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LAURIER TURNS DOWN EQUAL COALITION

Sir Wilfrid Says He Cannot Support Conscription and Cannot Enter a Government Pledged to Compulsory Service.

(From Our Own Correspondent.) OTTAWA.— Coalition has failed. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, after receiving every concession asked, refused to become a member of a war government.

Dear Sir Robert— On the 12th of May you asked me to meet you on the following day which I did. After explaining fully the conditions of the war in the light of the knowledge acquired during your recent visit to Great Britain you stated the reasons which had led you to the conclusion that compulsory service was necessary and you explained to me the provisions of the military service bill.

I told you at once that if my co-operation was desired I regretted that I had not been invited before you announced a policy of compulsory service as I dreaded very serious difficulties if a conscription law was passed by the present parliament.

At an interview which took place on Tuesday the 29th of May you suggested to me that you thought it necessary to hold a caucus of your supporters but desired to consult me before doing so. I suggested to you that to hold a caucus pending negotiations would not likely tend towards the objects to be attained.

At the conference on Friday, the first of June and again on Monday the fourth of June the personnel of a coalition government was considered. Some not insuperable difficulties in the personnel were anticipated and the subject was not concluded.

At this and previous interviews I always stated to you that whenever conscription was adopted after a consultation of the people I would certainly urge in every possible way obedience to the law.

Believe me yours very sincerely, WILFRID LAURIER.

OTTAWA.— Sir Robert's reply:— On June 7 Sir Robert Borden replied as follows: Dear Sir Wilfrid Laurier: I beg to acknowledge your letter of yesterday in which you set forth the substance of recent negotiations respecting the formation of a coalition government.

At our first interview you had expressed the opinion that compulsory service should not be enforced until it had been approved by a referendum or at a general election. It was for this reason that I decided as stated in the fourth paragraph of your letter I agree that it was the policy of the compulsory side which is your judgment made it impossible for you to join a coalition government.

ANOTHER GREAT BRITISH OFFENSIVE IN FULL SWING IN BELGIUM

After Artillery Preparation Continuing for Days the British Have Advanced on a Nine Mile Front Carrying Everything Before Them. Latest Word is that Messines is Captured. The Immediate Offensive is Supposed to be Liffe. 1,000 German Prisoners Captured in Early Stage of the Attack.

General Haig has launched his expected blow at the German lines in Belgium, striking early this morning along a nine mile front on the Messines Wytchaete Ridge, between Ypres and Lille.

Success marked the opening of the offensive, the British winning all their initial objectives and pushing on. Their further progress is reported to be satisfactory along the whole front. While a considerable stretch separates the field of this new offensive from that of the Arras operation, it may be considered as in conjunction with and continuing the battle of Arras.

A sweeping salient in front of the city of Lille has been created by the Arras attack and in a broad sense this salient is now under threat from both north and south.

Belying the recent German boast that the British offensive from Arras had come to a halt, General Haig, earlier this week, proved that he had Lens in his grasp carrying a mile of German front north of Scarpe.

The reverberations from this blow had hardly died away before today's attack was launched on the other side of the Lille salient. A sharp well defined curve in the German line, about three miles deep and the same distance across, is the immediate object of this new attack.

MESSINES REPORTED CAPTURED. The village of Messines was reported to have been taken early in the fighting.

It was also reported that Lenfer and Zereba had fallen and that Wytchaete had been surrounded by British storming troops. Tanks were in the thick of the fighting in the British offensive. More than one thousand Germans were taken prisoners early in engagement.

The fighting continues under a mid-summer's sun. The Germans have not yet rallied for the expected counter attack.

Most Gigantic Mining Operation in History of Warfare. More than one million pounds of high explosives was blown up under German forward positions.

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BEDEQUE DELEGATION WAITS ON GOVERNMENT

Make Strong Plea for Government Assistance Towards Improving Ferry Service. Delegates Incidentally Asked to Express Opinion on Opening Road from S' side to Port Borden for Motor Traffic Which They Did Unmistakably in the Affirmative.

An important and representative delegation waited upon the Government yesterday in the interests of the Summerside Bedeque Ferry. The delegation consisted of Mr. N. C. Pearson, who acted as chairman, Messrs. W. F. H. Montgomery, Albert Schurman, Walter Leard and Howard McFarlane.

The delegates were introduced by Hon. James McNeill. The chairman, Mr. Pierson, on invitation of the Premier came forward and read the following: TO THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT.—

Whereas, Bedeque is greatly handicapped for want of a Ferry to handle farm produce as well as passenger traffic, owing to the fact that the Ferry formerly on the service has been sold to parties abroad and so far no suitable steamer has apparently been available.

