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WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 28th 1917

PRIN. SEAMAN'S SECOND LETTER

Elsewhere in this issue we publish a second open letter from Principal Seaman to Messrs. Warburton and Sinclair. A week ago he asked them on behalf of the electors to define their position on the vital questions now before the people, and they made no reply. He is repeating the question. Principal Seaman is not a partizan politician. He has never, so far as we know, taken part in a political campaign. He does not care what party is in power so long as that party stands by the Empire, by Canada and by the Canadian army. Such phrases as "Win-the-War" and "In-it-to-the-End" are meaningless to Principal Seaman and to thousands of others unless there is something in the policy of those using these phrases to back them up. He has looked for this something in the manifesto issued by Messrs. Warburton and Sinclair; in the speeches delivered by them throughout the country and in the editorials in the Patriot which professes to be the exponent of their views—and he can not find it. On the contrary he finds, as others have found, that as the professed followers of Sir Wilfrid Laurier they are pursuing a policy that will paralyze Canada's effort in the war and lead to her disgrace among the nations, a policy that will link her up with Laurier's solid Quebec which dictated the policy of Sir Wilfrid.

Messrs. Warburton and Sinclair have been publicly endorsed by Sir Wilfrid Laurier; they tell the people they are not following him in all his policy, that they are "Win the War Liberals." What Principal Seaman and the people want to know is how are they going to prevent Sir Wilfrid Laurier from pursuing his referendum and delay policy, to which they profess to object if "Win the War" means anything, after they and others like them have placed Sir Wilfrid Laurier at the head of the government? Every leading Liberal in Canada has left Sir Wilfrid Laurier because of his war policy. How do Messrs. Warburton and Sinclair justify what able men of their party than they have openly and publicly condemned?

Messrs. Warburton and Sinclair have failed to take a bold stand regarding the war and are therefore not entitled to the support of any one who places the interests of the country and the Empire and of civilization itself before their petty personal ambitions.

"POISONING THE WELLS"

When, after the war, the civilized world sits in judgment on Germany one of the blackest in the long list of crimes charged against her will be that she poisoned and polluted the wells in the territory she was forced to abandon. This crime, heretofore avoided even by savages, will be placed in the category with baby killing, with the murder of innocent women, with the inhuman cruelties inflicted upon Belgium and Serbia.

What, after the war, will civilization have to say of the men and of the press that are today poisoning the wells from which public opinion is being fed and formed? What will civilized Prince Edward Island say of the press that, while the best blood of the province is being shed in France and Flanders, wilfully attempts to lead public opinion into a path which a few months ago it publicly declared was the wrong path?

The Patriot a few months ago took the same stand on the Military Service Act that all the leading Liberal newspapers in Canada did. Within the past few weeks, yielding to partizan pressure, it abandoned this stand while its more honest contemporaries followed along the course which they considered the only safe course for Canadians to pursue. Today the Patriot stands almost alone; every leading Liberal newspaper in Canada and every leading Liberal stands by the Union Government and its policy; stands unflinchingly opposed to Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his policy, declares in solemn and unmistakable tones that the Laurier policy, if followed, would lead to Canada's disgrace among the nations and its own ultimate ruin. In support of its untenable position the Patriot now is deliberately trying to mislead and corrupt public opinion. Where will the Patriot stand after the war? Where will

it stand after the coming election? If its teaching is followed Prince Edward Island will be the only English-speaking province in Canada linked to Laurier's solid Quebec. After the war, if the Patriot's teaching is followed, Prince Edward Island will hang its head in shame when it meets what are left of our soldiers, when it sees the gaps in the ranks that might have been filled if the Patriot and others of its ilk had not helped to mislead and corrupt public opinion.

