LIBERAL RALLY IN THE OPERA HOUSE AROUSES IMMENSE ENTHUSIASM

Audience Responds With Outbursts of Applause to Arguments of Speakers

Telling Denunciation of Meighen Administration, Sound Reasons for Return of Liberal Party to Power and Promises of Brighter Days After December 6 Mark Speeches of Premier Foster, H. R. McLellan, Dr. W. P. Broderick and I. C. Rand.

As one point after another was scored against the Meighen administration, and as reason after reason why the Liberal party should be returned to office was advanced, the great throng of electors who filled the Opera House to its utmost capacity last evening gave more and more enthusiastic in their outbursts of applause. The occasion was a rally in the interests of the Liberal candidates in this constituency, Dr. W. P. Broderick and H. R. McLellan, when they, with Premier Foster and I. C. Rand, of Moncton, addressed the audience.

So eager were the voters of both sexes to hear the speakers and to show their loyalty to the Liberal cause, that hundreds who sought admission had to be turned away. Those who were accommodated in the big auditorium made one of the most enthusiastic audiences ever assembled at a political rally in this city.

The conviction and openly expressed admissions that the Meighen government is doomed to defeat had their part in creating the atmosphere of confidence which permeated the meeting and the speakers found a ready response to their arguments.

The Speakers.

Premier Foster, who was the first speaker, was in fine form and held the audience interested and enthused. At time, with light touch, he scored his points amid the laughter his words aroused and again, in telling argument he put the facts before his hearers. He set forth the iniquities of the railway juggling, the great injustice done St. John in keeping away business and work from this port and giving it to Portland (Me.) He scored the Meighen administration for its tariff policy and its flagrant discrimination against the great body of the people in its large imposts upon necessities of life. All these conditions would be rectified under Liberal rule, which, he said, to the accompaniment of hearty applause, it would be Canada's good fortune to enjoy after Dec. 6. Mr. Foster's strong appeal for a united Liberal vote in St. John city met with a rousing response.

H. R. McLellan, the first of the candidates to speak, was given a fine reception. In a speech of compelling interest that was punctuated with frequent humorous sallies, he told of the reasons that impelled him to enter the fight, that at some length with the tariff question in a general way, and went into considerable detail in exposing the railway and the machinations of Sir William MacKenzie and Sir Joseph Flavelle, two knightly gentlemen, who, according to the speaker, fared rather handsomely in a financial way as a result of the vicissitudes through which the railway transportation systems of this country have passed during the last six or seven years.

Dr. Broderick, who was given a fine reception by the large and representative audience, severely criticised the present administration for holding on to the reins of power without a mandate from the people. Much of the tremendous debt of the country had been incurred, he pointed out, without the people having had any say in the matter. He showed how the controllable expenditure of the country had been increased from $79,000,000 in 1910, until today it had reached a total of $367,000,000. He also handled the tariff question in a masterly manner, showing how Canadian manufacturers had profited at the expense of the people.

The last speaker, I. C. Rand, of Moncton, showed how the Meighen government, on its last legs, held up various bogies to try to scare the people into returning it to power. He also criticised the government's action in acquiring the railroads, to the profit of Mackenzie and Mann.

Premier Foster.

Hon. Mr. Foster quickly aroused the enthusiasm of the large audience by his early reference to Hon. Mr. King as the next premier. Cries of "Hear, hear" and ringing applause showed how well the sentiment was received. Hon. Arthur Meighen had lost from the principle that the tariff was the issue, but he and his supporters had found that there were issues more close than this to the New Brunswick and the other maritime provinces. The premier said he had found a strong current for a change of government in Canada. The tremendous had change desirable not only from a party point of view but because of the great problems confronting the country. With a fresh mandate from the people on these questions and without the necessity of spending so much time in defense of their actions of eleven years as was the case with the present administration, matters would be much better with a Liberal government at Ottawa and there was no doubt that the Meighen government was going to be beaten.

New Brunswick, he said, had its problem in home affairs, some of them closely interwoven with Canadian matters and as premier and a New Brunswicker he was anxious that they should send a good Liberal representation to Ottawa, and particularly as a citizen of St. John was he anxious to see the Liberal candidates elected by a good majority.

The Valley Railway.

