

# WANTED—A NEW NATIONAL POLICY

By THE EDITOR

**L**AST week, our readers were asked to give serious consideration to the question of a new national policy for this Dominion, and for the purpose of starting a discussion several suggestions were offered. The communications already received and promised indicate that the subject appeals to many leading minds. Political leaders seldom inaugurate new policies. They are so busy with the problems of every-day administration that they find little time for detached observation. Indeed, many of them do not claim to be leaders in the larger sense, contenting themselves with being the instruments through which public opinion becomes crystallised in legislation. Therefore the *COURIER's* appeal is to the well-informed, patriotic citizens outside of parliamentary life.

The discussion is intended to emphasise the point that Canada's national policy must be a creation of the people—not of the legislators at Ottawa alone. In a recent article in the *Outlook* Senator Dolliver of Iowa, traces the growth of new political ideas in the United States, and especially in the Republican party. He admits that most of them have come from the outside, from those who were not compelled to "weigh the chances of success" and who "felt at liberty to speak the truth." Men have broken down party discipline in an endeavour to present independent views of public affairs, and have thus had a potent influence upon the parties themselves. Though himself a strong Republican, he admits that the progress of the Republican platform has been largely due to what has been recently termed the "insurgent" movement.

To the insurgent, to the patriotic citizen who does not allow his party allegiance to stultify his ability to think, to the man who has views of public policy which are different from those of one party or the other or from both, to the man who puts the interest of country above self and above purely party success—the *COURIER* makes this appeal. The politicians will listen—and the best of them will adopt such of the ideas presented as seem best fitted for the occasion.

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## Conservation or Endowment.

**L**AST week the two main topics touched upon were the falling back of the rural population in older Ontario and the Maritime Provinces, and the necessity for harmony of opinion between the farmer and the manufacturer. There are a number of other points of equal importance in a discussion of this nature.

Chief among these is the question of Conservation. Conservation may be good or it may be bad. Conservation which would withdraw all public land, mineral deposits and timber limits from possible exploitation would mean stagnation. On the other hand, a policy of non-conservation which would throw the public domain into the hands of mere speculators would be disastrous.

There is a Conservation Commission in existence, but its powers are simply advisory. It has been investigating and discussing, but so far, has not arrived anywhere. Whether as at present constituted, it will ever arrive anywhere is open to question. Nevertheless, there is great need of just such work as it is expected to accomplish.

The timber wealth of the country needs protection. Forest fires destroy annually more of this timber than the lumbermen manufacture. The governments need stirring up on this question. Ontario has, after a long agitation, decided that university students on vacations and preachers out for a holiday are not suitable fire rangers. The Hon. Frank Cochrane promises that in future fire rangers shall not be appointed for purely political considerations. This will be an advance if it materialises, but it is not enough. There must be a policy of scientific harvesting such as the Harmsworth interests have adopted in Newfoundland, and such as have been in vogue for centuries in the benighted, military-ridden countries of central Europe. What is said of Ontario may also be said of Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and British Columbia. The timber wealth of Nova Scotia has been absolutely frittered away, and even the land on which the timber stood has been appropriated without let or hindrance.

So with mineral wealth, it must be conserved by a policy of exploitation for the public benefit. The mines must not be closed up, neither should they be given to political favourites. Fisheries and water powers also must be treated as a part of the people's endowment. Why not a national endowment policy rather than a conservation policy? Con-

servation seems to mean too much to some people. It is a rather strong term to be used in a country which is so keen on development as ours.

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## Labour and Capital.

**T**HE new National Policy must aim to make the interests of labour and capital identical. It is probably true that up to the present, capital has been receiving more consideration than labour. This was probably justified by the necessity for attracting foreign and British capital to this country. Yet labour interests have not wholly been overlooked, and to-day the mechanic in this country has little to complain of. Nevertheless there is much to be done along the line of compulsory arbitration, technical education, and a better understanding between employer and employee. The Lemieux Act is good; the Old-age Annuity scheme which Sir Richard Cartwright inaugurated is excellent, though not yet understood; the general laws for the protection of women and children in factories are fine. But laws and Acts of Parliament are not sufficient. There must be a spirit of harmony, engendered by a desire to serve the common good. Labour must pursue a policy which will not injure capital, and capital must give constant attention to the needs and desires of labour.

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## Nationalism vs. Sectionalism.

**T**HE new National Policy should be so broad-based that every section of Canada will find it wide enough to allow for sectional ambition without prejudicing the national ambition. With the central governing body there should be neither East nor West, neither North nor South. Parliament should be just as solicitous of the welfare of Prince Edward Island as of the welfare of Vancouver Island—no more, no less. The remoteness of a district should but add to the attention which it receives. As Parliament, so people; every section should be anxious about the progress of every other section, while paying the keenest attention to its own affairs.

How can sectionalism be submerged in nationalism? This is a point we would press upon the reader. The tendency to sectionalism is undoubtedly present to a limited extent, and steps must be taken to prevent its growth.

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## City vs. Country.

