

Munitions Profiteering May Cause Crisis at Ottawa

Twenty- Conservative Members Said to be in Revolt Against the Government-- Want an Investigation With the Shell Charges--The Pacific Scandal Which Wrecked the MacDonald Government Has Been Put in the Shade.

Ottawa, March 29--Of the many crisis in the precarious history of the Borden government ever since its advent to power through the alliance with the Nationalists in 1911, there have been none more serious than the present one. Today it is admitted frankly in the government ranks that the government, and with the government its followers in the House, are in an almost hopeless predicament. The charges preferred against the Shell Committee culminating in Mr. Kyte's sensational indictment of last night, threaten to bring down the whole house of cards.

After committing itself to no investigation, after hitching up through the minister of militia with the Shell Committee and with Colonel J. Wesley Allison, the government now finds that at least a score of Conservative members in the House will not stand for the burking of an inquiry, and are demanding that there be a real and resolute leadership and a genuine cleaning up. It looks as though the revolt in the government camp which has grown steadily today as the details of Mr. Kyte's charges have been studied in Hansard, cannot be quelled.

It is very doubtful if a sufficient number of the members can be whipped into line again to insure the turning down of Sir Wilfrid's resolution for an investigation in case the government should refuse to vote face and should still insist on a party vote against that resolution.

Confession of Weakness.

On the other hand, it is realized that if an investigation is granted, it will be a damning confession of weakness in view of the unequivocal stand hitherto taken by the government against an investigation, while at the same time the washing of the dirty linen in public would be almost certain to insure a sweeping defeat whenever the electors had again a chance to render verdict at the polls.

Private members among the Conservative party frankly admit that this about represents the situation. There is open fault-finding with the

leadership which has allowed the party to get into such a mess. There are again heard the demands of former years for a general cabinet shake up and a new and strong leadership, and there are many who, while recognizing that Major General Sir Sam Hughes is perhaps the one strong card the government would have to play in a general election, declare that he is too irretrievably committed to Allison to be allowed to remain longer in the cabinet.

His responsibility for the munition dollar rake-off of Allison and his friends Yoakum and Lignati, must be shared by the whole government and by the party so long as he remains a member of the cabinet. There is vigorous criticism of the minister of militia, for having run the whole show with regard to the Shell Committee without having taken his colleagues into his confidence, for having skipped off to London just before the storm broke and for leaving the government caught by surprise and without a defence of any kind against the latest and most sensational of all the charges of munitions profiteering.

The Conservative Press.

This feeling is frankly expressed in the Conservative press.

The Ottawa Citizen, for instance, says:

"Many Conservative members are plainly dissatisfied with the situation. They take the view that they hold no brief for Colonel Wesley Allison and that because he is a friend of General Hughes, the party as a whole is not bound to rush to his defence or to that of the minister and refuse investigation. Sir Sam Hughes enjoys no striking popularity with the Conservative party and a big group of members are demanding that he be brought back to defend himself."

The Ottawa Journal, through its parliamentary correspondent, and with undoubtedly the imprimatur of its editor, P. D. Ross, one of Premier Borden's closest personal friends, says:

"Amongst the names of Conserva-

tive M.P.'s mentioned prominently as advocating government action are W. F. Nichol, R. B. Bennett, Hon. Andrew Broder, Donald Dutherland, Colonel John A. Currie, Clarence Jamieson, W. F. McLean and W. B. Northrup. It is said that there are twenty Ontario Conservatives alone who would prefer an investigation."

Hon. Mr. Broder's Protest.

Following this up, The Journal prints an amazingly frank and significant interview with Hon. Andrew Broder, one of the most respected members of the House, who was recently made a privy councillor on the recommendation of the prime minister. Mr. Broder comes from Morrisburg where Colonel Allison has his home. He knows Allison, says The Journal, and quotes him as saying:

"I warned Sam Hughes when the war began."

Then The Journal quotes "Honest Andrew" as saying:

"I am getting too near the end of my life to be expected to object to holding an investigation into the work of the Shell Committee. I think if an investigation was decided against, I would have to vote against him. He said that if I voted against him it would do him more harm than if almost any other member of the party did so. I replied that I could not alter my view at my time of life, that I would have to go straight to the end. I would have to vote for an inquiry. I don't believe the premier quite realizes what is going on. He does not seem to know is going on. These are not the days of the situation. The people know what of Marlborough wars."

