

POOR DOCUMENT

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THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY, JULY 10, 1917

The Evening Times and Star

ST. JOHN, N. B., JULY 10, 1917.

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"FINISH THE WAR FIRST"

"Finish the war first. Then we will all help to clean house."

These are the words of a St. John soldier at the front, who knows how sorely the Canadian divisions are in need of fresh drafts, to keep them up to anything like fighting strength.

Partisan politics does not cut any figure with the men at the front. They are not caring whether a Conservative or a Liberal of a National government sends the needed help. They are facing the stark realities. They are doing their part and they know that unless the thinning ranks are filled there will eventually be no Canadian army at the front. It was not for this they enlisted. We pledged ourselves as we cheered their departure from the shores of Canada that we would do our part.

We have failed to do our part. Men just out of the trenches have had to go back again without proper rest because there were not enough in reserve to relieve them. And this after days of hellish torture, enduring in the sodden fields and flooded trenches the furious fire of the German guns, and the sleepless watch to prevent surprise attacks. It is an old story and a shameful one. There was perhaps some shadow of excuse in the earliest stages of the war, but we have been at war for nearly three years. The Canadian who does not desire the needed reinforcements to be sent as quickly as possible is a betrayer of the trust of the living and the dead.

"Then we will all help to clean house."

But there must first be a house to clean, and the house is still in danger. There must be no shirking of the duty which demands that relief be sent, not scantily, but in full measure, to the men on the firing line—Canada's first line of defence, which is in France and Flanders. Else, how shall we look the maimed survivors in the face?

Why is it that after three years there are still those in Canada who do not know where our first line of defence is? What pains has the government taken to impress that thought upon every mind in every province of the Dominion, as it is now being done in every state of the American Union? Addressing the International Convention of Rotary Clubs, while presenting an American flag from the city of Augusta, Georgia, the Rev. Ashby Jones last month thrilled the vast assemblage when he said:

"But, after all, each generation must choose its own flag, giving its own definition to its national life. Is that our flag, and its definition of America our America? When Belgium was raped and the fertile fields of France drenched in blood; when Serbia was left a desert of dust and ashes, and when the hitherto free highway of the seas was soiled with the blood-stains of women and children, it became inevitable that we must either fight or change our flag. And, strange, strange spectacle in this American land of ours there were blind ones who could not see the light of those stars, and deaf ones who could not hear the voice of human wrongs, and they cried:—'Wait until America is invaded, then our sons will leap to the defence of our flag and our country.' Oh ye of little faith, did you not understand when Prussian legions first crossed the Belgian border, that America was invaded? For then it was that autocracy struck its first blow at democracy. And ever since that day the place to defend America has been upon the soil of Belgium and France. If we had but one flag, rather than place it upon the enshrined dome of the Capitol at Washington, I would place it in the hands of the gallant Pershing, to keep knightly company with the Union Jack and the Lilies of France; for, where human liberty is at stake, there fights the guardian spirit of America."

In these thrilling words there is a challenge to all Canada, and if any province or any section of the community be so misguided as not to be able to appreciate its force, the Dominion as a whole must respond, and bear its part in that battle-front where today the invasion of Canada, of America, of democracy the world over, is being met by the men of France and Belgium, of the British Empire, and now of the United States.

"Finish the war"—let no thought of partisan advantage obscure the people's view until that has been accomplished.

THE WAR SITUATION

The real centre of interest today is not on the French front, where the Germans for some days have been launching furious attacks, but in Berlin, where the Reichstag threatens to get out of hand and declare for a peace without annexations or indemnities, and for such internal reforms as would mean an approach to democratic methods. It is intimated once more that Austria is heartily sick of the war, and is disposed to find a way out, and such an attitude on her part would necessarily have a great influence upon German policy at the present time, since Germany cannot afford to attempt the role of dictator as in the earlier stages of the war.

It is of course regarded as good policy to inaugurate a vigorous offensive against the French, to convey to the Reichstag and the country the impression that all goes well with the armies in the field; and this is the more necessary because of the growing knowledge that the submarine campaign is not doing its work to anything like the extent hoped for and promised. In spite of every effort of the Kaiser and his coterie, however, the people of Germany are apparently coming to the belief that they are fighting for a lost cause. Once that belief becomes fixed in their minds, the Kaiser's house of cards will begin to tumble down. Nothing like a sudden collapse is anticipated, since the insistence of the Allies upon the terms of peace already outlined by them will afford the war party in Germany further ground for appeals to save the fatherland, and thus prolong the struggle.

