

## RECRUITING.

**SPEAKING** in the House of Commons, Friday, January 26th, Mr. J. G. Turriff stated as follows:

"I say that for no other purpose, the Prime Minister has kept in his Government these three Nationalists-disloyal Canadians, disloyal Britishers—simply and solely and purposely to hinder recruiting in the Province of Quebec."

Speaking of the falling off of recruiting throughout Canada, Mr. Turiff added:

"We have not heard about the intimation given by the Prime Minister last spring to the representatives of the Ontario Recruiting Committee in Toronto that if he had his way there would be no more recruiting in Canada, and that the attention of the Canadian people should be turned to the development of their industries. That was followed by a direct falling off in recruiting from one end of Canada to the other."

These two statements by a responsible member of the House of Commons were serious. It is true that on Monday January 29th, the Prime Minister denied the accusation in the following terms:

During my absence on Friday the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. J. G. Turriff) made a statement in the House with regard to myself to which my attention has been directed. I need not read all of his speech, but the statement to which I refer was in effect: that I did last spring intimate to the representatives of the Ontario Recruiting Committee that if I had my way there would be no more recruiting in Canada and that the attention of the Canadian people should be turned to the development of their industries. That statement is on its face so transparently absurd that I must apologize to the House for making allusion to it. However, my silence might be misunderstood, and therefore I desire to assure the House and the country that neither to the Ontario Recruiting Committee on the occasion mentioned, nor to any other organization or individual on any other occasion, did I ever convey any such intimation as that suggested, or anything that could be tortured into such an intimation.

It will be noted from the Prime Minister's statement that no reference whatever was made to the three Nationalist Ministers in his Cabinet.

While we accept unreservedly the statement of the Prime Minister we cannot permit this matter to be closed without referring to one or two other statements which have been made in regard to this matter.

**Sir Sam Hughes Says that Officers of this Department made Certain Statements that they had been Directed to go Slow in Recruiting.**

Speaking in the House of Commons on January 30th, Sir Sam Hughes ex-Minister of Militia and Defence stated:

An Order in Council was passed forbidding the Department of Militia from authorizing a battalion here, there or elsewhere, and it is said that the reason was that too many battalions were being raised in Toronto, Winnipeg, Montreal and other large cities.

**MR. MACDONALD:** When was that Order in Council passed?

**SIR SAM HUGHES:** I am not sure. It was passed in my absence anyway, you may be sure of that; I have never read it yet. The point is that they said: Here you must not have so many regiments recruiting in Toronto or so many recruiting in Montreal.

**MR. MACDONALD:** What was the result of that Order in Council? What effect did it have on recruiting?

**SIR SAM HUGHES:** I do not know. Recruiting has not gone on, I know that. The Minister of Public Works wanted three battalions in Winnipeg—he was not afraid of it, and I passed the Order. That was when I happened to learn that this Order in Council to which I have referred had been passed. I went to England and when I got back he had not yet started raising the battalion; authority had not been given; it was held up in the Treasury Board or some place and nothing had yet been done. Had I been running the show in the old way we would have had them raised in six weeks. . . . In other words, three months was lost, not in organizing the battalions, but in getting the power to organize them. . . . There was a drop in recruiting at all events. I have heard all sorts of stories, but I have never asked my officers. When I came back my officers made certain statements; they had been directed to go slow in recruiting, but I never asked; I do not know whether it is true or not."

There we have a direct statement from the ex-Minister of Militia that instructions had been given to his officers to stop recruiting in Canada.

Speaking in the House of Commons on February 1st, 1917 Sir Robert Borden stated:

"The only charge that was made was this: instead of these battalions being authorized merely by a direction issued in the Department of Militia and Defence, the amending Order in Council provided that thereafter they must be authorized by Governor in Council.

**MR. MURPHY:** That is with reference to the battalions. What about the other statement, about the officers having been told to go slow in recruiting?

**SIR ROBERT BORDEN:** I am not aware of what the officers said or who the officers referred to may be. All I have to say is that there were no direction to go slow in recruiting, so far as I am aware, except by reason of what I have just detailed; that is, instead of a free hand being given to authorize battalions without any reference to the Governor in Council, the control was reserved to the Governor General in Council in order that an excessive expenditure of public money in the way indicated might not be incurred.

**SIR SAM HUGHES:** The basis of the whole thing was this agitation to pander to the cry of labour; the cry went up for men for munitions. That is what started the agitation and stopped the recruiting.

**MR. PUGSLEY:** Will the ex-Minister of Militia allow me a question? I understand that what the ex-Minister complains of is that the matter of recruiting was practically taken out of his hands.

**SIR SAM HUGHES:** I have never complained of it.

**MR. PUGSLEY:** No, that is the fault of my hon. friend, and still less does he complain of it latterly.

**SIR SAM HUGHES:** The recruiting vanished, that is all.

**SIR SAM HUGHES:** I made recommendations for three battalions in Winnipeg, and it took three or four months to get even authority to start them. In Toronto, fortunately, I had got them organized before the brakes were put on, and before the mental epilepsy got hold of people I had got things going before that time.

## Women's Liberal Club.

A Women's Liberal Club has been formed at Cumberland, B.C. Hon. Presidents: Mrs. J. de B. Farris and Mrs. Ralph Smith, President, Mrs. MacFarlane; and Hon. Secretary, C. E. Florence Loaring.

In view of the franchise being extended to the Women in the Province of British Columbia we are glad to note that the ladies are organizing clubs throughout this Province. These organizations are worthy of encouragement in every Province in the Dominion.