"The people of Canada are on trial for their honesty. I told the premier it was no use sneaking to the imperial government that they should ask for an investigation. They can't ask the Canadian government for an investigation. We are the people to deal with this."

Tory Leaders in a Quandary.

Meanwhile, there is nothing definite to be gleaned as to what the government will finally decide to do. Apparently neither horn of the dilemma has yet been grasped. After the House adjourned last night, the prime minister had an emergency meeting in his office with some of his colleagues. There was another meeting of the cabinet before the House met this afternoon. All during the day these have been little confabs among the ministers and little corridor discussions of the situation among obviously depressed and

NEGRO BOUNCER

HAD FINE SPORT

It is probable that no negro since Ham ate his first watermelon, has enjoyed himself more than the colossal and dusky commissioner of Carnegie Hall, New York, on a recent occasion. As visitors to that city are aware, this colored gentleman stands two inches higher than Jess Willard and is muscular in proportion. In fact, had he chosen to adopt the profession of pugilism instead of that of calling carriages, we should perhaps, have never heard of Jack Johnson. At a meeting of the American Rights Association, called to voice American sympathy with the Allies, a concerted attempt to break up the meeting was made by pro-Germans. The committee had prepared for just such disorders by scattering detectives through the hall, and so soon as a disturber was apprehended, he was escorted to the aisle by officers, who there handed him over to the commissioner. On by one, the dusky giant carried the Kaiser's friends to the entrance as though they were babies and dumped them in the cold March night. Among the score or so of hyphenates were two Irishmen. What joy for the black man, but ah, what humiliation for the poor Fenians, to be handled by the hated "naggur!" It is rather regrettable that they were not Senators.

A stranded but still haughty "leading lady" was obliged to put up at a dilapidated country hotel. She glanced frowningly at the office, reluctantly signed the register and took the brass key from the proprietress. "Is there water in my room?" she demanded.

"Why, there was," replied the proprietress. "There was, but I had the roof fixed!"

B. B. Dykeman & Co. mean business be on hand.

angry groups of members of the government side of the House. It is certain that no decision can be finally reached without a party caucus.

The whole pot is boiling, but so far few of the members will talk for publication. A caucus will probably be held in a day or so and during the interval the cabinet ministers will try to look up some defence, and the party whips will be busy with a view to enabling the government to handle the situation when the caucus meets. A possible compromise which is now being hinted at is the granting of a royal commission to investigate the charges during the parliamentary recess. That might enable the government to prorogue and give a few months more grace until parliament meets again. Then it is hoped the government might be able to worry through another session. After that, will come the debacle.

There are not a few Conservative members today who freely admit that the government might as well abandon all hope of a return to power after the next general election.

Constituents Behind Insurgents.

The moral of the whole tense situation at present seems to be that the conscience or perhaps merely a larger visional political foresight on the part of a number of the private members heretofore supporting the government is likely to shake the political situation in Canada as it has not been shaken for years. The result promises to do much toward ridding the country of the disgrace of parasite profiteers and bandits who have preyed upon the blood and agony of the empire.

The "revolvers" among the government's following are receiving scores of messages which are beginning to pile in upon the government members from their constituents demanding a thorough cleaning up.

"Whatever happens here," said one Conservative member to your correspondent today, "the mind and heart of the Canadian public are above considerations of mere party advantage. You can trust the people in this time of war."

These supporters of the government who have taken issue with the decision of Premier Borden to keep on the lid are, for the present, unwilling to commit themselves to public statements. They declare, however, that they have demanded and succeeded in securing the promise of a party caucus. At this caucus they state, they intend to place their position fully and determinedly before their colleagues and demand drastic government action. If Sir Robert continues to refuse to take this course, they state they will be prepared to make their views public.

Bennett Again an Insurgent.

Among the Conservative members who have avowedly out for an investigation as demanded by Sir Wilfrid (Continued on page 5.)

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