Therefore, ask the Government to do at once all in their power to secure a satisfactory Ferry for this important service. We have associated with us today J. Rhyndar who has been connected with the operating of that Ferry for a number of years, and has given excellent satisfaction.

He is now in a position to invest capital as well as give his whole attention to the service. We ask the Government as a special inducement to encouraging any parties to purchase a suitable Ferry to offer a satisfactory grant and also to aid them in every possible way.

Signed, N. C. PEARSON, W. F. H. MONTGOMERY, ALBERT SCHURMAN, WALTER LEARD, HOWARD MCFARLANE.

Mr. Pierson, in supporting these joint representations, in a very practical and brief address pointed out the serious losses sustained by the farmers on the south and east of Bedeque Bay through the want of the ferry service which they had enjoyed for so many years.

The excellent steamer which for a number of years past had carried on the much needed service had been sold and, up to the present, no other suitable boat was in sight. It was pointed out that if the Government would hold out a substantial inducement by way of subsidy or otherwise for the service a suitable boat might be secured.

Owing to the want of transportation such as would be afforded by a suitable ferry the farmers were losing out five cents a bushel on their produce. The section of country served by this ferry was one of the most thriving and progressive in the province and it was felt that if the present serious handicap were removed and a suitable ferry boat placed on the route it would be a great boon not only to the people directly concerned, but to the whole province as it would encourage production and add thus to the much needed supply of foodstuffs.

Mr. W. F. H. Montgomery followed. He said the importance attached to the mission of the delegation might be inferred from the fact that many of them had left their teams idle in order to present their case before the Government at this meeting.

The people of Bedeque had gone heartily into the campaign for increased food production, but they were confronted with the question of transportation. The scarcity of vessels added greatly to the difficulty of the present situation. If a ferry boat which could be used as a tug as well as for passengers and freight could be procured it would very materially improve the situation. He recognized that the ferry boat heretofore in the service had been sold and so far no other suitable boat was in sight. The prevailing opinion was that if assurance were given of a substantial subsidy some one might be induced to risk purchasing a suitable vessel and undertaking the service.

Mr. Howard McFarlane who lived fourteen miles from Summerside by road and five by the ferry told of the great inconvenience and loss incurred in driving cattle around the road to market instead of as formerly having them carried across by the ferry. He added his request to that of his fellow delegates that the Government take such steps as they deemed best to ensure the resumption of the ferry service.

Mr. Albert Schurman followed, emphasizing the opinions expressed by the other delegates and uniting with them in the hope that the Government would find a way by which this great handicap to the prosperity of one of the finest sections of the province might be removed.

The Premier, in replying to the delegation said, that the matter of the Bedeque ferry had given the Government much concern and he assured the delegates that the members, individually and collectively, were desirous of meeting their reasonable request. The Government would be very glad to give the subject their most careful consideration. It was not within their power to make an appropriation for the building or purchasing of a steamer, but they would very gladly provide a subsidy, which would meet the reasonable demands of a satisfactory service. He commended the practical and business like manner in which the delegates had presented their case, a case, he added, the importance of which the Government fully recognized.

ANTI-AUTOMOBILE PETITION. Mr. David Auld, Freetown, asked and was granted permission to present a petition from residents along the road from Summerside to Port Borden opposing the opening of that road to automobiles.

Premier Matheson asked the Bedeque Ferry delegates who were still present, to remain during the presentation of this petition as the members of the Government were desirous of obtaining all possible information as to the attitude of the people of this section on the automobile question. The manner in which they had presented their own case was an assurance that their views on this question would be representative and practical.

One of the delegates stated that they purpose returning by the afternoon train, but would be pleased to remain as long as train time would permit.

Mr. Auld then presented his petition. He said he had been asked to circulate a petition to ascertain the will of the people on the question. A petition had previously been circulated which it was alleged, was signed by 82 per cent of the people asking that the road be opened for automobile traffic from Summerside to Port Borden and Crapaud. He believed that unfair representations had been made by the canvassers to induce the people to sign this petition.

The Premier: Can you give the names of persons who made unfair representations or those to whom such representations were made.

Mr. Auld said he could give the names of persons who had complained to him.

Sir Charles Dalton: Did you take the names of those who were in favor of having the road opened?

Mr. Auld: Yes, in some sections, but not along the whole road.

The Premier said he would like to hear the opinions of the Bedeque delegates who were present.

Mr. Pierson said he had always been neutral on the auto question. Until recently some of his neighbors were strongly opposed to them and as he had no personal interest one way or the other he took no part in any of the discussions. The question of opening the road from Summerside to Port Borden, however, was a matter in which everybody along the road was interested. He believed it would not only be a great convenience to the public to open the road, but a serious matter not to open it. The opening of the road would be practically equivalent to having a railway station at every man's door as he had no doubt that motor trucks and motor vehicles of every description would be put on this road as soon as opened. There were industries along the road that were suffering for such a service. Ives' Mill and the Reid Raynor Knitting Mills might be cited as instances, and there were others, present and prospective, which would be benefited. He understood a petition had been presented to the Government containing the names of over 80 per cent of the people asking that the road be opened, and he sincerely hoped the Government would do it.

