

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 1919



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## GOVERNMENT LEANING TOWARD TARIFF REFORM AS CONCESSION TO WEST

Temporary Measure "Sufficient to Carry Judgment of Unionist Party as Whole" Promised

Western Members Outspoken at Party Caucus at Which Both Sides Are Heard—General Revision After Study by Minister of Finance and Eastern and Western Members.

Ottawa, March 20.—Although no definite promises of tariff reform were made in so many words at the Unionist caucus this morning, Sir Thomas White's statement that "He saw no insuperable difficulties in the way of dealing with the tariff in such a manner as would carry the judgment of the Unionist party as a whole," is read that way by western members in view of the fact that he had just heard them say that the west was inflexibly determined to have a substantial reduction in the tariff, and to have it now.

In the series of seven-minute speeches by which members of both east and west expressed their tariff views, there were no threats and no loud talk; everybody stated his views moderately and none adopted a chip-on-the-shoulder attitude. Sir Thomas White's conciliatory address at the outset helped in this, but all seemed satisfied that the government had gone as far as it could under present conditions, when Sir Thomas stated that announcements would be made during the present session as to immediate tariff measures which, in his opinion, would suit the Unionist party and the country as a whole.

### In Hands of Government.

Sir Thomas, though speaking in a conciliatory manner both at the opening and the close of the caucus, made it clear that he stood on the practice of having the government responsible for the tariff as for any other policy. He stated the other day that the caucus was held only for their government to hear expression of views, but the government did not intend to give any promises or intimations one way or the other. His general statement above quoted is being taken, however, as such an intimation. It must be added that Sir Thomas emphasized the necessity of looking at the question from a national, rather than a sectional point of view, and stated that the national interest and welfare were the sole interests considered in the tariff ultimately adopted.

There was no doubt, he said, that he tariff needed a general revision such as it had had in 1896 and 1897 and 1907. He pointed out that there had been a revision in 1914 and that a general revision would have been made in 1916 after a full inquiry by ministers. As soon as normal conditions are restored, Sir Thomas declared that this general revision would have to be made, and that it would be accomplished after inquiry by the minister of finance assisted by eastern and western ministers and after all conflicting interests had stated their views.

### All Groups Represented.

It may be said that in the caucus over which Sir Thomas White presided, there was sufficient diversity of opinion fairly to represent the different groups in Canada. There were men there who believed in free trade and others who thought high protection necessary, but not one talked as though his views could

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Why, I could fairly LIVE on them

—Bobby

be expected to predominate without the other fellow's views being given a show. Colonel J. A. Currie, member for North Simcoe and the arch-apostle in this parliament of protection, was not present, and the "Ginger" group was mainly conspicuous by its absence. Some of the western members did not fail to give a substantial reduction now."

That was the attitude of the whole western group—a substantial reduction now. The eastern members also spoke, some seeing the same light that the westerners saw, and others insisting just why they thought the government should "go slow" about making reductions. James D. Chaplin, member for Lincoln and president of the Welland Vale Mfg. Co., a Conservative before he was a Unionist, drew parallels from western members especially when he declared that so far as his business was concerned he could not see any tariff at all, and that he did not fear American competition at all if dumping were prevented. It was stated afterwards that Mr. Chaplin meant by "other conditions being equal," that if the United States removed its tariff against his goods he was perfectly willing to meet American competition in Canada as long as he could invade the American market as well. It is known that Mr. Chaplin has already done so, having a factory at Detroit as well as those in Canada. Manufacturing costs are about the same in both countries, the only difference being that a large market of 100,000,000 people permits a more permanent specialization and standardization of factory processes than is possible with a small market.

Each western member went to the caucus either with a letter in his pocket from Wm. R. Wood, M. P., secretary of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, or with its contents fresh on his mind.

This letter, containing a resolution passed by the grain growers, says: "We look to western members of the house of commons for an inflexible stand on the farmers' platform."

After pointing out that the war is over and that there should be no delay in tariff changes which will favor the development of agriculture which is the basis industry of Canada, the resolution goes on to say: "The time for relief is long overdue and western Canada, having formulated its views in the national platform of the Canadian Council of Agriculture, requires that the government at the present session take definite action there is no reason why substantial progress should not be made at once." Further on the resolution adds: "The exorbitant cost of living to the common people must be reduced if actual want is to be avoided."

"Did you take any inflexible stand on the farmers' platform?" your correspondent asked one of the western members afterwards.

