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**At The Federal Capital**

The week ending April 20th was, in many respects, one of the most memorable in the history of the Canadian Parliament. As will be readily understood, the cause of this is the serious condition at the battle front. In the first place an unusual, and for the Canadian Parliament, an unprecedented event occurred on Wednesday the 17th, that is a secret session of the House of Commons. The Prime Minister announced on Tuesday the 16th that the session on the following day would be held behind closed doors. He communicated this intelligence to the Leader of the Opposition, who acknowledged the courtesy of Sir Robert in taking him into his confidence regarding this matter. It is unnecessary to repeat that the very serious status of the Allied armies, in the tremendous struggle that has been going on for weeks in which the fate of our Empire and the cause of liberty and civilization are trembling in the balance, was the subject which engaged the attention of the House of Commons during the secret session. No one except the Members of the Commons and the Senators were admitted to the proceedings of this session. The Senators took seats in the galleries, and visitors, door keepers, and pages were excluded. The Sergeant-at-Arms alone was the only medium of communication between the lobbies and the Chamber. Any messages from outside, to Members were attended to by him. There was a full attendance of the Members, and the opening proceedings were anticipated with breathless tension.

The routine proceedings were dispensed with, until the orders of the day were reached. The Prime Minister then moved that the House now go into Committee of Supply, and took the Senators and the Members into his confidence with regard to the serious message he had to deliver. When all was over, there was not so much presented to the House by the Prime Minister of a really secret character as might have been expected, for a very considerable portion of the knowledge placed before the House is known to the public in a general way. The feature especially demanding secrecy was the messages passing between the Prime Minister of Canada and the Prime Minister of Great Britain, through the medium of His Excellency the Governor General. Lloyd George's confidential message emphasized the serious but altogether hopeful position of the British army. That is not divulging any secret, for it is generally known. All the correspondence regarding the present position of the contending armies strongly indicate that the objective of the German army, in this tremendous drive, was the destruction of the British army, its separation from the French army, and the hope that it would be possible to force them to surrender. The rest, in the opinion of the Huns, would be easy. But from day to day, the position of the British and Allied armies is becoming more hopeful, and the intelligence from the front these days is more and more optimistic. It is now felt, generally, that the disarrangements and the losses of

the Allied armies have been repaired, and that the German army can be withstood and held for an indefinite period, and until reinforcements can go to the rescue. Possibly, should the Allies take the offensive, the enemy may be driven back even before additional forces of any extent can arrive on the scene. The Prime Minister's message was received in profound silence and with all possible seriousness. He spoke, as is his wont when presenting grave and serious questions to Parliament, with intense deliberation and earnestness. His discourse lasted scarcely an hour, and he was followed by the Leader of the Opposition who spoke briefly. It was agreed that the Whips of both parties should decide what portion of the deliberations might be made public. Then the tension was removed, the doors were opened, and the proceedings of the balance of the afternoon went on in the usual way.

The other serious and important events of the week was the presentation of the amendment to the Military Service Act, in the form of an Order in Council which was laid before both Houses of Parliament on Friday afternoon the 19th. This Order in Council provides for the calling to the colors of all unmarried men and widowers without children, between the ages of 20 and 23 inclusive. The Order in Council also cancels all exemptions granted or pending. As was explained, the seriousness of the war conditions demands that all technical or routine requirements should be removed without ceremony and that the men be called to the colors without delay. The great thing is men, more men, and still more men, and the Order in Council provides that they shall be enlisted on the shortest possible notice, all constitutional and technical provisions to the contrary notwithstanding. In the Commons, the resolution was presented by the Prime Minister and supported in a speech of extraordinary earnestness and sincerity, which made a deep impression on all present. As is usual with Sir Robert Borden, when weighty matters are involved, he spoke quietly and solemnly to a Chamber that was strangely hushed. His address made an unexampled impression on the House. He told of the gravity of the situation, of the efforts of Germany to crush the Allied armies, of the tremendous attempts that have been made by the Teutons, of the terrible drain that has been made on the blood of France and Britain, and then asked if, in a crisis of this kind, the Canadian people were prepared to stand by and not do their share when faced by the tragic facts. With an intensity of earnestness that carried all before it, the Premier's speech was an extraordinary Parliamentary effort. For some minutes after he resumed his seat, deep volumes of cheers rolled over the House.

