

The Case Against Federal Control Of The Canadian Patriotic Fund

The past twelve months has seen a large increase in the ranks of those who maintain that the Patriotic Fund should be financed and administered by the federal government. To the uninitiated, this view appears sound and logical. It is significant, however, that among the many men actively engaged in the administration of the fund, the doctrine of federal control or maintenance has few supporters. In daily touch with the work and the problems surrounding it they are able to foresee, more accurately than others, the difficulties and disadvantages of such a plan.

1. The burden on the country would be heavily increased. The government could not discriminate. It would have to pay the same amount to each person, even as it now pays a uniform separation allowance. The fund pays only in case of need. There are about 105,000 families drawing separation allowance, but of these only 60,000 are on the fund. The average of payments to these 60,000 families is \$192 a year. If the government administered the fund and paid \$192 to every family, the cost over present system would be \$6,600,000 a year. And every dollar of this would go to people who are really not in need of it. But this estimate is based on the "average" payment from the fund. If the government administered it, and paid only this average, the families now below the average would receive too much, those above it, too little. The alternative would be the payment to each family of a sum equal to the maximum paid by the fund. The maximum

JOFFRE A STRONG, UNSELFISH MAN

Paul Scott Mowrer Describes Personality of Great French Leader

Cool and Confident—Very Deliberate, Thoughtful and Most Impressive in His Certainty of Victory

(By Paul Scott Mowrer.)
Paris, France, Sept. 16.—Many photographs, many lively cinema films had familiarized me with the direct gaze, the white moustache, the brooding smile of Gen. Joffre. They had given me an impression of a full-checked energetic man not over medium height and inclining to stoutness. How would the original compare with the pictures? Our automobiles came to a halt. We followed our soldier guide, straightening our neckties and nervously brushing the dust from our clothes as we walked. Presently in the gravel pathway, we met Gen. Joffre's special chief of staff, a trim slender man with a small grey moustache. He had the jaunty figure of a boy, but his eyes looked old and tired.

"This is the fellow who really does the work," one of my colleagues whispered admiringly.
The implication was that Joffre is merely a puppet, so to speak, in the hands of Gen. Joffre. I have heard several such legends since the war began. Some journalists have a peculiar way of complicating things. The plain fact is

not sufficient. They must give you the "inside story," and where there is none, somebody's invention quickly supplies the deficiency. Doubtless Gen. Joffre is a very able officer, but I do not believe Gen. Joffre is his or anybody's puppet. Second to the generalissimo in command is Gen. Castelnau, chief of staff. This famous leader received us in his chart-papered headquarters. Small, steps, well-built, with piercing black eyes, and a grey tuft, French style, on his under lip, he seemed the embodiment of decisive energy.

The building where the commander in chief of the French armies stays when he is not touring the front is at once elegant and simple, calm and dignified. It is marked by an absolute lack of military nonsense.

Tall and Powerful
No splendid mounted cavalry mount guard at the door, no soldiers present arms along the corridors. Doubtless the general is well guarded, but he is certainly guarded unostentatiously. We filed through a dining room where a table was laid for eight or ten people. The menu card lying face up on the snowy cloth bespoke plain and moderate fare. Then, almost before we knew it, we were in the great reception room.

But in my turn I found myself shaking a cordial hand and looking into a pair of blue eyes which I recognized.

We ranged ourselves in a semi-circle, facing Joffre. He stood in front of his flat topped desk, shifting his weight from one gaitered leg to the other. He was dressed in the uniform of an artillery officer—black jacket and red riding breeches, with wide black stripes. He wore no weapon, no medal. Only three small silver stars on his coat sleeve denoted his rank. Was this, after all, the man I had seen so often at the cinema? He seemed the same, and yet not. Instead of a medium-sized rather stout man, I saw a man tall and powerfully

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discontinue their subscriptions, injustice would be worked. The people thus taxed would be taxed again by the federal authorities, and would then bear a double share of the burden. The municipalities which are taxing themselves to maintain the fund would be bearing a burden of three-fold taxation. How the fund by municipal and provincial taxation is not generally understood. The governments of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan are under pledge to contribute large sums, while municipal councils in all parts of the Dominion are similarly engaged. For the most part, these obligations extend into or over the year 1917. Can any good reason be assigned why this mass of patriotic effort, this volume of self-sacrifice, should now be declared useless? Yet if the federal government assumes the fund as a duty incumbent on it, equity would require that the provinces and municipalities be relieved of their self-imposed burdens. But to the public mind, the burden of this is a crowning objection. The burden would be handed down, and future taxpayers, and the very men whose families we are pledged to support would be called on to bear their share of the cost.

4. The richer members of the community would not bear their fair share. The voluntary system makes large demands on the men of wealth. Even those among them who are not generous givers, nor particularly public-spirited, feel the call of the fund is so insistent, its objects are so laudable, its sympathy with its aims is so universal, that they give to it freely. Abandon the voluntary system, and the wealthier classes will bear a relatively insignificant part of the load, for our method of raising revenue by customs tariff does not reach their wealth as the British income tax reaches the richer classes in the United Kingdom. It is safe to say that the greater part of the money raised for the fund has come from the pockets of the people who are best able to meet the demand.

5. A great opportunity for serving the state will be removed. The fund in its call on both the generosity and the industry of the individual, has done much to promote the well-being of Canada. Men and women, whose public-spirit has lain dormant for want of a vehicle through which to express it, have found in the work of the fund scope for self-sacrifice and public service. It is war work. It helps to win the war by freeing men who wish to enlist from the anxiety about their families, that otherwise would hold them back. To give to the fund and to work for it, is "doing our bit." So thousands have found in the fund an outlet for their patriotism, a stimulus to self-sacrifice, and a means of satisfying a conscience relative under the imperative character of the call of duty.

There is another point of view. Even if the government undertook, not the administration of the fund, but the contribution to it of a sum representing the difference between its receipts and expenditures, many of the objections indicated would hold good. The provinces, counties and towns that are self-sufficient would be choked, for if the government promises to raise certain moneys by general taxation, why should an individual pay his own share of the tax and also make a free contribution to recoup the share of the tax to be borne by his fellows? The workers, when they felt the burden pressing heavily, would be disposed to lay it down, satisfied that the government would take it up. The cost would be borne, not by today, but by tomorrow, by the men whose families we are safeguarding while they are safeguarding us.

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In comparison with the letter's swift decisiveness, Joffre seemed slow and meditative. His gaze, as he talked, wandered across our faces, then fell thoughtfully to the floor, then rose again. Only occasionally did I catch a flash of the clear blue eyes. He accompanied his words with a slight movement of his heavy shoulders, as if to give them additional weight. His voice was low, effective, matter of fact, almost hesitating.

He ranged ourselves in a semi-circle, facing Joffre. He stood in front of his flat topped desk, shifting his weight from one gaitered leg to the other. He was dressed in the uniform of an artillery officer—black jacket and red riding breeches, with wide black stripes. He wore no weapon, no medal. Only three small silver stars on his coat sleeve denoted his rank. Was this, after all, the man I had seen so often at the cinema? He seemed the same, and yet not. Instead of a medium-sized rather stout man, I saw a man tall and powerfully

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