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THE PATRIOT SEEKS EXCUSES

The Liberal factionists who foisted the two by-elections on the province at the present time are considerably crestfallen over the result. They had buoyed up their supporters and won over the more stalwart and responsible Liberals to enter into the contest on the assurance that the Georgetown seat at least would be won by the Opposition. As is well known many leading Liberals opposed contested elections in both districts and several of those who afterwards spoke on behalf of the Liberal candidates, at first positively declined to have any part in opposing the return of the government candidate.

The Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues let it be distinctly understood that any Liberal who refused to take an active part in these by-elections would run the risk of being read out of the party or, at least, be deprived of any patronage or preferment should Mr. Bell become premier. This supplied the necessary impetus to the party machine and the contests were ultimately carried on on strictly party lines and the vote in each district was a strictly party one.

In Egmont Bay district Premier Arsenault obtained a normal majority. The district, as is well known, went twice Liberal and in the late Senator Arsenault's day was usually won by from two or three to forty votes. A majority of 99 for Premier Arsenault, allowing for 48 absentees at the front was therefore the full strength of a normal majority.

The Patriot, as was to be expected, suggests that undue influence was used in the election and shows an uncanny intimacy with the methods pursued in soap-sudding the electorate. After the scandalous disclosure of the importation of grosses of cases of whisky by the Liberals in Georgetown it ill becomes the Patriot or any other Liberal to cast aspersions on the Conservatives regarding the conduct of the election.

In the Georgetown district Mr Stewart, as we showed yesterday, polled more than the average party majority. In 1915 ex-Premier Mathieson's majority was exceptional and not phenomenal. He carried a large number of Liberal votes, so much so that his opponent lost his deposit. It was not to be expected that a new and untried candidate would repeat this phenomenon and certainly the Liberals never dreamed he would. They prophesied that their candidate, who was the most popular man they could nominate, would carry the seat. They made their preparations accordingly and made the mistake of halooing before they were out of the wood. They may put forward as many excuses as they choose for the failure of their prophecy to materialize; the fact remains that the electors have declared by their votes that they no longer put any confidence in the criticisms and allegations which the Leader of the Opposition and the Patriot venomously make against the government policy and administration. They have cried "wolf" too long and it has lost its effect.

THE QUESTION FOR CANADA

The situation confronting the Canadian people today could not be more clearly put (says the Ottawa Journal) than it is in Sir Clifford Sifton's letter to Senator Bostock. After reading that letter one must feel shame for the political shysterism that is taking place in Canada, for the actions of men who call themselves statesmen in placing party considerations before the cause of the war and the country's honor. One must look with dread upon the possibility of success for the selfish scheming of these pseudo statesmen. Sifton reveals the crisis of the Dominion bluntly. It would be well if all Canadians were to view it honestly.

"We are not fighting for sentiment, for England, for Imperialism; we are fighting for the rights of ourselves, and our children to live as a free community.

"Shall Canada be the first of all the allied nations to slink from the field? Let us realize the position now. It will be no use to wake up when it is too late"

Sir Clifford points out that our reserves at the front are becoming exhausted. "Shall Canada be the first of all the allied

nations to slink from the field?" That is just what she will do unless a vigorous war administration is continued. It is what Quebec, or the political leaders of Quebec who would govern a Laurier administration were it placed in power, desire Canada to do. Are the English-speaking Liberals of the Dominion, for the sake of selfish party considerations, to permit Quebec to force Canada to slink from the field? Surely the Liberals of Ontario will not sacrifice the country's honor on the altar of party chance.

Every true Canadian must agree that when the honor of country and the fate of human liberty are at stake we cannot place loyalty to party or to party leader first. If the Liberals of Ontario follow the injunction of the Graham-Pardee convention and rally behind the leadership of Sir Wilfrid Laurier in a general election, the responsibility is theirs.

The situation is clear. With that analytical lucidity which distinguishes him from most Canadian public men, Sir Clifford Sifton cuts straight to the heart of the issue before the nation, when he writes:

If Sir Wilfrid is returned to power in the approaching election, two-thirds of his followers in Parliament will be pledged to the hilt against conscription, and pledged to the hilt against any but a perfunctory and ineffective participation in the war Then:

1—There will be no conscription in Quebec.

2—There will be no recruiting in Quebec.

3—Under these circumstances it will be obviously impossible to raise troops in the other portions of Canada. (Imagine a Laurier Government trying to raise troops in the other provinces while Quebec scornfully refuses either to submit to conscription or to recruit.)

4—Our regiments at the front will be left stranded and will dwindle and disappear as an effective fighting force.

The predominating and controlling element behind Sir Wilfrid Laurier will not allow him to prosecute the war. None who has the slightest experience of Parliamentary Government in Canada can honestly gainsay this conclusion.

That, in a nutshell, is the case for the Borden Government or for a union government such as Sir Robert has been trying to form. Defeat of conscription in this election will be the defeat of voluntarism also. And with Laurier in office and voluntarism broken down, what then?

