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WILLIAM HAWKINS, Principal

Mr. Scallion Opposes Navy

Veteran "Father of the Grain Growers' Association" believes Canada Should Act the part of a Christian Nation

I am strongly opposed to a navy. I think it would be a tremendous mistake for Canada to adopt either Borden's or Laurier's naval policy. What necessity is there for a navy now more than there has been for the past fifty or one hundred years? Surely the nations, the Christian nations, at least, should be advancing in international goodwill in the arts of peace and the cause of humanity. The great common people of Germany are opposed to war, so are the common people of Britain and of every other civilized country. They are the people who would suffer in the event of war. The jingoes and stirrers up of international strife are not on the firing line in the struggle. Can the most rampant jingo point out what is to be gained either from a national standpoint or the cause of civilization from a war between Great Britain and Germany? Britain's trade with Germany during the past year amounted to \$600,000,000, more than her trade with France and Russia—her allies—combined. That trade is of immense importance to the industrial life of both countries, and is constantly growing. Do the wild clamorers for war, such as Lord Roberts and others of the same mind, want to destroy that trade and cause untold suffering to the people of both countries and put back civilization for years? And are the people of Canada whose whole national life, development and prosperity depend upon the arts of peace, expansion of trade and international goodwill, going to aid in this European war game planned and promoted by chancellors and jingoes of the nations, urged on by the great manufacturers of war material for their selfish and heartless gains, and fanned into flame by a subsidized press? Are the people of Canada going to encourage European Militarism and the estrangement of nations by spending millions in the construction of warships and creating a navy to be used in that game of destruction and human suffering?

Where Are the Churches?

What action are churches taking on this question of tremendous importance to the welfare and real Christianization of their congregations? Preachers are supposed to be the ambassadors of the Prince of Peace. Are they speaking out against the insane War Game, or are they afraid to offend the jingoes in their congregations and make it less comfortable for themselves? Surely if the friends of humanity are to make themselves heard anywhere it should be from the pulpit. But when this navy question is settled it must be settled in accordance with the wishes of the Canadian people as expressed by their ballots at the polls. Neither Premier Borden nor Sir Wilfrid Laurier has any mandate from the Canadian people to carry out their respective naval policies. The people should insist upon being consulted upon such an important and far-reaching departure from existing military conditions in this country. Let the people have an opportunity to vote for either naval policy, or against both.

The Game of Politics

Little can be hoped for in the interest of the common people, from our representatives in Parliament under the present party system. The game of politics, as played for years by our two parties, is arranged and settled in the secret party caucuses of the two parties

in the game. The supporters of both parties are bound by the course mapped out in the caucus of their respective parties and must support the measures decided on there on the floor of the House. Now, when it is considered that these party supporters have been elected by the aid of the party machines financed by interests which have received, or expect to receive, special favors from the party in power, it can easily be understood how difficult it is for a member of Parliament to take an independent stand and support his honest conviction on the floor of the House when such action would be against the tactics decided on in his party caucus. He may support his convictions as strongly as he likes in his party caucus, but if he is defeated there, he must submit to party discipline. If he dares to continue the fight on the floor of the House as things have been going on for years, he will not get the nomination next time at the party convention, and if he comes out as an Independent, depending on the honest support of the common people for whom he stood up in the House, it can readily be seen, in view of the methods and money used in elections in this country, how small his chance would be of winning an election. It may be pointed out as against all this that W. F. McLean has on several occasions taken an independent stand in Parliament and yet continues to be elected. But Mr. McLean has ceased to be taken seriously. It is well known that Mr. McLean will not press any of his measures to a vote, if by so doing he would endanger the standing of his party. This was clearly shown last session when Mr. McLean introduced an excellent resolution on Public Ownership and freight rates, but rather than press the resolution and commit his party he withdrew it and at once left the House, amid the shouts of "fakir."

State Should Pay Expenses

It is a large undertaking to organize a new party. It might be accomplished by the farmers' organization, but the farmers must be educated to a greater degree than at present, I think, to drop their party prejudice before they are strong enough in their unity of purpose to successfully launch a new party. If a law could be passed whereby all legitimate election expenses would be paid by the state and all other contributions entirely prohibited, it would go a long way in enabling the people to be honest in casting their ballots, and it would cost the country a great deal less than by the present methods, because there is no doubt that the money now spent in elections is paid by the people many times over in graft and special legislation in the interest of those who finance the elections. If it were made a criminal offence to furnish any contributions to elections, save the lawful expenses furnished by the State, the people would gain a great victory and the men of their choice, no matter what their financial standing might be, could be elected to represent them in Parliament, irrespective of party machines and funds furnished by predatory corporations as at present. I think it would be a good thing to agitate for such a reform.

Yours truly,

J. W. SCALLION.
Virden, Man., Dec. 30, 1912.

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