

CORRESPONDENCE OF GENERAL  
SIR SAM HUGHES

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CANADIAN LIBERAL PARTY

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# **CORRESPONDENCE**

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OF

**GENERAL SIR SAM HUGHES**

**Ex-Minister of Militia**

AND

**THE RIGHT HON. SIR ROBERT BORDEN**

**G. C. M. G.**

**AT THE TIME SIR SAM RESIGNED**

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**Sir Sam accused of insubordination  
but dismissed for writing the Premier an  
insulting letter.**

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**READ THE "CHARGES AND ACCUSATIONS."**

PUBLICATION No. 52

**THE PRIME MINISTER "GUILTY" OF PERMITTING  
"PETTY INTRIGUING" IN CONNECTION WITH THE  
SUCCESSFUL PROSECUTION OF THE WAR, SO SAYS  
SIR SAM HUGHES.**

**READ THE LETTERS.**

When Sir Sam Hughes resigned his portfolio as Minister of Militia and Defence in the Borden Government several letters which had passed between himself as Minister of Militia and Sir Robert Borden were published. These letters contained grave accusations, not only against Sir Robert Borden, the Prime Minister of Canada, but against his colleagues, members of the Borden administration, all with reference to the conduct of the war. All of these charges are most serious, in fact if half of what Sir Sam Hughes states is true the members of the Borden Government, Sir Robert Borden himself included, are guilty of interfering with the successful prosecution of the war.

All the letters made public at that time are given in full herewith :—

## OVERSEAS MILITIA COUNCIL SUGGESTED.

Ottawa, October 18, 1916.

"Dear General Hughes,—

"I am enclosing herewith a memorandum embodying the proposal "which I discussed with you yesterday. The grounds upon which it is "based are briefly summarized in the draft Order-in-Council. In order "that our participation in the war may accomplish the highest results, "the co-operation between this Government and the Imperial Government "should be as close and effective as possible. Our forces at the front are "grouped in the Canadian Army Corps, but that army corps, as well as the "Australian and New Zealand troops in the western theatre form part of "the British forces under the direction of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir "Douglas Haig.

"By the end of the present month the number of troops actually despatched to Great Britain will exceed 256,000. More than 100,000 are in "the fighting line at present.

"It is apparent that we should have a more efficient organization in "Great Britain. Your recommendations as to an Overseas Militia Council "are based on that view, as I understand. I am not criticizing your suggestions as to the personnel of the proposed overseas council, but I am "of opinion that the direction of a member of the Government resident in "London is both desirable and essential.

### Canada's War Expenditure Greater Than Total Annual Revenue Before War Broke Out.

"Our overseas force already despatched to Europe is greater by 100,000 men than the effective strength of the British regular army before "the commencement of the war. The expenditure thereon is larger than "the total annual revenue of the country before the war broke out. A still "greater effort will be necessary before the supreme purpose for which "this war was undertaken shall have been accomplished.

### Great Ability and Wonderful Energy.

"You will agree that the most effective control of expenditure under "the war appropriation act must be provided. Every consideration demands our best efforts for that purpose. I realize that you have done "much to assist in cutting down expenditure. The proposal embodied in "the draft Order-in-Council is not intended as a reflection upon your "efforts or your administration. I thoroughly appreciate the great ability, "the wonderful energy and the unequalled resourcefulness which you have "placed at the service of the country ever since the outbreak of war.

"I should be glad to have you take the subject into consideration to-day as I desire to have it discussed in council to-morrow, if possible.

"Yours faithfully,

"(Signed), R. L. BORDEN.

"Lieut.-Gen. Sir Sam Hughes, K.C.B., Ottawa, Ont."

### ACTION OF PRIME MINISTER WILL CRIPPLE, IMPEDE AND REDUCE OVERSEAS FORCES TO CHAOTIC CONDITION.

October 23rd, 1916.

"Dear Sir Robert :—

"Your letter October 18th received. I entirely agree that the one "object to the accomplishment is the winning of the war, but I must submit "that the proposed Order-in-Council of September 22nd ult., with its accompanying regulations, will, to my mind, cripple, impede and again "reduce the force overseas to the chaotic condition to which it had fallen "at the end of the first nine months of the war under a system practically "what you now propose re-establishing.

"I regret that I cannot endorse your statement that 'It is apparent

"that we should have a more efficient organization in Great Britain," if "reference is had to the present organization there, but if reference is had to the plans established during the first nine months, under a system almost identical with what you now propose, then I cordially agree.

"Regarding your letter and memorandum, permit the following:

**Sir Sam Objects to Canadian Forces, Supplies, Equipments,  
Transports Being Completely Put Into Hands of British.**

"From the first I strongly objected to the fact that practically the entire management of our force, our supplies, our equipment, our transport, etc., had been taken completely out of our hands and was controlled by the British authorities, we notwithstanding pay the bill.

**Canadian Government Should Control Her Own Troops.**

"In October, 1914, in conversation on the subject with the late Earl Kitchener, he pointed out that the Canadian High Commissioner had intimated to him that it was the desire of the Canadian Government that these troops should be regarded as purely British and that Canada should have nothing to say in their management while in England or at the front. I drew his attention to section 177 of the Army Act, and to the spirit and principles of the Constitution, but he again intimated that he understood it was the desire of the Canadian Government that the troops were to be handed over to them absolutely as 'British regulars.' To this I objected and pointed out that I fully believe that our force, under officers of our own selection, should at the front be under the command of the British Commander-in-Chief, yet the appointment of officers at the front and the control of everything in connection with the force while in Britain should be entirely with Canada, but I further stated that I felt in such a great struggle where each was actuated by proper motives there should be no need of friction.

