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## Semi-Weekly Telegraph and The News

ST. JOHN, N. B., MARCH 18, 1916.

### WAR COMMENT.

If Maximilian Harden, speaking unofficially for the German government, is anxious that there shall be an early discussion of possible terms of peace it may be inferred that his real reason for desiring a conference is not only the industrial situation in Germany but the terrible losses of men which Germany has met in battle, which have brought the Kaiser no real profit, but in the light of which he now sees himself upon the edge of the abyss.

In the American Review of Reviews for March Mr. Frank H. Simonis takes up the question of Germany's real losses and reaches the conclusion that the number of Germans put permanently out of action since the beginning of the war is about three millions. Mr. Simonis notes that the French losses were recently given as 2,500,000, which would be fifty per cent of the greatest number of men France is ever thought to have had engaged in the war—5,000,000. As the French have done less fighting than the Germans, because Germany has been engaged on two fronts, the German losses, figured by the French ratio, would be in the vicinity of 4,000,000, divided as follows: Killed, 1,250,000; wounded, 2,000,000; captured, 750,000. The usual figures given for Germany have been about one million less than these, and Mr. Simonis says the explanation is to be found in the belief of the Allies that only those men who are permanently disabled. While the French General Staff fixes Germany's losses at more than 4,000,000, Mr. Simonis says a conservative estimate of the permanent losses, the suffering made up of men killed or so seriously wounded as to be out of action until the war is at least 4,000,000.

Assuming that Germany's permanent loss has been 3,000,000, Mr. Simonis says they still have 2,000,000 men available. Of these about 8,000,000 are necessary to hold their lines, another million is engaged in garrisons, on communications and other services, which would leave them about a million in reserve. At the present rate of wastage Germany would be able to fight until August without actually suffering a decline in effectiveness. Mr. Simonis, however, inclines to the belief that Germany has been concealing its losses to some extent. He says:

"If the French figures are correct the point where exhaustion will begin to tell has already set in. If the German figures are correct, there is no likelihood that Germany will run short of men in any time within which it is reasonable to suppose the war will continue. But the German figures can hardly be correct, because the experience of both the British and the French, who know their own casualties and use them as a basis for estimating the German points to a far greater German total and more fully justifies the conclusion that the German figures, as shown by the posted lists, represent only the permanent wastage and not the temporary, incident to the removal of men by wounds which are not serious enough to keep them permanently out of the line."

Writing just before the attack on Verdun, Mr. Simonis examined the chances for a successful German offensive on the western front this spring. He said:

"Now, it must be conceded at once that if the Germans could win a great victory in the West—take Calais, Boulogne, and the Channel Coast—the moral effect would be incalculable and might lead with brief delay to the making of peace, which is postponed now because of the belief in all Allied capitals that Germany is approaching exhaustion, that the war has been won. If Germany could succeed now, where she failed at the Yser, in the battles of Flanders fifteen months ago, if she could now straighten her line out in France and by shortening it reduce the number of men required to guard it, her success would be a staggering blow, particularly to France."

"But is the thing possible? Frankly, I cannot believe it, because it seems to me impossible that Germany could succeed now, when she is outnumbered in the West and has to face equal if not superior resources in munition and in guns, when she has to break through long stretches of permanent works that her opponents, when there were 100,000 British instead of 1,000,000 in the field, at least the weight of probability is against such a success now."

He reminds us that prophecy is unwise in a war like this, but while he thought it possible that Germany might attack heavily in the West—he did a few days after his article was written—he pointed out that before the Germans could make a real breach in the Allied

line, "the Allies, having superior numbers, would be able to make a concentration of greater numbers behind the danger point and the German advance would be checked." What has happened at Verdun during the last three weeks appears to confirm his judgment that a German offensive in the West must fail, though, remembering his warning that prophecy is unwise, it must be noted that the movement at Verdun is not yet at an end.