The Leader of the Opposition followed the Prime Minister. He received from his supporters the usual applause and cheers, but his first words were his declaration that he would most strongly oppose the Government's proposition. He then proceeded to argue his case, but to anyone at all conversant with the situation and seriously considering the necessity for Canada to make a supreme exertion to uphold her position in the war, Sir Wilfrid's presentation of the case was the weakest and most illogical that could well be contemplated. It was humiliating to find oneself listening to the official Leader of the Opposition in the Canadian Parliament animadverting upon the Governments proposals in the same old illogical, untenable and opportunist fashion that had

done duty on every platform in Canada during the last Federal election. In the first place, he took exception to the Government's manner of presenting the question to Parliament. He contended that a matter of this importance should not be brought in an Order in Council, but that it should be presented to Parliament in the regular way, in the form of a bill, to be discussed and passed through its various stages in both Houses before becoming law. Then he undertook to show that food production was of more importance than men, and as the most illogical proposition of all, he made the statement that as the men that might be secured under the resolution now under discussion, would not be ready for service inside of 4 months at least, it could not help the situation at the present time, therefore, he concluded that the best thing was to send them to the farms to produce food. Anyone that will give this proposition a moment's serious thought will see how silly and illogical it is. As the Prime Minister had said in the course of his speech, the battle now going on might continue for several months, four or five or six months. Our reserves, that are overseas and on the way, and at different stages of drill and formation, would by degrees come to the front in batches one after another. Well then what would happen should we now refuse to enlist any further forces? The time would come, perhaps in four months or less, when we would have no reserves at all. Then the Canadian Army would be subject to annihilation, no one coming to their assistance. This point was well answered by the Honorable F. B. Carvell later, when he showed that if the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition were followed, if, instead of this matter coming before Parliament in an Order in Council, it be presented as a regular Bill, it would take probably three weeks or a month before it could be passed through the different stages of both Houses. Then, said he, if we take the Leader of the Opposition's view, that it would take four months to get troops sufficiently trained, and we present this matter as a Bill, that would be an additional month, making five months, and make conditions worse and worse. The Leader of the Opposition spoke about three-quarters of an hour and when he concluded, the thought would naturally come to anyone who was taking seriously the matter under discussion, in the first place, to sympathize with the old man, for the unfortunate position in which he was placed, but secondly he would have to revise his opinion and consider that Sir Wilfrid was only continuing in the same illogical untenable and opportunist course that he has followed during the whole of his public life.

Honorable N. W. Rowell, President of the Privy Council, replied for the Government, and it must be admitted that he reached a great height of Parliamentary eloquence, achieving a reputation for oratory of a fervent, impassioned type that is surpassed by few men in the House. Answering Laurier's contention that it was the duty of Canada to send food and not men, Mr. Rowell solicited unstinted applause when, pointing across the floor of the House to Sir Wilfrid, he said "I am not able to agree with my right honorable friend on that point. Our duty is not to send food or men, but to send food and men. The people of Canada will not have done their duty if they confine their efforts to either of these contributions. Our duty is men, food, munitions, ships, money. We have staked everything on this war, and we must go on to the bitter end

Are we going to keep our pledges to our gallant sons? That is the question you and I must answer to this House. I believe that from the Atlantic to the Pacific, throughout the Dominion of Canada, there is but one answer in the hearts of the people, and it is this: Canada must and will stand by these men to the limit of her strength. The issue must determine our future, our liberties, the cause of humanity and civilization. Each one of us has the great privilege in this critical hour of the world's history to make a contribution to the future well being not only of Canada, but of our race. Are we going to do it—do it as our fathers did a century ago? The Germans must triumph! The cause of liberty must prevail. Canada must not strain her glorious record, but add a new chapter for liberty and civilization now in peril."

