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RUSSIA

It would appear as if, for some time to come at least, Russia may be counted out of the war as an effective ally. The situation there is neither clear nor satisfactory.

As stated in a previous reference to this subject, the Provisional Government of Russia is true both to Russia and the Allies. But there is a power behind the Provisional Government who must be reckoned with, namely, the Executive Committee of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies.

This is the body which obliged the Ministry to define and modify its war terms. It is the body which alone can insure order in the streets of Petrograd and steady work in the capital's munitions factories.

The Provisional Government's ministry remain the directing executives of Russia, but behind them is this new body, the Council of Deputies. Call it a second House to the Duma or a substitute National legislative body, the fact remains that for the moment at least it is the directing force.

In the first days of the Russian revolution we heard principally of the Duma. Its members had continued to sit after its dissolution was ordered; its temporary committee of safety had bridged the gap between the passing of the Czar's Ministry and the entrance into office of the Provisional Government, of which the Duma furnished most of the members.

But the Duma accepted the revolution, rather than started it. Its beginning, so far as it can be placed, was among the factory workers of Petrograd, with whom the Army soon joined. And to care for and present the interests of these factory workers, the makers of munitions and other Government products, the Duma had previously devised a system of deputies whom the workers elected.

New as it was, and small, representing little more than the Petrograd district, the Workmen's Council held its sittings at the same time as did the Duma's committee, and with it co-operated to establish the Provisional Government. The Duma was to name the men, the Council to determine the measures. Abolition of National and religious limitations, equality of soldiers before the law, improved working conditions—though approved by the Ministry, these reforms originated with the Council.

The Council, requiring that it be informed of all Government acts, had its first differences with the Ministry over the delay in insisting on the Czar's complete abdication, but to prevent the sending of the Czar out of the country, as later planned by the Ministry, the Council itself directed the movement of the Nation's soldiers.

Since that time there has been no doubt where the real power lay. How far the Council represents Russia may be questioned, but it represents Petrograd, and the Ministry must do as Petrograd wills.

The Council of Deputies has rapidly grown in volume. Other cities have their workmen delegates there, however chosen, and the soldiers from many widely separated sections have sent their delegations as well. Even by mid-April the presence of the "picturesque" delegates from the far-off armies of the Caucasus was noted.

In Russia the industrial cities are not representative of the entire Nation. From 70 to 80 percent are peasants, and this class the Council represents only so far as it may express them indirectly through the armies. It is the Socialist workmen of the cities who speak through the radicals of the Council. "We represent only the workingmen and soldiers not all Russia," is the way one of the members expressed it.

But still less is the Provisional Government the true representative of Russia. The Duma, elected by a complex system of classes and curias, under which popular majorities were whittled to minorities, was essentially conservative. It united with the radicals only for the prosecution of the war against the pro-German forces which ruled the court and bureaucracy, much as the French middle classes united with the Paris proletariat at the outset of the French Revolution. The Russian leaders who form the coalition ministry of the Provisional Government are men honest and capable, but with few exceptions, are only moderate liberals and, what is more, they are self-appointed leaders, serving Russia, but not chosen by her.

Only after a general election by all the people, whether for a new Duma or for a Constitutional convention, shall we know what manner of leadership Russia really desires, whether the moderates of the Ministry, the radicals of the Council or something between

the two. But such an election, even without woman suffrage, means the vote of 36,000,000 men, and to establish the machinery for it in the midst of war and conditions of semianarchy, may be the work of months.

Meanwhile the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies is the closest approach to a National representative body that Russia has and is the present seat of power. "The force is ours, and we can overthrow the Government when we wish." Where this new power shall stand, whether its Socialist elements, dominated by brother Socialists from Germany, shall dominate their future war policy; is in the womb of the uncertain future. Meanwhile they are doing Germany's work in the holding up of hostilities. Russia is an uncertain quantity.

WILL STOP THAT LEAK

For the sake of maintaining cordial relations with the United States, says an Exchange, the British blockade of Germany has been by no means as tight as it should be. Not much consideration was given to goods bound for Germany at any time, but there was a tremendous leakage through Norway, Sweden and Holland, countries whose imports doubled and in some cases quadrupled since the beginning of the war.

One part of this sensational increase was due, no doubt, to the fact that many of the articles which the little neutrals near Germany had purchased from their large neighbor before the war were not to be had. They were being used for the German people, who were cut off from most of the world. There is no doubt, however, that a tremendous smuggling business has been going on in the past two years, and goods imported with the sanction of the Allies by Norway, Sweden and Holland have been reshipped in huge quantities to the Central Powers.

Now that the United States has joined the Allies, she will be just as anxious to prevent Germany getting any foodstuffs or other supplies of American origin as Great Britain. The President is likely to be given full power to prevent shipments to neutrals, and this power, we may be sure, will be unhesitatingly exercised. American citizens who seek to evade the restrictions imposed by the President are likely to be summarily dealt with. It has been pointed out that Holland, Norway and Sweden have been virtually forced into a position of German allies, willing or unwilling. They have suffered from German tyranny, but they dare not do more than protest, because they fear the fate of Belgium should they break off relations with their bullying neighbor. We may be sorry for their plight and indeed recognize that they are among the small nations whose rights the Allies are fighting to establish. Yet even the prospect of their suffering from an embargo upon foodstuffs and other supplies will be faced rather than that the present leakage should continue. Stories of anti-dynastic risings in Sweden, in response to Norway pressure, are an indication that the Swedes and Norwegians, who are not making any money out of the smuggling business, and who find themselves the victims of increased prices, realize their danger, and might even risk war with Germany rather than starvation in her behalf.