Further success by the Russians, and the assertion of an American officer who has toured the Russian front, that the army will continue to fight with vigor, serve to strengthen the feeling that hereafter the eastern front will contribute more and more news of an encouraging nature. The Russian democracy appears to be standing the test more satisfactorily than was anticipated a few weeks ago. The lack of news from the Italian and Macedonian fronts is rather surprising, and can only be taken as an indication that the armies of the Allies are not yet able to conduct a vigorous and sustained offensive. The successful bombing of the German works at Essen suggests much more ambitious air raids in the future, and much is to be hoped for from this species of warfare during the next year.

WHERE THE FAULT LIES

Sir Sam Hughes re-asserted in parliament yesterday that the falling off in recruiting in 1916 was due to interference by Sir Robert Borden and Sir Thomas White, who were being urged by financial and industrial interests to "let up." Sir Robert and Sir Thomas had denied this, but Sir Sam re-affirms the charge. As a matter of fact, those who were members of the recruiting committees, only he taken as an indication that the armies of the Allies are not yet able to conduct a vigorous and sustained offensive. The successful bombing of the German works at Essen suggests much more ambitious air raids in the future, and much is to be hoped for from this species of warfare during the next year.

The Financial Post of Canada says: "Sir Robert Borden has not told enough. He has not given out even a reasonable amount of important information. If parliament, and the people of Canada, knew the real seriousness of the situation there would be no opposition to the fullest preparations. They would back up the premier in a complete re-organization of his cabinet; taking in the ablest executives in Canada—regardless of party or precedent—and in the formation of a national committee made up of the most capable leaders in all important walks of life: Agriculture, Labor, Finance, Manufacturing, to advise and assist him in taking care of the present emergency; and to plan for the rehabilitation of the country after the war."

Of conditions in Halifax, the Montreal Financial Times says:—"Business conditions are decidedly good in Halifax, and building operations quite active. During recent years many million dollars have been expended upon public works and business plants and residences, and there are now in process of erection, or contemplated, several new enterprises, the construction of which will involve the investment of large additional capital. These expenditures also insure a permanence of present active business conditions, and a guarantee of future growth."

Sir Sam Hughes Repeats Charges

Ottawa, July 9.—At a preliminary to today's continued discussion in the committee stage of the details of the military service bill, the commons had another illuminating instalment of the mutual recriminations between General Sir Sam Hughes, the prime minister and the minister of finance with regard to Sir Sam's charges, that he had been directed to let up on recruiting in the spring of 1916.

On Friday and Saturday of last week Sir Robert Borden and Sir Thomas White declared that truth and Sir Sam were considerably at variance and that the ex-minister had imagined things. Today Sir Sam returned vigorously to the attack. He declared that he had spoken the truth in regard to the influences which had worked on the prime minister to induce him to call a halt in recruiting, and he repeated the charge that Sir Thomas White and the financial group back of him were mainly responsible for interfering with recruiting.

Sir Robert Borden contented himself by declaring that he had nothing further to add to his statements of Friday last. Sir Thomas White was not in the house.

Hon. J. D. Hazen stated in the house this afternoon in reply to C. A. Gauvreau, that requests that the minimum salaries of lighthouse keepers be increased had been received by him, but he could give no assurance regarding the matter at the present time.

Mr. Crothers said that if any effort had been made through the newspapers to reach all classes of the people. He mentioned that the St. John Standard, which he described as the chief government organ of the province, had received \$900 out of \$1,200 spent in the province on advertisements on recruiting.

General Hughes said he thought the Standard was a Liberal paper.

GROTHERS SAYS NORMAL COAL SUPPLY WILL COME TO DOMINION

Ottawa, July 9.—"We are going to get all the coal we need this winter," declared F. W. Grothers, when asked if he had anything to say regarding the coal and licensing order placed by the United States on the export of coal to all countries, even to the countries of the allies.