The next speaker was Dr. J. B. Molloy, of Provencher, Manitoba. His speech was brief and at its conclusion he moved an Amendment to the effect that farmers be exempted from the new draft. His motion in amendment was seconded by Captain Read from Prince Edward Island. He concluded his remarks a few minutes before six o'clock, and the Hon. F. B. Carvell took the floor. After the six o'clock recess, he proceeded to discuss the grave question before the House. He spoke with earnestness, indicating in every word that he felt the gravity of the situation. The Members were all in their seats and the galleries were crowded, crammed indeed to suffocation. Hon. Mr. Carvell's speech was calm and slow, but with much concentrated earnestness and sincerity that the Members leaned forward to catch every sentence, and absolute silence took possession of the Chamber. Answering those who wanted exemption for farmers, he asked, "What's the use of your farms if the Hun break through? If this measure should pass to meet defeat in this Chamber, I would not give in; I would go back to the country, and I would have no fear that the verdict of our boys in Flanders, would not be as overwhelming as it was in December last."

At the conclusion of Hon. Mr. Carvell's speech, the question was proposed by Mr. Speaker and the first division of the new Parliament was demanded. But in the present improvised Parliamentary Chamber, Members are not placed in regular seats. As a matter of fact, apart from the front rows on the Government side and possibly the front row on the Opposition side, the rank and file take such seats as they find unoccupied when they come in. It amounts more or less to a grab game. Those who come early have a chance of securing a fairly good seat, but those coming later take what they can find. Under these conditions, a Member might not be seated in the same place twice in succession during the different sittings of a week. It is true that ordinarily they get about somewhere in the same vicinity in the Chamber, whether in the same seat or not. But the point to be observed is this, that in the confusion, rising more or less from the seating, and considering that there are in the present Chamber some 130 Members who have not been sitting in Parliament before, and the fact that Parliament has only been sitting about a month, the Assistant Clerk must find it rather difficult to name and locate each member on both sides of the Chamber. But in the first division, Mr. Beauchene named each man when it came his turn to vote, before he rose to his feet. That is as one man rises to record his vote and he is checked off. Mr. Beauchene calls the name of the next one before he rises to answer to the call of his name. This little incident seemed worthy of remark, as it was quite a feat under the circumstances, that the vote should be taken without the slightest hitch or hesitation. After the vote was taken, scarcely anything else beyond a formal motion was made, and the House adjourned a few minutes before 11 o'clock. On the following day, the Government had a meeting in council, and desired to enforce the regulations without any delay, to call to the colors the needed men as fast as they could be

was taken, it was found that three members of the opposition, namely, Mr. Duncanson, of West Middlesex; Mr. W. C. Kennedy, of North Essex; and Mr. A. B. McCoig, of Kent, had voted with the Government on Mr. Lapointe's amendment. On this amendment, the vote stood: For 62. Against 117, a majority for the Government of 55. Then came the vote on the main motion. Before this was taken, some of the Members left the House, as they were desirous of catching, out-going trains for their home for the week end. The result of this vote stood; for the motion 114, against 65, Government majority 49. Thus ended this memorable debate.

A few matters of not very serious importance are forced upon the attention of an on-looker in a Parliamentary division. In the first place, one can scarcely deprecate from his mind how much the Members of Parliament are like school boys, after all; for in the very case under review, after the first division had been taken and the Members all remained in their seats, the second division on Lapointe's amendment would have taken in a very short time. But immediately after the first vote was recorded, the Members trooped into lobbies and there was chaos. It was necessary for the Sergeant-at-Arms and the Whips to call them back. This took some time, and of course, delayed the taking of the division. Probably the time was not so exceedingly important that the loss of this brief space should be strenuously objected to, but it just amounts to this, that it strikes one, in particular the uninitiated, that it was unnecessary. Another feature that could scarcely help being noted was the facility with which the Assistant Clerk of the House is able to call off the divisions without a hitch. It must be explained that the taking of a division occupies some 30 to 40 minutes. The duties of the Assistant Clerk are to call out the names of each member, as he rises to record his vote, and it is checked by the Clerk, on the list which is before him. Now under ordinary circumstances, in the regular Parliamentary Chamber, for instance, in the old House of Commons, all Members are allocated to specific seats, and it would not necessitate more than a very brief time for the officials of the House to know and be able to place each Member. But in the present improvised Parliamentary Chamber, Members are not placed in regular seats. As a matter of fact, apart from the front rows on the Government side and possibly the front row on the Opposition side, the rank and file take such seats as they find unoccupied when they come in. It amounts more or less to a grab game. Those who come early have a chance of securing a fairly good seat, but those coming later take what they can find. Under these conditions, a Member might not be seated in the same place twice in succession during the different sittings of a week. It is true that ordinarily they get about somewhere in the same vicinity in the Chamber, whether in the same seat or not. But the point to be observed is this, that in the confusion, rising more or less from the seating, and considering that there are in the present Chamber some 130 Members who have not been sitting in Parliament before, and the fact that Parliament has only been sitting about a month, the Assistant Clerk must find it rather difficult to name and locate each member on both sides of the Chamber. But in the first division, Mr. Beauchene named each man when it came his turn to vote, before he rose to his feet. That is as one man rises to record his vote and he is checked off. Mr. Beauchene calls the name of the next one before he rises to answer to the call of his name. This little incident seemed worthy of remark, as it was quite a feat under the circumstances, that the vote should be taken without the slightest hitch or hesitation. After the vote was taken, scarcely anything else beyond a formal motion was made, and the House adjourned a few minutes before 11 o'clock. On the following day, the Government had a meeting in council, and desired to enforce the regulations without any delay, to call to the colors the needed men as fast as they could be