Why does the Patriot emphasize the enormous expense of the coming election? Whose fault is it that there is an election? Can elections be conducted without expense? Was not all this known when Sir Wilfrid Laurier, aided by the Patriot and its ilk, drove the country into an election campaign, against the wishes of all right-minded Liberals? Why does the Patriot misrepresent the work of the Exemption Tribunals? Why did it refrain from publishing the official reports of the Registration Office and instead, give false reports of its own? Is it not to mislead and corrupt public opinion? How will Prince Edward Island hold up its head in Canada, if the Patriot and the slackers that are now howling with it, succeed in corrupting enough of the voters to elect even one of the Laurier candidates?

DUTY OF TRIBUNALS

Referring to complaints being received against the manner in which the Military Service Act is being applied the Ottawa Journal says: "Here and there it is alleged that the local Tribunals are refusing to exempt men necessary for the increased production of food."

"If any of the Tribunals are stripping the farms of needed hands they are injuring the cause of Union Government and the Canadian Army. They are helping to defeat the very purpose for which Liberals and Conservatives all over the country are burying party differences. Consciously or unconsciously, they are playing into Sir Wilfrid Laurier's hands. They are misinterpreting the Military Service Act and running counter to its whole spirit. The purpose and intention of the Act is to apply the Selective Draft in an intelligent manner that will make at once for the strengthening of the Canadian Expeditionary Force and for the stimulation of vital war-time industries at home. The public authorities have power under the Act to divert labor from unnecessary industries to such vitally important work as the production of food and munitions."

"Hon. T. A. Cregar, Minister of Agriculture in the Union Government, has been quoted as saying that the Military Service Act would increase the supply of labor available for the farms. It is obvious that some of the Ontario Tribunals neither understand the measure nor the purpose behind it. The remedy probably lies with the Appeal Tribunals, which will begin to sit almost immediately. The Union Government is intent upon reinforcing the Canadian Army in the shortest possible time, but it also emphasizes the need of assisting agriculturists in the production of food-stuffs."

SOME CROSS-EYED PATRIOTS

"But whilst the army is fighting so valiantly, let the nation behind it be patient, strong and all-united. The strain is great on nations as on individuals, and when men get over-strained, their tempers get ragged, small grievances are exaggerated, and small misunderstandings and mistakes swell. Long wars, like long voyages and long journeys, are very trying to the temper, and wise men watch their tempers and make allowances."

"There are some who are more concerned about the ending of the war than about winning it, and plans which lead to victory, if they prolong the conflict, have their disapproval and the people responsible for such plans have their condemnation. Let us keep our eye steadily on the winning of the war, and, may I say, let us keep both eyes. Some have a cast in their eyes, and whilst one eye is fixed surely on victory, the other is wandering around on some pet partizan project of their own. Beware of becoming cross-eyed. Let both eyes be set on victory, looking neither to the right nor to the left. That is the way we will win."

"If anyone promotes disunion, he is helping the enemy and hurting his native land. And it makes no difference whether he is for or against the war—as a matter of fact, the hurt is deeper if he is for the war, because the pure pacifist, whatever he says is discountenanced as far as war is concerned. Let there be one thought in every head. If you sow distrust, discontent or disunion in the nation, we shall reap defeat. If, on the other hand, we sow the seeds of patience, confidence and union, we shall gather the fruits."—Hon. David Lloyd George.

MR. HUGHES AND THE FISH DRIER

How the Dark Lantern Brigade Balked Investigation into the Accounts for the Souris Fish Drier.

Mr. J. J. Hughes, in furtherance of his candidature in King's County, poses as wholly disinterested and entirely devoted to the welfare of the fishermen. In this connection it may be well to recall some facts about the construction of the Souris Fish Drier. The accounts, amounting to \$19,711.90 and \$14,449.36 were before the Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts in May, 1908, but Mr. Hughes, with the aid of the "dark lantern brigade," succeeded in preventing the committee examining his books though his bookkeeper, Mr. Brennan, who had been subpoenaed, had taken the ledger to Ottawa.