"We do stand on that platform and we expect that union government will make that 'substantial progress' spoken of in the resolution. We are responsible people in the west, no matter what interested



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people may try to make us seem. We know that Canada's interests have to be taken as a whole, but we determined that the west shall not be left out in considering those interests. I think we have shown ourselves reasonable on things greatly needed by the masses of people. The tariff, they believe, should go as high as is consistent with getting the most revenue on luxuries, but should be lowered or disappear altogether on things absolutely necessary for the poor. The war super tax could even stay as far as they are concerned for such items. They felt that on leather goods, for example, costly goods should come under the tariff and the cheaper goods be free.

For example one member stated that boots and shoes under \$7 and \$8 should be admitted free, while a man willing to pay \$16 for a pair of shoes, should be able to afford a duty as well.

He thought that woolen goods needed by everybody should have a low duty, while the tariff on furs only bought by the well-to-do and the rich, should have the tariff. No member wanted to defend diamonds from the tariff.

Sir Herbert Ames, member for St. Antone division, Montreal, and a large manufacturer of boots and shoes, thought that it was better to defer action on leather goods for a year, and deal with them after an inquiry at which all sides could be heard.

Among those who spoke at the caucus in addition to Sir Thomas White were Dr. Chas. Sheard, member for Toronto South; Jas. D. Chaplin, member for Lincoln; John Best, member for Dufferin; John A. Maling, member for Maple Creek; F. L. Davis, member for Nepean; T. J. Stewart, member for Nepean; Frank Stewart Scott, member for Waterloo South; and a host of others.

Geo. W. Allen, member for Winnipeg South; Henry A. Mackie, member of Edouard; Sir Herbert Ames, member for St. Antone; Sir Sam Hughes, member for Victoria; who stated that though a protectionist, he did not want a tariff which pressed unduly on any

western member. The resolution states that the basic industry of Canada and that as the war is over there should be no delay in restoring the changes.

"The time for relief," says the resolution, "is long overdue and western Canada, having formulated its views in the national platform of the Canadian Council of Agriculture, requires that the government at the present session take definite action. There is no reason why substantial progress should not be made at once."

The resolution says further that "The exorbitant cost of living to the common people must be reduced if actual want is to be avoided."

At the conclusion of the caucus which was prolonged, Sir Thomas White stated that twenty-five members had taken part in the discussion, and they were allowed seven minutes each. The tariff only was discussed and he expressed the opinion that no insuperable difficulties presented themselves which would prevent the views of all members of the Unionist party. He said the discussion was conducted with moderation and there was no suggestion of schism.

Press that he had pointed out to the caucus that a general revision of the tariff had taken place periodically as in 1896 and 1907.

There had been, he said, a partial revision in 1914 and a general revision, after a full inquiry by ministers would have taken place in 1916 for the war.

It was stated, said Sir Thomas, that after normal conditions returned a general revision would be necessary. This should be accomplished after an inquiry by the minister of finance assisted by western and eastern ministers who could hold conferences at which those having conflicting interests could attend and all the different interests of the country could be fully considered. In the meantime the acting prime minister said he was confident that measures could be taken and announced made as to the future which would carry the judgment of the Union following and would not be a detriment to the national interest.

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They may be hurting you. Nervousness, headache, heart or stomach trouble are pretty sure indications. Why not try

**INSTANT POSTUM**

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"There's a Reason"

## HIGHER SALARY IS FAVORED FOR JAMES L. SUGRUE

N. B. Federation of Labor Report Says He Should Receive Same Pay as Others

### FAIRVILLE STRIKE BEFORE MEETING

Delegates Appointed to Wait on Provincial Government Regarding Legislation Desired—Convention Supports Moncton's Claims—Important Declaration of Principles Announced—The Housing Problem.

(Special to The Telegraph)

Fredericton, March 20.—The Thursday afternoon session of the N. B. Federation of Labor convention dealt with several new resolutions which were brought up by the various delegates.

The report showed a membership of 2,200 members for the last year. The report of the past president, J. L. Sugrue, was read and ordered handed to the same committee. The convention then placed itself on record on the fact that the salary of the labor representative of the Workmen's Compensation Board should be increased by the same amount as that of the other members.

A splendid address on vocational training was delivered by Fletcher Peacock, following which a vote of thanks was extended to Mr. Peacock by the meeting.

### Non-Union Cigars.

The report of the committee on union labels was read and a list of the names of those cigars which at the present were non-union made was read, and the delegates were requested to take a list of the same back to their local unions.