Hon. Mr. Foster then went into the matter of the Valley Railway which carried with it a burden on the people of $1,000 a day for 300 days in the year. He was anxious that the people should be relieved of this burden as was done in the matter of trunk lines in other provinces. He also spoke about the transfer of our national resources. He had made several trips to Ottawa in the hope of having New Brunswick rights in these matters properly recognized, but in vain.

The general railway situation in Canada was thus taken up. Mr. Baxter had side-stepped this issue save for one phase. The Hanna telegram was referred to and was termed by Mr. Foster but a message to deceive. There was this about it, though, it carried the open admission that Canadian freight was being carried to Portland (Me.) for export, though it was pleaded that this was done only when shippers gave instructions to that effect. It was specifically set out in the law of the land, relative to traffic originating along the C. N. R. and its branches, that everything must be done to develop trade along Canadian channels and through Canadian ports.

As an effect of the sending of our products to Portland (Me.) instead of to St. John, Premier Foster read from a common council poster warning people seeking work to keep away from this city this winter, and in ringing words he declared that it was time that the people woke up to the great crime that was being perpetrated in the diversion of the traffic to Portland.

The conclusion must be reached that the government was responsible. In taking over the Grand Trunk they had taken over the line to Portland. Mr. Meighen had asked what if Portland line had got into American hands? Better for the people of the maritime provinces that it should have, said Mr. Foster. The government had no mandate and no right to acquire it and to right to carry Canadian traffic over it. The policy of the Liberals was Canadian freight through Canadian ports.

The Standard newspaper had criticised him because of a misquoted statement relative to the distance between Montreal and Portland. What he had said was that Portland was 172 miles from the Canadian border. The operation of that line cost our people $1,600,000 outside of interest on cost. If we had that money for the development of St. John in the next ten years, what progress would be made here. It was a great crime against the people of St. John and he would be one of the first to protest if the Liberals did not rectify it, but the Liberals would carry out the provisions of the agreement and Dr. Broderick and Mr. Leblan would be vigorous champions in this good cause.

In speaking of the Intercolonial, Hon. Mr. Baxter had neglected to deal with the most important phase of that question, the freight rates.

Discrimination Against Us.

In September, 1920, Hon. Mr. Foster said, the railway commission in adjusting freight rates over Canadian government roads, as well as over other railways, made an increase on freights from east to west of thirty per cent, and from west to east of thirty per cent, thus discriminating against the products of the maritime provinces in their transportation to western markets. In December of the same year, after many protests made touching this unjust discrimination, the railway commission re-adjusted the rates so that the increase from east to west was fixed at thirty-five per cent, and that of west to east at thirty per cent. Last week the board of railway commissioners announced a further decrease of ten per cent, but this decrease only applied to ten per cent, decrease on the original increase of 1920. For instance, if lumber was carried at a rate of $3.50 a thousand in January, 1920, and increased to $4 a thousand in September, 1920, the present decrease of ten per cent, would apply to fifty cents a thousand increase in 1920, leaving a reduction of only five cents a thousand feet of lumber. This applied in the same way to all other merchandise adjusted over government railways.

The freight rates of the old Intercolonial, so called, could only be regulated, increased or decreased by the railway commission on application to the department of railways as the old I. C. R. still remained a direct government owned road independent of the railways taken over by the railway board for the dominion government. The order-in-council touching the Intercolonial after the inauguration of the railway board, stipulated that the directors of the board, Mr. Hanna and his colleagues, were only recognized as managers of the old International Railway. Therefore, any increase of freight rates over the Intercolonial must be brought about by direct demand on the part of the minister of railways to the railway commission.

Mr. Foster referred to the confederation bond, and made a strong argument for return of the Intercolonial to its original status; it had never been intended to be a business road, but was built to serve the people of the maritime provinces.

The Tariff.

Turning to the matter of the tariff, Mr. Foster asked Mr. Baxter and Dr. MacLaren to say how protection with high tariff would reduce the high cost of living. That was something, he said, they could not do. The high tariff policy bore heavily on the masses of the people. The Conservatives sought to present the issue as between free trade and protection. They knew this was a misstatement. Free trade was a theory, excellent if all countries adopted it, but not possible for Canada, because other countries had tariffs. What was wanted here was a policy of tariff for revenue only, so adjusted that it would not bear heavily on the masses; with downward revision on food and clothing and the implements of production.

