

THE CHARGES OF SIR SAM HUGHES AGAINST THE BORDEN GOVERNMENT.

WHEN Sir Sam Hughes resigned his portfolio as Minister of Militia and Defence in the Borden government several letters which had passed between himself as Minister of Militia and Sir Robert Borden were published. These letters contained grave accusations, not only against Sir Robert Borden, the Prime Minister of Canada, but against his colleagues, members of the Borden administration, all with reference to the conduct of the War. All of these charges are most serious, in fact if half of what Sir Sam Hughes states is true the members of the Borden government, Sir Robert Borden himself included, are guilty of interfering with the successful prosecution of the War.

The Hon. Charles Murphy, Ex-Secretary of State in the Laurier administration, has taken the trouble to make a summary of these charges and when speaking in the House of Commons on January 29th, 1917, he placed this summary on Hansard.

We quote herewith the summary of the accusations made by the Ex-Minister of Militia and Defence.

1. That from the outset the management of our forces, supplies, equipment, transport, etc., were taken completely out of our hands and controlled by the British authorities.

2. That for the first ten months of the War our equipment, stores, supplies, armament, everything provided by us was set aside.

3. That the Ex-Minister of Militia spoke to the Prime Minister about the rejection of our stores and supplies of every description and submitted to him a written memorandum proving the utter falsity of the reasons given by the British officers for their rejection of everything that came from Canada. But nothing was done.

4. That the Pay Department was found to be absolutely chaotic, and that the Medical Service lacked system, efficiency, and comprehensiveness.

5. That a force was raised and managed in spite of all sorts of intrigue.

6. That appointments in the force were based on two avenues of supply, of which one was British officers connected with society people, and the other Canadian Permanent Corps officers, with their usual pull.

7. That few, if any commissions, are of any practical value, and that everybody connected with the Hospitals Commission, the Pensions Board, and the National Service Commission knows of the absurdities they contain.

8. That had the forces been conducted on the basis of formal Orders-in-Council the First Division would not have left Valcartier yet.

9. That the Second Division was held in Canada for four months by the Cabinet's petty haggling over the question of paying commissions to agents on the sale of motor trucks, instead of purchasing at the lowest wholesale prices.

10. That no one knew better than the Prime Minister that the statements made by him in his letter of October 31st, 1916, regarding the control of the forces during the first year in Great Britain, were not correct.

11. That the Prime Minister's reason for appointing an Overseas Minister of Militia was not, as alleged by him, due to the failure of the ex-Minister of Militia to secure authority by Orders-in-Council for his acts, but was the result of several months planning between Sir George Perley and the Prime Minister.

12. That for a long time there were petty intrigues going on in the Cabinet, to which the ex-Minister of Militia had shut his eyes as he wanted to win the War.

13. That the Prime Minister had not supported the ex-Minister of Militia in the administration of his department.

14. That from the opening of Valcartier Camp the Prime Minister had agreed that matters of urgency need not be brought before the Privy-Council, and that ratifying Orders-in-Council could be passed after action had been taken.

15. That the Minister of Finance never brought before Council any proposed loan for the Dominion of Canada, or any single important act concerning the administration of his department.

16. That the same observation applies to the Minister of Trade and Commerce.

17. That two members of the Cabinet were usually antagonistic to anything proposed by the ex-Minister of Militia, and when they opposed him the Prime Minister did not support him.

18. That the Prime Minister asked the ex-Minister of Militia to submit Orders-in-Council before incurring large expenditures, so as to set an example and assist the Prime Minister to control the Post Office Department, Railway Department and Public Works Department, for projects had been undertaken without the authority of Orders-in-Council.

19. That the Prime Minister also stated that some boats had been purchased and other large expenditures incurred without his knowledge and without Orders-in-Council.

20. That for more than a year the ex-Minister of Militia had known of the meddling and intriguing that had been going on to place Sir George Perley in control in England, and that the position taken by the Prime Minister in the correspondence in regard to the matter was untenable.

21. That the Prime Minister was actuated by favoritism rather than by the best interests of the force.

22. That the Prime Minister mis-represented the attitude of the ex-Minister of Militia with regard to the sub-Militia Council.

23. That except when in trouble himself the Prime Minister had never been frank or loyal with the ex-Minister of Militia, and that he rewarded loyalty by preferring those who had been untrue to him.

This indictment of the Prime Minister and his colleagues by a member of his own Cabinet is absolutely without parallel in any country enjoying responsible government. The Prime Minister although replying to several letters which contained these accusations did not deny them, in fact a significant fact which these letters proved, is that Sir Sam Hughes was not dismissed for mismanagement or maladministration. The letters prove conclusively that he was dismissed for accusing the Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden for not telling the truth.

But this was not all. As stated these synopsis accusations were all contained in the letters made public at the time of Sir Sam Hughes' resignation. Sir Sam however, wrote another letter to the Prime Minister which was not made public at the time of his resignation, but which was made public when Sir Sam spoke in the House of Commons on January 27th, 1917. On this occasion he read to the House a letter which he had addressed to the Prime Minister on May 13th, 1915. While it may be stated without fear of contradiction that the accusations made in the letters made public at the time of Sir Sam's resignation were serious, no one can say that they are half as serious as the accusations made in this letter which were as follows:—

Dear Sir Robert,

May 13th, 1915.

Since my return from England last November, I have repeatedly notified you that owing to the interference and plans of the "so-called" sub-committee and to the repeated hold-ups and needless obstruction