

CANADA

House of Commons Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT

Friday, June 6, 1919.

The House met at Three o'clock.

SEDITION AND SEDITIOUS PROPAGANDA.

DAY FIXED TO DISCUSS REPORT OF
SPECIAL COMMITTEE.

Hon. HUGH GUTHRIE (Solicitor General) presented report of Special Committee appointed to consider and report on laws relating to sedition and seditious propaganda.

SENATE BILL.

FIRST READING.

Bill No. 124 (from the Senate) for the relief of Andrew Pepper.—Mr. Campbell.

RESIGNATION OF HON. T. A. CRERAR.

LETTER FROM MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE PRIME MINISTER'S REPLY.

On the Orders of the Day:

Rt. Hon. Sir ROBERT BORDEN (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have the permission of His Excellency the Governor General to communicate to the House the correspondence respecting the resignation of the Minister of Agriculture:

Ottawa, June 4, 1919.

The Right Honourable
Sir Robert Borden, G.C.M.G.,
Prime Minister of Canada,
Ottawa.

My Dear Sir Robert,—The Government, in its consideration of the Budget to be placed before Parliament to-morrow, has reached, I take it, definite and final conclusions as to the form it will take. As you are aware, I am not in accord with it and therefore cannot support it, either in the House or in the country. Having reached this decision, there is only one course for me to follow, and I therefore tender you herewith my resignation as a member of the Government. The reason for my decision shall be given more fully when the subject is under discussion in the House.

In view of the fact that the military business of the war, through demobilization, is not yet completed, permit me to say that only strong conviction upon this issue, reached after

earnest consideration, impels me to take this course.

I cannot refrain from expressing my appreciation of the heavy worries and responsibilities you have so courageously faced during the war, and particularly in the last year—worries and responsibilities which I venture to say the people of Canada do not yet fully understand; and also the fine manner in which you have represented Canada overseas in the delicate and difficult negotiations preliminary to the signing of Peace.

Let me also thank you very sincerely indeed for the many courtesies and kindnesses you have shown during the past eighteen months, to one quite inexperienced in Parliamentary work and in the very intricate and difficult problems of Government in this country.

I am,
Yours truly,
(Sgd.) T. A. Crerar.

To which the following reply was given on the same day:

Ottawa, June 4, 1919.

My dear Mr. Crerar,—I have received with deep and unfeigned regret your resignation as a member of the Government; but I entirely appreciate and respect the sincerity of the convictions which have impelled you to take that course.

It will be my immediate duty to acquaint His Excellency the Governor General with your decision and to request his authority for the acceptance of your resignation.

During the period of nearly two years in which you have been one of my colleagues your high sense of public duty, your fine ability and your indefatigable energy have made your service to the country especially valuable. Within that period problems of an exceptionally difficult character have continually presented themselves and I am most grateful to you, and to all my colleagues, for the loyal assistance and earnest effort which on all such occasions have been of invaluable assistance to me in the consideration of such questions.

My association with you as one of my colleagues will always be to me a happy memory; and I know that I may express this to you on behalf of all the members of the Government.

I am very grateful for your kind words in respect to my own part in public affairs since it has been my privilege to have you as one of my colleagues.

With every good wish, believe me, dear Mr. Crerar,

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.) R. L. Borden.

Hon. T. A. Crerar, M.P.,
Ottawa.