Mr. Grothers said that C. A. Magrath, the fuel controller, had made complete arrangements for Canada's normal supply of fuel from the United States. Mr. Magrath has appointed an American expert on coal and transportation to look after the coal from the mines to the Canadian border, and from the border to the points of distribution it will be taken care of entirely by the railway commission under Sir Henry Drayton.

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Home Rule Won, Says O'Connor

Declares Failure of Irish Convention Would Merely Delay It

Would Placate Orangemen—Believes in This War Crisis They Can Be Induced to Accept—An Interview of Deep Interest

(Special to The New York Times) Washington, July 7.—In what has been the most important interview he has given since he came to the United States, T. P. O'Connor, the noted Irish parliamentarian and writer, today described the Irish situation in detail and expressed the conviction that the "unanimous and ardent support by the people and government of the United States" of home rule for Ireland would be brought home to Great Britain should reason arise. Mr. O'Connor had an interview with President Wilson on Thursday. He had strong reason to believe, he said, that neither Mr. Balfour nor any of the other British statesmen at home had been left in any doubt of this unanimous and ardent support of home rule here in America.

Mr. O'Connor discussed the prospects of a permanent settlement of the Irish question through the Irish convention, the probable influence and action of some of the strong elements that will enter into its composition, and the practical way in which Irishmen in America may be of service. In answer to a question Mr. O'Connor said he saw with satisfaction that the date of the first meeting of the convention was now announced as July 23 and that practically all the preparations for it were complete. When he was asked if he was hopeful as to its results, Mr. O'Connor said:

"I am neither hopeful nor despondent. I do not think anybody can give an accurate forecast of what so uncertain a thing as a gathering of such heterogeneous elements can turn out to be. Nor do I at all accept the idea that the convention is the end any more than the beginning of the struggle for home rule. In some respects it might be said that the struggle for Irish self-government is over. Anybody who wants to defeat self-government for Ireland now has to fight, not Ireland, but the world. The world has spoken; the cause is decided.

"The when, the where of Home Rule alone remain important things that just set themselves, and quickly, now that the principle of Irish self-government has been adopted with the

sanction of the entire world, and with that of practically all England, almost as much as of all America. I refuse, then, to say that if the convention failed, that would do anything worse than mark another milestone on the road to which there can be only one ending."

"Would you venture even a guess or a speculative forecast?"

Ought to Placate Orangemen

"If you insist, certainly, though politicians do not like to prophesy. What I think the convention ought to do is for the Nationalists to offer freely, without even being asked, every possible safeguard against the apprehensions—unfounded but sincere—which the Orangemen entertain of interference by the Dublin parliament with their liberties, civil or religious. I would be willing, for instance, to increase the representation of the urban districts; that would do good all over Ireland, for I see some danger in a mere farmer parliament. It might be too conservative. As an increase, however, of urban representation would give more additional members to Ulster than to the rest of Ireland."

"I would also give larger representation in the senate to the Unionist forces of the country. Finally, I have heard a suggestion that there might be in Ulster and in the south of Ireland provincial councils for dealing with purely local affairs, both these councils, of course, being subject to the national parliament in College Green. I don't quite like this suggestion, but it has the backing of several very important men in Ireland and in more than one party. I would, in short, give the Orangemen any fair concession, but no Irish Nationalist can now accept, even temporarily, the partition of Ireland in any shape."

"Will the decisions of the majority of the convention be binding on the minority and on the government?"

"I must answer both yes and no. The convention has advisory, not legislative, powers; what recommendations it makes must afterward be accepted by the government, be put by them into a bill, and passed through the houses of parliament. On most of the questions submitted to the convention I believe there will be little difficulty in coming to an agreement. The one crux of the problem now as for the last three years—is Ulster, or rather Orange Ulster."

"Will the Orangemen still hold out for the separation of the Ulster Orange counties from the rest of Ireland and

from the control of the Dublin parliament?"

"I cannot say. If you had asked me that question some months ago, I would say they probably will; now I cannot say. The world forces which are now behind home rule, the abandonment of the Orange position by the strong Tories in England who formerly supported it, the peril of the empire, the pressure of American opinion, the assurance of Mr. Lloyd George and the labor section of the ministry, all these things cannot remain without influence on the Orangemen, with all their dogmatic impetuosity; and they may prove more tractable in this convention than they have hitherto been."

