

Get Behind the Government

Much of the Idle and Harmful Criticism of Government Action, which is so prevalent in Canada, is born of patriotic fervor

By J. W. MACMILLAN.

This is a time for loyalty and submission, for sympathy and support, for postponement of criticism and antagonism, for silent obedience. It is not a time for murmuring and grouching, for hand-ling on injurious rumors, generally with added con-demnatory details, for unconscious sedition and playing into the hands of the Hun.

Strange as it may seem, much of the idle and harmful criticism of Government action, which is so prevalent in Canada, is born of patriotic fervor. The eager spectator is always impatient of the efforts of the man who is trying to get out of a difficulty. As he sits on the fence and views the attempts of the unlucky teamster who has been bogged in a mudhole he is continually thinking, "Why doesn't he do this? Why doesn't he do that? I'd like to show him how to get out of that mud-hole." The strain on the man who would help and cannot is great. So he grows impatient and fault-finding.

He has nothing to do but feel. He does not think, because he lacks the materials for thinking. There are very few men in Canada to-day who are in a position to criticise the Government from first-hand knowledge. The great mass of the critics must draw upon their imaginations and wishes, with such supplement as rumors can supply, for their denun-ciation. Thus the denunciation, lacking those re-straining factors which come from deliberation, is extremely vapid and futile. It does not understand. It comes from a mood, not from a decision. It has no rational policy, but is merely the angry utter-ance of impatience.

The emotional critic always thinks of doing some-thing simple, direct and smashing. He is provoked at the apparent delay and hesitation of those in au-thority. His pent-up feelings seek discharge in some violent action. Relief for him dies that way. Hence he accuses those responsible for taking action of slackness, indifference, tardiness and all the slug-gish vices. The real trouble lies in his own lack of self-control.

ANOTHER CLASS.

Then, there are critics of another class, those who put their selfish interests before anything else. Their detraction, it is true, is generally conceived in a spirit of lofty patriotism, and their arguments are drawn from the needs of the Empire, but their con-clusions simmer down to this: "Do nothing to hurt us. Hurt somebody else." With them the right way is always the way which is profitable to their busi-nesses. We need not accuse these gentlemen of in-sincerity. Most men take their opinions from the way in which they make their living. They prob-ably are convinced of the truth of what they say. It would be impossible for them, perhaps, to think connectedly along any other line than one which helped their businesses, so completely have they identified themselves with these businesses. But if we do not blame them too severely, neither do we hearken to them with much attention.

It is inevitable that most of the current criticism should converge upon the question of food. Bread and butter are elemental substances. The instincts which underlie nutrition are stirred. From the days of Archbishop Hatto until now the man who deals with the people's food is a target of criticism. Hence the profits of packers and bakers excite ten times the interest that profits of iron-workers and munition-makers do. Hence, also, the food controller and all his doings are singled out for peculiar and cen-sorious scrutiny. Hence all appointments, regula-tions, and enforcements of law which touch this dangerous subject of food are subject to reckless and prejudiced criticism.

A trip into the United States makes one proud to be a Canadian. Seen from that distance we are revealed as a people who have risen greatly to a great occasion. Our enlistments, our generosity, our constancy have won the admiration of our neigh-bors. It is just a little pathetic to hear the mem-bers of a proud nation such as the United States express the hope that they may do as well at home and in the battle fury as we have done. It would be well if some of our citizens who are busy finding fault with the government of Canada would take a short jaunt into the United States. They might learn to respect themselves more. Un-

doubtedly we have done well. Perhaps we might have done better. It is even possible that we might be doing better now. But how many of those who criticise really know what they are talking about?

SHORT CUTS IMPOSSIBLE.

I have pointed out that the emotional critic al-ways thinks of doing something simple, direct and smashing. On the other hand the man in the re-sponsible position sees that most of these short-cuts to success are impossible. He feels himself in the midst of a veritable web of circumstances and condi-tions. Every proposed action has to be considered in relation to many other matters. He feels that the balance of things is delicate, and must be preserved. He is conscious of the division of labor between him-self and others, and that his activities depend upon theirs. Instead of cutting Gordian knots he is carefully disentangling intricate snarls. The cheap and easy methods recommended to him by his im-pulsive critics he knows to be ineffective. Is it not right to trust the man on the job rather than the man who really knows nothing about it?

If there are any pro-German influences at work in Canada, and it is highly probable that there are, they are certainly fomenting this spirit of fault-finding. We know that they have been detected

doing that very thing in the United States. They are undoubtedly trying to build on the founda-tion of the ignorant and interested criticism which spontaneously springs up. They pass around the whisper that such an official spends only one day a week in his office, that another gorges himself at high-priced hotels, that some malign personality is ruler of the Government, that the farmers are being sacrificed, that the manufacturers are being sacrificed, that some young fellow has been unjustly sent to the war, that another has been unjustly left at home, that a family in the next block is throwing beefsteaks into the garbage can—and all the other forms which idle and harmful criticism takes.