**Provincial Legislature**

April 19th, 1918.  
 Hon. Murdoch McKinnon, Commissioner of Agriculture, speaking on the debate on the Budget completely answered the criticisms made on his department. He was pleased to note that his department got the most attention in the debate and that not only the members engaged in agriculture are experts along that line but that those of other callings are experts also.

One thing we have not heard very often is the fact that for the last few years this is the only province in the Dominion of Canada that has not had to go to the money markets of the world to borrow money. All the money needed to finance the heavy liabilities left us by our predecessors can readily be gotten from the banks at 5 per cent, a lower rate than is now paid on loans by the Dominion of Canada. This speaks well for the careful management of our finances by the present Government, which has not in the last six years increased the liabilities of the province one dollar, while in addition to paying for the ordinary expenses of the Government it has spent large sums in permanent works.

The new member for the Third District (A. E. McLean) had dealt for a considerable time on the financial condition of the Province. Among other things he claimed that the annual deficit in the School Supply Department was \$2000 a year. To make a pretense of being within the mark however he would call it \$1680. Like most other calculations it was a matter of guesswork. If the hon. gentlemen had informed himself correctly he would find that instead of a decrease of 5c per book in the cost of school books there has been a decrease of 19c each on 14 of the books in general use.

In 1916 the Department of Education in Nova Scotia sent a man here to investigate our School Supply and the result is that now the Province has a School Book Bureau along the same lines.

Teachers from the Western Provinces who know the high quality and low price of our school supplies are sending here to have their wants supplied. The Leader of the Opposition had figured out for the present Government a deficit of \$204,000 while the members for the Second District had one of \$249,000. He would like to know how they reconciled these two statements. However it was not strange to find such a difference. As both calculations were not founded on fact, the results could not be expected to tally. Starting with the fact that the debt of the Province has not been increased under the present government the plain result was that there was no deficit for the period.

The Hon. Member for the Second District of Prince had made the statement that Dairying had gone down every year since the present government came into power. While Dairying had gone down in some lines and in some places it had increased in other lines and in other places to a greater extent.

Mr. A. E. McLean who followed the Commissioner of Agriculture on the Budget dealt with the finances of the Province and criticized the administration of the Department of Agriculture. In regard to Education he said that no better man could be in control of the Department than the Acting Superintendent Mr. Shaw.

Mr. W. M. Lea was the next Speaker. He was not in favor of cutting down the grant for agriculture, but if the people of this agricultural country persisted in sending to parliament so many representatives who were not farmers they must expect that sort of thing.

He thought Exhibitions should still receive a grant as they were a stimulus to greater production which was necessary not only for the time of the war but also for the period at the close thereof, when burdens will still be upon us.

If the revenue cannot be made to meet expenditure some means should be taken to increase it. It looks as if the Government was afraid to increase taxation, this awful bugbear, Members should see the need of this thing and should face it as it should be faced.

He thought that the road tax should be increased to two dollars when a man had to be paid that amount for a days work on the road.

The Premier informed him that a bill had been proposed for that purpose. Mr. Lea concluded by criticizing the Road Masters saying that they were not doing their duty especially in the matter of looking after the winter roads.

