

HUGHES DEFENDS COURSE PURSUED

(Continued From Page 1.)

premier had been frank and loyal to him.

Points at Issue.

"Dear Sir Robert: In reply to your memorandum of October 31st, I do not recall any visit to Great Britain in the autumn of 1914. I did expect both under the statutory law of Britain, and under the law of common courtesy, that I would have been permitted to exercise some 'control and direction' over our gallant Canadian boys in the way of organization."

"But there had evidently been some communication to the effect that 'control and direction' of this magnificent force should be under the British Government direct. The then Mr. George Perley, acting high commissioner, implied such in the following words: 'You do not pretend surely, to have anything to do with the Canadian soldiers in Britain.'"

Perley Unfriendly.

"Further, Sir Robert, I spoke to you on my return and told you the circumstances both then and subsequently. You yourself know that last year you took occasion to speak to Sir George Perley concerning the matter. The treatment he accorded me after this was the only respectful or courteous treatment he ever gave me."

"Regarding the consultative sub-militia council, it has only been relatively former. My way of doing things is to obtain results, not necessarily the creation of bodies organized by order-in-council. As everyone knows, what may seem workable in theory does not so turn out in practice."

"On my arrival in England this year, I was met by your cablegram of July 21st, which you quote. During the month of August, I visited every camp in England, France and Belgium, and consulted in detail with all the leading officers of the Canadian forces. I went further and asked for suggestions from leading officers in every force."

Appearance Deceiving.

"Not content with this, however, I decided to try the thing out in practice, and in an informal way, and before embodying anything in order-in-council, which would find any weak points in the system, which might arise, and could add any improvements necessary."

"Every officer concerned was distinctly notified of this, that no question of rank or pay, or precedence or anything else, other than trial or organization was contemplated."

"As a result, before I left England, we had made many improvements. Permit me to draw your attention to nearly every commission which has been formed. They look beautiful on paper, but few, if any of them, have been anything like perfect in practice. The hospitals, commission, the pensions board, and the national service commission all seemed lovely when sent out, but every one of them, when they know of the absurdities therein contained."

"Permit me further to draw your attention to the fact that the British constitution does not exist on paper, so order-in-council is behind it."

Plain Words to Borden.

"Further, had I ventured to conduct this force on the basis of formal order-in-council, the first division would not have left Valcartier yet, and you know yourself how, by technicalities, the second division was held up for four months through little petty haggling on the question of motor trucks, etc."

"The second line of your memorandum says: 'So far as I am aware, you exercised the same control and direction over the forces in Great Britain during the first year as subsequently.'"

"Sir Robert, no one knows better than you that this statement is incorrect. This last year, with the full concurrence of the war office, our management and direction have been given every consideration and have been their request."

Perley's Plans.

"One other point and I am thru. It might be implied from your memorandum that my failing to secure authority by order-in-council for the sub-militia council impelled you to the course you are now pursuing regarding Sir George Perley. May I be permitted to say that both you and I know to the contrary. I knew as well in August that Sir George Perley had planned something along these very lines. You have also known as early as the first week of September, when you had this matter under consideration, that it was Perley's plan. You incidentally remarked yesterday that you had not consulted any of your colleagues. Of the statement, you corrected yourself."

"Faithfully, (Signed) 'Sam Hughes.' H. Borden, C.M.G., prime minister of Canada, Ottawa, Canada."

Demanding Resignation.

To this Sir Robert Borden replied, demanding Sir Sam Hughes' resignation."

Ottawa, Nov. 9, 1916. "Dear General Hughes: During your absence I have given very careful consideration to your letter of the 1st instant, and I must express my deep regret that you saw fit to address to me, as head of the government, communication of that nature. As you

are to return tomorrow, it is my duty at once to announce to you my conclusion. Under conditions which at times were very trying and which gave me great concern, I have done my utmost to support you in the administration of your department. This has been very difficult by reason of your strong tendency to assume powers which you do not possess and which can only be exercised by the governor-in-council. My time and energies, although needed for much more important duties, have been very frequently employed in removing difficulties that unnecessarily create."

"You seemed actuated by a desire, and even an intention to administer your department as if it were a distinct and separate government in itself. On many occasions, but without much result, I have cautioned you against this course, which has frequently led to well-founded protest from your colleagues, as well as detriment to the public interest."

"I do not intend to dwell upon the instances, some of which are still under consideration, in which you have acted without authority or consultation in matters more or less important. Of these, the latest is the establishment of a militia sub-council in which you have included the appointment of its personnel. I conveyed to you on the 31st July a clear intimation that upon so important a proposition, involving considerations of the gravest moment, the cabinet must be consulted before action was taken. All the members of the government have full and direct responsibility in respect of the very important matters which the proposed council would advise upon and direct. The intimation which was given to you in my telegram of 31st July should not have been necessary. As soon as it was received, you proceeded to disregard it."