Mr. Foster gave two striking examples of the injustice of the high protection policy of the Meighen administration. He showed the duty on a diamond set in platinum to be but twenty-two per cent, while the much needed suit of clothes or warm underclothing had to bear an impost of thirty per cent. Again, the lady who could cut coupons from bonds to pay for a silk velvet dress need give the government but seventeen and a half per cent, in duty, while the country girl for her calico frock must pay in duty twenty-five per cent. Surely there was need of revision and the Liberal party was pledged that it should be made.

The Conservatives cried blue ruin when the Fielding tariff of 1897 was put into effect, but all knew the prosperity that existed under Liberal rule. If the Liberals were returned to power, they would be, the tariff would be revised; such irregularities as those noted would no longer exist, and there would be lasting benefit to Canada. As a business man of the province, he was anxious to see growth and prosperity here; he had no fear as he reviewed the Liberal record of 1896 to 1911, and he would bank his future on the Liberal party and the reforms that they would bring about.

In closing, Premier Foster made a stirring appeal to the people to weigh well the issues. The ballot was sacred and in it was the future of the country and the future of its hearers and their children. They should not consider any differences there might have been in the Liberal party in the city of St. John. Those should be sunk deeply out of sight. (Applause.) They should not consider what altar a man might worship at. The issues were the policies of the Liberal and Conservative parties, and he had no doubt that, weighing these, they would rally at the polls in support of Mr. McLellan and Dr. Broderick.

H. R. McLellan.

After the great burst of applause that followed the introduction of H. R. McLellan had subsided he thanked the audience for the generous reception, commented upon the encouragement afforded by the presence of such a large audience including such a number of women, and appealed to his audience to give together to all past differences and to consider the important questions in the election for this community.

It was a desire to promote the interests of the port of St. John, of the constituency of St. John-Albert, and of the province of New Brunswick that impelled him to enter the campaign, the speaker declared. The people, he said, should set aside their prejudices and differences and unite upon a platform for the promotion of these interests, conditions obtaining at present were endurable no longer, and the present government appeared unable to do anything to remedy the situation.

"The general welfare of the country demands that Canada be governed by those able to govern it," said Mr. Mc-Lellan. The electorate had been told, he said, that to put the present government out of power would be a retrograde step.

"It would be retrograde," said Mr. McLellan, "in the sense of putting the government back where they belong." The electorate had been told, too, that the defeat of the government meant the destruction of the prosperity of Canada. What the defeat the government would mean, he declared, would be the destruction of the capitalistic combines whose existence was prejudicial to the welfare and prosperity of Canada today.

The electorate had been told that the tariff was the real issue. In reality the tariff was a blind—a barrage to obscure the real issue. The Liberals stood for a tariff that was the friend of the many; as against a tariff for the profits of the few. He ridiculed the allegation that the Liberals stood for free trade.

Tariff As An Asset.

Mackenzie King, he declared, was a man whose keen powers of perception would be enlisted in the task of framing a tariff to meet the needs of the country. If that tariff were so shaped as to enable the Canadian working man to preserve his high standard of living in the face of competition of the cheap labor of other countries then it would be Canada's best asset.

He then proceeded to point out how the present attitude of the Conservatives contradicted their historical stand on the subject of reciprocity. In 1854, he said there was a treaty of reciprocity negotiated with the United States. In 1866, after Confederation, the government made a reciprocity offer to the public. Again in 1869, 1879 and 1871 attempts were made to ratify a treaty.

"Reciprocity of trade, reciprocity of tariff," had been the war cry of St John and J. Macdonald who on another occasion in 1878 declared: "I am unwilling to own myself a protectionist."

"Yet," declared Mr. McLellan, "these little piggies running round now have forgotten the traditional doctrine enunciated by their political godfather."

Protection and liberty were, in the speaker's opinion, contradictory terms. There could be no true liberty, he declared, under any system, the function of which was to concentrate the money of the country in a few hands. He then went on to show how a protective system could be made prohibitive of importation and the manufacturer, taking advantage of the protection, could run the price of his products up, with the result that the money went into his pocket and not into the treasury of the country as it would under a tariff for revenue.