**Direct Criticism of Sir George Perley.**

"I do not know whether the Canadian High Commissioner had the authority of the Canadian Government, but a day or two later that gentleman of his initiative strongly spoke to me and briefly said: 'You do not pretend surely to have anything to do with the Canadian soldiers in Britain.' I suggested that he might be well advised to study not alone the Canadian military law, but the British Army Act, as well as to comprehend the spirit of the Constitution. I felt then, as I feel to-day and as I am pleased to say the entire British Government and War Officers also realize to-day, that our officers and men being in the pay of Canada, Canada should absolutely control them in Canada and in Britain, excepting in so far as securing camping grounds is concerned, and at the front, for everything excepting the command and general administration under the command.

**All Canadian Equipment Set Aside.**

"However, for the first ten months our suggestions were practically ignored; our equipment, stores, supplies, armament, everything provided by us, was set aside.

**Pay Department Chaotic, Medical Service Lacked System,  
Efficiency and Comprehensiveness.**

"The pay department was found to be absolutely chaotic, the medical service, modelled on the British, lacked system, efficiency and comprehensiveness.

**Excuses of British War Office Without Foundation.**

"I spoke to you at the time about the rejection of all overshoes and supplies of every description and proved to you that the excuses of the British office were totally without foundation. You have my memorandum at the time proving the utter falsity of their bogus excuses regarding our wagons, etc.

"Your suggestion then was that as the changes had been made we should abide by the decision of the British officers. However, I did not wish to raise any trouble in the matter, but I determined that Canada was not to be treated as a Crown colony and that we paid the bill and furnished the goods, which in nearly every instance were better than the British, I would act. I ordered muster parade of our men and tried to lay plans to stop the scandalous neglect going on in the pay department.

"A change was also ordered in the convalescent policy, as one had previously been ordered in the pay department.

#### Resident Ministers in Britain Unnecessary.

"In your memorandum you speak of the need of a resident Minister in Britain. As I pointed out to you the other day, it would be absurd. There is no more necessity for a resident Minister in Britain than there is for a Minister at our camps in British Columbia, Calgary, Camp Borden, Valcartier, etc. Indeed, there is less need in Britain, because where formerly General Carson was alone the representative, he is now surrounded by a sub-militia council composed of the ablest officers to be found to advise and report to headquarters at Ottawa on all military matters.

"They have no final say—they merely report to Ottawa—and there is no more delay than there is in coming from Vancouver Island or from Halifax. Further from a constitutional viewpoint it is more than absurd.

#### Canadian Government Must Accept Responsibility.

"I had to accept, under protest, for the first year, the management of the force in Britain. The anomaly of such a state of things is apparent. The Canadian soldier in the trenches must voice his complaint, if any, through the Parliament of Canada, and the Minister of Militia and Defence must accept responsibility. How could the Canadian soldier obtain redress through the British House of Commons? Kipling's lines hold good: 'Daughter in her mother's house, mistress in her own.'

"As another standard maxim 'taxation implies representation, and brings responsibility.'

#### Declares an Overseas' Minister a Fifth Wheel, Would Confuse Organization and Bring About Return of Irregularities in Management.

"We have reorganized and re-formed the pay and medical services in Britain, and to-day have paced the force there on a good basis. Thus, on the face of it, it is evident that there is no more need for an extra or separate member of the Government to look after things in England than there would be at Camp Borden or Camp Hughes, our two large camps. It would confuse the entire organization, would bring about a return of the irregularities in management, in training and in promotions (which I have been endeavoring to eliminate by placing them on the basis of preference to men from the front), and as was the effect under the cancelled Order-in-Council, would cause chaos in the administration, would destroy the present friendly relationship between the Canadian forces at the front and in Britain on the one hand, and the British administration on the other.

#### Reorganization Saved Millions.

"During the last year's management we have introduced a new system of convalescent control upon which the British are now modelling. We returned a much higher percentage to the battalions trained and fully fit for service and saved to Canada the sum of upwards of six millions of dollars. Under our system our men are fed, and more than well fed, at a cost of one shilling threepence halfpenny (1s. 3½d) per day, a large percentage less than the cost of any other service in the field, and the

"quality and variety are of the best. It is impossible to lay a finger on any part of our service that is not better and more economically administered than the British and infinitely better than anything that ever occurred before. Indeed, the British were modelling after our system when I sailed.

"You spoke of enlistment and of training. Enlistment, I am now convinced as a voluntary matter, has about reached the limit and I wish to discuss the remedy fully.

"Regarding the purchasing in Britain. What I have suggested long ago was that General Carson, as representing the Militia Department in Britain, should in non-military business, such as supplies from Britain not covered by Order-in-Council, consult with Sir George Perley.

#### Sub-Militia Council Seriously Interferes With Efficiency of Militia Department.

"I cannot but realize that the proposed Order-in-Council will seriously interfere with the efficiency of my department and if persisted in will be most detrimental to the best interests of the force. Let me summarize some of the things which have been accomplished by the department to date. We have raised a force and managed it, in spite of all sorts of intrigue, and sent from Valcartier and from all over Canada the finest fighting force in the world.

