

Government Not as Keen on Conscription as It Once Was

Would Like to Get Away From Something Which May Have a Serious Come Back--Opposition Has Developed in Unexpected Quarters--Government Wants the Liberals to Accept a Share of the Responsibility--Organized Labor Opposed to Conscription.

(By H. F. Gadsby.)

Ottawa, June 2nd. — What gives the rank and file of the Conservative party in the House of Commons more than a passing qualm is the reflection that the military situation may not warrant all the heart-burning the Borden Government may incur and all the risks it takes to enforce conscription.

According to Premier Borden's own figures there are from one hundred and ten to one hundred and twenty thousand Canadian soldiers now in reserve in England. The Fifth Division, of which General Garnet Hughes is the commander, has not yet been sent to before? If it were the practice for to take the ground that Canada should come out of the war with the maximum strength with which it went into it, but the question Premier Borden's supporters in the House of Commons are asking is what country ever did it before? If it were the practice for belligerents to maintain their armies at the maximum strength from start to finish, would there ever be any finish?

These reflections may appear frivolous, but the fact that they are entertained and voiced by members of the Conservative party indicates that conscription doesn't look as good to them as it did when Premier Borden made his first announcement. In fact, as the days go by, it takes on more and more the appearance of a boomerang and it will be found in the final draft of the bill that the government has washed its hands of the administration of the act as far as possible. The idea is to get away from something which may have a serious come-back.

Afraid of Results.

Fear of results is also seen in the suggestion made by many Conservative members and several Conservative newspapers — including that fine old stalwart, the Montreal Gazette — that the way out is coalition. In other words, they would not be unwilling to divide the responsibility with the opposition. One thing is certain, the government is bound to go through with conscription — the party press dwells on that point. The government is bound to go through because it is a promise to the British government.

It is more than a promise — it is a bargain. The Borden government gives selective conscription and the British government gives a year's extension on the Borden government's majority in the Canadian parliament. That is to say, it will give the extension if the Borden government asks for it. Just now it is a moot question with the supporters of the Borden government whether it would be good play to force an extension against the wishes of any considerable group in parliament. For the doubtful satisfaction of mismanaging the war for a year longer it is worth while to imperil the party's place in the esteem of the people for years to come by abrogating home rule at the request of Downing Street? Sir Edward Carson gave a clear answer to that in a recent speech when he rebuked the centralizers of Downing Street

for trying to do things to the colonies in the name of the war that the colonies would not stand for after the war was over. Thus out of the mouths of their own friends the Borden government finds doubt and distrust being voiced at arbitrary measures of this sort.

The Quebec Situation.

Another thing which has cooled opinion in the Conservative ranks is the state of affairs in Quebec. It looked like good sport to "get Quebec" a fortnight ago, but it doesn't look like such good sport now. Is it advisable for the sake of an extra fifty thousand men, who could be raised by really brisk recruiting, to bring about by means of conscription a turmoil of race and creed hatred which may end by leaving Quebec in the same position toward Canada as Ireland now stands toward Great Britain? Is the game worth the candle? The sober-minded men in the Conservative party do not think it is, especially when it serves the ends of a little crowd in Toronto who are more anxious for revenge on Laurier than they care for selective conscription. Why play the other fellow's cards for him? A fierce light was shed on the motives of this Toronto group when they objected to conscripting unmarried men between twenty and thirty-five because most of the men of that age in Quebec were married and the fathers of families.

Unexpected Opposition.

Opposition to conscription crops out in the most unexpected spots in the Conservative party. For instance, the Calgary News-Telegram, a red hot government organ, edited by a red hot patriot like George Thompson, is out against conscription in the most downright fashion. Mr. Bourassa's Devoir could not say harder things about conscription than does Editor Thompson of the Calgary News-Telegram. What's more, the Conservative press in general is not cock-a-whoop about the popularity of the measure. In fact it admits that if a referendum were taken conscription would be overwhelmingly defeated, an admission which implies that it would be a poor election cry also.