"If," said the speaker, "trade with the Yankees is no benefit, then why did the government buy hundreds of miles of railroad in the United States? If their principles are sound then they have been false to them."

The Real Issue.

"The tariff is not the real issue, the tariff is but a barrage to hide the real issue which is the railway crime," declared Mr. McLellan. The Conservatives were blaming the sagacious Laurier for the railway problem, he said. Laurier was the wisdom that had planned and promoted what was to be the greatest of the transcontinental roads, a road that would bring Canadian export trade through Canadian ports, the speaker declared amid much applause. Laurier had made his plans, had submitted them to the people and won their assent to them, but, by a flag-flapping campaign, one of the best and greatest of Canadians had gone down to defeat in 1911.

His successors realized that if the Laurier plans were completed that the railways would be an abiding monument to his memory and they were determined that no such monument should exist. Manifesting political snipers, Borden and his satellites had increased the grades, substituted wooden for iron trestles, and bought rolling stock too heavy for the wooden trestles and then scrapped it because it was too heavy.

He asked the audience to consider the tremendous expense incurred under the present regime. The C. N. R. alone had cost the people $635,000,000. Conservative expenditures had grown from $79,000,000 in 1910 until today they had reached the gigantic figure of $307,000,000. The estimates for the year 1921-22 called for an expenditure of $606,000,000. When all these huge sums had been taken into consideration there was every reason to say that the government had acted without a mandate from the people and had spent the people's money without authority.

The people's representatives, instead of getting information, had been denied it on the floors of parliament, and most of the legislation has been put through by order-in-council.

Mr. Meighen had said that there was only one issue—the tariff. There were other issues, the speaker declared. The tariff issue could be met from the Liberal standpoint. Mr. Meighen had said that the Liberal party was a free trade party and that the country would go to ruin if it was returned to power.

Liberal Party and Prosperity.

The Liberals were in power from 1896 to 1911, during which time the industries of the country flourished as never before or since. Therefore it was plain that if the country wanted a return of prosperity the Liberal party should be returned. A man would be a fool who would say that the Liberals would remove all tariff.

Mr. Meighen, in the east, declared that the tariff was the issue; in the west he forgot all about it.

The speaker then went on to explain what a tariff was. It was a method of raising money by placing a barrier on foreign imports. The higher the barrier was the more it kept out the products of other countries.

Taking a concrete illustration, the speaker took up the questions of shoes. Suppose a pair of shoes cost $5 in the United States, and suppose it cost a little more to produce them in Canada. There was a duty of thirty per cent, on shoes, which amounted to $1.50 on the $5. The Canadian manufacturer could in fate his price almost $1.50 and still be under the United States price. The Liberal idea was that there should be a tariff for revenue. If the government got the duty it was a tariff for revenue. If the manufacturer got the benefit the revenue went into the pocket of the manufacturer, and the duty was used as a means for inflating prices.

The speaker charged the minister of customs and excise with interpretation in his statements regarding the control of the Grand Trunk. The road, Mr. McLellan declared, was under the control of Sir Joseph Flavelle, who was about to fasten up the Canadian National system also.

Reason for Alarm.

He then read a special Ottawa despatch to the Montreal Star of November 30, saying that it had been inserted on unimpeachable assurances in the staff of the government railways were contemplated. It was suspected that Sir Joseph Flavelle was behind the movement, the purpose of which was plain, and it carried into effect would constitute an autocratic one of power. If consummated, the despatch continued, the public would have reason to feel alarmed. "Imagine that in the Montreal Star," said Mr. McLellan.

He then told of a proposal advanced by Sir Joseph Flavelle to hand over the railways to him free of political interference together with from $125,000,000 to $175,000,000 to renew rolling stock.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Mr. McLellan, "you are ear-marked by the gunmen of Ontario."

The speaker declared that he had been prompted to go into this campaign to secure for this constituency and this province a recognition of their rights under confederation. He said that the west was indebted to the east, and the east furnished the maritime element of nationhood. These maritime ports had been visioned as great as American ports by Cartier, Galt and other statesmen of Confederation days, and these were some of the things that were going to be fulfilled, the speaker said.

