

Morning Leader
November 17/21

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Pay Debts to Soldiers

"But there is another charge on the money of the country which is more important and sacred than anything else. Not to meet this charge is to be guilty of dishonor and ingratitude of the worst kind. I mean what is owing to the returned man and his dependents and relatives. There, to my mind, is the first charge on the treasury of this nation and that charge should be met in a generous and proper way, but to meet it needs a large sum. This year alone the charge came to about 135 millions.

"That brings us to a consideration of the total expenditure. This year Parliament voted 500 millions to carry on government alone. To our population it means about \$61 per individual or to a family of five, the average is \$310.

"Now do you begin to see why the women of the country have an interest in the question of government and why the cost of government is the most important of all as a contributing factor to the high cost of living?

"Supposing your wealthy man happens to be a landlord and a large sum is taken from him in taxes. He simply passes it on to the tenant. The same is true in the purchase of dutiable commodities. The consumer ultimately pays it."

Illustrates By Rhyme.

"There is a little rhyme that might help you to see the force of my argument:

'Big fleas have little fleas
Upon their backs to bite 'em;
And little fleas
Have lesser fleas
And so ad infinitum.'

"If instead of taking that little rhyme you will take another calling the flea the big bug instead, you will have this truth:

Big bugs have little bugs
To whom they look for taxes;
And little bugs have lesser bugs
Who have to grind the axes.

"That is the position in regard to taxes. Sooner or later it gets down to the homes of the people and to those who can least afford it. No wonder the women of our country

are beginning to take an interest in government.

"I want to quote you two items to illustrate what I have said. Meeting today in Washington is the greatest conference on armaments the world has ever seen. After the war was over while the work of demobilization was going on we all felt that with our great public debt it was desirable to cut down expense as much as possible. So the Liberal Opposition took the view that until demobilization was complete we should go easy on expenditures on war account.

Accept Five Ships.

"Will it not surprise you to know that the Government accepted from the mother Government five ships, one cruiser, two torpedo boat destroyers and two subs without ever saying a word to Parliament about it or giving the people a chance to discuss it or their representatives. They came into Parliament after accepting these ships and asked us for two million last year and this year three million to manage these ships as ships of war. All the ships have done is to sail from Halifax through the Panama to Esquimalt and back again. Today at this conference comes the word from England that they would like to do away with submarines. Can you think of a greater waste of public money? The Government had no policy on the naval question and said they would not have until after the next Imperial conference.

No Reduction

"Another instance. The Minister of Militia asked us to vote money for ammunition. We knew that great quantities of ammunition had been prepared for the war and that great quantities remained after the war, and when I suggested that we cut down the money for ammunition to a figure that was equal to the amount expended the year before the war the minister said, 'No.' He said our heavy artillery ammunition is manufactured at Quebec, and we have to pay wages which are so much higher than before the war. The other ammunition for infantry is manufactured at Lindsay. The minister asked that the proposed expenditure be accepted, and it was. This year much the same thing happened. Altogether two million was voted for ammunition and war supplies in the last two years.

High Explosives Imported

"What happened? Without having said a word to Parliament about credit elsewhere, we discover a ship coming to Levis carrying high explosives to an enormous extent. I happened to go down to the river, and saw a ship, and discovered 40 men in uniform taking these high explosives off. Nine box cars were filled, and a great quantity was still on the ship. I learned this was one

of five ships that had come recently with it. The boxes were marked to be fired or destroyed by June, 1925.

"I was told on inquiry that these explosives were going to the different depots to be stored. I wrote the Prime Minister, and the answer was that the Minister of Militia gave out an interview that this was a gift from England. One of the officers of the department also gave out a statement, but it was different. He said this is part of Canada's credit, be-