The Dominion of Canada is a democracy. Its gov-ernment has been chosen by the people themselves. Shall the people not obey and trust the Government? Perhaps you did not vote for the Government which was elected. None the less must you obey and trust it, if you expect others to obey and trust a later Government which you may help to elect. The members of the present Government are as effi-cient a set of men as the people of Canada are like-ly to elect. They are probably bringing to bear upon the diverse and abnormal problems of the hour as much sagacity as could be assembled for the pur-pose. It is a patriotic obligation to support them. They need public opinion at their backs. They are busy men, whose time should not be wasted by dis-tracting suggestions from people who have had no opportunity to study the situation from all its sides. They are giving great service to us, and deserve at our hands sympathetic and cordial acquiescence in their leadership.

To Prevent Hoarding of Food

Ottawa, April 4.

New regulations of far-reaching importance, pre-pared by the Canada Food Board and effective from to-day, will eliminate the speculative element from the Canadian produce business. The Food Board's order definitely limits the quantities of produce which a dealer may own, or have in storage for his ac-count, to his reasonable requirements, and also makes it impossible for him to carry larger quanti-ties of food than are required to provide for his Canadian trade requirements during the season of scant production of supply. The holding of exces-sive quantities of produce in storage after the ex-piration of the period of scant production is thus made illegal and subject to heavy penalties.

TO GIVE MONTHLY REPORTS.

Monthly reports giving details of supplies on hand, volume of business, profits, etc., will be required. These reports will be in such form that the Canada Food Board will at all times know the quantity of foodstuffs owned by each dealer. In this way hoard-ing, speculation and profiteering will be impossible, and the possibility of waste will be kept to the low-est point. These reports will also give accurate in-formation as to waste where waste occurs, and profit or loss on various transactions.

TO LIMIT HOLDINGS.

The order requires that no person shall own or hold meats, lard or oleomargarine in greater quan-tities than are reasonably necessary to supply the dealer's own Canadian trade requirements for a period of sixty days unless permission in writing is first ob-tained from the Food Board.

No person will be permitted, after December 1 in each year, to own or hold more eggs than are neces-sary to supply his own Canadian trade requirements until March 1 of the following year. On March 1 he must not have more than sufficient for fifteen days' requirements.

Holdings of butter are similarly limited to the quantities necessary to supply the dealer's own Can-adian trade requirements until May 1 in each year, on which date he must not have more than suffi-cient for fifteen days' requirements.

THIRTY DAYS' SUPPLY.

With cheese, holdings are limited to requirements during the period of scant production, that is until June 1 in each year, on which date the dealer must not have more than 30 days' supply. This extra holding is permitted so that a reasonable supply of old cheese may be available for the Canadian mar-ket.

Holdings of poultry must not exceed the dealer's own Canadian requirements until September 1 in be reconsidered and revised.

each year, on which date the dealer must not have more than 30 days' supply.

Similar restrictions are imposed on holdings of canned or condensed, evaporated or powdered milk, the period of scant production for the purposes of the order expiring on May 1 in each year, on which date no dealer may have more than sufficient for 30 days' requirements.

Produce definitely subject to the order of the pur-chasing agents of Great Britain or her allies may be held in addition to the quantities as limited above.

TO ENFORCE NEW ORDERS.

The order is issued under the new powers grant-ed to the Canada Food Board, authorizing it to prescribe the amount of any kind or kinds of food that may be purchased or held by any person, and to seize any food or food product purchased or held in excess of the amount so prescribed.

Violation of these regulations or obstruction of any officer enforcing or carrying out any of the pro-visions of these regulations makes the offender liable to a fine of not less than \$100 and not more than \$1,000, to imprisonment for three months, or to both fine and imprisonment. The Food Board also has power to cancel the license of any dealer who does not comply with the regulations.

In case proceedings are instituted at the instance of any municipality or municipal officer, the fine shall be paid to the Treasurer of such municipality. When instituted by Provincial authority the fine shall go to the Provincial Treasury.

\$2.21 WHEAT.

The following statement was given out at Win-nipeg on Thursday last, April 4: "The Board of Grain Supervisors, for Canada are of the opinion that the present price of Canadian western wheat, namely, \$2.21 per bushel for No. 1 northern wheat, Fort William and Port Arthur, is a reasonable price for wheat of the crop of 1918."

In reaching this conclusion the board have given full consideration to the necessity of stimulating the production of wheat; to the increased cost of pro-duction; and to the relative prices of coarse grains; which have not been fixed during the cur-rent year, either in Canada or in the United States.

"The board are also of the opinion that this price should be guaranteed, that the guarantee should be given immediately, and that if for any reason such a guarantee cannot be given the price stated, and all regulations connected therewith should and must