

Our Ottawa Letter

Looks like an Election—Over 100,000 may be Conscripted—White on Income Tax
By The Guide's Special Correspondent

Ottawa, July 13—Events at the capital are slowly but surely moving towards a climax. The trend of movement is mixed and confused and no one is able to follow the threads of the skein that is being unravelled to an end, but the time is within measurable distance when there must be some kind of definite development. At the time of writing it would appear that a general election is almost certain to precede any attempt to enforce the manhood conscription act; but doubt exists as to whether or not the government which goes to the country to get the endorsement of the nation for its enforcement will be a party government or a union organization made up of conscriptionist Conservatives and Liberals. There is still a possibility of such a government being formed with the object of continuing the administration of affairs until after the war. It would of necessity be a war government as its members would not agree on matters of domestic policy. It would be opposed in the house by a considerable majority of the Liberal members and by a couple of groups of Conservative members, one from Quebec and the other largely from Ontario, and perhaps led by Sir Sam Hughes. There is also some speculation here as to the probable attitude of Hon. Robert Rogers should he be left out of such an administration, as he has been frankly opposed to a coalition all along.

Events will come to a head soon because after the conscription bill, which is now disposed of in committee, gets its third reading the decks will be cleared for action. The government will on Monday open the ball by introducing the resolution asking the Imperial government to extend the life of parliament. A member opposed to an extension stated today that he expected the line up against the resolution would number 75, the 62 who voted for a referendum and a number of others. On the basis of the government majority of 63 for the second reading of the conscription bill this would mean that the resolution would be adopted by a majority of approximately 35. The question would then arise as to the desirability of asking the Imperial government to act in the face of such a large body of opposition, more particularly as one province would be practically unanimous in its opposition. Probably the decision would be that it would be inadvisable to take such action and dissolution and an election would be the result. As a matter of fact such a decision may be taken as soon as it becomes manifest that there will be a big vote in the house against the resolution.

The sensational development of the week, apart from political affairs, but still very closely related to them, has been the report made by W. F. O'Connor, the cost of living commissioner, regarding his investigations into cold storage conditions in Canada.

The figures on this, reported elsewhere in The Guide, will stand some explaining

and call eloquently for government action of a most drastic nature. Will it be forthcoming?

Agricultural Exemption

That it is expedient in the national interest that a man should, instead of being employed in military service, be engaged in agricultural, industrial or other work in which he is habitually engaged.

A proposal by J. A. Rainville, deputy speaker of the house, and one of the three French-Canadian Conservatives to vote for the second reading of the conscription bill to insert the foregoing subsection in the measure, thereby practically exempting agriculturists from the operation of the bill, was productive of one of the most interesting discussions of the week. Mr. Rainville argued that the adoption of this proposal would simply be giving expression to the intentions of the government as set forth in the preamble of the bill. He said that everybody would admit that under existing conditions agriculture was one of the industries which should be taken care of. The inserting of these words would not mean that a man engaged in agricultural pursuits would necessarily be exempt, but it would ensure that the production of the country would not suffer by reason of the bill.

Geo. H. Bradbury, of Selkirk, while agreeing with this view, said he would strenuously object to any suggestion that would exempt any class of people in the country. The farmers had responded nobly in the past and he was sure they would not be drawn upon unfairly when the bill is enforced. Sir Sam Hughes asked if the farmers as a class would not resent the insertion of such a clause and Mr. Bradbury replied that they would.

Hon. Arthur Meighen said that there was no reason to doubt that the requirements of the bill can be filled without taking such men from agricultural pursuits as would reduce agricultural production. A. K. MacLean: "I suppose that statement would apply to other productive pursuits such as fishing, lumbering and mining?"

Mr. Meighen: "I see no reason at all for believing that the production of this country cannot be fully maintained and the requirements of this bill filled as well."