The first witness was Mr. James McEachern, Souris, who admitted that he was builder of the fish drier and inspector-foreman for the Government, in the erection of the fish house in connection with it in 1905-06. The latter was built by day's work, there was no contract, and he was paid by day's work at \$3.50 per day. He bought the material for the work from J. J. Hughes & Co., and made no profit in the transaction.

Examined by Mr. Crockett, witness testified as follows:
 Q. Do you know, or do you not, Mr. McEachern, that this lumber that was turned into the drier in your name, was bought by the Hughes' firm from Messrs. Mooney, of Greenville, at \$2 and \$2.25 per ton and turned into the government in your name at \$3 per ton?—A. I don't know anything about that.
 Q. You do not know that, as a fact?—A. I do not know what he paid for it.

Q. Do you know that the shingles were bought from Alexander Dixon by the Hughes' firm at \$1 and turned into the government at \$1.50?—A. I do not know what they paid for their stock.

Q. When did you pay for this stock?—A. I do not remember distinctly; they charged me with the stock when I bought it and I paid for it later on.

Q. You say the Hughes' firm charged you with the stock when you bought it?—A. I had a running account there.

Q. You had a running account with them and they charged you with it when you bought it and you paid for it later on. Did you pay for it before you received payment from the government?—A. I don't remember.

Q. You don't remember?—A. No.

Q. Do you remember when you received payment from the government?—A. It would be in May or June of that year 1906.

Q. Did you receive cheques from the department?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. How many cheques did you receive?—A. Two, I think.

Q. Two cheques, and what did you do with the cheques?—A. I placed them to my credit.

Q. With whom?—A. With the Hughes Company.

Q. You simply turned the cheques over to the Hughes Company, didn't you?—A. I placed them to my credit.

Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg).—He endorsed them.

By Mr. Crockett:

Q. What do you mean by placing them to your credit, handing them over?—A. I endorsed them to the Hughes Company.

Q. You turned all the cheques that you received for this lumber from the government over to Hughes & Company, did you not?—A. I might have.

Q. Is it not a fact that you turned all the cheques you received that year over to Hughes & Company?—A. I may have, I don't remember.

Q. Well, here are the cheques (producing cheques). There are three cheques?—A. (After examining cheques.) There is one in 1905, that has nothing to do with it. Here are two for 1906, it would be those two.

Q. These two cheques you say. There is a cheque dated 25th May, 1906, for \$270?—A. Yes.

Q. 'Pay to the order of James McEachern \$270'?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. It is endorsed 'James McEachern and J. J. Hughes & Company,' and for endorsement 'Pay to the order of any chartered bank or banker.' You turned that over to the Hughes Company as soon as you received it, did you not?—A. I endorsed it and told them to place it to my credit.

Q. Who did you give it to?—A. To the bookkeeper.

Q. To the bookkeeper of the Hughes' firm?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Here is another cheque for \$122.99, dated 29th June, 1906, 'Pay to the order of James McEachern \$122.99.' That is endorsed by yourself and by J. J. Hughes & Company, the same as the other?—A. The same as the other, yes, sir.

Q. As soon as you received that cheque you turned it also into the Hughes Company?—A. That was placed to my credit also.

Q. You got no cash from Mr. Hughes?—A. I got cash when I wanted it. I had an account there and I placed these cheques to my credit.

Q. You turned those cheques over to Mr. Hughes and you received no money?—A. Yes.

Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg).—He has answered that two or three times. You have no right to question him in that way. This witness is not here to be bullied by any member of this committee.

Mr. Crockett.—I am not trying to bully-rag him.

Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg).—He has answered that these cheques were put to his credit in a running account with Hughes & Company.

By the Chairman:

Q. At the time you turned the cheques over did you get any money on them, or were they simply paid over?—A. I asked them to credit them to me. I had a running account there and whether I got any money I cannot just say.

By Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg):

Q. Were you usually a debtor to Hughes & Company or a creditor? Did you usually owe them anything?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. You usually did?—A. Yes, sir.

