

# Campaign Fund Contributions

By LEVI THOMSON, M.P. for Qu'Appelle, Sask.

To the Editor of The Grain Growers' Guide:

Sir:—I had hoped that the suggestion on the front page of your issue of the 11th February would have received more public attention. I hope, however, it has set the public thinking, and even at the risk of being misunderstood, I propose to respond to your invitation. I assume that you intended to refer only to funds for legitimate purposes, and I propose to confine my remarks to such funds. I fancy the public generally do not fully understand what a large amount is required for that purpose. I would estimate the amount at \$10,000 for each ordinary rural constituency in a Dominion election, that is \$5,000 for each candidate. The question now comes up, by whom is this amount to be paid—by the candidates, by the electors, or by outsiders? I am afraid that a very large percentage of the electors expect the greater part of that amount to be paid by outsiders, and I fancy that the general public expects that the amount so contributed will be largely made up by those who have axes to grind. Having reached this stage, other questions face us.

## Why They Contribute

1. What is the object of those contributors?
2. What is the effect on the candidate?
3. What is the effect on the electors, among whom the money is spent?

Probably most of your readers will admit that the money received in this way is given in the hope that it may help in the passage of legislation, or the performance of executive acts in which the contributors are personally interested.

As to the effect on the candidate.

The following is the suggestion which prompted the letter from Mr. Thomson:

## JUST A SUGGESTION

If the 50,000 members of the Grain Growers' Associations were to contribute \$10 each to a fund of \$500,000, and donate it to the campaign treasuries of the two political parties would they then be as solicitous for the welfare of the farmers as they now are for the manufacturers? This is worth investigating, because it would be a cheap way to secure a square deal. The views of the politicians on this subject are requested.

Representative government is based on the theory that the representative shall properly represent his constituency, with no other thought in view than the best interests of the country at large, having special reference to the constituency which he represents, and of whose requirements he should have special knowledge. The success or failure of representative government depends very largely on how far that theory is carried out, but if the representative believes that the money to run his election has been paid by such outside interests, is he not in the impossible position of the man trying to serve two masters? And if those outsiders did not believe that the candidate assisted would not only sometimes, but frequently, be influenced by their assistance, would they give that assistance? No doubt, the assistance given frequently fails to have any effect, but the funds in question would not continue to be contributed unless these selfish outsiders knew by experience that their contributions frequently had the desired effect.

## A Gamble for High Stakes

We now consider what, to my mind, is much the most important question.

What is the effect of this outside support on the electors? To my mind, the effects are all bad. The effect of looking to others for the performance of acts we should do ourselves is always bad. We can hardly be blind to the fact that outside contributions are generally given with a selfish purpose in view; if these outsiders pay money out of their own pockets to secure the election of certain candidates, are they not paying it out with a view to having the amount, and a great deal more, paid back to them? Is it not purely an investment on their part, and a gambling investment at that? Will they not naturally expect more back than they pay out? Without wishing to introduce party politics, may I give an illustration from the last Dominion election campaign. Probably every reader of your paper, whether a friend or foe to reciprocity, believes that the leading manufacturers and financial men of Canada spent fabulous sums to defeat it, and did so for their own selfish purposes. Why did they do this? Surely because they expected to recover from someone sufficient to repay them, not only for the sums advanced, but some consideration for the chances taken.

Where money is raised by voluntary subscriptions many of those interested will fail to put up their share, and many will even fail to put up any portion. In the case under discussion many of those people probably refused because they were life-long Liberals, and would not go back on their party. Others would have conscientious objections, and, as in every case of the kind, there would be those who preferred to let others put up the money while they received a share of the profits. It must always be remembered that elections are very unsafe things to bet on. No one really knows how they are going, until the vote is counted, notwithstanding the fact that many people tell us, after the event, that they knew all about it. If we believe that these people put up their money with the same worldly wisdom they use in investing money on other occasions, it necessarily follows that for every dollar they invested in that campaign, they expected in case of success to receive back five, ten, twenty or perhaps even more, and who is there among us who does not believe that they are actually receiving it? It is true that in many cases the money is thrown away, either thru the defeat of the candidate or party supported, or by reason of the candidate not being affected by such contributions. These people know there must be some failures, and no doubt they make full allowance for such failures.

## The Moral Injury

I do not think the greatest injury to the electors is the financial injury. I noticed in this morning's Ottawa Citizen some extracts from speeches delivered at St. Patrick's gathering by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. The Prime Minister

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# Some Problems of City Life

By J. S. WOODSWORTH

Secretary, Canadian Welfare League

## Article I. The Cost of Living

The editor of The Guide has asked me to undertake the rather strange task of writing a series of articles on city problems for country readers.