**S**HALL the cities grow at the expense of the country? Will it be best for Canada, if she becomes a nation of great cities or remains a nation of great farmers? How is the country to be preserved from the charms of the great city? How are the breeding-grounds of the nation to be protected against the stifling, stunting, over-crowding which goes with industrial progress? Here are problems which vitally affect the future of the people from the standpoint of physique and human effectiveness. Shall the "Men of the Northern Zone" lose that virile physical and mental force which has distinguished the native Canadians of the past? How will the new National Policy meet these problems?

In the last forty years the rural population of the county of Perth in Ontario has declined from thirty-one thousand to twenty-six thousand, while that of the county of Huron has declined from fifty thousand to thirty-six thousand. The Deputy Minister of Agriculture for Ontario states that the rural population of the whole province declined between 1888 and 1908, to the extent of eighty-six thousand, while the urban population increased four hundred and fifty thousand. There have been very similar results in many parts of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Even in Manitoba there are some agricultural districts which are not so densely populated as they once were. This means that the movement from the country to the city is one which demands the consideration of both the economist and the statesman. The economist is interested in the problem because of the possible decline in a great industry. The statesman should be interested because of the possible decline in the physical and moral strength of the nation as a whole.

Here is a problem which is as great, if not greater, than the tariff problem, the transportation problem, and the immigration problem.

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## Independent Civil Services.

**A**PPPOINTMENTS to the public service under every Government of Canada, and there are ten of them, are made on the basis of partisan pol-

itical service or political pull. Recently the "inside service," or the employees of the Dominion Government at Ottawa have been put upon an independent basis. There is a Civil Service Commission which now regulates appointments at the capital, oversees promotion, and is supposed to prevent waste and idleness. This is splendid, but it has never received the consideration which it deserves from either Parliament or people. The Cabinet Ministers and the members of the House, with a few exceptions, have resented the loss of this piece of patronage and apparently have resolved to stop the reform at this point. They will succeed, if public opinion does not wake up and force further action.

Not one of the nine provincial governments has considered civil service reform. Every appointment made by these administrations, whether Liberal or Conservative, is liable to be the football of politics. Members of the Legislatures demand a voice for themselves and their patronage committees in every appointment. These same members waste their time getting "jobs" for useless members of society, when they should be studying public questions. The consequence is that the public services contain many incompetents, are lacking in discipline and efficiency, and the chief glory of the "member" is his record in securing appointments and patronage for his constituents.

Of course the politicians are not to blame for this. This state of affairs would not exist if public opinion were against it. The other day a few cheap jacks in the Conservative party in Toronto tried to have politics introduced into municipal elections, and the Central Conservative Association endorsed the movement. Public opinion both within and without the party was against it, however, and the movement was speedily buried in a pauper's grave.

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## In Brief.

**C**ANADA must be careful to avoid any form of that disease known as "swelled head." Ever notice the look of supreme self-satisfaction which adorns the face of the proud owner of a new \$5,000 automobile as his chauffeur swings it skilfully between the bodies of the hurrying pedestrians? That is not the fault of the automobile, nor any argument against its use, but it illustrates the point. Our success is great, but it should not puff us up with pride.

Canada is a great manufacturing country, but the State of Massachusetts produces more manufactured goods every year than all the factories of Canada's nine provinces. At the same time, the value of the agricultural products of that State has increased 38 per cent. in ten years. Its tilled lands are only one-thirteenth of those of Texas, but its crop value is one-fifth. Expanse of territory is not everything. Massachusetts has a Forestry Commission which is increasing the forest values of the State, while those of the Canadian provinces are declining. Massachusetts is a great manufacturing province, but it has agricultural high schools in its rural centres, while there is no teaching of agriculture in the schools of Canada.

Nor is Massachusetts the only state that may be quoted. Maine increased its potato crop from 6,500,000 bushels in 1899 to 29,250,000 bushels in 1909. Is there any province in Canada which has done better than that?

Canada has been doing splendidly, but it must do better. Electricity, hydro-electric energy, electric railways in city and country, improved methods of education, improvements in manufacture and agriculture, the rapid advance in science as applied to industry and soil-production, have made progress rapid the world over. To say that our progress in the first decade of the twentieth century was double that of the progress made in the last decade of the old century is to say nothing. The progress of the world in general has been more rapid. If Canada had not done what she has done, she would have gone behind in comparison with the United States, Argentina and Germany.

Occasionally Canadians flatter themselves that their politics are cleaner, that justice is better administered, that there is a higher code of ethics in business and in public life than in the United States. Undoubtedly this is true as to the punishment of murderers, but on all other points the United States has made tremendous progress in recent years. Canada must give more heed to the development of public spirit, culture, patriotism and appreciation of those things which are higher than material wealth, if it is to be the intellectual and moral giant of the continent. Canada must have a national spirit and a national policy which will carry it forward with increased speed, greater certainty, and towards a more clearly defined goal.

Readers who are interested in the discussion are invited to send in their views for publication in the issue of December 3rd.