### BEFORE CONSCRIPTION.

From many parts of Canada come reports of resolutions by recruiting committees, and other bodies, favoring conscription. Conscription may come. It must come if the voluntary system or some modification of it does not produce the men needed. The question of conscription is one which only the Federal government can really deal with. National registration, which would come before conscription, can be carried out only under Dominion authority, for methods approaching compulsion must be applied all over the country if at all. There are many who think the government should long ago have registered the men of war age, not only in order to get records but to avoid drawing unduly upon occupations in which men are needed to carry on work vital to the country.

"Young men of what for lack of a better name may be called the middle class," say the Toronto Globe, "are being called to arms. 'Day laborers and mechanics,' says the Globe, 'with little to lose except their lives and their health, but the comfortable middle class youth needs much urging in Canada, as he did in the United Kingdom. It would be well were the higher officials of the Militia Department in charge of recruiting to make special efforts to attract this class of the population to the colors, rather than the already depleted artisan and farm labor classes. That there are in this city alone many thousands of possible recruits from middle class homes is apparent from a casual stroll in the vicinity of the large office buildings at the closing hour of business. The methods of recruiting, so far as Ottawa is concerned, have been far too haphazard, and the officers and sergeants who are actually doing the hard, discouraging work of raising men have not been supported as they should have been by the authorities. Canada needs a Derby who will point unflinchingly to the districts and the classes of population which have failed in their duty, and by entreaty and admonition secure better results. The need is still urgent. Let it not be said that in this supreme crisis any section of the Canadian people failed to take its proper share in the defense of civilization."

This whole matter was discussed at length at a representative meeting in Fredericton yesterday and a resolution in favor of a qualified form of conscription was passed unanimously. This and other resolutions adopted are worthy of serious consideration.

### THE NEW BATTALIONS.

Now that the clock shows that the 115th Battalion has passed the 900 mark, those civilians and military men who have been working so earnestly to complete this battalion should have more assistance from the citizens generally. And this is true not only with respect to the 115th but also in connection with the other new battalions throughout the province. The record for last week shows that New Brunswick did better than for many weeks previous, and with the coming spring weather and the chance of getting overseas without undue delay, this certainly is the time for young men to get into uniform.

It is expected that there will be heavy fighting on the British front very soon, and the Canadian divisions along the trenches will be requiring reinforcements. It is most unfair to those who want early to the war to leave them unsupported. The young men who have already joined the new battalions recognize this, and are only too anxious to get across the water and to their share. But there still are in New Brunswick some thousands of physically fit men of service age who are unable to present any reasonable excuse for avoiding the recruiting lists. A few hundreds of these would suffice to complete the 115th, the 140th, the 182nd, and some of the other battalions.

In many quarters the suggestion is being made that a national register will have to be adopted before Canada secures the 500,000 men promised by the government. That should not be so, but it is plain that the voluntary system will have to do much better during the next few weeks if it is to satisfy the needs of the hour.

With everything at stake, Canada cannot afford to triffl with this, the leading issue of the day. The future rests upon the shoulders of our young men. Are they going to stand the test?

### A THREAT TO THE U. S.

The United States has been hearing some unpleasant language from Berlin. The message is not likely to contribute to the case of mind of those Americans who argue that their country has nothing to fear from Germany, and who have steadily favored the sort of neutrality which permits the United States to evade its responsibilities as a world power and an upholder of civilization and to continue to profit largely in a business way by reason of the war. A few days ago the New York Globe confronted Americans with an authoritative article from the Frankfurter Zeitung, one of the leading German newspapers. The Frankfurter Zeitung, in the course of an article considering the American position, said:

"With the fall of England, however, Russia and France will automatically collapse like the organs of a body whose

## DEFINITE SHELL CHARGES AS LAID BY HON. WM. PUGSLEY, M. P.

"I, William Pugsley, a member of this house, in support of the motion now under consideration, standing in this house and on my responsibility as a member of this house, declare and charge that the shell committee appointed by the minister of militia and referred to in said motion, fixed excessive and unreasonable prices for shells and for other munitions and goods to be furnished to the British government, which, by arrangement between the British government and the Canadian government were to be paid for in part by Canada.

