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From Mr. O'Connor.

Memo re General Currie's Remarks at Montreal to the delegates to the Tax Conference and Civil Servants Research Conference held under the auspices of the Citizens Research Institute of Canada, September 11th.

Speaking to such an organization as mentioned in the heading, Currie favoured the conferring of more power and freedom of action upon the expert officials of our various civil services. Believed would tend to economy. Reason, governments more open to practical blackmail of local selfishness which makes demands not consonant with national patriotism but which governments unable to withstand. Thus are expenditures with incident taxation increased.

Proceeded that many wonder if expenditure and taxation would be as great if governments had available expert advice, or if it had followed such advice. Evidently thought that problem should be resolved negatively, because proceeded to illustrations leading to such a conclusion.

Refers, illustratively, to war expenditure. Doesn't know all about the expenditures of the war but KNOWS that it cost hundreds of millions of dollars more than it should have cost if the expert advice that was available had been listened to. Cites four instances of refusal or omission to follow expert advice. (1) At least 100,000 men enlisted and sent overseas who were of no use to the army. (2) Ross rifle. (3) Harness and (4) Oliver equipment. As to the 100,000 men he is quite indefinite. In fact he makes no charge at all. All he says is that "The expert medical advice which was available was apparently in many of these cases ignored." He does not purport to know or to say that the government did ignore expert advice in any case. He surmises, but, worse than this, he raises an ambiguity - he does not make it apparent whether the whole 100,000 that was of no use was so because of physical or other defect discoverable on medical examination. Still worse, he "ignores" the possibility of medical error. All this upon the assumption that the whole 100,000 was "of no use to the army". His actual words as quoted by the Montreal Star lead to a conclusion that the whole 100,000 were of no use because below the required standard physically or mentally. The charge, if any, must, then, be that the government sent over men who had been rejected by the doctors. This charge is sufficiently answered by a mere denial. The government followed the advice of experts with the result that it imposed upon General Currie, if he is right, and rightly reported, 100,000 useless soldiers. From all this, in logic, if an army may be established by logic, we should rather reach the conclusion that a better way to establish an army would be to disregard the advice of doctors. In good sense, however, we realize that experts, like all other men, are not infallible, and that their mistakes are as likely and as frequent as those of governments, though different.

As to the Ross rifle, harness and Oliver equipment Currie is more specific. The expert advice, he says, was given but was "not listened to." Hence he observes, facetiously, if his audience intends to offer any advice to governments don't be disappointed if they do not pay much attention to it - the advisers being, presumably, experts. Currie does not identify the experts who were not listened to. The precise data in answer to his charge will be indicated at a later stage of these notes, but it may be mentioned here, surely, as in point that one bound to rely upon experts may be hard pressed to select his expert and may justifiably err in the selection of him. For instance Oliver was an expert. So was Ross. So was Hughes. So was Sir Fred. Borden. Rifles, harness and equipment were all selected and furnished upon the advice of experts. If these erred there seems only one recourse - the abandonment of our system of representative institutions, (for these cannot function properly unless properly advised by proper experts) and the establishment of a system of expert selectors of experts who, looking far into the future, knowing everything in advance as well as those who, after the event and in close contact with it are looking back, will select infallible experts. These must have not merely the capacity of being always right, but also that of being able to convince always a majority of the people whom they serve that they are right, and of keeping the people so convinced. It might be, however, that General Currie, if entrusted with the organization of the

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