

The St. John Standard

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MR. KING'S ATTITUDE.

"Attitude is all important," says Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King in reply to the charge that he has no definite programme to put before the country. Practical policies and concrete measures are all very well; but attitude is all important. The Liberal party has the correct attitude, and that is all the public have any need to know.

Mr. King is not the first politician who has struck an attitude for the edification or admiration of the people. But he is probably the first to arrive at the conclusion that a political party's aspirations and purposes find their fullest expression in an attitude. Mother Grady has always been noted for her correct attitude, but nobody has ever accused her of doing anything for progress.

Webster gives the following definitions of attitude:

(1) The posture or position of a person, or the manner in which the parts of his body are disposed, particularly in relation to some purpose or emotion; as, a threatening attitude; an attitude of entreaty.

(2) Figuratively, position resulting from feeling, mood, or condition; as, a nation's attitude; one's mental attitude.

To strike an attitude; to pose for effect.

Synonyms: situation, standing, position, posture, pose.

When Mr. King says the all important thing for a political party is attitude, without defining the object or objects of the attitude, he leaves his meaning as obscure as the utterances of a Greek oracle. Apparently Mr. King is trying to found a new school of politics which will confound the metaphysicians. He would have us believe that the attitude of his party is, in principle, party or purpose is far more important than the principle, policy or purpose to which the attitude is taken. If his peculiar statement has any meaning at all, it means that Mr. King's attitude to a thing determines the thing itself; that in his philosophy the relative embraces the absolute, and not the absolute the relative. Apparently Mr. King is a disciple of Berkeley and Spinoza, and believes that his great attitude of mind determines the existence of things in this world. On the other hand he may be a super-man, whose attitude by some mysterious alchemy determines his purposes, policies, or emotions. In that case his superior attitude of mind is no doubt above the need of defining the principles or policies to which he has taken an attitude. It is possible, too, that under his super-guidance the whole Liberal party has been led up the Olympian heights so far above the plane of practical politics that its attitude springs, like Minerva from the head of Jove, full bodied, and fully armed with a splendor of wisdom that makes explanation of any kind superfluous. And in that case it is probably the misfortune of the rest of us that we labor under the disadvantage of not knowing what our attitude is to a principle or policy of which we have no knowledge. Unlike Mr. King we cannot understand a friendly attitude without having formed a conception of a friend; we cannot grasp the relation of things without some knowledge of the things related.

If Mr. King's idea that attitude is all important to his party is to be taken seriously, it follows logically enough that he has no notion of leading his party anywhere. According to Webster attitude is a static condition; it is a situation, standing, position, posture, pose. It is not progress, it is not movement. Mr. King has struck an attitude. He declares the Liberal party stands for stability in government; that is for a government without purpose or object, except it may be the perpetuation of existing conditions—a negative policy unlikely to make any strong appeal to the masses of the people who believe in the possibility of a better life. Mr. King also stands for national unity, but for what purpose or object, except the election of himself to power? People do not unite for nothing. The men who formed Union Government had reason to talk of national unity; they had an object in trying to unite the people—a purpose whose importance overshadowed the interests or objects of any section of the people. Apparently national unity with Mr. King is merely an attitude, not a purpose broader than his personal and party ambitions; possibly he uses words as a parrot does, without understanding their meaning; perhaps he has a vague idea of establishing national uniformity—the unity and stability of stagnation. If he has more than a personal and party purpose, it will need a united effort on the part of the people to find out what it is.

MR. VENIOT IN TROUBLE.

While Hon. Mr. Veniot, according to his own account, is as busy as a bee in clover giving the people of the Province such fine highways that the farmers' movement has obtained a start, he is in the unfortunate position

of being unable to secure a decent railway service from the Caraquez Railway in his own constituency. His efforts to deal with the situation having come to naught, the County Council of Gloucester has taken up the matter and will start an agitation to induce the Dominion Government to take over the railway, or the Provincial Government to take action to make the company live up to the terms of its charter. Mr. Veniot put through an act at the last session of the Legislature which he claimed would enable him to compel the company to give a reasonable service. Last week he gave the Gloucester County Council an account of his efforts to deal with the situation; he made a thorough examination of the road, and wrote to Superintendent Burton, saying he had found some improvement, but did not consider trains moving 45 miles in six hours a satisfactory service, though the condition of the roadbed might not warrant higher speed. He told the superintendent that unless more energetic measures were taken to improve the road he would be compelled to take action under the Act of the Legislature. The Superintendent did not reply to this letter, but some time later Mr. Veniot learned that the Caraquez Railway had petitioned the Federal Government to veto the Provincial Act, claiming, among other things, that it was ultra vires, as it gave the Provincial Government consociatory powers. No action has been taken on this petition, which Mr. Veniot claims tied his hands.