#### Canadian Soldiers Second to None—System of Recruiting Overthrown.

"From Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Asquith, Lord French and Sir Douglas Haig come the statement: 'The Canadians are the equal of the Guards and are second to no fighting force in the world.' Is this by chance? We fought for the rights of Canadian manufacturers in supplying materials, equipment, etc., for that force; also for the rights of the officers and men in being organized and officered as a Canadian force. The system of recruiting in local centres, which proved such a tremendous success last year, has been reported to be overthrown, and it is said 'the troops will be located only in large centres this winter.'

#### Welfare of Officers and Men and Assistance Towards Winning the War Not Objects of Sub-Militia Council.

"As an intermediary in all diplomatic relations concerning our military forces in Britain and at the front, we secured the services of one of the ablest diplomats, namely, Sir Max Aitken. He is respected by everyone in the War Office, in the Canadian service, in the Colonial Office, and in the Foreign Office. This whole position is based on misconception of the facts, and can but have three motives to inspire it, none of which is the welfare of the officers and men, or the winning of the war. I am sure such a proposition never originated with you. Having established a system to conduct this war on the basis of proper administration, the upbuildings of the honor and respect of Canadians, the maintenance of just rights for Canadians, the establishment of perfect harmony between all branches of the Canadian force and the British force, all tending to the successful conduct and victorious issue of the war, I cannot concur in the proposal to destroy these plans. The excuse put forward that the Department of Militia is too busy is very weak. Under its organization the munitions industry was established, bringing in about five hundred millions of dollars to the Canadian people.

#### What Has Been Done in Canada.

"The manufacture of copper and zinc in Canada will afford opportunity for tens of thousands of men to get employment both during and after the war. Basic steel was used where acid steel could not be successfully produced in Canada, and millions of pounds of Canadian steel, made by Canadian workmen, have thus been produced by Canadians. Tens of thousands of tons of lead, from mines previously idle in Canada, have been utilized in the war. A grant was obtained from the British Govern-

"ment for the manufacture of T. N. R. at Sydney and thence the great  
 "Canadian high explosive industries have sprung. We have established  
 "the fish ration for the soldiers at the front, the greatest boon that was  
 "ever conferred on the fishermen of Canada, and the ration has met the  
 "wishes of the soldiers. We have now the lumber industry and other  
 "projects in hand for military purposes. There is also a parliamentary  
 "secretary for the Department of Militia and Defence to lighten the bur-  
 "dens of the Minister. Therefore, why such solicitude for further lighten-  
 "ing the Minister's burdens? The result of the work of the present ad-  
 "ministration of the department has been one of the finest armies in the  
 "world and by the insistence on our position as Canadians our manufac-  
 "tories have flourished and prosperity has marched hand in hand with our  
 "military success. In short, the banks of Canada and the pockets of the  
 "Canadian people have been filled with money. Thus it is an easy matter  
 "for the bankers and Finance Minister to gather this gold together for the  
 "necessary purposes of the war.

"There, therefore, seems no just reason for the proposal.

Faithfully,  
 "(Signed), SAM HUGHES.

"The Right Honourable Sir R. L. Borden, G.C.M.G., Etc. Ottawa."

#### PREMIER DISAGREES WITH SIR SAM HUGHES.

Ottawa, October 26th.

"Dear General Hughes:—

"I have read carefully your letter of the 23rd instant, respecting the  
 "proposal to establish a Ministry of Overseas Forces serving in Great  
 "Britain and elsewhere in Europe. With respect to your view that the  
 "system which I propose is that which was in force during the nine months  
 "of the war, I cannot concur. There was no Minister resident in London  
 "who was charged with direct responsibility in such matters, and the  
 "conditions to which you allude, in so far as they existed, were evidently  
 "due to the lack of direct control on the spot. Thus I am not proposing  
 "re-establishing anything which previously existed, but to create a new  
 "department, under the direction of a Minister who will be in close touch  
 "with the British authorities as well as with the needs of the overseas  
 "forces, both in Great Britain and in France subject to the paramount,  
 "consideration of such unity of organization and direction as will make our  
 "overseas forces to the fullest extent an effective part of the united expe-  
 "ditionary forces of the Empire. The appointment of a Minister charged  
 "with the proposed duties will not in any way abdicate that control and  
 "will aid in securing and maintaining necessary co-operation.

"I also thoroughly agree that supplies, equipment, etc., should be  
 "provided in this country as far as possible. That policy has been and  
 "will be maintained. In providing supplies we should have regard to  
 "the importance and in many cases the necessity of uniform type in order  
 "that unnecessary delay and confusion at the front may be avoided. The  
 "creation of the proposed ministry will not lessen in any way our control  
 "of responsibility nor is it designed for any such purpose. In the dis-  
 "charge of his duties the Minister will be subject as a real Minister to the  
 "decision of council in every important matter, and council in turn is  
 "subject to the control of the people's representatives in Parliament.

#### Every Member of Government Responsible for Individual Action of Any Minister.

"There is no motive for establishing the proposed ministry except to  
 "secure the greatest efficiency and the most economical administration  
 "that can be obtained. It is intended to continue only during the progress  
 "of the war, and for a limited period thereafter during the return of all  
 "troops. You do not need to be reminded that the war appropriation has  
 "been voted not to any particular department of the Government, but to

"the Government as a whole. Your department for obvious reasons has been chiefly concerned with the expenditure of the sums so voted, but all the members of the Government have a special responsibility in connection therewith. You have recognized the importance of overseas administration first, by appointing General Carson to reside in London as representative of your department, and secondly, by your proposal with regard to an overseas council. It appears to me that the direct control of a member of the Government resident in London would afford an additional and important safeguard.