Another thing which gives the average Conservative pause is the attitude of organized labor toward conscription. Organized labor wants a referendum. If a referendum carries, then organized labor will abide by it if the government adopts food control and regulation of prices. As a referendum would not carry and as the government, so far as signs count, has no intention of granting anything but a mock dictatorship in food, it looks as if organized labor will be to conscription all through the piece.

So far as can be ascertained at present the government idea of food dictatorship is a solemn humbug. The dictator would be only a comic Cerberus. He would have the power to limit the quantity of food to be placed in cold storage warehouses and also the power to order its release and distribution at such intervals as he should deem necessary.

But he would have no power to regulate prices. "Unrestricted marketing" is to do that. In other words, after the food operators have been given the opportunity to buy all they want the general public will be at perfect liberty to buy all it can get. You can imagine how much the general public would get and what prices they would get it for when you remember that the farmer sells by preference to the big buyer who comes to his door and takes the trouble of marketing his product off his hands. What's more, the big buyer can always threaten the farmer, if he sells to the little buyer at prices or in quantities which might influence the big buyer's market. Yes, "unrestricted marketing" has a fat chance!

It is possible that the working man might favor conscription if he was sure of getting a square deal from the Borden government on the food question, but he certainly would not care to march away to war and leave his loved ones at the mercy of the food pirates as they exist at present and as they promise to exist until the end of the war, because the Borden government will not grant a food dictatorship that will hurt Mr. J. W. Flavelle and its other friends, who squeeze the last cent out of the necessities of the people.

Mr. Flavelle is such a great and good man and controls so much advertising that the Toronto newspapers never tell what he is doing, but he is one of the biggest food operators in Canada. The other day he was looking for \$2,800,000 insurance on food products stored in Toronto. As he could not insure for more than 80 per cent. of their value, it follows that Mr. Flavelle has about \$3,500,000 worth of food cached in one place. And he has other places besides. Mr. Flavelle is entrenched in the very bosom of the Borden government—like a maggot in the cheese. He is chairman of the Imperial Munitions Board and member of all the dilatory commissions on the high cost of living, fidus Achates to Sir Thomas White—the man behind the gun. It will be a long time before the Borden government turns the gun on him or his friends.

Food control, price regulations and such would do better in the hands of men who take less stock in Mr. Flavelle than the Borden government does. Moreover, if price control is to have any lasting effect it should be accompanied by a complete change of heart in the profiteers. They are, many of them, very pious and, though they may be satisfied with eight per cent. in times of peace, they believe that Providence sends wars so the righteous man can take one hundred and fifty per cent. with an easy conscience. They say that the Lord loveth a cheerful giver and consequently that the more the consumer has to give the more cheerful he ought to be about it.

MARYSVILLE NEWS

An Interesting Meeting of the Town Council—Much Business Disposed Of.

Marysville, June 6.—The regular monthly meeting of the Town Council was held last evening. Mayor Gilbert occupied the chair, and the full board was present with the exception of Couns. Berton Dennison and McElman.

The session was lengthy and considerable business was disposed of. While the accounts of the month were under consideration a bill was read for road work by two residents of Ward 2. This bill was certified by ex-Coun. Stewart, and Coun. Finnmore stated that the amount was very much more than had been claimed by the workmen when speaking to him of their claim. Coun. Stephenson stated that the matter could no doubt be explained by the fact that the work was performed on the eve of the civic election and was no doubt manipulated so as to ensure to the benefit of the ex-Councillor on election day.

Sewer Extension.

Coun. M. V. Dennison introduced the matter of extending the present sewer on Bridge street so as to connect with several dwellings which at the present time have no connection. He stated that the sanitary conditions were at present in a very dangerous state, and the extension of the sewer was a dire necessity. Coun.

How Brown Learned How.

There is a man who makes shoes for children—and sells them to stores all over Canada But he is only just learning how people buy.

It was this way: His wife—let us call her Mrs. Brown—phoned to him and asked him to buy some underwear for little Brown.