"That such prices were fixed without competition and were far in excess of what would necessarily have been paid if ordinary business methods had been pursued, thereby involving an unnecessary expenditure of money, millions of dollars, conservatively estimated at least \$30,000,000, which will be improperly taken from the people of the United Kingdom and Canada.

"That the said committee gave large orders at such excessive prices and without competition to companies in which members of the committee were largely interested and of some of which companies members of the said committee were the directing heads.

"That there has been a great and wholly unnecessary delay in furnishing the completed shells for use of the Canadian and British forces at the front.

"That the said shell committee neglected and delayed for an undue period of time to provide the fuses necessary to render the shells effective, and, failing to endeavor to provide for their construction in Canada, as they might have done, proceeded to give and award, through J. Wesley Allison, in the United States, contracts for fuses amounting to \$22,000,000 on which they made an advance of \$3,750,000. That the making of the said contracts through the said Allison was unwise and imprudent and was entered into with the knowledge and connivance of the minister of militia and the shell committee failed to obtain delivery of said fuses for an unreasonable time.

"And I do also charge that the government of Canada had, through the minister of militia to whom the said shell committee reported weekly, knowledge of such irregular and improper methods and acts of the said shell committee, and while having the power at any time to put an end thereto, the said minister improperly consented to such irregular and improper methods and acts, and permitted the same to continue."

Hon. Mr. Pugsley Tuesday in parliament at Ottawa made these specific charges. A few days ago Hon. Robert Borden said in effect that if any member of the house on his responsibility of a member would stand up in his place and make a formal charge against any member of the government in connection with the Canadian shell transactions a full and free investigation would be made.

Tuesday Hon. Mr. Pugsley complied but Hon. Arthur Meighen's solicitor-general, was put up to answer him and, despite the premier's assertion, investigation was refused.

heart has been bored through. Then, also, America will remain isolated, and must for her part accept of conditions which we impose, because in the peace treaties with our European foes we can, among other things, also demand the handing over of all large battlefields and harbours, whereby our fleet would become seven times the strength of the American navy. Then America would be simultaneously compelled to surrender and as a matter of course, would not only be compelled to give up all the interned German liners, but also pay the war expenditures of the Germanic Powers and their allies."

The German idea, to pursue this uncomfortable revelation, is that the Allies will be unable to pay indemnities after the war, and that therefore the United States will have to pay heavily because it has sold munitions and supplies to Germany's enemies. The method of payment is thus set forth:

"The Entente Allies will be bankrupt, and thus unable to pay. So Uncle Sam will be the indemnity payer. A round bill, say \$10,000,000,000 to Germany, \$5,000,000,000 to Austria, \$2,000,000,000 to Turkey, and, say, \$1,000,000,000 to Bulgaria. In all \$18,000,000,000—a handsome sum."

The Toronto Globe refers to the German newspaper's article as "plucking the beard of Uncle Sam." If anything, says the Globe, "could stir the Yankee from his engrossing pastime of wealth accumulation and remind him how futile is his faith in the omnipotence of the Monroe Doctrine as a national asset, that wards off all dangers, it is this impudent boast of a responsible and representative German newspaper, which is not the idle chatter of the street, but of the heads of the German Admiralty—the Admiralty that is responsible for the behavior of German submarines." The American people now know what to expect were the Prussian to emerge as victor in the European war. Well may the New York Globe exclaim that "gratitude is due to our German friends for this minute description of the part the United States is to play in the grand settlement." The Germans have snatched a brief interval in which to turn from their ghastly pastime of murder on the high seas to pluck the beard of Uncle Sam.