Mr. W. F. H. Montgomery was the next speaker. He had not expected to be asked his opinion on the auto question, but, being asked, he considered it his duty and the duty of the other delegates who were unexpectedly called upon, to present the matter as carefully and as impartially as possible. He had been authoritatively informed that on the first nine miles of the Bedeque road only two had signed the petition against opening the road. It was true that in times gone by people who did not know the autos were afraid of them and thought their horses would be also. Now, they are becoming acquainted with them, they find that horses are not afraid and they are beginning to realize the benefit they are. There had been many delegations from Bedeque that did not represent the intelligent opinion of Bedeque and on account of these one of the most progressive

(Continued on page three)

into the British line north of the river Lys and at the same time to relieve pressure on Ypres which had been under bombardment since the Germans failed in their attempt to break through in 1915.

The British have captured important trench positions all the way from Observation Ridge southeast of Ypres to Ploegstreet Wood north of Armentieres.

Most Gigantic Mining Operation in History of Warfare. More than one million pounds of high explosives was blown up under German forward positions.

This is the most gigantic mining operation in the history of warfare and spread panic among the Germans.

The British in their attack today used probably twenty per cent. more guns especially those of heavy calibre than they employed in the battle of Arras.

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AMERICAN WARSHIPS ON FRENCH COAST

(Canadian Press Despatch.) PARIS.— The Minister of Marine announces that American warships have anchored off the French coast.

The announcement adds that the French navy greets with joy on their arrival those new brothers in arms who under the flag of the Great American Republic have come to participate until final victory in the struggle against a common enemy is assured.

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LIEUT. THOMAS OF THE AVIATION CORPS GIVES INTERESTING TALK

(Canadian Press Despatch.) LONDON.— The British opened an attack on a nine mile front between Messines and Wytchaete and have taken all their first objectives. The new British offensive is against a sharp German salient three miles south of Ypres.

For several days the British have maintained a tremendous bombardment for almost thirty miles on this portion of their front. The salient itself is about three miles in width and the same distance in depth. An effective advance in this sector would seriously menace the German hold on Lille which is about five miles from the nearest British position.

The text of the official statement follows: "We attacked at 3.10 a.m. this morning the German positions on Messines Wytchaete ridge on a front of over nine miles. We have everywhere captured our first objectives and further progress is reported to be satisfactory along the whole front of attack. Numbers of prisoners are reported already to be reaching the collecting stations.

LARGEST ATTACK SINCE VIMY RIDGE. The British attack, begun south of Ypres this morning, is believed to be the largest since the Canadians carried Vimy Ridge.

The attack was preceded by a fortnight's bombardment which was more than usually necessary as the German positions on this part of the line were known to be very strong. The object of the attack doubtless is to annihilate the salient which projects

used. A man going to qualify as a pilot, must know all about an engine and be able to repair the smallest detail in any one of nine engines. A young man to be successful as a pilot needs to be possessed of a trained mind. He receives schooling of this kind for three months after which he is sent to a flying school, where he takes his first joy ride through space. In this ride he generally gets samples of all the thumps and plunges which come to the aviator. He is liable to get thoroughly scared but is able to get over this afterwards. An officer in the aviation corps must be honorable. When he gets his orders to drop bombs on a certain place, it is necessary to trust to his honor that this will be done.

The Lieutenant went on to tell of the different types of machines. There are three kinds used—the "Corps" machine which goes to a height generally of about 3,000 feet—another type flying from 8,000 to 10,000 feet in height, the duty of which is to attack and dispose of all hostile aircraft, and the Light Scout which ascend to a height of from 12,000 to 15,000 feet, and wait up there, waiting their chance when they see a Hun machine to plunge and destroy it.

The English are well satisfied with the Canadians who have joined the air service and are continually asking for more of them. They are establishing schools in Canada which will probably mean an outlay of some four or five million dollars. All expenses in connection therewith, are being borne by the Imperial Government, so that the least Canada can do is to provide the men.

Lieut. Thomas described in a pleasing manner the make up of an aeroplane and the types of engines

(Continued on page three)

CONDITIONS IN RUSSIA MORE PROMISING.

Conditions in Russia appear more promising from several angles. For one thing the incident of Kronstadt with its revolting fortress garrison and declaration of independence has been adjusted, the self constituted Kronstadt authorities recognizing the authority of the Provisional Government.

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