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# THE CANADIAN FORWARD

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## A Rambler's Review

### COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE THEM.

#### A Demobilization Problem.

One of the most serious of the problems that confronts Canada, as well as Britain, after the war is the question of the demobilization of war factories. The demobilization of the armies will in itself be a complicated affair involving a heavy strain on the country, but it will be more easy of accomplishment if arrangements have been perfected for the demobilization of all the military allied industries and their adjustment to peace conditions.

Already far-seeing manufacturers are urging on the British Government the necessity of insuring the country against violent slumps after the war. A writer in the trade supplement of The London Times points out that when peace comes there will be an enormous quantity of raw materials and goods on order by the Government. He suggests that any temptation to economize by breaking contracts and offering compensation should be resisted, otherwise the market will be flooded with raw materials and goods at greatly reduced prices, bringing ruin to manufacturers. Another suggestion made is with regard to the release of the enormous motor auxiliaries at the front. Thousands of motor cars, trucks, and bicycles will be discarded at the end of the war. The makers of these, desirous of preventing a slump on the market, propose to take over their own machines at a valuation and repair them for sale to the public. Any violent oscillation of the markets after the war should be guarded against, but as the manufacturers of war supplies have reaped a rich harvest it should be made difficult for them to deprive the general public of the legitimate bargains and fall in prices that peace must inevitably bring.

### AS SEEN FROM THE LABOR BENCHES AT WESTMINSTER

(By J. R. Macdonald)

Carson's Capitalist contingent is angry—very angry. The British Capitalist Combine which, since the Germans have been cleared out of Nigeria, has reduced the price paid to the poor negroes for palm kernels by £4 per ton (from £14 to £10) and at the same time has jumped the price to the British purchased by about £10 per ton, is raging mad because the Government is not going to hand over the ex-German properties to the Combine at the Combine's own price.

The Government is actually "unpatriotic" enough to allow neutrals to come in and bid for the property.

If the Government were not itself actuated by Capitalist ideas and ideals, it would, as good business, have stuck to these ex-German properties and worked them for the State, as Northcliffe's Times has been suggesting; and a fat picking there would have been; one M.P., Bigland, declaring that there is a potential profit of £15,000,000 a year which could have been devoted to paying off the War Debt.

But the Government decided to sell

the properties to the highest bidder in accordance with the best anti-Socialist advice they could get. Now, selling to the highest bidder means that the Combine will be compelled to pay a market price for the properties, and



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Sir Ned and his friends were in a tearing rage.

Sir Henry Drayton, Chairman of the Board of Railway Commissioners of Canada, giving evidence before the Dominion Royal Commission, has recommended the establishment of an inter-Imperial transportation service to be conducted by the Imperial Government. He suggests further that for five years after the end of the war the ships now requisitioned for the transportation of war supplies should be used for that purpose, and that maximum rates for ocean freights should be fixed.

Anybody who still fears that the Kaiser is coming over here to impose Prussianism on us, has a curious mental make-up. Berlin Bill is hardly the sort of man to spend time and money (not to speak of cannon-fodder) in carrying coals to Newcastle, and if the job has been properly done already, Bill is not the boy to waste himself trying to do it again. Here is a list of questions being put by detectives to "a number of respectable citizens of Birmingham" (see Manchester Guardian Nov. 9, 1916):

1. Are you now or have you been connected with (a) the No-Conscription Fellowship; (b) the National Council Against Conscription; (c) the Union of Democratic Control, or any of them, or with any other society or body publishing matter directed against conscription or recruiting or the upkeep of military forces, and, if so, in what capacity?

2. Have you supplied any money to any such society or societies, and, if so, to what amount, and when?

3. Have you supplied any money either privately or through any society to which you belong or of which you have knowledge for the upkeep or support or payment of propagandists whose efforts have been directed against

the war either directly or indirectly?

4. You are required to produce for inspection your cheque and bank pass books and to answer any questions in regard to any item.