"Some portions of your letter are expressive of the attitude which I have described, and to which you evidently intend to adhere. Such an attitude is wholly inconsistent with and subversive of the principle of joint responsibility upon which constitutional government is based."

"But more than that, your letter is couched in such terms that I cannot overlook or excuse it. I take strong exception to the statement in which it is couched, but to its general character and tone. You must surely realize that I cannot retain in the government a colleague who has addressed to me such a communication. I regret that this has thus imposed upon me the disagreeable duty of recommending your resignation as minister of militia and defence."

"Faithfully yours, (Signed) H. Borden. 'Lieut.-Gen. Sir Sam Hughes, K.C.B., Ottawa.'"

"Dear Sir Robert—Your letter of Nov. 9 I at hand and it affords me great satisfaction to now tender you my resignation. Indeed, my letter of Nov. 1 rendered it impossible for me to remain your colleague, unless you concurred in its correctness."

"For a long time I have retained the portfolio of militia only that I might be able to help the government in training and at the front, and to do the best I could towards winning the war, which is all that mattered. I have closed my eyes to all party intrigues and ambitions about me. It is my intention still to devote my energies to the interests of those who have done so much to maintain the great cause of human liberty."

"It is not necessary to analyze, in detail, all disappointing matters in my resignation. I have already done so in the second paragraph of your letter of Nov. 9, I have done my utmost to support you in the administration of your department, and I have done so to the best of my power."

"This is pleasing news to me, but I learn it now for the first time. Cut Out Red Tape. "Your statement that I had a 'strong tendency to assume powers which you do not possess and which can only be exercised by the governor-in-council' is also news to me. True, from the opening of Valcartier Camp, such things were done with your full knowledge and authority. Upon my representations to you that the formation of the force was urgent, and that they should be passed afterwards, this was done, and has never been deviated from. War cannot be successfully waged on a day-to-day basis."

"Your statement that my time and energies, although needed for much more important duties, have been very frequently employed in removing difficulties that unnecessarily create, is also news to me. Why was I not informed of it? If you mean your time was given up to listening to the complaints of dissatisfied and overbearing people, I can understand it. In war time in all countries, criticism of all measures abounds. In the eyes of some, everything done is wrong. I do not have more than my fair share of unkind criticism, even from well-meaning friends."

"Your statement further that 'you seemed actuated by a desire, and even an intention to administer your department as if it were a distinct and separate government in itself' is also news to me. It is true that I did not always attend council to see my recommendations thru. I was engaged in other work. But if you will permit me to make a comparison, I have yet to learn where once the finance minister of Canada brought before council any proposed loan for the Dominion, and I have not more than my fair share of criticism of that department. The same observations apply to the minister of trade and commerce."

"Moreover, it is difficult for me to recall where you have actively supported me in the passage of any order-in-council concerning the building of the militia when opposed by two members of the cabinet usually antagonistic to anything proposed by me. As you are aware, I took up four months in the midst of this great war to fight thru the principles of purchasing for the second division, trucks of allowing large commissions to local agents who would have nothing to do with securing the order."

"Your next paragraph is that 'On many occasions, but without much result, I have cautioned you against this course which has frequently led to well-founded protest from your colleagues.'"

"You will pardon me, but I can recall but one such instance, namely, secret service. I do remember you asking me on one occasion to submit orders-in-council where possible before incurring large expenditures, but the reason you assigned was not protest from my colleagues over my action, but that it was to get an example of to assist you to control others. You instanced the postoffice department, the railway department, and the public works department, where projects had been undertaken, which have been order-in-council, and I remember distinctly you stated that some boats had been purchased and other large expenditures incurred without your knowing anything about it, and without any order-in-council."

"Your next statement is concerning the proposed sub-militia council. In England, on Nov. 1 I wrote you in reply to your letter of Oct. 31 giving a full statement. Sir Robert, I have known and experienced for a long time the meddling and intrigue which has been going on. More than a year ago I understand you had it in contemplation to get Sir George Perley in order-in-council. I was assured in April last that the plans which you have now carried out were under contemplation. I was further assured, the first week of August of this year, that the plans were practically completed."

"However, as you had not spoken to me about it, as in honor bound, I did not credit the matter. I was assured by Sir George Perley, including the appointment of its personnel. I conveyed to you on the 31st July a clear intimation that upon so important a proposition, involving considerations of the gravest moment, the cabinet must be consulted before action was taken. All the members of the government have full and direct responsibility in respect of the very important matters which the proposed council would advise upon and direct. The intimation which was given to you in my telegram of 31st July should not have been necessary. As soon as it was received, you proceeded to disregard it."

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"You state that I conveyed to you on the 31st July a clear intimation that upon so important a proposition, involving considerations of the gravest moment, the cabinet must be consulted before action was taken. All the members of the government have full and direct responsibility in respect of the very important matters which the proposed council would advise upon and direct. The intimation which was given to you in my telegram of 31st July should not have been necessary. As soon as it was received, you proceeded to disregard it."

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