**Premier Gives No Consideration to Sir Sam's Proposal.**

"I do not pause to dwell upon your suggestions that these would be the like reason for establishing a separate department to control each of the training camps in Canada. The comparison seems to be absolutely irrelevant. The organization, direction and control of a quarter of a million men overseas, the necessity of thorough co-operation with the British Government in all matters relating thereto in such manner as to preserve unity of direction with necessary maintenance of Canadian rights and interests, the very fact that in your own view an entirely new Canadian organization is necessary in Great Britain, all these considerations so plainly distinguish the two cases that I am not disposed to enlarge upon them.

**Counsel Must Decide.**

"Thus I regret that I cannot concur in the view expressed in your letter, and I must, therefore, bring up the matter for consideration in council in the immediate future. This would have been done at an earlier date except for pressing matters which have occupied our attention during the past few days, and I had returned to your reasonable desire that I should give further consideration to the suggestion in your letter.

"Yours faithfully,

"(Signed), R. L. BORDEN.

"Lieut.-Gen. Sir Sam Hughes, K.C.B., Ottawa, Ont."

**SIR GEORGE PERLEY TO BE APPOINTED.**

Ottawa, October 26th, 1916.

"Dear Sir Robert :—

"Last night in glancing over your memorandum re our proposed new London Minister, I observed that the gentleman was returning to be clothed with the powers outlined in the memorandum. The great objection, therefore, that I had next to the misfortune for the force which I love should a wrong man be appointed and my solicitude to prevent humiliation and insult to our mutual friend, Sir Max Aitken, who has so long, so successfully, disinterestedly, and so diplomatically performed for Canada the very work outlined in your proposal. I could not, in honor, be party to any such action to overshadow him by appointing another gentleman to this work, as he has practically since the beginning of the war performed all the very duties outlined in the memorandum, and surely you could not either. But I will be more than proud to support the proposition, with all my heart and all my power, if you fill in the name of Sir Max Aitken. It is a question of the man and not the office.

**The Appointment of Any One Else Would Disintegrate  
the Force, Place Our Boys at the Front in Danger  
and Give Them Improper Management  
Behind Them.**

"I have for months and months planned to give him the status due him, and had hoped that he might become High Commissioner, so that we could have all these duties, which he has so long and so faithfully performed, handed over to him with the rank of the Minister. To be



"frank, the idea of creating him a separate Minister did not occur to me, but I have been busy. As Sir Max knows, I have planned to remove him from the status of a mere 'hat in the hand pleader and diplomat' and give him that of an accredited representative. Therefore, please fill in his name, let the office be attached to him instead of him to the office, and you have my exact wish. I, therefore, will as strongly support the proposal with Sir Max Aitken, the man, as I would bitterly resent and oppose it were another under whose ministrations the force would be disintegrated, and our gallant boys at the front be placed in danger, not from the enemy but from improper management behind them.

"If you therefore will do me the honor of filling in the name of Sir Max Aitken, I would be pleased if you could put the proposal through within an hour. It is the man and not the office in this case.

"Faithfully,

"(Signed), SAM HUGHES.

"The Right Hon. Sir Robert Borden, G.C.M.G., Prime Minister of Canada,  
"Ottawa, Canada."

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ESTABLISHMENT OF PROPOSED MINISTRY FIRST, THEN  
THE MAN.

Ottawa, October 26.

"Dear General Hughes:—

"Your letter of to-day reached me just before I went into Council, and I have not had a previous opportunity of answering it. The draft report of Council which I submitted for your information was not intended to contain an appointment. It is necessary first to establish the proposed ministry, and after it is established the question of an appointment must at once be taken up. It would then be my duty to submit to the Governor-General the name of a person to be selected for the post, and to inform my colleagues of the selection. The subject would naturally come before Council when the necessary recommendation had been submitted. I cannot concur in your view that the selection of any other person would be a reflection upon the gentleman whose appointment you advocate. Nothing could be further from my thoughts than any such intention.

"Faithfully yours,

"(Signed), R. L. BORDEN.

"Lieut.-Gen. Sir Sam Hughes, K.C.B., Ottawa, Ont."

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SIR SAM AGAIN RECOMMENDS SIR MAX AIKEN.

Ottawa, October 28th, 1916.

"Dear Sir Robert:—

"Re the memorandum on proposed change in Britain, and my agreeing to Sir Max Aitken. Of course it is clear, from the context of my letter, that my idea is a man instead of an office. The plan should be, as he has informally had it, that Max would be the Canadian representative there for war purposes under me, while Perley should, as now, be consulted regarding all contracts and purchases not under the fixed charges. Max could be given Privy Council rank, which would not require any election, any salary, or anything else.

"Faithfully,

SAM HUGHES.

"The Right Hon. Sir Robert L. Borden, G.C.M.G., Prime Minister of Canada,  
"Ottawa, Ont."

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SIR GEO. PERLEY DOMINATES.

Ottawa, October 31st, 1916.

"Dear Sir Robert:—

"In conformity with the suggestion made this morning, permit me to briefly summarize the situation.

### Sir George Perley Dominated Over Sir Sam Hughes.

"During the first year of the war the plans adopted for the force in England were modeled on the British War Office, but I had nothing what-ever to do with them. The Canadian High Commissioner seemed to be the one dominate as witnessed in the contract made for officers' mess-ing, etc., at Salisbury; for the British system in regard to the Pay Department and the British system in regard to the Medical Department.

### V. A. D. Hospitals Manned With British Society People and Canadian Officers With Their Usual Pull to Which Sir Geo. Perley Agreed.

