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THE VANCOUVER DAILY PROVINCE

Vancouver, B. C.,

January 9th, 1940.

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General J. A. Clark,
475 Howe Street,
VANCOUVER, B. C.

My dear Arthur:

I must apologize for this belated reply to your letter of January 3rd. An unexpected trip to Victoria last Friday, together with sickness among some of our senior executives provide the explanation of my apparent discourtesy.

With nearly everything you say on the first 3 pages of your letter, I am in hearty agreement. On some of them I share your resentment of the government's failure to make reasonable preparation for the war and having committed the country to participation in the war, failed to put into it the administrative capacity the country had a right to expect.

Let us accept any part or all of your indictment of the government and where does it get us as to the advisability of holding a general election within the next few months? If there was any reasonable hope of turning the government out and replacing it with a competent administration I think elections would be warranted. There is only one object in holding elections and that is to give the electorate the opportunity of obtaining better government.

As I see it, elections within the next few months would provide the opportunity but with the opportunity very little prospect of effecting a change.

The trouble is that the country has not yet commenced to examine closely the government's past and present failures. It is the war itself that absorbs public attention and public concern.

Something is happening in the field of action every day to divert the public's attention from home affairs to the war in Europe. It is true that the war preparations and provision for our soldiers on active service enter very largely into the attention which the public is giving the war in general terms, but I don't think this has reached the point where it would be possible to obtain a sharp judgment on what our government has done or what it has failed to do.

The point of view which I put forward for what it may be worth will find greater emphasis as the war develops in Europe and larger operations occur on land and sea and in the air. With these things to command its interest I do not think it is really possible for the electorate to sufficiently detach its interest from the actual theatre of war to consider as closely as it should consider the numerous ways in which our government has failed to do its duty.

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