The Chairman.—He says he does not remember whether he got any money.

By Mr. Crockett:

Q. You had not paid the Hughes' firm for this lumber before you received these cheques?—A. Well, I could not tell you. I am in the habit of having a running account there.

Q. Is it not a fact that you did not pay the Hughes' firm any money for this lumber?—A. When I got them cheques.

Q. And when you received these cheques you received no money?—A. I don't know whether I did or not, I could not tell you. I may have received money although I don't remember. I may have asked for \$5, \$20 or \$100.

Q. Are you able to say whether you got any money at all for these cheques?—A. I don't remember.

Q. You don't remember?—A. I remember distinctly ordering the bookkeeper to put the money to my credit.

Q. And you may have got from him \$5 or \$30?—A. I may have.

Q. Here is another cheque dated 1st August, 1905 for \$210.86; 'Pay to the order of James McEachern \$210.86.' That is endorsed in the same way by James McEachern and J. J. Hughes & Company?—A. That was in 1905?

Q. In August, 1905, and these cheques just pay the account. You did the same with that cheque?—A. That was for the drier proper.

Q. It is for the accounts that are in the Auditor General's report.

Mr. Finlayson.—You have got to take the witness' answer.

By Mr. Crockett:

Q. That is down to the 30th of June, 1906?—A. That was for the work of 1905.

Q. You did the same with that cheque as you did with the others?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Turned it over to the Hughes' firm?—A. Yes, sir.

By Mr. Finlayson

Q. The last cheque is not for goods supplied in 1906?—A. No, sir.

By Mr. Crockett:

Q. It is for goods supplied during the year 1905-6.—A. For 1905, there is no 1906 about it at all.

The Chairman.—These three cheques aggregate the amount payable to the witness in the Auditor General's Report for 1905 \$613.85. Whether that is only a coincidence or not I do not know.

By Mr. Crockett:

Q. So that is the fact, then, Mr. McEachern: you cannot remember paying the Hughes' firm one cent for this lumber, or you cannot remember getting one cent from that firm out of the cheques that were given for it?

BOOKKEEPER EXAMINED

The following report of the proceedings shows how Mr. J. William Brennan, bookkeeper for J. J. Hughes & Co., evaded producing the books to show the profits his firm made off the Souris fish drier:—

House of Commons,
 Committee Room No. 32,
 Ottawa, Friday, May 29, 1908.

The committee met at eleven o'clock, a.m., Mr. Duncan Finlayson presiding, and proceeded to the further consideration of a payment of \$19,711.90, as set out at P-196, 1906, and the payment of \$14,449.36, as set out at P-170, 1907, in connection with the Souris Fish Drier.

Mr. J. William Brennan, called, sworn and examined.

By Mr. Crockett:

"What is your occupation?—A. Accountant, sir.

Q. With whom are you employed?—A. The J. J. Hughes Company.

Q. How long have you been employed by that firm?—A. Eight years, I think, seven or eight years.

Q. You have been employed by them for the past seven or eight years?—A. Yes.

Q. Are you the head accountant of the firm?—A. Yes.

Q. You were asked to bring some books of account with you—Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg).—Where is the subpoena?

(Subpoena produced by witness.)

The Chairman.—This subpoena reads, 'That you bring with you and then there produce all books of account in your possession containing any entry or entries relating to the supply of goods by J. J. Hughes & Co. to James McEachern for Souris Fish Drier.'

By Mr. Crockett:

Q. You received that subpoena?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. When?—A. I just forgot the date now—the day that I left the island, the 26th, I think, I received this subpoena.

Q. On the 26th of May?—A. Yes.

By Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg):

Q. Have you any books of account—I mean books of account that you have control of yourself that are your books, that have any memorandum in them relating to the supply of goods by J. J. Hughes & Co. to James McEachern?—A. I have no books of my own.