Picture Brown now among the throng of mothers at the "Children's Underwear" counter. He asks for Underwear for a child of six. He looks it over helplessly. What on earth does he know about Children's Underwear? For lack of anything better to say he asks: "Is this good quality?" The answer is short and quite conclusive: "It's Blank's"—naming a well-advertised line. That short word says everything. Brown pays his money and goes home, quite satisfied with his purchase.

Now what bothers Brown—a manufacturer of shoes, is this: How would it affect the purchase of a child's shoes if the salesman said "They're Brown's"?

Nobody knows Brown's shoes. Brown doesn't advertise.

The name Brown signifies nothing when used in connection with children's shoes. The salesman must use all his persuasive wiles to induce people to buy them.

The point is—If the name Brown was as synonymous with Children's Shoes as "Blank's" is with Underwear, wouldn't Brown sell more shoes with less effort?

If you are doing a local business talk over your advertising problems with the Advertising Department of this newspaper. If you are doing a provincial or national business it would be well for you to have the counsel and assistance of a good advertising agency. A list of these will be furnished, without cost or obligation, by the Secretary of Canadian Press Association, Room 503, Lumsden Building, Toronto.

Stephenson supported the contention of the former, and stated that pipe was on hand and the cost of the work would not be enormous and might prevent the outbreak of an epidemic of typhoid, such as occurred last year. A vote was taken on the matter and the motion was declared lost, the mover and seconder alone voting for the resolution.

A communication from Col. W. H. Grey was read requesting the Council to pass a resolution to remove the names of ratepayers on active service from the defaulters' list. The request was complied with.

The bill of the assessors was placed before the meeting and was the subject of considerable discussion. Coun. M. V. Dennison stated that he had been informed that the assessors had completely ignored the desire of the Council for certain changes in the matter of assessment, and he would be in favor of allowing the bill to stand until the matter could be investigated. A special meeting of the board had been called for this purpose of suggesting these changes, and it was the intention that a more equal distribution of taxation should be made in the direct interest of the wage-earner. After an expression of opinion by the other members of the board an amendment was made by Coun. Finnmore that the amount of the bill be paid. The amendment was carried. It is expected that the matter will again be brought before the Council.

Coun. Finnmore engaged in a sharp controversy with Coun. Hart concerning road matters, and stated that the latter had proceeded with new work without the consent of the council. Coun. Hart in reply stated that owing to the criticism which had been offered by Coun. Finnmore he would resign his position as chairman of the Road Committee. His resignation was accepted and Coun. Finnmore was appointed to the position. Coun. Stephenson also precipitated a lively clash with Coun. Stafford regarding finances. The meeting adjourned at midnight.

ANSWERS TO INQUIRIES IN LEGISLATURE

In the Legislature on Friday replies were given to the following inquiries:

By Mr. Sutton:
Q. Has Mr. Frank Glidden, who has been acting as caretaker of the Woodstock bridge, been dismissed?

A. Yes.
Q. If so, who recommended his dismissal, and what reasons were given for same?
A. Recommended by defeated candidates. Political partisanship.
Q. Who has been appointed in his stead?
A. John Brown.
By Mr. Smith (Carleton):
Q. Who signed the recommendation for the dismissal of David Jackson, structural bridge superintendent of Carleton county?
A. He was dismissed on recommendation of defeated candidates.
Q. Who has been appointed in his place?
A. D. A. Campbell, Peel.
Q. Is the Government aware that the new appointee is not an experienced bridge builder?
A. So far as the Government is aware the new structural superintendent possesses the necessary qualifications for the position to which he has been appointed.
Q. Was there any charge laid against Mr. Jackson in the recommendation for his dismissal? If so, what was the nature of said charge?
A. Political partisanship.
By Mr. Peck:
Q. Did the Minister of Public Works instruct the supervisor of roads in the Parish of Hillsboro to only repair the roads suitable for carriages, but not to be particular to make roads passable for automobiles?
A. No such instructions were ever issued from the Department of Public Works since the present Minister assumed office.

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