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## THE BORDEN GOVERNMENT THE FRIEND OF MIDDLEMEN

The Biggest One of all is Kept on the Job at Ottawa and Expects to Pull a Knight-hood Out of It--Country Needs Less Greed and More Common Honesty--People ask for Bread From the Government and get an Order-in-Council.

(By H. F. Gadsby.)

Ottawa, Nov. 30.—Friends of the Borden Government keep explaining that bread costs more in Canada than it does in England, because England is three thousand miles nearer the war. At least that is how it sounds to the average sceptic. The fact of the matter is that the argument is all against them—they haven't a leg to stand on.

Their tactics, however, are the same as usual. They wrap the high cost of living up in the old flag and ask the people to swallow it on patriotic grounds. The reasoning is that the war entails sacrifice and the Borden Government's idea of sacrifice is to sacrifice the people, not their friends, the profiteers, who have till October, 1917, to shear the people good and close.

The People Sacrificed.

There is nothing new about the Borden Government's idea that the people are the ones to sacrifice. They got into power on that very idea in 1911, waving the old flag violently the while to distract attention from their guilty

purpose, and they have acted on it ever since.

No sooner were they seated than they proceeded to hand the country over to the food exploiters, who were mainly instrumental in putting them in. The tariff was boosted in three jumps to forty per cent., the Northwest farmer was delivered, gagged and bound, to the milling trust, and the British preference was considerably expurgated. One way and another the home market was sewed up good and tight for the middleman.

Waving the Old Flag.

Five years ago the majority of the people of Canada, with the old flag being waved in their eyes, were unable to see how a limited interchange of table products with the United States would enable the Canadian consumer to pay less for his food and the Canadian producer at the same time to get more. Time has taught that lesson pretty well, and it's a low brow that can't understand now where the middleman got his work in. War prices prevailing, the farmer gets 12 cents now for hogs on the hoof, and

that teaches him what competition will do for him. But five years ago he couldn't see it. He couldn't comprehend the fact that he would get a better price for his hogs with two sets of packers bidding than with one. He knows now.

The consumer suffered from a similar obtuseness, but he probably understands now, having learned through his pocket that 37-cent bacon might listen to reason if United States bacon were allowed to give it an argument.

The Whole Indictment.

To come right down to cases, the gap between ten cent hogs—which was the before-the-war price—and 37-cent bacon, is the whole indictment against the high cost of living.

The middleman is getting it all. He pays the producer the least and charges the consumer the most he can, and thus works both ends for the middleman. The Borden Government is his particular friend. Under its auspices he becomes bold and does anything he likes—in Canada.

Of course, he can't get gay with the United States, as a certain bloated middleman did the other day, when he proposed to open a chain of stores in Buffalo. "Oh, you will, will you?" said the local privateers. "Very well, we'll invade Toronto." And no more was heard of that.

Middlemen on the Job.

This gentleman's agreement, by which Toronto is prevented from getting cheaper food, is being well kept. But in Ottawa it's different. There the middleman can do anything, and get away with it. The Borden Government has such a high opinion of the middleman that it keeps the biggest of them right there at Ottawa, puts him on a job out of which he expects to pull a knighthood, not to speak of the drag it gives him with the British War Office in the matter of beef contracts, and posts him strategically on all the committees and commissions whose business it is to investigate the high cost of living. If any of these commissions discover any-

thing—and one or two have actually had to stumble into the facts, although it was against the Government's wishes—Mr. Middleman is there to give it a soft answer and head off discussion.

Too Much Greed.

Some critics have urged that what this country needs is less greed and more common honesty. But where is it to begin? What happens if the people look to the Borden Government for an example? Its shell-making friends soaking the country for anything up to nine hundred per cent. profit! Paper shoes, spavined chargers, fuse scandals! Colonel John Wesley Allison cried up by Sir Sam Hughes, as a man of more honor than the Auditor General! Tom Kelly stealing a million dollars presumably for the Conservative campaign fund, and getting two and a half years in jail for being a goat!

Under these prodigal auspices is it any wonder that smaller dealers make free with the necessities of life—potatoes, butter, eggs, milk, bread, coal and so forth and so on.

Potatoes \$2.50 a bushel; milk 9c. a quart, and blue at that; hay crop, in the meantime, the best we have had in years. Bread 18c. a loaf, porons stuff, full of holes; eggs 70c. a dozen—not honest eggs either—cold storage firsts.

Why Eggs Go Bad.

And talking of eggs, how one would love to hear a conversation between an egg just out of jail, we'll say, with three years of prison pallor on it, and the Person who put it there. What wouldn't that egg say to him for throwing it into prison, robbing it of its character with ammonia fumes and then letting it out again to hold up the public for prices which are sheer robbery? Is it any wonder that an egg occasionally goes bad under these discouraging circumstances? The wonder is how any egg remains honest with the Old Fagin of the egg business teaching it how to go out and pick

(Continued on page three.)

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## A Message From Lloyd George

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"We have been living in a sheltered valley for generations. We have been too comfortable and too indulgent, many perhaps too selfish. But the stern hand of fate has scourged us to an elevation where we can see the everlasting things that matter for a Nation, the great peaks we had forgotten---of Honour, Duty, Patriotism, and clad in glittering white, the towering pinnacle of Sacrifice, pointing like a rugged finger to Heaven."

Compared to service in the trenches, Service in the Munitions Plant is the lesser sacrifice, but it is hardly less vital to the Empire.

MARK H. IRISH,  
Director of Munitions Labor,  
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