

Reopen C. N. R. Case

Sir Wilfrid passes in review alike some of the legislation of the late government and the program of the present. He finds no trace in the manifesto of the Union Government that its Liberal members have influenced their colleagues to the adoption of measures they deemed essential. He refers to "most of the articles" in that manifesto as "stale commonplaces..... resurrected for a new election." He declares of the war-times election act passed last session that "it is a blot upon every instinct of justice," and holds the view that the Canadian Northern Railroad purchase should be adjudicated upon by the new parliament.

A consultation of the people at short and regular periods is the right of a free people. The constitution provides accordingly for a general election every five years. It is undeniable that there has existed a strong desire in the community to avoid an election during the war.

Election Unavoidable

An impression prevails that had I accepted the invitation of the prime minister to join his government a new extension would have been possible. This impression is absolutely erroneous, the fact being that the invitation extended to me was coupled with the stipulation that the coalition Government would pass a conscription measure, and then appeal to the country, thus making an election unavoidable.

The Government as recently reconstructed, the Union Government so-called, is now appealing to the country for support. Six members of the Liberal party, some of them close personal friends, have consented to become members of the administration, and the programme which they intend to follow has already been placed before the public, but in this programme no trace is to be found that the Liberal members of the administration have succeeded in influencing their colleagues to the adoption of measures which they deemed essential not only to win the war, but for the welfare of the country at all times.

Stale Commonplaces

Most of the articles in the Government manifesto are merely stale commonplaces extracted from the Conservative program of 1911, forgotten after the election, resurrected for a new election. Such is the promise of economy of public expenditure, and such the promise of civil service reform—two reforms which the Opposition would have been happy to support in the last parliament if the Government had afforded them the opportunity.

In the manifesto "a strong and progressive policy of immigration" is promised. This will be perhaps the most important question after the war. The burdens which are now being accumulated and which will have to be assumed and borne by the Canadian people can be faced if the enormous resources of the country are developed. But development demands a rapid increase in the population. Hence the necessity of a strong and progressive policy has been seriously impaired by the breach of faith with naturalized Canadian citizens involved in the withdrawal of the political franchise from large numbers of these citizens. This must prove a serious blow to immigration, especially when the conduct of the Canadian Government is contrasted with the attitude of the United States, where no such indignity has been placed upon naturalized citizens.

The C. N. R. Case

"An article of the program of the Government speaks of the development of transportation facilities, but in vague though rather ambiguous terms. No mention is made of the acquisition of the Canadian Northern Railway yet this subject was not exhausted by the legislation of last session, and it will be one of the most important duties of the next parliament again to review it.

"One feature of the act of the last session is that the Government becomes the owner of the stock of the company, on the nominal value of sixty million dollars. There never was a dollar paid on the stock. Experts em-