J. G. Turriff considered that the wording of the clause of the bill governing exemptions was fair. As a representative almost wholly of farmers he had no desire to see them singled out and made exempt as a class. He thought that any tribunal having charge of exemptions in any district would see that the production of food was not interfered with. Mr. Turriff said it would be a good policy to conscript such men as are walking about the country demanding five and six dollars a day from farmers and refusing to work for less. He would say to them: "If you want men to fight for your country the least you can do for them is to produce food for them and do it at from \$2.50 to \$3.00 per day and your board." Mr. Turriff continued: "This is good big pay. I should like to see conscription go far enough to make that class of men get to work and do one thing or the other. If he is not suitable to go to the trenches he should be made to produce food."

Mr. Thompson did not think there were many surplus men left in the west, but he had no objection to the class of men described by Mr. Turriff being sent away. Practically every farmer in the west is required to look after the crops and if many are sent away the grain will go to waste. Mr. Thompson objected to the idea of the regulations governing exemptions being framed by the judges. He thought that parliament itself was the best body to decide who should be exempt.

Mr. Rainville explained that he did not desire that his proposal should be regarded as an insult to the farmer and he would challenge those who contend that such was the intention of the amendment. His only desire was to ensure maximum production in Canada.

The amendment was not accepted. Mr. Oliver's Strong Criticism
Hon. Frank Oliver, who seconded Mr. Wilfrid Laurier's referendum amendment, was the most vigorous opponent of the

conscription bill during its consideration in the committee stage. As a matter of fact the discussion at times was practically confined to a duel between the member for Edmonton and Hon. Arthur Meighen.

Mr. Oliver maintained in the most vigorous manner that the bill was not based upon principles of fair play and that he had no faith in the promises of the government that it would be fairly administered. The bill, he said, had a double purpose in view. Its provisions would be used to secure men for the front, but also to exempt men in the interests of the friends of the government who are making money out of the manufacture of munitions and other goods. The local boards of exemption would have the power, he said, to exempt anybody they desired to exempt while the ultimate enforcement of the act would rest with a government in whom the people had lost confidence. Mr. Oliver thought that in order to retain the elements of fairness in the measure the system of balloting, which has been used for thousands of years as the fairest way of selecting men for military service should have been adhered to. Instead men could be sent to the front, or to lucrative jobs, at the discretion of the local tribunals. The bill trusts to the fairness of everyone connected with its administration.

Mr. Meighen frankly admitted that the fair administration of the bill rests with the tribunals and he was going to assume that they would act with fairness and impartiality in all cases. He said he could not see any way in which under such conditions as exist in Canada today, selective conscription could be dealt with. He endorsed the position taken by the Prime Minister that the balloting system is based upon chance and that in view of the necessity of keeping certain men in Canada it could not be adopted in connection with the administration of the present bill.

Apart from the matters dealt with in the foregoing the discussion in committee on the conscription bill related more particularly to proposed amendments to make the measure work more smoothly and with the least possible injustice to all parties concerned. As a result of determined opposition from members on both sides of the house to the proposal to have the first call apply exclusively to youths between the ages of 20 and 23, the government finally decided to throw the first three classes into one class and the second three classes into a second class. This means that the first call will apply to all unmarried men between the ages of 20 and 34 and widowers without children. From this class it is expected to secure the 100,000 men called for by the bill. The second class will include married men of the same ages.

May be More Conscripted

One important development was the official announcement that the 100,000 men to be provided by the bill will not necessarily be the total number of men conscripted in Canada. In this connection the Prime Minister in response to questions by Hon. Frank Oliver said that at subsequent sessions if necessary a short bill could be introduced by way of amendment increasing the number of men required.

There was vigorous criticism of the penalty clauses which go into effect immediately and which provide severe punishments for any effort on the part of any person or persons to nullify or obstruct the law. The opposition vigorously argued that the purpose of some of these penalties was to stifle criticism of the government.

Sir Robert Borden assured the house that there was no such intention on the part of the government. Criticism would not be objected to, nor would it be punishable under the act—but any effort on the part of an individual or a number of individuals to interfere with its successful operation would be severely dealt with.