Assuredly the people of Canada never faced a more solemn question. The English-speaking Liberal party men of the Dominion are to give the answer to that question. What is it to be? Is there to be ineffective prosecution of the war? Is Canada to be the first of the allied nations—not merely the first but the only one—to slink from the field?

UNSWERVINGLY CONSCRIPTIONIST

In the early days of last month the Patriot declared it was "unswervingly in favour of conscription." Yet when Mr. J. J. Hughes appeared on the scene bringing with him from Ottawa his anti-conscription speech with which he had attempted to justify his anti-conscription vote in the House of Commons, the Patriot proceeded to justify Mr Hughes' speech and vote. This was the limit of inconsistency, and we would like our contemporary to explain how it can be both "unswervingly" conscriptionist and support an anti-conscriptionist candidate.

The Toronto Globe comes out four square on this question, and we are surprised the Patriot does not line up to its name and follow suit.

In an editorial on "Canada and the War," on Tuesday, the Globe says:

"The formation of a government opposed to conscription would be a proof that the majority of Canadians were war-weary, and would be so interpreted in every country in the world, Germany included. It would be a signal to every man who has hitherto dodged his duty to continue in the path of safety first. It would bring down on Canada the reproach of every nation fighting for the great cause. It would tarnish or efface the glorious chapter written with her bravest blood. These are considerations which should weigh upon the mind and conscience of every voter and of every candidate.

"As for itself, the Globe will oppose the election of any man who does not uphold the principle of compulsory military service and who would vote in Parliament for the creation of an anti-conscription ministry."

May we inquire whether our "unswervingly" conscriptionist local contemporary will publish a similar resolution and cast over Mr. J. J. Hughes the anti-conscriptionist member for Kings?

REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA MACHINE-MADE BY ALLIES

"Your majesty, if there is not a change in the cabinet within twenty-four hours I cannot be responsible for the consequences"

This was the warning the czar of Russia got of the impending revolution, and it came from Sir George Buchanan—the English ambassador to Petrograd.

The Russian revolution was a machine made affair that took advantage of the readiness of the Russian people for liberalism and liberty. It was managed by England and France, the latter country playing a passive part, lending its support by silent acquiescence to the active policy of the English ambassador, M. Paleologue, the French ambassador in Petrograd. It was considered there that he should have had a more active participation in affairs in Petrograd, and on account of the weakness he was charged with having shown M. Albert Thomas, minister of armaments, was sent to Russia to be the French representative and adviser to the revolutionary government.

Control of affairs by the czarina was the direct reason for the revolution. She was Germanophile, and being a strong character, while the czar was weak, she directed the policy of the empire and controlled the formation of the cabinet to the German advantage.

Such things were constantly happening as the discovery of a train of thirty cars of munitions intended for the Galician army wandering several months later over the Serbian steppe. The desertion of Rumania by Russia was another thing to be charged to the czarina and her control of Russian policy.

With the allies plans for a great offensive to begin in the spring and continue right through the summer and until the bad weather came in the autumn, a half-hearted Russia was an impossible ally. The allied force the weak-kneed czar into line, and when that was found impossible, plans were laid for the revolution, the last chance being given the czar to take control of his own government.

The plans as made, however, carried no contemplation of a republic or democracy. They were for a constitutional monarchy on the lines of the English monarchy. The czar was to abdicate and his brother, who was strongly anti-German, take over the job. The duma was to be a truly representative body, with the ministers answerable to the duma instead of to the throne, an duma instead of the empire was to be transformed into a second legislative body, such as the House of Lords in England or the Senate in France.

Consultations had been held with the leaders of the duma, and the allied duma was to be held upon, Miliukoff was thoroughly gratified and he was counted on to carry the duma with him.

The whole idea was to un-Germanize Russia and assure her active part in the great offensive.

A liberal government for Russia was a secondary consideration. The needs of the allies were the driving force, and a liberal Russia seemed the best way to accomplish the desired end. Hence, the peaceful revolution, if the czar had been strong enough to control the czarina and run his own affairs there would have been no revolution.

For three days everything seemed going well. The czar's brother had one foot on the steps of the throne and was already issuing decrees when the committee of workmen's and soldiers' delegates from Petrograd appeared in Petrograd. They had been dying from starvation all winter in the interior of Russia. Reports reached Paris that in the worst of the winter they starved to death at the rate of 10,000 a week. And the hardest part of the revolution having been carried out for them, deposing the czar, through the kind offices of Sir George Buchanan, they were ready to take things into their own hands and proceeded to do it.

There was a complete upset to the plans of the steering committee. The committee of workmen's and soldiers' delegates had not been consulted as to what the revolution should do, and they were not interested in post-dated revelations. Instead of working in harmony with the duma or taking orders from that body, they set themselves up as a committee of public safety and issued orders to the duma.