The committee also reported that organized labor would be greatly advanced by demanding that the union label be placed on wearing apparel, tobacco, shoes and printed matter, and recommended in future that delegates attending the N. B. Federation have at least two bona fide union labels on their wearing apparel.

The report of the resolution committee was adopted as a whole and the committee was discharged.

The following delegates were on the session of the committee: Donald Sutherland, member for Quispesic; J. C. Henderson, members for MacDonald; and Samuel Clark, member for Red Deer.

It was the impression of most of the western members that the inquiry on a general revision of the tariff will be based would take place before the next session of parliament and probably start this summer.

On March 20 the government caucus on the tariff which opened this morning at 11 o'clock was the most largely attended of the session.

The purpose of the caucus is to hear the views of the Unionist members as to the tariff and trade policy of the government ought to be according to the debate on the address the two extremes of opinion as to the tariff were expressed in the house by members of parliament in attendance at today's caucus.

Colonel J. A. Currie voicing the protectionist viewpoint and J. A. MacIsaac, M.P.A., secretary of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, voicing the free trade viewpoint.

The resolution states that as agriculture is the basic industry of Canada and that as the war is over there should be no delay in restoring the changes.

"The time for relief," says the resolution, "is long overdue and western Canada, having formulated its views in the national platform of the Canadian Council of Agriculture, requires that the government at the present session take definite action. There is no reason why substantial progress should not be made at once."

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"If high rates of interest must still be paid on Canadian Government borrowings, ALL the people should have the opportunity to earn this interest."

—SIR THOMAS WHITE, Minister of Finance.

## Why They Are Buying WAR-SAVINGS STAMPS

The housewife is economizing in comfortable ways and investing in War-Savings Stamps at \$4.02 each this month. In 1924, when these stamps are redeemed at \$5.00 each, every dollar will have greater purchasing power.

The business man is cutting off small and unnecessary expenditures and buying War-Savings Stamps. He knows his money is available any time he really needs it, with added interest. \$5 for \$4 in five years is an excellent return on money otherwise idle.

School children are buying Thrift Stamps at 25 cents each and are filling their Thrift Cards in order to acquire a War-Savings Stamp. They are helping their country and acquiring the habit of Thrift.

Men on the farms are buying W.S.S. because the Government uses the money to finance export orders for the food raised on Canadian farms. This makes their market sure.

Men, women and children of all ages and conditions of life, are investing in W.S.S. because it is a convenient way to "build a bond". The security is absolute and the interest is unusually high. Some day they will look back with great satisfaction to the day when they bought their first War-Savings Stamps.

### Have You Bought Your Stamp Today?

The world war has forced all people to a fuller and deeper realization of the menace to civilization contained in automatic control of the activities and destinies of mankind. It has opened the doors of opportunity, through which more sound and progressive policies may be developed. New conceptions of human liberty, justice and opportunity are to be applied.

The New Brunswick Federation of Labor as representing the organized labor movement of this province presents the following programme for the guidance of its membership and recommends to its careful and thoughtful consideration, to leaders in all branches of life in the province.

The establishing of democracy in industry can only be brought about by organization of the workers. It is essential that workers should insist on their right to organize. Through organization of industry will be provided true co-operation between employer and employees.

Many Problems Arise. There are many problems arising from production, transportation and distribution, which would readily be solved by applying the methods of co-operation. There is unlimited field for the consumer, in which to establish co-operative buying and selling. Co-operation protects the wage earner from the profiteer.

Independent political action is continually being urged by many labor organizations. The vital legislation required can be secured through education of the public mind and the appeal to its conscience. Provincial, municipal and civic elections acts should contain provision for initiative, referendum, recall and proportional representation. Political action might possibly divide the activities of members and officers and it would be well to devote our energies to develop to their logical conclusion policies already laid down for securing legislation covering those conditions and provisions of life not subject to collective bargaining with employers.

Public or semi-public utilities whether provincial or municipal should be owned, operated and regulated by the government in the interest of the public. Freedom of speech, press, public assembly and association should be guaranteed. Public buildings should be at all times available for use by the people for discussion of public questions and activities in the interests of the community.

Workmen's Compensation. The compensation act should aim to provide adequately for those incapacitated by industrial accidents. Standards of wages should be established that will guarantee to the worker an amount sufficient to maintain himself and family in decency and comfort, provide a competence for illness and old age, and afford an opportunity to cultivate the best that is within mankind. In order temporarily to relieve em-

(Continued on page 12, first column.)

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