

However, almost immediately after Mr. Dunning's resignation was tendered fearing that a situation might arise which would make it imperative to fill the post of Minister of Finance at short notice, I got in touch with my former colleague, Colonel Ralston, to ask him if he would join the ministry and take Mr. Dunning's portfolio. Colonel Ralston said to me that he had not contemplated returning to public life and would not like to enter the ministry immediately. He volunteered however that in the event of an emergency arising I could count upon him to accept any post the government might wish to offer him. Upon the outbreak of the present emergency, I again got in touch with Colonel Ralston and, as hon. members are aware, he came forthwith to Ottawa and yesterday was sworn as Minister of Finance in the present administration.

I should like to table the letter which Mr. Dunning wrote me at the time of tendering his resignation and the final reply which I sent to Mr. Dunning yesterday. Without being read, they might be allowed to appear in *Hansard*.

Ottawa, July 21st, 1939.

My dear Prime Minister:

As you know, I have been endeavouring during the past twelve months to recover my health and at the same time carry on the duties and responsibilities of Minister of Finance. During that time you and my colleagues in the cabinet have tried to relieve me as much as possible, and only by reason of that kind assistance have I been able to carry on.

For some time past medical advice has been definite to the effect that I can expect complete recovery only if I free myself from responsibility and work for some time to come. It is evident that I cannot undergo the strain of a general election.

Under the circumstances, I feel it my duty to ask you to accept my resignation as Minister of Finance, effective on a date convenient to you.

In doing so, I wish to thank you and all my colleagues for the kindness and consideration I have received from them during a difficult and trying time.

Yours faithfully,

Charles Dunning.

Ottawa, September 6, 1939.

My dear Dunning:

As you will recall, on July 21st last, you advised me by letter that, owing to the impaired condition of your health, you deemed it your duty to ask me to accept your resignation as Minister of Finance, effective on a date convenient to myself.

When your letter was received I did not hesitate to say to you that I hoped you would not think of pressing for an immediate acceptance of your resignation, but would take a complete rest and change, to see if, with time, your health might not so improve as to permit

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

you to continue in the position of Minister of Finance. I have all along hoped that your progress would be sufficiently favourable and rapid as to permit you to reconsider resigning from the ministry.

Were the international situation not what it has become, I would have been prepared to wait some little time longer before finally deciding to act upon your letter. However, with conditions as critical as they are, I feel I must not longer delay in filling the position of Minister of Finance and, at the same time, relieving my colleague, Mr. Isley, from continuing to carry on the duties of Minister of Finance in addition to administering the affairs of the Department of National Revenue.

You will be pleased to know that our former colleague, Colonel Ralston, has responded to my urgent request that he should rejoin the ministry and give to the country, as Minister of Finance, the benefit of his exceptional experience and abilities. I have already informed His Excellency the Governor General of my intention to recommend Colonel Ralston for the portfolio mentioned. His Excellency has warmly approved, and I am looking forward to Colonel Ralston being sworn into office this afternoon.

After our close association over many years, and the intimate personal friendship enjoyed with yourself, to say nothing of the invaluable services you have been rendering the government and the country, it is natural that I should feel the deepest regret at the severance of official relations which have been so pleasant and helpful, and which your fine sense of public duty caused you to continue over a period when the condition of your health demanded a complete rest. I am sure the citizens of Canada generally will share the regret of all the members of the cabinet at the loss of your presence at the council table.

I can only hope that, despite the very grave anxieties which have come upon us all since you left on your trip to the old land, you may return much benefited by the change, and that, ere long, your health may be fully restored.

With my warmest regards and wishes, and with an abiding sense of gratitude as well for your loyal cooperation in the affairs of state during the years we have been associated together in the public life of our country.

Believe me, dear Dunning,

Yours very sincerely,

W. L. Mackenzie King.

INTERNAL ECONOMY COMMISSION

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister) presented the following message from His Excellency the Governor General:

The Governor General transmits to the House of Commons a certified copy of an approved minute of council appointing the Honourable T. A. Crerar, Minister of Mines and Resources, the Right Honourable Ernest Lapointe, Minister of Justice, the Honourable W. D. Euler, Minister of Trade and Commerce, and the Honourable J. L. Isley, Minister of National Revenue, to act with the Speaker of the House of Commons as commissioners for the purposes and under the provisions of chapter 145 of the revised statutes of Canada, 1927, intitled An Act Respecting the House of Commons.