On December 16th Mr. Veniot wired Ottawa asking the Government to acquire the railway, as the conditions on the road pointed to a stoppage of the service, which would isolate 25,000 people, and cause great business loss as well as suffering. The Minister of Railways replied that the Caraquez Company had refused the offer of the Government, and that the Company, being a Provincial incorporation, was not under the jurisdiction of the Dominion, but at the Provincial Government. On January 12 Mr. Veniot wired the Minister of Justice at Ottawa, charging that the railway was being run in a manner that endangered life, and asking an immediate decision on the petition respecting the Provincial Act. At the same time he gave the company official notice to provide such train and engine crews as were necessary to insure at least protection to the public.

Mr. Veniot and Attorney-General Byrne are up against a situation which is causing them much concern, for the people of Gloucester are angry and determined to find out why the railway matter has been allowed to drift till an intolerable situation has developed. When Mr. Veniot introduced his bill in the Legislature last year surprise was expressed at its character, as there did not appear to be any good reason why a special act should be required to enable the Government to oblige a railway holding a Provincial charter to give a reasonable service. Now the Minister is under the obligation of explaining how they managed to defeat their purpose, or why they had not the courage to do what they proposed to do.

LIBERAL DISUNION.

Mr. King's notions are so nebulous that it is not very clear what he means when he talks of National Unity. It is not on record that he showed any interest in national unity at the last election when the people had a purpose of supreme importance to unite on, and when there was need that the country should show a united front to the enemy and the world. Mr. King did nothing to unite the people in the face of the enemy of the Empire and of civilization, but now he claims to have a mission to unite them in the face of a new enemy—the Unionist Party, which sprang into being as an evidence of the determination of the great majority of the people to unite their efforts for the winning of the war, and which includes a great number of former supporters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. In the face of the common enemy, he says, it is necessary for the old line Liberals, the farmers and the laborers to unite their forces. Before the Liberal Unionists, whom in one breath he refers to as enemies, and in the next invites back into the fold, take much stock in Mr. King's belated battle-cry, they will expect him to establish some appearance of unity in the ranks of the Liberal party. Mr. King and his boss, Mr. Lapointe, are hardly the men to establish party unity, much less national unity. Mr. Lapointe and his feud with Sir Lomer Gouin has created a pretty split in the Liberal ranks in Quebec, and his action in imposing Mr. King upon the Liberal convention, and turning down Mr. Fielding—probably the one man who could have re-united the Liberal party—has not aroused any enthusiasm among the Liberal Unionists. Mr. King is gracious enough to give the Liberal Unionists credit for sincerity, but Mr. Lapointe, his boss, says they are supporters of sham and hypocrisy. And the attitude of the old line boss is plain enough—the Liberal Unionists may

return, but they will have to come back in sackcloth and ashes and do penance for a time. Being high-spirited men who left their party for principle they will hardly accept Mr. King's leadership on such conditions. Mr. King has some knowledge of the art of conciliation; at any rate Premier Foster was allowed to officiate as chairman of his meeting without his right to the seat being challenged, as it was at the Liberal meeting in the Seamen's Institute. But it does not appear that his presence at the organization meetings on Saturday was the signal for many Liberal Unionists in this city to attend and find out where they fitted.

WHAT THEY SAY

The One Sure Way.

(Philadelphia Inquirer.)
 All one has to do now to make a bottle that is non-refillable is to pull the cork of a full one.

Finger Wagging.

(London Daily Mail.)
 There has been enough solemn finger-wagging at the Germans, who have come to believe that it is safe to defy the Allies. As the result we have the kind of spirit that is now showing itself among the ex-officers and leading them to drink "to the day"—when the Hohenzollerns shall be restored. Weakness the Germans do not understand. The wise and merciful course is to tell them plainly that if within a fixed time-limit they do not comply with the Allies' conditions and fulfill the Treaty terms the blockade will be renewed.

A Simple Task.

(St. Louis Globe Democrat.)
 There is only one practical thing to be done in this very great and very grave crisis, and that is for the Senate to exercise its constitutional powers and duty and confirm the Treaty with such reservations as can be agreed upon by two-thirds of that body. That can be very quickly done. What America wants and supremely needs is ratification; what the world wants and supremely needs is American participation in the application of the covenant. Only by getting together can this be accomplished.

Unsportsmanlike.