"From the outset I object to these women's organizations in Britain in the shape of V.A.D. hospitals, etc., but the Canadian High Commissioner seemed to favor them.

"The appointments in the force were also based on two avenues of supply, one was British officers connected with society people, and the other, Canadian permanent corps officers with their usual pull. In justice to a limited few of each class who were worthy, the majority of them were not up to the average of capability.

### Millions Saved.

"Since a year ago Canadian control through the Militia Department has been, more or less, with the full consent of the British War Office, gradually recognized to the great advantage of the force. The absurd system in pay and Medical Services, modeled after the British, were last year revolutionised, saving many millions to the country. This has caused, of course, some opposition among those interested in the obsolete and inefficient ways of carrying on.

"During the last year the connections with the British Government have been carried on—the mere departmental or routine ones—by the departments concerned; while the diplomatic ones with the War Office and with the force have been undertaken by a most capable officer, Col. Sir Max Aitken.

"In matters not concerning the purely military affairs such as purchase and contracting for supplies, I long ago directed that the Canadian High Commissioner should be consulted.

### Sub Militia Council and How It Should Work.

"Recently I have formed a consultative Sub-Militia Council, whose officers are paid according to their rank and not as members of this Council. These are purely advisory.

"I do not see wherein this could be strengthened in the least degree, excepting by giving Sir Max Aitken—who to-day has only a semi-official position—a more dignified status in connection with the work which he has so long carried on. I would therefore, suggest that the proposed order-in-council regarding the formation of the Sub-Militia Council might be altered so as to make Sir Max Aitken a Canadian Privy Councillor and appoint him to take charge of the general conduct of matters between the Sub-Militia Council on the one hand, with the War Office and the force at the front on the other.

"All matters not covered by order-in-council, pertaining to contracting and the purchase of supplies or expenditure of money other than regular routine payments, should be submitted by the Sub-Militia Council to the consideration of the Canadian High Commissioner for his consideration, and these considerations should be submitted back to Canada in the form of a draft report to Privy Council addressed to and to be signed by the Minister of Militia and Defence for Canada for submission to the President of Privy Council.

"In connection with the channels of communication, matters from the High Commissioner of the Sub-Militia Council concerning the regular Military affairs, should be carried on through the constitutional Minister of Militia and Defence for Canada; with a view, however, to adjusting and co-ordinating the purchases or other expenditures which may be made

"under the War Measures Act, I would recommend that the High Commissioner, as president of the Sub-Militia Council, be called upon to submit by Order-in-Council, in as much detailed form as possible, whatever authority he may need for the expenditure of sums of money which cannot be accounted for before the Order-in-Council is possible—for the signature of the Minister of Militia and Defence; such sums to be later accounted for by the High Commissioner in due course, as required by law.

"Also that in accordance with the present practice, all appointments, nominations, promotions and any expenditure under the War Appropriations Act, be authorized by Order-in-Council on the recommendation of the Minister of Militia and Defence for Canada.

"There would thus be no confusion, but each officer concerned, whether in Canada or at the front, would have his proper function to perform. All would work in harmony and the best interests of the force in Canada, in England and at the front would be maintained.

"A most important point to all would be the preservation and the continuity in preserving an equality in the way of promotions in the three forces—Canada, England and the front.

Faithfully,

(Signed) SAM HUGHES.

The Right Hon. Sir Robert L. Borden,  
G.C.M.G. Prime Minister of Canada,  
Ottawa, Ontario.

#### SIR SAM HUGHES DISOBEYS ORDERS.

Ottawa, Ont., October 31st, 1916.

"Dear General Hughes:—

"I beg to acknowledge your letter of last evening which reached me this morning. So far as I am aware you exercised the same control and direction over the forces in Great Britain during the first year as subsequently. You may recall that you visited Great Britain in the Autumn of 1914 for that purpose.

Sir Sam Told Not to Complete Arrangements Regarding Sub-Militia Council Without First Reporting to Premier.

"With reference to the consultative Sub-Militia Council which as stated in your letter you have formed, may I remind you that on the 31st of July, 1916, I sent you a cable as follows:

"When you have reached conclusion respecting your proposals for reorganization please cable them fully as they should be definitely embodied in Order-in-Council, and it would be desirable to consider them before they are actually put in operation."

"On the 7th of September, in consequence of a press despatch from London, I sent you the following message by cable:

"Extraordinary press report appeared last evening giving details of arrangements which you are said to have made with respect to the control of our forces in Great Britain. Please note my cable thirty-first July on this subject. In my judgment more effective and definite arrangements must be made for control of overseas expenditure and for direction of overseas forces. Such arrangements must be put in definite shape and embodied in an Order-in-Council. It is most undesirable that proposals contemplated should be announced in advance of consideration by Council."

"On the 8th of September I received from you a reply as follows:

"Regarding cable press report positive orders were given from beginning that not one word was to be uttered concerning proposals until finally fixed in Canada. Have analyzed (?) and at War Office, Canadian front and general headquarters all advised me

'regarding proposals, but all were supposed to be secret. Will  
'enquire fully. Hope definite suggestions will be ready to-morrow.'  
'To which on the same day I sent the following reply :

'Cable received. Greatly surprised that composition of pro-  
'posed Overseas Council is announced in press this morning. Hope  
'you can return immediately. Kindly cable date.'  
'And on the 11th September I received a further cable message from  
'you as follows :

'Purpose returning about end of month, my work here not  
'completed before. Know nothing whatever about our own com-  
'position (?) of proposed council and cannot understand your pecu-  
'liar message. Report on proposed council mailed you. Question  
'of salary or rank never once raised by any officer. Absolutely  
'understand nothing settled until approved by Order-in-Council.  
'Leaving now for week inspection timber camps at various points.  
'Absent about week.'