Voice of Southern Protestants

"I have not mentioned, however, a force that may have greater influence on the Ulster Orangemen than even these great outside forces I have already mentioned. That is the pressure from their own co-religionists in the other parts of Ireland. There is a large representation of the southern Unionists—Protestants for the most part—in the convention, and for a very obvious reason they do not want to go into a parliament in Dublin, mainly Catholic in its membership, without the assistance of their big Protestant brother from Ulster. The Belfast banks draw a large part of their money from the south; the Belfast business—outside linen and shipbuilding, which are international trades—get a great deal, if not most, of their custom in the south of Ireland. Nationalists like John Dillon and John Fitzgibbon, for instance, who have businesses in the south, are favored with visits every day in the week by the drummers of the Belfast houses."

"I think, from all these indications, that if it should come to a division on the question of partition, there will be a big majority against it in the convention."

"What then?"

"Either the Orangemen will now bow to this, or carry on their opposition to it outside the convention. In the latter case I think the government might very well be compelled by English as well as by Irish opinion to use such pressure on the Orangemen, such as appeals to their patriotism at an hour when the allies are fighting for the liberties of Europe as would compel or persuade them to throw

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in their lot with the rest of their countrymen."

"What can America do for Ireland at this hour?"

"America has always been doing a great deal for Ireland. I have no official information, but I have strong reasons to believe that neither Mr. Balfour nor the British statesmen at home were left in any doubt as to the manly and ardent support of home rule by the people and by the government of the United States. I have no doubt that, should the occasion arise, that opinion will again be brought home to the people and to the government of Great Britain. The friendly counsel of America must be the more welcome to Great Britain and have even greater influence ever when there begins to appear in the papers of the world all the names of the Cascays, the Kellys, and the Sheas, who now, as in every war of America, have figured in the ranks of America's army and navy."

Of the men of Irish blood in America Mr. O'Connor said:

"They can exercise great influence on the Irish situation, great influence for good, great for evil. If they give their support to the impracticable demand for an Irish republic and help to keep Ireland in disorder and in chaos, of course their influence will be mischievous, and though even such folly cannot defeat home rule ultimately—nothing can now defeat home rule—it may postpone it, and this, for a thousand reasons, and not when the war is over, is the hour to settle the Irish question."

What form do you expect home rule to take when it emerges from the convention?"

"I am glad you asked that question, for so much attention has been concentrated on the Ulster issue that other and in some respects more important aspects of the Irish question have been forgotten. Take, for instance, the question of finance, a vital question, so vital, indeed, that home rule without good finance might have many evil consequences. When the home rule measure now on the statute books was passed, Ireland was in this peculiar position: Ireland was a poor country, but the yield of Irish taxation was some \$85,000,000. In other words, Ireland cost more than she gave. She was a debtor nation, in such condition the imperial government limited the financial control of Ireland by the Irish government, but it was presently provided that the limitations would come to an end when the deficit disappeared. Under the increased taxation brought by the war, the Irish deficit has disappeared and Ireland's right to what may be called full fiscal autonomy has been established. Thus the home rule measure can be so much amended in the direction of fiscal freedom as to make it almost twice as great a measure of liberty as it was in its original shape."

But these are not the only modifications which are possible. I should say even probable. The Orangemen have always maintained that if Ireland were to get home rule at all, it ought to be the fullest measure of home rule, and I do not believe that they would resist these enlargements of Ireland's control of her own finances. Ireland should be supreme within her own household. This is a programme on which all Irish Nationalists could unite. For myself, for all my colleagues in the Irish party, I can say that now, as always, our effort has been to get for Ireland the very largest measure of self-government that we thought could be obtained. Ireland could never be too free for us in the management of her own concerns."

LIBERALS HAVE TWO STRONG CANDIDATES IN FIELD IN P. E. ISLAND.

Charlottetown, P. E. I., July 9.—The government is to have opposition in the two bye-elections. The Liberals nominated their second man, Saturday, selecting W. W. Jenkins, of Georgetown, against J. D. Stewart, an ex-Premier Matheson's old seat, the fifth district of Kings. Mr. Jenkins is regarded as a strong man and his nomination increases the Liberal hopes of defeating the government in the bye-elections.