### THE SHELL CHARGES.

Sir Robert Borden said in the House of Commons last week that no investigation of the opposition's shell charges would be made unless some Member of Parliament made a formal charge against members of the government in connection with the business. Hon. William Pugsley rose in his place in the House on Tuesday and made formal charges such as leave the government no excuse for further evasion of the issue.

Hon. Mr. Pugsley had prepared his case with care, and he accepted complete responsibility for the grave accusations he placed upon the records of the House. He pointed out that the old shell committee, appointed by Sir Sam Hughes, provided shells and other munitions as part of the cost of which was to be paid for by Canada. That shell committee reported frequently to the Minister of Militia, and Hon. Mr. Pugsley charged that its methods involved an unnecessary expenditure of an immense amount, estimated conservatively at \$30,000,000, which amount will be taken improperly from the people of the United Kingdom and the people of Canada.

He charged, further, That the committee gave large orders at excessive prices and without competition to companies in which members of the committee were largely interested and of some of which companies members of the said committee were the directing heads.

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shell game—the problem is to guess what shell the price is under. Sir Sam is one of the ablest explainers in the whole world. Anything will do that gets by for the minute. Thus the explanation gets a good start and it takes the truth a long time to catch up with it."

Sir Robert Borden has closed the door against a sworn inquiry. Feeling safe because of the knowledge that there can now be no proper investigation, the Standard seeks to assume that the country generally is not aware of the grave need for an inquiry as disclosed in the House of Commons. It shouts angrily that certain Liberal firms secured shell contracts, and offers that as proof that the old shell committee was merely another of the silly developments with which the Standard has made its readers familiar.

The country knows why Sir Robert Borden stifled the investigation. The Standard's friends in this province and in the Dominion at large have not had much luck with investigations during the last few years. Naturally they escape from them as frequently as possible. But the country knows.

A LITTLE FREE ADVERTISING.

A modest political journal called the Canadian Liberal Monthly is issued under the auspices of the Liberal party of Canada. It is published in Ottawa, and is widely circulated throughout the Dominion, for the purpose of keeping the electors informed as to the progress of political events, and protecting them from misstatements made by Conservative Members of Parliament in the House and Conservative newspapers in the various provinces. The circulation of the Monthly, it now appears, does not command the approval of the St. John Standard, and Monday the government newspaper devoted a column and a quarter of editorial matter to condemnation of the Monthly and its editor, Hon. William Pugsley, Mr. Carvell and other Liberals whose very existence it resents.

The main contention of the Standard, so far as any contention is to be found in the mass of angry words, is that the Canadian Liberal Monthly ought not to be circulated in time of war, inasmuch as it is a partisan publication designed to disturb the public mind and stir up political feeling when all parties should be devoting themselves to the prosecution of the war itself. If this contention is sound the Standard, which is daily allied with grossly abusive partisan matter, of degrading tone, and devoid of any purpose unless it be calculated misrepresentation of the Liberal party. Certainly any policy which would result in the suspension of the Liberal Monthly would be a gross misrepresentation of the Liberal party. The Standard is a mild and reasonable publication. The fact advertising it is getting will do no harm.

It is not difficult to understand why the Standard begins to display anxiety concerning the overbearing of the party press as that true in dishonestly interpreted in Conservative circles. In these days the publication of news and views concerning matters political necessarily keeps the public constantly informed as to the grave troubles which Conservatives are encountering all over Canada. What happened in Manitoba a short time ago was everywhere recognized as deeply significant. Then came the verdict in Peel, showing how the public resents the presentation of tame candidates by the Conservative machine. We have some similar cases in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia upon which a verdict is to be expected before long. And then, like a thunderclap in the ears of Conservatives, came the by-election results in Vancouver and Victoria. The people of Canada have made no trace with political dishonesty and incompetence. Hence the Standard's lamentations.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

The convention at Rexton Wednesday of electors opposed to the local government was the largest ever held in Kent County, and a strong ticket was placed in the field. It is highly significant that the delegates included many former and well known supporters of the present administration.

The shrill screaming of the Standard and other government