White on Income Tax

An indication of the steady but sure conversion of Sir Thomas White on the question of the desirability of introducing an income tax, as urged more particularly by western members of the house for over two years past, came on Tuesday, when the minister of finance more than hinted at the probability of this form of taxation being adopted in the near future. The prelude was made in connection with a statement that Sir Thomas made to the house relative to a feeling of apprehension which he said had got abroad amongst bank depositors because of the talk in parliament and throughout the country

of the desirability of the "conscripted of wealth." While the minister did not say so specifically it is understood that he has been advised by the banks that a large number of people fearing that the confiscation of their savings was being contemplated had withdrawn their deposits from the banks. Sir Thomas became quite alarmed about the situation and decided to give an assurance to the people through the channels of parliament that there need exist no apprehension on the part of the public that any action of a detrimental character will at any time be taken with respect to the savings of the Canadian public. On the contrary, it will be the policy of the government in the future, as in the past, to encourage in every way possible the exercise of the thrift and the economy resulting in national savings which have enabled Canada to maintain her credit and improve her economic position during the war.

"Any taxation to which it may be necessary to resort," Sir Thomas continued, "will be in accordance with legitimate and established forms of taxation. This statement, therefore, must not be understood as precluding legislation providing for income taxation upon those whose incomes are such as to make it just and equitable that they should contribute a share of the war expenditure of the Dominion."

Calgary's Premier Exhibition

Continued from Page 4

Champion female—J. W. Forster & Sons, Nately, on "Lady Nately"; reserve, Oscar Miller on "Crumley Princess."

Champion Alberta bred stallion—"Coulee Royal Friar."

Champion stallion—T. Rawlinson, Innisfail, on "Cromwell Thumper"; reserve, "Saxon Lad."

Shorthorns:

Bull, senior champion—Yule and Bowes, Calgary, on "Missie's Wonder Junior"; reserve, George Walters, Calgary, on "Baron Stanford."

Bull, junior champion—J. G. Barron, Carberry, on "Fairview Chief"; reserve, Yules and Bowes, on "Roseberry."

Bull, grand champion—Yule & Bowes, "Missie's Wonder Junior"; reserve, J. G. Barron, "Fairview Chief."

Senior champion female—J. G. Barron, on "Fairview Baroness Queen"; reserve, J. G. Barron, "Gracie."

Junior champion female—Yules and Bowes, on "Clipper Girl"; reserve, J. G. Barron, on "Lavender 46th."

Grand champion female—J. G. Barron; reserve, Yules and Bowes, on "Clipper Girl."

Herefords:

Bull, senior champion, 2 years or over—Champion, Curtiss Cattle Co., Langdon, "Beau Perfection 48th"; reserve, Geo. E. Fuller, Girvin, Sask., "Martin Fairfax."

Bull, junior champion, under 2 years—Champion, L. O. Clifford, Oshawa, Ont., "Lord Fairfax 5th"; reserve, Curtiss Cattle Co., "Beau Donald."

Bull, grand champion—Curtiss Cattle Co., "Beau Perfection 48"; reserve, L. O. Clifford, "Lord Fairfax 5th."

Senior champion female—L. O. Clifford, "Miss Armour Fairfax"; reserve, Geo. E. Fuller, "Edna Fairfax."

Junior champion female—Geo. E. Fuller, "Beauty Fairfax"; reserve, L. O. Clifford, "Florence Fairfax."

Grand champion female—L. O. Clifford, "Miss Armour Fairfax"; reserve, Geo. E. Fuller, "Beauty Fairfax."

Aberdeen Angus:

Bull, senior champion—Jas. Bowman, Guelph, Ont., on "Beauty's Leroy"; reserve, Jas. Bowman, "Young Leroy."

Bull, junior champion—J. D. McGregor, on "Black Cap McGregor"; reserve J. D. McGregor, "Quality Lad of Glenearnock."

Bull, grand champion—J. D. McGregor "Black Cap McGregor"; reserve, Jas. Bowman, "Beauty's Leroy."

Senior champion female, 2 years and over—J. D. McGregor on "Majesty Queen"; reserve, Jas. Bowman, on "Emeline."

Junior champion female, under 2 years—J. D. McGregor, "Pride of Glenearnock 3rd"; reserve, "Pride of Glenearnock."

Grand champion female—J. D. McGregor, "Pride of Glenearnock 3rd"; reserve, J. D. McGregor, "Majesty Queen."

Remainder held over for lack of space

Gas Engine Troubles



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