Q. You have no books of your own?—A. No.

Mr. Barker.—If that is the point we will probably have to adjourn and subpoena Mr. Hughes himself.

By Mr. Crockett:

Q. You, as chief accountant of that business, have the custody of those books, haven't you?—A. Yes, to some extent.

Q. You have the custody of those books; have you brought those books as directed by that subpoena?

Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg).—I do not think that the witness—

Mr. Crockett.—I am entitled to an answer.

Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg).—If the books were right here on this desk I should, on principle, object to the production, I do not care whether they are here in Ottawa or not, as one member of this committee I do not propose to allow hon. gentlemen, such as my friend here unnecessarily to consume the time of the committee in an examination for an object in connection with which this committee is without jurisdiction, absolutely without jurisdiction.

Mr. Barker.—We have got over that by the action of the committee in ordering this man to be subpoenaed and to produce those books.

Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg).—That has nothing to do with this particular matter.

Mr. Barker.—To produce those books for the purpose of the present question.

Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg).—He has no books.

Mr. Crockett.—Let the witness answer.

By Mr. Crockett:

Q. Have you brought those books to Ottawa?—A. I have a ledger in Ottawa.

Q. You brought a ledger, anything else?—A. That is all, sir.

Q. Whose ledger is that?—A. The ledger of J. J. Hughes & Co.

Q. Where is that ledger?—Have you that ledger with you in the room?—A. It is not in the room here.

Q. Why did you not bring it here?—Does the subpoena direct you to bring it here and produce it before the committee?—No answer.

Q. Why didn't you bring it to the room, if you brought it to Ottawa?

Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg).—I object, Mr. Crockett has properly no right to ask the witness such questions, he has no right to embarrass him by it.

By the Chairman:

Q. Is there any entry in those books showing that there were any dealings with the Souris Fish Drier that is with the Souris Fish Drier as a fish drier?—A. There is no separate entry, no, sir.

By Mr. Crockett:

Q. Is there any entry in the books showing that there were dealings with James McEachern for lumber and iron furnished for the Souris Fish Drier?

The Chairman.—James McEachern and the Fish Drier are two different concerns. I would certainly rule any question along this line out of order.

Mr. Crockett.—I do not see, Mr. Chairman, how you can rule upon this question until the books are produced before the committee.

The Chairman.—If he says there is no entry—

Mr. Barker.—It might be, I do not say it is, that he might not be telling the truth, and that is the purpose of asking for the production of the books.

The Chairman.—How can you compel him to produce this book if you have subpoenaed him to produce 'all books' of accounts in your possession containing any entry or entries relating to the supply of goods by J. J. Hughes & Co. to James McEachern for Souris Fish Drier?

Mr. Barker.—He has had sufficient charge of the book to bring it to this city.

The Chairman.—That is true.

Mr. Barker.—Now, he says he has not brought it to the room where it is wanted, and he is asked the question, 'is there a certain entry there,' that is what I want to ask him about.

The Chairman.—He says there is not.

Mr. Barker.—We have the right to see whether there is or not.

Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg).—In the first place this committee had no authority to direct a subpoena to be issued to Mr. Brennan asking him to bring here the books of account of the J. J. Hughes Company.

The Chairman.—I absolutely agree with that.

Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg).—Are the books of a gentleman in business to be opened before this committee and given to these gentlemen to look at? What right have they to see the books of J. J. Hughes & Co? There is no suggestion of any transaction between that firm and the government and this examination relates to one item alone. As I said before, if my friends on the other side who are promoting this enquiry were fair and frank about things I would not object and I would even go so far as to say that Mr. Hughes will let these gentlemen see his books, himself, after this enquiry is over, if it will do them any good, but I object on principle.

Mr. Barker.—What is the purpose of the objection, then, if you will let them see the books afterwards?

Mr. MacLean (Lunenburg).—Just to keep your friends right.

The Chairman.—I think it would be a bad precedent to establish and I would not like to establish it.