(Malbourne Argus.)
 Quarrelling with the umpire is always regarded as most unsportsmanlike and contemptible, and when the quarrel is pushed so far that every one in the community is involved in hardships and loss, those who "kiss up the dust" for a small personal gain cannot expect to be held in very high regard. If there has been one thing more than another which has helped to bring discredit on the militant section of unionism, it is its utter callousness about public rights and the recklessness with which it will enter upon strikes that must inflict hardships on all classes of wage-earners.

A BIT OF VERSE

CHILD LABOR.

Wherever little children toil for bread
 Through force, parental wantonness
 or need,
 The country's veins and arteries
 must bleed
 And its vitality snap, thread by thread.
 Till come follow: Where the child is
 Upon the altars of your gain or greed
 What power of brain or hand can intercede
 To balk the doom such sacrifice has
 Just retribution? You who use the name,
 "A Christian Nation," how you thus
 pursue
 The heathen's course! Beneath your
 freedom true,
 How you continue those foul acts of
 shame
 Which brand you faithless, void of
 heart and soul;
 Dull-eyed to life and far perfection's goal!
 Where little children toil in pain and
 woe
 With poor, frail bodies; where their
 backs are bent
 With sordid labor, tell me what is meant
 By this great spectacle, this mighty
 show
 Of costly edifice and towering
 spires?
 This boasted mercy, love, intelligence?
 This great devotion, piety intense?
 These high-priced preachers, priests
 and vested choirs?
 How do you call it? Is it truth or lies?
 Is mine alone the courage to condemn?
 Give freedom, health and happiness
 to them.
 The little children—whom your acts
 despoil!
 —New York Times.

A BIT OF FUN

Puzzled.
 "Will you come and make a four at bridge, sir?"
 "I'm exceedingly sorry, sir, but I don't play bridge."
 "You don't play bridge, sir? Then what the devil did you join a golf club for?"
 Comparative Luxury.
 "My dear, as you have been fairly prosperous this year, I think you

Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

Ma was reading the paper last nite, and she sed to pop, Willyum, did you reed about that woman thats bin asleep for weeks and weeks and the doctors cant seem to wake her up? No, I didnt reed about her, but she's a lucky woman to sleep throo the high cost of living. I wonder how she does it? sed pop. Dont be foolish, Willyum, its an axident, sed ma.

And this morning I wook up on account of ma calling me from down stairs exter load, and I thawt, G, Im going to per-tend to be asleep like that lady, and after its too late to go to skool Ill wake up.

And I kepp on not ansering, and ma came running up stairs, saying, Benny, do you want to be late for skool, wats the matter with you this morning? Me jest laying there with my eyes shut like a lady that nobody cant wake up, and ma shook me hard as anything, saying, Wake up, wake up, wake up, my goodnies sake.

Wich the more she shook the more I didnt wake up, and ma called Willyum, will you come up heer a minnit. Wich pop did, and ma sed, I cant seem to wake this boy up, do you suppose anything can be the matter with him? And pop shook me about twice as hard as wat ma did, on account of being a harder shaker, saying, Hay, shake a leg, shake a leg, this is no cemetery.

Me jest laying there with my eyes shut, and ma sed, O goodness, Willyum, something must be the matter with him.

I think I know wats the matter with him, sed pop. Me thinking, Gosh, he thinks I got the same thing the lady had.

If he's not up by the time I count 3 sed pop, Im going to take this glass of ice wattr and pore it rite down his neck, 1, 2—

Wich jest then I quick opened my eyes, saying, Did anybody call me?

O no, you must of bin dreeming, sed pop. Him not having a glass of wattr at all, and I sed, I must of bin sleeping like that lady.

Tell that to the marines, sed pop. Meaning he didnt bleeve me, and he grabbed a hold of my hair and pulled me up strate and I quick got out of bed the rest of the way by myself without waiting for him to help me.

might give me a few dozen eggs as a Christmas present."

"Cant afford it, darling. You will have to content yourself this year with just a diamond necklace."

Clever Miss.

"Mr. Graboom spent thousands of dollars on his daughter's education. She attended some of the most expensive schools in America and Europe. She was taught to sing, to paint, to play various instruments, and to speak three or four languages."

"Fine."

"But let me tell you how shamelessly she repaid her father's tender care. She came back home and married his chauffeur!"

"Splendid! A girl possessing her wealth and with her accomplish-

ments might have married a broken-down duke."

Had No Limousine.

"Pa, how much money did Croesus have?"
 "Oh, I don't know. About enough to live in what is at present middle-class style, I guess."

"Better be Sure than Sorry!"

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