

SESSIONAL PAPER No. 174

tions restraining me from bringing pressure upon my Ministers to either call a session of the Legislature, or bring on a general election at an early date. And now, in your letter under reply, also one that cannot be laid before Parliament, I am in effect censured for not having brought pressure upon my present constitutional advisers to compel them to bring on an early session of the Legislature, or a general election before the date already fixed. You end your letter by saying:

‘Any letter marked private or confidential does not go on file, and this letter, of course, must be treated as confidential, and destroyed.’

I may tell you that no one but my secretary and myself has seen anything of these confidential letters from you, and I do not think that there need be any occasion for taking them from the obscurity of a private file, but I would point out to you that you now apparently find my course blameworthy, through having acted in strict compliance with the directions given in your letter of August 30, reading:—

‘Your Ministers are the proper judges of the time to summon the Assembly—keeping, of course, within the year’s limit.’

Certain portions of that letter are quoted in my report to the Privy Council of March 27 last. But those portions I could hardly avoid quoting, in justice to myself. I think it is done in such a way, however, as to make further reference to the said letter unnecessary. I certainly should have preferred an official notification from the Privy Council if they considered that I had left untouched or unexplained any relevant phase of my action throughout the present crisis. Not having received one, however, I have undertaken to forward to His Excellency in Council a supplementary report of this date, dealing with the criticisms upon my conduct subsequent to the dismissal of the Semlin Government, as far as I could gather them from the Ottawa press despatches, and your letter under reply. I have stated fully all I have to say touching the points you refer to, without in any way referring to your letter itself. I am not setting up for a constitutional lawyer, but I do say that I have sought to discharge my duties faithfully, under probably as trying circumstances as a Lieutenant-Governor has yet been placed in in Canada. But the attitude taken toward me by some of my old friends and colleagues in Ottawa, at least as represented by the press and private report, has been a genuine surprise to me, and I cannot help thinking that they have been grossly misinformed and misled. Some of the provincial press contain references and extracts from Ottawa letters like the following, taken from the *Greenwood Times* of the 27th ultimo:—

A prominent Liberal member writes under date of April 11th as follows:

‘We hear to-day that the House is dissolved, and that elections will be held June

9. Well, I would not give much for McInnes’ scalp if Martin is turned down.’

Another Liberal who is in close touch with Sir Wilfrid, says:

‘Blame the Lieutenant Governor, I know the view of our friends here, and it is very hostile to McInnes. These views fairly express Sir Wilfrid’s position.’

Very well, let them ‘blame the Lieutenant-Governor’ if they will. But it may prove to be no wiser a course than it was for Mr. Duncan Ross, the editor of the above mentioned paper, who, for doing that very thing, was expelled from the Liberal Association of Greenwood. And here in Victoria, at the annual election of officers of the Liberal Association, every officer—with the exception of Mr. Drury who has taken a perfectly neutral stand—was turned out, and others elected in their places, in consequence of having taken a somewhat similar attitude to that of Mr. Ross.

In conclusion let me say that I am, and always have been, ready to acknowledge the authority of advice and directions given by you respecting my official duties and prerogatives, but I do not propose to be swayed from what appears to be my line of duty by the hostility of a certain section of the press, or their contributors—let the outcome be what it may.

Yours very truly,

THOMAS R. McINNES.