Mr. J. A. Dewar who spoke on the Budget Monday evening made an excellent speech. He said that there had been much discussion on Agriculture and something had been said about the part taken in it by the lawyers in the House, he thought that perhaps the reason why there were so many lawyers in the House was the fact that their training especially fits them for the deliberative work that has to be done here and for the campaign work of election.

In regard to the financial situation he said that according to the statement of the Provincial Auditor the money paid out was \$22,000 greater than the money received, but as part of the money paid out was invested in Sinking Funds and applied to reduce outstanding liabilities there is a small surplus, which is proven to be correct by the fact that it agrees with the amount by which we have reduced the liabilities of the province. Further proof of this contention is afforded by the Bank Managers who have from time to time made an External Audit of the provincial finances.

These men could not afford to have their reputation affected by the publication of anything but a correct statement.

The Hon. Member from Victoria seemed to think that the levying of taxation was a great ideal in statesmanship but he would remind him that the true system of government is based on our efficient public service carried on with economy, that the propositions in that service should be from merit and not from party pull. If you have that progress is sure to follow. The statement has been made that there has been no progress in Education in the last ten or fifteen years.

If so there must be something radically wrong as we are now spending \$52000 annually more on Education than was spent in 1911.

public roads were never better attended to but did not think the double track system in winter was feasible in this country.

It has been said that the Government did nothing towards increased production on the farms. Of course it is the farmers who directly increase production but the Government can assist the farmers. Take the matter of matted mud, 50,000 thousand tons have been distributed among the farmers. At 6 tons to the acre this would cover 800 acres. I have used it myself and know that it will increase the crop 2 tons to the acre thus the total increase in hay would be \$320,000. With potatoes \$50 an acre would be a fair increase or a total increase of \$450,000 and the extra fertility would not be in the land for one year only but added to by the increased supply of stable manure would continue so long as the lands were carefully farmed.

In the matter of dairying he thought that the scarcity of labor in latter years had decreased the output of dairy products.

About the hog question there had been much squealing but it was a case of much noise, little wool.

The farmers who bought the imported broad sows did so with their eyes open and they do not need much advice on that question. The way these poor swine were slaughtered was make one think they were the original brand of razor backed clam diggers of the North Shore.

The School Garden is a beautiful, splendid thing, and Home Projects do a lot of good, but he thought that perhaps both were over-rated, not great factors in increased production. Dr. Robertson has said you cannot produce by legislation. You can strip a farmer of his civilian clothes and put on a military suit. If he has not the sand in him or the courage or patriotism to defend his country and home he should be made to do it, but to compel a man to farm in a certain way, you cannot do it.

Fault had been found that at a Dairymen's convention it was said that the great aim was not wealth. It was one of our great educationists who made that statement and I have so much respect for the man that I cannot feel that he was very far astray.

"I'll face the land to hastening ills a prey, Where wealth accumulates And men decay"

There is no doubt that the Agricultural Grant in producing good results in this country. I have no doubt some of it was spent in high salaries and wisely too, when you get a man of ability and business capacity, of intense humanity and sympathy with the workers of the soil, a large salary is not too much for him.

In conclusion he urged the members when they went home should do all they could towards increased production by every influence in their power. The plough will have its part in winning the war.

He was followed by Mr. G. E. Hughes whose remarks were principally confined to Falconwood Asylum. He criticized the present management of the farm and the Government in connection with Dr. Goodwill's departure.

Mr. Jas. Paton followed and gave a very clear and convincing exposition of the provincial finances. He showed that since the present Government assumed power they had not only paid the ordinary expenses of Government out of revenue but had also spent large sums in permanent works without increasing the debt of the province one cent.

Messrs. Howatt, A. A. McDonald and McMillan followed with short speeches, and the motion to go into committee passed at 1 a.m. Tuesday April 23rd.

Mr. Bell rose to a question of privilege that he had been misreported by the Guardian. It was not true that he had voted for the War and Health tax on the third reading, a vote was not taken.

He also claimed to be misreported by the statement that he strongly concurred with the Home Project Movement.

Mr. Johnston on a question of privilege claimed to have been misreported by the Guardian in stating that he had said in the discussion on the Connolly Bill that there was an Irish Catholic (Continued on page 3)