Sir Sam Ignored Instructions and Appointed Sub-Militia Council.

'It would appear that the reorganization alluded to in these various  
'messages was actually put in operation before you left Great Britain,  
'although authority in council has not been obtained therefor. This is by  
'no means in accordance with the arrangements made in the correspond-  
'ence above quoted.

'I have read your letter with care and it does not seem to me that  
'the proposals which you outline are practicable; thus I regret that I  
'cannot concur in them. The control and direction of a Minister actually  
'on the spot seem to me highly important for the reasons which were  
'indicated in my letters of the 18th and 26th instant.

'Yours faithfully,

'(Signed), R. L. BORDEN.

'Lieut. Gen. The Hon. Sam Hughes, K.C.B., Minister of Militia, Ottawa.'

#### DIFFERS WITH PREMIER.

Ottawa, November 1, 1916.

'Dear Sir Robert :—

'In reply to your memorandum of October 31st ultimo, permit me in  
'brief to summarize.

Sir Sam Wanted to Retain Control.

'I do recall my visit to Great Britain in the autumn of 1914. I did  
'expect both under the statutory law of Britain and under the law of  
'common courtesy, that I would have been permitted to exercise some  
'control and direction' over our gallant Canadian boys, in the way of  
'organization.

Sir Geo. Perley Thought British Government Should  
Have Control of Canadian Soldiers.

'But there had evidently been some communication to the effect that  
'control and direction' of this magnificent force should be under the  
'British Government direct. The then Mr. George Perley, Acting High  
'Commissioner, implied such in the following words: 'You do not pretend  
'surely to have anything to do with the Canadian soldiers in Britain.'

'Further, Sir Robert, I spoke to you on my return and told you the  
'circumstances, both then and subsequently. You, yourself, know that  
'last year you took occasion to speak to Sir George Perley concerning the  
'matter. The treatment he accorded me after this was the only respect-  
'able or courteous treatment he ever gave me.

Sub-Militia Council.

'Regarding the consultative Sub-Militia Council. It has only been  
'tentatively formed. My way of doing things is to obtain results, not  
'necessarily the creation of bodies organized by Order-in-Council. As  
'everyone knows, what may seem workable in theory does not so turn out  
'in practice.

"On my arrival in England this year, I was met by your cablegram \* of July 31st, which you quote.

"During the month of August I visited every camp in England, France and Belgium, and consulted in detail with all the leading officers of the Canadian force. I went further, and asked for suggestions from leading officers of every force.

"Not content with this, however, I decided to try the thing out in practice, and in an informal way, and before embodying anything in Order-in-Council, would find any weak points in the system which might arise, and could add any improvements necessary.

"Every officer concerned was distinctly notified of this, that no question of rank, or pay, or precedence or anything else, other than trial organization, was contemplated.

"As a result, before I left England, we have made many improvements.

Hospital Commission, Pension Board, National Service  
Board All Absurdities.

"Permit me to draw your attention to nearly every commission which has been formed. They look beautiful on paper, but few, if any of them, have been anything like perfect in practice. The Hospitals Commission, the Pensions Board and the National Service Commission all seemed lovely when sent out, but everyone concerned with them knows of the absurdities therein contained.

"Permit me further to draw your attention to the fact that the British Constitution does not exist on paper, no Order-in-Council is behind it.

First Division Would Not Have Left Valcartier Had  
Orders-in-Council Been Necessary—Second  
Division Held Up for Months.

"Further, had I ventured to conduct this force on the basis of formal Orders-in-Council, the First Division would not have left Valcartier yet, and you know yourself how by technicalities the Second Division was held up for four months through little petty haggling on the question of motor trucks, etc., etc.

Sir Robert Borden Accused of Fabrication.

"The second line of your memorandum says: 'So far as I am aware, you exercised the same control and direction over the forces in Great Britain during the first year as subsequently.

"Sir Robert, no one knows better than you that this statement is incorrect. This last year, with the full concurrence of the War Office, our management and direction have been given every consideration, and by their request.

Premier Again Fabricates Regarding Sub-Militia Council  
Alleges Sir Sam.

"One other point and I am through. It might be implied from your memorandum that my failing to secure authority by Order-in-Council for this Sub-Militia Council impelled you to the course you are now pursuing regarding Sir George Perley. May I be permitted to say that both you and I know to the contrary. I knew early in August that Sir George Perley had planned something along these very lines. You have, also, admitted that as early as the first week of September you had this matter under consideration. I understand that it was under consideration by you and Perley earlier. You incidentally remarked yesterday that you had not consulted any of your colleagues. Of course when I drew your attention to the statement, you corrected yourself.

"Faithfully,

"(Signed), SAM HUGHES.

"The Right Hon. Sir Robert L. Borden, G. C. M. G., Prime Minister of  
Canada, Ottawa, Canada."

\* For Copy of this Cablegram see second paragraph of letter dated October 31, 1916, from Sir Robert Borden to Sir Sam Hughes.

## SIR SAM HUGHES' RESIGNATION DEMANDED.

Ottawa, November 9, 1916.

"Dear General Hughes:—

"During your absence I have given very careful consideration to your letter of the 1st instant, and I must express my deep regret that you saw fit to address to me, as head of the Government, a communication of that nature. As you are to return to-morrow, it is my duty at once to announce to you my conclusion.

