

ON FLAVELLE'S PROFITS

The following from the editorial page of Toronto Saturday Night should be good reading for profiteers everywhere. It puts up a clear-cut issue:

"That a leading citizen, honored with a baronetcy by his King for 'services rendered the Empire,' should be charged with what is perhaps the most sordid and despicable trafficking, namely, the accumulation of great wealth out of the blood and agony of those who fight in the trenches, and of their women and children who are living scantily on the pittance of a soldier's pay, arouses every element of resentment. Either Sir Joseph Flavelle is guilty or he is the snow-white victim of a deep laid plot. The O'Connor report is either true in fact and substance or is a premeditated pack of lies, manufactured out of whole cloth. There is no middle course. Joseph Wesley Flavelle must at once either completely prove the falseness of the charges laid against him, or disappear into oblivion.

Joseph Wesley Flavelle is not a private citizen. He is not merely a private manufacturer to whom the war has brought good fortune. Joseph Wesley Flavelle has been the lay head of the great Methodist Church in Canada, a life-long Sabbath School teacher and a lay preacher in many of our leading pulpits. Joseph Wesley Flavelle has been called a prominent Canadian philanthropist and has accepted public honor as head of a great University. To the public he has stood as a friend of the sick and the maimed, as chairman and governor of the Toronto General Hospital. He has explained the fact that he accepted the Chairmanship of the Imperial Munition Board 'without pay'—to serve his King and country.

Addressing a meeting of prominent Canadian manufacturers in the Board of Trade, Toronto, some weeks ago, Sir Joseph Wesley Flavelle, lifting his spectacles and wiping the tears from his eyes—a very characteristic pose—said: 'As I stood in the trenches beside our brave Canadian boys, I said to myself, 'My God, what have I done in return for what these boys are doing for me?' Later, on the same subject, raising his eyes to Heaven, and with uplifted hand, he said: 'What have we to do with profits in this war? I would like to send profits to the hell where they belong.'

The William Davies Company with its net-work of little provision stores scattered throughout Canada is a big factor in the amount of bacon, or the number of eggs, that the poor dependent soldier's wife can buy with her military pittance. Joseph Wesley Flavelle, in his capacity as a government contractor, stands between the British government and the soldiers in the trenches. The question is, did or did not Sir Joseph Flavelle take advantage of the British government's dire needs to extort from it profits which are unjustifiable? There can be only one answer. No ordinary denials, in figures, or percentages of profit, can be accepted; for there is an old saying that "figures lie, and liars figure." There can be but one clear-cut proof.

What were you worth, Sir Joseph Flavelle, when the war started? What are you worth today? What were your personal profits before August, nineteen fourteen? What are your personal profits from August, nineteen fourteen to date?

If they have been fair—if they have been even reasonable—"Saturday Night" would be glad to publish the facts. If your personal profits have been unreasonable and inordinate, then the public of Canada demands that you resign at once from the Imperial Munition Board and hand back to the crown the honor which was bestowed upon you.

On the morning of Tuesday, July 17, there appeared in the Toronto newspapers a page paid advertisement of the William Davies Company, signed by E. C. Fox, general manager, and an employee of Sir Joseph Flavelle. The statement is intended to flatly contradict the O'Connor report. The Company has included in an enormous mass of words what would appear at first glance a very clever defence of their position. It will be noted by readers of the advertisement that the balance sheet of the Davies Company is missing

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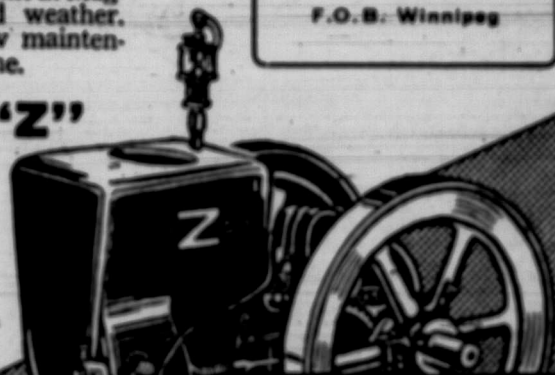
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