He said that two years before the Intercolonial was taken over that it had made profits of $880,000. There had been for months now in Moncton locomotives lying idle which the government had hired from Sir William MacKenzie for $100 a day. These things were not told, nor were others, but when the Mackenzie King government went into power there would be an investigation of all these things.

Referring to Hon. Mr. Baxter's reason that he did not wish to engage in a joint debate with Mr. McLellan because he feared there might be mudslinging, Mr. McLellan set the house rocking with laughter when he declared that Mr. Baxter did not mind slinging mud when it was netting him ninety cents a yard.

It was a great pleasure to address the audience; it would be a greater pleasure to represent them on the floors of parliament, he said. He would guarantee that if elected he would work for this port and for the recognition of confederation rights, which had no chance of being recognized by Meighen. Since Mr. King was here he had seen the necessity for work being done. If elected he would embark on a campaign of education and to induce Mackenzie King to come to St. John and make it plain that he would undertake a fixed plan of improvement, a plan of improvements of such magnitude that for eight or ten years there would be no unemployment within a considerable radius of St. John. When the speaker concluded he was given great applause by the audience.

Dr. W. P. Broderick.

The chairman then called on Dr. W. P. Broderick, who was given a hearty reception. He said that it was an honor to speak to such a large number and a pleasure to see so many ladies present, anxious to take part in the government of the country. He said that universal suffrage always had been a Liberal plank.

He trusted that they were all good Liberals. If not, now was the time to be converted and give up their former ways. It had been said that the advent of women would clean up politics. There was no such thing as cleaning up Conservative politics, he declared; they must be put out of power.

The speaker denounced the Meighen government as a usurper of power. It had no mandate from the people. In 1917 the coalition government of Liberals and Conservatives was formed. All contentious matters were to be eliminated for the successful carrying on of the war. This was the idea that the people had voted for, and as soon as demobilization had taken place the government was to have appealed to the country. It was said that the government had demobilized everything but itself. Mr. Meighen would not be appealing to the country today had it not been that the by-elections had been going against him and public opinion had been aroused. The Montreal Gazette, a strong government organ, had declared that it was up to Mr. Meighen to let the people have a voice in the government.

Liberal Party and Prosperity. (cont.)

Mr. Meighen was the prince of humbugs and he would find this to be the opinion of the people after December 6.

Hon. George E. Foster had laid the railway muddle at the doors of the Laurier government. He had described it as a mess, but no suggestions how to get out. All they did was to tell the people that they were in a mess.

The railroads had been handed over as private report and said that railroad conditions resulted from overbuilding. The country would have to put up with an annual loss of $80,000,000; $40,000,000 for fixed charges and a like amount of operating deficit. The situation would be by a large amount of immigration.

Instead of following this advice the premier had appointed Dr. Edwards as minister of immigration; a man of small vision and petty partisanship. On nomination day he had punched his opponents nose and that was the only remarkable thing that he ever had done. Mr. Meighen's answer was the appointment of a man like this.

Sir Joseph Flavelle had said that the immigrants must be taken to the vacant lands in the west along the railroads. A few had gone there to try and make a living, but not before Mr. Meighen had met them at the ports of St. John and Halifax and held out his collection plate. Mr. Meighen thought that the Maritime provinces were a delapidated annex and the sooner they broke off and fell into the Atlantic ocean the better he would be pleased. The Transcontinental had been built to bring grain to Maritime Province ports, but since 1917 not a bushel had come over that road. After ignoring these provinces for five years he proposed that Moncton should be the centre of a railway system which would direct operations in Portland, Me. The speaker declared that this was an election bribe.

The speaker said that Mr. Meighen was the mouth-piece and advocate of Messrs. Mackenzie and Mann. Mr. Bennett had said that the trail of Mackenzie and Mann was strewn with corruption and he would not accept their statements in parliament. Mr. Bennett had asked for a Royal Commission to investigate their statements but Mr. Meighen had said that he would not insist them. Mackenzie and Mann had pocketed the profits and had saddled the roads on the people, Mr. Rand declared.

In conclusion the speaker said that now was the time to strike a blow for the people of the country and the time to strike a blow for the restoration of a man like this.

The meeting was brought to a close with cheers for the candidates, Hon. Mr. King, and the singing of the National Anthem.

Trade With United States.