At first blush one may wonder what interest city problems can possibly have for those who live in the country. As well talk to Britishers about the Fiji Islands! But this is far from being so. The city is city and country is country, country people often move to the city even tho city people rarely go to the country. What happens to the city brothers and sisters? Has the city devoured them that they never return, is its charm so subtle that they cannot escape, or are its benefits so great that no one having once enjoyed them would think of living elsewhere? These are questions of interest to the country brothers and sisters.

But there is a deeper interest than this. The city is of interest to the countryman as a countryman. The city is the country's customer and at the same time its source of supply. The problems of the two are closely inter-related. Sometimes their interests seem identical, sometimes antagonistic. Neither can be understood without understanding the other. Each has much to learn from the other.

## Their Common Enemy

The workers in the city and the workers in the country are often struggling against a common enemy and yet simply because they don't understand one another and don't fight together their efforts are futile. There is needed an interpreter who, knowing something of the speech and life and ideals of each, can stand between the two and explain each to the other.

Let us begin with the cost of living

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in the city. I shall use figures secured for a paper read at the Canadian Conference of Charities and Corrections. Sometimes when I have told country audiences of a family being in poverty even though the father earned \$2 a day for a good part of the year they have smiled and afterwards said frankly that something was wrong with the family. When I say that it takes \$1200 a year to live decently in Winnipeg I fancy that a good many will think that "decently" will include fine clothes and theatres, if not automobiles. Nothing of the kind. If a man has a wife and family to support it takes \$1200 or thereabout to give decent shelter, food and clothing and insure them from becoming a public charge.

Let us go into this in detail. First of all comes the house. Now the price of land is so high in the cities that many wage earners can never hope to have a home of their own. Fancy paying \$10, \$20, \$30, \$40, \$100 a foot frontage for a spot on which to build your cottage. The land a few years ago was farm land, but speculators have run up the price. By-the-way, Mr. Farmer, with your wide acres and flood of sunshine about the house did it ever strike you that by making money out of city lots you were helping to take away from the poor city dweller the chance of a home and bit of garden and a little place for the children

to play? Surely, if he understood, the farmer with 320 acres wouldn't take away the poor man's chance of having a lot 25 feet by 100 feet. But our ordinary wage earner must rent. Rent will be \$20 a month. That doesn't mean a fine house—only a four or five roomed cottage on a narrow lot, with no place for a garden and little room for the children to play. Rent, then, \$240 a year.

## The Cost of Food

Few farmers realize the cost of food. It is so easy to have a garden or bring in the eggs or kill a chicken. In fact, however poor the crop, most farmers reckon on having a living anyway. But it is very different when one must buy every drop of milk, every egg, every pound of meat, every vegetable.

Frank Kerr, the Winnipeg city relief officer, estimates the food expenditure for a family of five as follows: Groceries, \$15 a month; bread, \$4 a month; milk, \$4 a month; fruit and vegetables, \$4 a month; meat, \$12 a month; a total of \$39 a month or \$468 a year.

The Labor Gazette, April, 1913, publishes a table showing the typical weekly expenditure on staple foods for a family of five. The quantities indicated in the budget are slight modifications of those employed in similar calculations by various official bodies. At Winnipeg retail prices,

as given by the Gazette, this food budget amounts to \$8.16 a week or \$424.32 a year. I have carefully compared these budgets with the actual expenditures of working men's families. There is considerable variety in kinds of foods and quantities of each kind, but one may safely conclude that the estimate of the Department of Labor is not too high. Food, then, \$424.32 a year.

## The Clothing Bill

It is very difficult to determine the amount needed for clothing. Individual taste enters very largely. Better clothing has been worn of late years. The expenditure of those who can afford to buy is very heavy. In Winnipeg, as Chapin in "The Standard of Living" has noted in New York, "a large proportion of the families on the lower incomes depend upon gifts to keep up such standards in regard to dress as they maintain." Again, in this northern climate special clothing for certain seasons (for instance, woollens and furs for winter) becomes a necessity. Mr. Kerr's estimate is as follows:

"The least a man can dress on is \$72 a year. A working suit at \$15 and a better suit at \$20 will be \$35; two pairs of boots are \$8; underwear for summer and winter, to last two years, will be \$5 a year; linen adds another \$5; head and hand covering \$3; and rubbers and overshoes \$4. Furs are a necessity in Manitoba, and a fur coat at \$60 will, with care, wear five years, that is \$12 a year. (Cloth coats would come to about the same).

"A woman, if she is clever with her needle, can dress on \$80 a year. A winter coat at \$50 will, with care, wear

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