically paying for the settlement. The city engineer had told him (Mitchell) that Mr. Sturgeon had offered to sell a pair of horses for \$435. Personally, he had no knowledge of harness, wagon or equipment until he had seen it on the street.

His Worship went on to say that he had thought himself of having a city team purchased, but to be kept at the fire station, the fire horses to be worked on the streets.

Ald. McLellan said he had suggested the same thing to Ald. Wilkinson. The latter said it was not practicable.

Mayor Mitchell said that Ald. McLellan was merely making an arrangement whereby his friend would be paid \$400 for a blundered horse which could not be sold in the open market.

Ald. Walker closed the debate. He pointed out that the notices of committee meeting had been issued and was the proper procedure. Ald. McLellan, in his remarks, had carefully avoided the questions asked and had used language that was scurrilous. He had brought himself to a low value. Five dollars had been paid for a horse-collar which was all out of shape. Ex-Ald. Moore's guarantee of the horse had not been produced. Ald. Lemont Chances.

Ald. Lemont said he was going to vote differently from the way he had voted the night before. He approved of a city team but not of Ald. McLellan's course of action. Tonight Ald. McLellan had shown no change of purpose and was in no way humbled. He should be distinctly informed by the Council that he had acted wrongly and that he was condemned. In view of the information given by Ald. Walker the bills should be held up.

Ald. Everett said he thought a committee should be appointed to handle its own business and he would support the Street Committee.

The motion was put. Ald. Walker, Ald. Baxter and Ald. Lemont voted for it, the motion being lost six to three. Ald. Shea was the only absentee.

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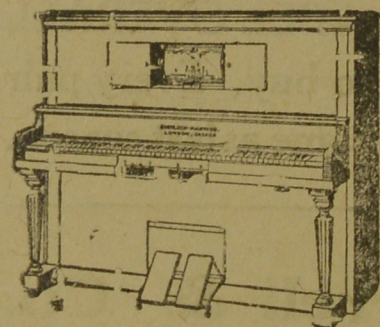
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