**Accuses Sir Sam of Assuming Powers Which He Does Not Possess—Premier Neglected Important Duties to Remove Difficulties Unnecessarily Created by Sir Sam Hughes—Colleague Often Protested.**

"Under conditions which at times were very trying and which gave me great concern, I have done my utmost to support you in the administration of your department. This has been very difficult by reason of your strong tendency to assume powers which you do not possess and which can only be exercised by the Governor-in-Council. My time and energies although urgently needed for much more important duties, have been very frequently employed in removing difficulties thus unnecessarily created. You seemed actuated by a desire and even an intention to administer your department as if it were a distinct and separate government in itself. On many occasions, but without much result, I have cautioned you against this course which has frequently led to well-founded protest from your colleagues as well as detriment to the public interest.

**Accuses Sir Sam of Acting Without Authority and Consultation.**

"I do not intend to dwell upon the instances, some of which are still under consideration, in which you have acted without authority or consultation in matters more or less important. Of these, the latest is the establishment of a Militia Sub-Council in Great Britain, including the appointment of its personnel. I conveyed to you on the 31st July a clear intimation that upon so important a proposal, involving considerations of the gravest moment, the Cabinet must be consulted before action was taken. All the members of the Government have full and direct responsibility in respect of the very important matters which the proposed Council would advise upon and direct. The intimation which was given to you in my telegram of 31st July should not have been necessary. As soon as it was received you proceeded to disregard it. Some portions of your letter are expressive of the attitude which I have described and to which you evidently intend to adhere. Such an attitude is wholly inconsistent with and subversive of the principle of joint responsibility upon which constitutional Government is based.

**Sir Sam Dismissed Not for Maladministration, But for Telling the Premier That Certain Statements He (the Premier) Had Made Were Not True.**

"But more than that, your letter is couched in such terms that I cannot overlook or excuse it. I take strong exception not only to statements which it contains, but to its general character and tone. You must surely realize that I cannot retain in the Government a colleague who has addressed to me such a communication. I regret that you have thus imposed upon me the disagreeable duty of requesting your resignation as Minister of Militia and Defence.

"Faithfully yours,

"(Signed), R. L. BORDEN.

"Lieut.-Gen. Sir Sam Hughes, K.C.B., Ottawa."

## THE RESIGNATION SIR SAM HUGHES.

Ottawa, November 11, 1916.

"Dear Sir Robert :—

"Your letter of November 9th is at hand and it affords me much satisfaction to now tender you my resignation; indeed, my letter of November 1st rendered it impossible for me to remain your colleague unless you concurred in its correctness.

### Closed His Eyes to Intrigues.

"For a long time I have retained the portfolio of Militia only that I might the better help the soldiers in training and at the front and to do the best I could towards winning the war, which is all that mattered. I have closed my eyes to the petty intrigues and ambitions about me. It is my intention still to devote my energies to the interests of those who have done so much to maintain the great cause of human liberty.

### The Premier Untrue to Sir Sam.

"It is not necessary to analyze, in detail, all disappointing matters in my association with you. You state in the second paragraph of your letter of November 9th: 'I have done my utmost to support you in the administration of your department.'

"This is pleasing news to me, but I learn it now for the first time. Your statement that I had a 'strong tendency to assume powers which you do not possess and which can only be exercised by the Governor-in-Council,' is also news to me. True, from the opening of Valcartier camp such things were done with your full knowledge and authority. Upon my representations to you that the formation of the force would be seriously delayed were every petty detail to be brought before Privy Council, you acquiesced in my recommendation that we should proceed without Orders-in-Council in matters of urgency and that they should be passed afterwards. This was done and has never been deviated from. War cannot be successfully waged on the tactics of a lawsuit.

"Your statement that 'my time and energies, although urgently needed for much more important duties, have been very frequently employed in removing difficulties thus unnecessarily created,' is, also, news to me. Why was I not informed of it? If you mean your time was given up to listening to the complaints of disappointed or overstrung people—I can understand it. In war time in all countries criticism of all measures abounds. In the eyes of some everything done is 'wrong.' I, too, had more than my fair share of uninformed criticism even from well-meaning friends.

### Minister of Finance and the Minister of Trade and Commerce Ignored Council.

"Your statement further that: 'You seemed actuated by a desire and even an intention to administer your department as if it were a distinct and separate government in itself,' is also news to me. It is true that I did not always attend Council to see my recommendations through; I was engaged in other work, but if you will permit me to make a comparison I have yet to learn where once the Finance Minister of Canada brought before Council any proposed loan for the Dominion of Canada or any single important Act concerning the administration of that department. The same observations apply to the Minister of Trade and Commerce.

### Took Four Months to Settle Principles of Purchasing for Second Division.

"Moreover, it is difficult for me to recall where you have actively supported me in the passage of any Order-in-Council concerning the upbuilding of the militia when opposed by two members of the Cabinet usually antagonistic to anything proposed by me. As you are aware, it took us four months in the midst of this great war to fight through the principles of purchasing for the Second Division trucks at the lowest wholesale prices instead of allowing large commissions to local agents who would have nothing whatever to do with securing the order.

Post Office, Railways and Canals and Public Works Departments Made Hugh Expenditure Without Proper Authorization.

"Your next paragraph is that : 'On many occasions, but without much result, I have cautioned you against this course which has frequently led to well-founded protest from your colleagues.'