DAILY SELECTIONS FOR GUARDIAN READERS

Furnished by W. S. Louson.

MY TREASURES.

"I've been picking up the blessings all along life's rugged way. Till I have a goodly harvest in my treasure house today. Every step that I have travelled, every path that I have known, Has been scattered full of blessings that I count today my own."

"Here a smile, and there a teardrop, here a handclasp firm and true; Now a little word of comfort, now a hope that flamed anew. All above and far before me, up the rugged mountain steep I have come on sweet ambitions which were mine to know and keep."

"Little gems of fond affection, precious jewels of delight; Flowery blooms of fragrant friendship, gleaming brightly to my sight. All the long, dark earthly journey I have plucked them as I went, Modest, gentle, little blessings, which have kept my soul content."

Their ideal was free Russia, and the affairs of the allies concerned them little.

One of their first proposals was to execute the entire royal family. They were thoroughgoing revolutionists, and believed that as long as a member of the royal family remained alive there was always a chance of the monarchists raising a revolt and reestablishing the autocracy. Revolutionary soldiers were sent to take possession of the czar, but he was protected by his guard regiment which remained loyal to his person and refused to give him up.

Meantime, the English government was extremely anxious over the fate of the czar. They felt directly responsible for his safety and tried to get him consigned to England for his prison. But the committee of workmen's and soldiers' delegates would not consent to the czar's leaving Russia and England, with much trepidation, had to agree.

The duma was powerless, as the army was with the committee of workmen's and soldiers' delegates. Within two weeks after the revolution 1,200,000 soldiers had laid down their arms and gone home. Those who remained were for the most part fraternizing very cordially with the Germans and Austrians. In many sectors of the front the two armies lived in the same trenches and ate the same food.

In other cases the same soldiers, being dissatisfied with the officers, simply shot them. The army decided that it preferred to elect its officers rather than have them appointed from above, and many regiments proceeded to the elections. Things got to such a pass that a general order was issued calling the attention of the soldiers to the fact that it was no right to shoot their officers without a trial, and requesting them to defer the shootings until a higher body had had a chance to pass on the cases.

Meanwhile, the duma was seeking to hold on to its vestiges of power and reach a compromise with the committee of workmen's and soldiers' delegates. But all compromises ended in the demands of the committee being acceded to. A committee of the socialist party in the French chamber of deputies was rushed to Petrograd, and Albert Thomas soon followed them.

When the French committee returned to Paris its president made a very pressing report to a secret session of the chamber on conditions in Russia and the outlook there. A separate peace was looked upon in Paris as practically certain. A certain section of the French socialist party, of which Jean Longuet, a grandson of Karl Marx, is a leader, was delighted. Longuet and his followers are pacifists of the extreme type. They are peace-at-any-price men, and they saw in the Russian revolution the triumph of their policy. It was they who wanted to go to the Stockholm conference, and were able to force the whole French socialist party to vote in favor of sending a delegation to Stockholm.

Yet the allied governments did not cease work in Petrograd. The more depressing and hopeless the situation looked the harder they worked, and the more they argued with the committee of workmen's and soldiers' delegates on the harm to the Russian revolution of a premature peace. Albert Thomas did a giant's work. America was brought in to prove the point. An American delegation was sent to Russia, an American loan was offered, American assistance was promised on the most liberal scale—all with the proviso that Russia stick to the war.

Karensky raised himself out of the ruck, and for the moment the situation was saved. The Russian army began a great offensive that synchronized exactly with the arrival of the Russian mission in this country. But the committee of workmen's and soldiers' delegates is still the power in Russia.

We have a gift accepted with a threat made by a body powerful enough to carry out the threat. At any rate, the fate of the Russian revolution gave a respite to Greece. Success for the combination in Russia would have brought immediately a revolution in Greece and a Grecian republic with Venizelos as the first president. The plans were made and the mine was ready to be sprung under Constantine, but the outcome of the Russian affair made the allies very thoughtful.

To continue Constantine as the ruler of Greece could not be considered, but there was a quick change of plans, and instead of a republic there was a simple change of kings in the direct line of succession.—Halifax Herald.

JOCK'S LETTER HOME

A minister home from the trenches has been recounting his experiences among the Scotch regiments, and among other interesting stories he tells of a wounded Jock who he found rather depressed, and on being asked whether he would like to dictate a letter home he assented. Thereupon the minister brought a table with writing materials to his bedside. However, he found Jock tongue-tied and unable to begin. So much so that the parson said after a while: "Come along now, I'm in a hurry. We must make a start."

No reply. "Will I begin—My dear Wife?" That'll amuse her."

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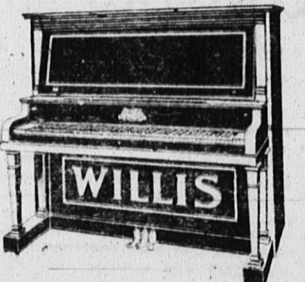
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