5. Have you done anything to prevent or attempt to prevent the circulation of literature as to conscientious objection amongst persons other than accredited members of the Society of Friends or Christadelphians or other bodies holding religious objections to bearing arms, or have you permitted



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or been aware of indiscriminate circulation of such literature by any such society?

6. What assistance have you given or are you giving to any person or persons in regard to the circulation of literature which has been the subject of convictions in different parts of England under the Defence of the Realm Regulations?

7. Have you been present at or associated with or have you assisted with money or otherwise the holding of meetings in public or private at which speeches have been made against conscription or recruiting or the upkeep of the military forces?

8. Have you now or have you had on your premises or under your control any literature directed against conscription or recruiting or the upkeep of military forces or the prosecution of the war, and if you now have any such literature you are required to produce it.

9. In regard to the Societies mentioned in Question 1, have you seen any draft or proof of the publications of those societies before their dissemination, or have you asked to see such drafts or proofs?

10. After convictions have taken place in regard to the publication issued by the above societies, or any of them, have you withdrawn your support from the society in question or taken any steps to prevent further dissemination of the literature in question?

The country is going to the dogs. The Patriots have quarrelled. The Right Hon. Sir Alfred Moritz Mond has voted against the Prime Minister, Frederick Handel Booth has voted against Sir William Bull, Sir Clifford John Cory has voted against William Brace, and the Right Hon. A. Bonar Law has voted with me on the subject of pine nuts and drink trade marks.

Bad as all that is, things are even worse. For Mr. Bonar Law has taken

the gloves off to Sir Edward Carson. This is some of the sparkling dialogue which flashed through the speeches:—

Mr. Bonar Law—Nobody knows better than my right hon. friend that the resolution as it stands is absolutely futile.

Sir Edward Carson (pulling a long face and looking thunder)—I do not know that at all.

Mr. B. L.—My right hon. friend indulged in a good deal of rhetoric. I do not admire rhetoric.

Sir E. C. looks hang-you!—I'll pay-you-out kind of style.

Mr. B. L.—If the French Government had protested, "no one would have been louder in his condemnation than my right hon. friend."

Sir E. C.—Absolutely untrue!

Sir E. C.—Not at all. Nonsense!

Mr. B. L.—My right hon. friend is not very polite. . . . On this question I am as little likely to talk nonsense as he is.

And so on.

The pother was about sales of land, property, and trade marks in Nigeria, and there is a story and a moral attached to them. Sir Edward Carson and his friends, like Sir H. Dalsiel, wanted to keep everybody out but British-born folk. The bulk of palm kernels has been sent to Hamburg to be crushed, two British crushers not being enterprising or Napoleonic enough to take the trade. After the war, a committee of interested persons, with the exception of an official and another, was appointed, and it recommended that an export duty of two pounds a ton should be imposed on these kernels, but that the duty should be refunded on those sent to Great Britain.

I and one or two others objected that that was a scheme to exploit Nigeria in the interests of a few Liverpool merchants, that it meant robbing the native, that a ring would be formed to end competition and keep down prices. We were lectured in the best Presbyterian-elder style by Mr. Steele Maitland, and Mr. Bonar Law used a stolen letter to confound us. That was the first act of the comedy.

Now, Mr. Steele Maitland has come round and has rehashed our old speeches. Since the combine of merchants was formed after the war, he told us that the price of palm kernels paid to the natives had gone down, whilst their price in Liverpool had gone up; that whereas before the war the difference in price per ton between Lagos and Liverpool was £4 to £5, since then it has been as much as £14. The friends of the combine said freights had risen. Yes, but "not a fraction of the excess." That is proved by the increased profits of the trading companies.

The merchants took this drubbing from Mr. Steele Maitland as badly as they had taken it from me a few months before. They interrupted and buzzed, and every one who spoke for them was cheered frantically. It was a fine epul-

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