"You will pardon me, but I can recall but one such instance, namely, 'secret service. I do remember you asking me, on one occasion, to submit 'Orders-in-Council where possible before incurring large expenditures, 'but the reason you assigned was not protests from my colleagues over my 'action, but that it was to set an example so as to assist you to control 'others. You instanced the Post Office Department, the Railway Department, and the Public Works Department, where projects had been undertaken, without authority by Order-in-Council, and I remember distinctly 'you stated that some boats had been purchased, and other large expenditures incurred, without your knowing anything about it and without any 'Order-in-Council.

For More Than a Year Sir Sam Had Known That Meddling and Intriguing Had Been Going on to Place Sir Geo. Perley in Control in England, and That the Position Taken by the Prime Minister Was Untenable.

"Your next instance is concerning the proposed Sub-Militia Council in 'England. On November 1st, I wrote you in reply to your letter of 'October 31st, giving a full statement. Sir Robert, I have known and 'experienced, for a long time, the meddling and intrigue which has been 'going on. More than a year ago I understand you had it in contemplation to get Sir George Perley in control in England. I was assured in 'April last that the plans which you have now carried out were under 'contemplation. I was further assured, the first week of August of this 'year, that the plans were practically completed. However, as you had 'not spoken to me about it, as in honor bound, I did not credit the stories. 'True to your suggestion and to our understanding regarding the formation of the proposed Sub-Militia Council, and wishing to make it as perfect as possible, I pursued the course outlined in my letter of November '1st. The organization had to be put into shape and tested out. That had 'not been completed when I left England. Therefore, your position on this 'is untenable. I had observed your every wish. Further, you were notified 'and every one connected with the proposed Sub-Militia Council was 'finitely notified, not once, but repeatedly, that the whole proposition was 'tentative and certainly would be changed as circumstances developed. 'This will be borne out by everyone associated with the proposed Sub-Militia Council. I am free to admit, however, that the question of a 'separate Minister of Militia in England never once presented itself to 'my imagination. There is no more need for a separate Minister of Militia 'for the forces in England than there is for those at Camp Borden, Camp 'Hughes, or any other large camp in the country.

Sir Sam Guilty of Insubordination, But Dismissed for Writing Insulting Letters.

"You state : 'I conveyed to you on the 31st July a clear intimation 'that upon so important a proposal involving considerations of the gravest 'moment, the Cabinet must be consulted before action was taken. All the 'members of the Government have full and direct responsibility in respect 'to the very important matters which the proposed Council would advise 'upon and direct. The intimation which was given to you in my telegram 'of 31st July should not have been necessary. As soon as it was received 'you proceeded to disregard it.'

"The first sentences of this quotation are absolutely true, and it is my 'belief that had you been actuated by the best interests of the force, instead of favoritism, that cablegram would not have been despatched.



"Your second statement is that : 'As soon as it was received you proceeded to disregard it.' I think you must now be convinced this is a grave error on your part. You were notified the very first instant any temporary conclusion was arrived at. I am not aware that 'the principle of joint responsibility upon which Constitutional Government is based' requires that anyone should be privileged, even unintentionally, to misrepresent facts concerning another. Therefore my letter of November 1st may, while absolutely true, seem in this regard emphatic.

**Human Progress Would Make Little Advance if All Had  
Such Soft Mannerism as Sir Robert Borden.**

"You take exception to the general character and tone of that letter. Well, Sir Robert, each one's manner is his own. It might be well if we could all possess your soft mannerism, but I am very much afraid, judging by all periods of history, that human liberty and human progress would not make much advance, as they never have made much advance, under such diplomatic forms and utterances.

**The Premier Untrue to Friends Who Stood by Him.**

"I have perused my letter of November 1st very carefully and I have also perused yours of October 31st. Your actions and manner to me at any period in the past, excepting when you would be in trouble in the Opposition days and since, while, as a rule courteous, have never been apparently frank or loyal. Even in the early Opposition days when a very few of us repeatedly stood by you and overthrew the agitations against you, you rewarded loyalty by preferring those who had been untrue to you.

"As I said in the early part of this letter, I have, for a long time, remained Minister of Militia, as scores of my intimate friends know, upon their urgent request, to remain in office in order the better to help to upbuild and to protect the interests of our soldiers overseas. As you know my great desire has been to see that Canadian soldiers enjoyed a status as such.

**Rumors That the Premier Was Retiring.**

"In conclusion, Sir Robert, let me say I have always been frank and honourable with you. When rumors would reach me of your supposed plans of retiring from politics and of your going to the High Commissionership, or to be Chief Justice of Canada, or to be on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council as colonial representative, or any other statement seriously affecting you or your political honor, which bound you to the party, and that you should not use your position to forward your own personal fads, I have promptly consulted you and you have as promptly given your explanations or denials. Recently I heard, on excellent authority, that you had it in contemplation for some time to retire to the Supreme Court of Canada by arrangement with the present incumbent of the Chief Justiceship and hand over the Prime Ministership to another under whom it is well known I would not serve. Surely you could not be a party to any such manipulation, but would face the electors and stand or fall by the result.

"I therefore most unhesitatingly tender you my resignation, to take effect so soon as I can remove my belongings from the department, of which I shall give you prompt notice. For the future, permit me to say that it shall afford me pleasure to support every act, every proposition, coming from where it may, which will tend towards the successful protection and welfare of the soldiers, who are so manfully sacrificing themselves in the great cause of human liberty.

"Sincerely yours,

"(Signed), SAM HUGHES.

"The Right Hon. Sir Robert Borden, G. C. M. G., Prime Minister of  
Canada, Ottawa.

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