Dr. Broderick then took up the subject of the C. G. M. M. to show the extravagance of the government under this head. In 1918 the minister of marine and fisheries thought up the scheme of a government merchant marine to help export trade. An initial expenditure of $25,000,000 was put through by order-in-council. At that time it was advised by Liberal members that it was a dangerous undertaking. The expenditure had grown to $67,000,000. The vessels had been ready to help in the war and were now going round from port to port, looking for cargoes.

The railway policy of the government was next attacked by the speaker. He said that the freight and grain of western Canada was going through the port of Portland (Me.) This was of great concern and interest to the citizens of St. John. He read, from a Portland paper, extracts telling of Grand Trunk expenditures being made there and of the large grain shipments from Canada expected to pass through the port as well as thousands of head of Canadian cattle. If the government could not regulate this traffic now, how could it regulate it later, he asked. Would this road be scrapped?

Dr. Broderick then asked what was the attitude of the minister of marine and excise towards the port of St. John? The speaker had it on good authority that there was not a carload of grain in the government yards here and the government elevator was as empty as one would expect in July. The government which had told the people not to have any truck or trade with the Yankees were now building up United States ports at the expense of St. John and Halifax.

The speaker next quoted from a Conservative pamphlet which he had come across, in regard to the Fordney Tariff. The reciprocity bill had looked good to the Canadian farmer when it would have opened up the country of 100,000,000 people to the people of a country of 6,000,000. The Conservatives had used the slogan of "no truck with the Yankees." If the reciprocity bill had been put through the Fordney bill would not be in force today, the speaker declared.

To show how Canada's trade with the United States had decreased he quoted figures. Three months previous to the enactment of the Fordney bill, Canada had exported barley to the amount of 3,176,185 pounds to the United States. For the three months after the bill was passed, the amount exported was only 200,000 pounds. In a like period the cattle exported was 88,867 head, compared with 15,811 head, and potatoes, 240,514 bushels, compared with 66,749 bushels.

The only trouble was that Sir Wilfred Laurier had been ahead of his time. If his policy had been put into effect there would have been no occasion for the Fordney tariff, the speaker said.

A Serious Duty.

In conclusion, Dr. Broderick said that a serious and important duty devolved on those present on December 6. They had to decide what government was to hold the reins of power. If they were satisfied with an autocratic government, one which put a tremendous debt on the country, placed such a railway burden on their shoulders, which had increased the uncontrollable expenditure from $79,000,000 to $365,000,000, then they should vote for the Conservatives. But if they wanted a return to prosperity such as prevailed from 1896 to 1911, a government at all times subservient to the will of the people, then be believed that they would vote for the Liberal candidates. It would be in the best interests of St. John, New Brunswick and Canada that Mr. W. L. Mackenzie King should be elected prime minister on December 6.

I. C. Rand.

The last speaker of the evening was I. C. Rand, of Moncton, who made a scathing denunciation of the policies of Hon. Mr. Meighen and his government. He declared that the campaign had now reached the rock-bed stage, on the part of the Conservatives. The speaker told of the supposed conspiracy brought out by Mr. MacNeill, of the G. W. V. A., in which the railroads were to be looted. He asked what there was left to loot in the C. N. R. He said that those present gradually read of other gigantic conspiracies and he would not be surprised to hear that Moncton was going to steal St. John harbor.

It was not the first time that these scare-mongers had been active, the speaker declared. The Conservatives were in full retreat and the scare batteries were blazing away. He told of the scares circulated in 1896, but where the Liberals came in power the country offered on a period of the greatest prosperity it had ever known. In 1911 there had been more scares circulated. It was said then that if the reciprocity bill went through the country would be severing relations with Great Britain.

This was not the only time that these awful predictions had been made. Mr. Meighen had perfectly well that if the Liberals got in the tariff would remain. It would have to remain because the government would have to raise money. The speaker declared that Mr. Meighen had been a low protectionist in 1911. He had moved to reduce the duty on farm implements to fifteen per cent because the Massey-Harris people were better prepared to face competition. They were in a still better position today and he could reduce it to ten per cent. He soon would be able to eliminate it altogether and would be a free trader and not from it.

Mr. Rand declared that the Meighen tariff discussion was humbug and that the Liberal party was a true trade party and that the country would go to ruin if it were returned to power.