THE CENSORSHIP

A portion at least of the United States press is smarting under the censorship rules which enjoin silence as to certain matters pertaining to the war and war movements. The Brooklyn Eagle, under the caption "The Unwisdom of Lansing" says: "Every State Department official has received over the signature of Robert Lansing, Secretary of State, an order not to talk with newspaper men 'even on insignificant matters of fact and details' The plan of treating newspapers as hostiles and reporters as alien enemies is the gravest unwisdom in conditions that demand the sincere and intelligent co-operation of the press and the people with the Administration. To a Secretary of State like Daniel Webster, or William H. Seward, or James G. Blaine, in touch with political conditions, this would be apparent. It is apparent to President Woodrow Willson, who is seeking just the intelligent co-operation that is needed. The President, as the world knows, has been in large measure his own Secretary of State. He may well give to Mr. Lansing a warning. The people will have to fight this war, and all that the people are able to know they get from the newspapers."

Our esteemed contemporary is in error in assuming that the silence demanded of the newspapers is because of treating them "as hostiles and reporters as alien enemies." What lies at the root of the censorship is to prevent information from leaking out to the enemy, and of this the heads of the various war departments should be the best judges. Possibly the hardest sacrifice that the newspaper scribe can be called upon to make is to withhold a "scoop," and how many "scoops" have had to be put in the ice-box since this war began! We on this side of the American border have become accustomed to this withholding; we have withheld "copy" the procuring of which made glad many a reporter and the withholding of which has almost precipitated rebellion, but this is war and even the ubiquitous reporter must at times close his eyes and his ears to things that, under ordinary conditions, would be meat and drink to him.

Our cousins across the border will gradually acquire self control in this respect, as they get into the maelstrom of war; they are as yet only on the quiet, scarcely disturbed shore. When they get into the turbid waters they will see the need of withholding.

FREE WHEAT

GOVERNMENT'S POLICY EXPLAINED.

By Sir Thomas White, Minister of Finance.

Mr. MACDONALD: Will the hon. minister undertake to say that the Deputy Minister of Justice expresses the opinion that the Government could not, by Order in Council, during the pendency of the war, transfer the articles back to where they were before?

Sir THOMAS WHITE: No, I do not.

Mr. PUGSLEY: How, then, does it become permanent?

Sir THOMAS WHITE: I will explain in a moment. Wheat, wheat flour and semolina are upon the free list in precisely the same sense as any other article is on the free list under the tariff today. Any article can be changed from the free list to the dutiable list by or under the authority of Parliament.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Does the hon. minister mean to say that any article can be changed from the free list to the dutiable list by Order in Council?

Sir THOMAS WHITE: If my hon. friend asks me that question, which embraces this particular case, I express my opinion that it can. But I will say this, speaking now on behalf of the Government, that the Government regard wheat, wheat flour and semolina as upon the free list in the same way that any other articles on the tariff are on the free list, and that fresh duties will not be imposed except by Parliament. Why do I eliminate "or under the authority of Parliament?" For this reason: Under the general legislation apart altogether from the War Measures Act—

Mr. MACDONALD: Why did not the hon. gentleman submit the proposition to Parliament?

Sir THOMAS WHITE: I have covered that ground so fully that I thought even a child could understand it. The hon. member (Mr. Macdonald) must have been asleep, or else he was talking to the hon. member for Bonaventure (Mr. Macleod) who is a charming companion. But I make the statement that the Government understand what has been done in the same sense that its legal adviser understands it, and I say that if those duties are ever reimposed it will be by Parliament. Why do I say that? Under the general legislation the Governor in Council at any time can place upon the free list any article or commodity that is used in connection with Canadian manufactures. Further than that, the Government can at any time grant remission of the duty under the Audit Act in cases where duty has been paid on articles imported. It is not an unusual thing for a government to reduce a duty, or even to place an article upon the free list. It is not altogether unusual—though power in this respect is more seldom exercised for the Government to grant remission of duty on articles that have been imported. The right hon. leader of the Opposition (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) when in power, remitted the duty on coal; and we remitted the duty on cement on one occasion, because there was a scarcity of cement in the West. It is not an unusual thing, say for the Governor in Council to reduce or remove duties. But it is an unprecedented thing, so far as I know to impose duties by Order in Council, and I have no hesitation in saying that this Government, or any Government that succeeds it, if it desires to impose fresh duties upon these articles, will bring the proposal down to Parliament and have it enacted into law in the usual way. So we need not worry ourselves about these legal disquisitions and arguments about the validity of the Government's action under the War Measures Act—that argument entirely disappears.

Let me summarize what I have said. In the first place, there has been no departure from the traditional fiscal policy of the Conservative party, which has meant so much for the prosperity of this country since 1873; the policy of Sir John Macdonald, the policy of Sir Leonard Tilley, the policy of the present leader of the Opposition down to 1911. In the second place, conclusions as to what should be done in this matter has been reached upon the merits at the time of decisions were taken, and having regard to the national interest. And when I speak of the national interest I repeat what I said in 1911 and I have no can think of the national interest of Canada without thinking of the interest of the three great prairie provinces.

Now, the hon. member (Mr. Turrieff) put forth a fifth criticism. It is really as unfounded and as little worth as criticisms one, two, three and four. He says: You are actuated by political considerations. One would hardly suspect my hon. friend from Assiniboia of suggesting that anyone could be actuated by political considerations. It would surprise me to learn that such a thought has ever crossed my hon. friend's mind. He says there is a coming election. What coming election?

Mr. GRAHAM: Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: My hon. friend from South Renfrew (Mr. Graham) merely interjects that. What have the Governments of Alberta and Saskatchewan to do with the question of free wheat?

Mr. GRAHAM: Just as much as they had to do with cement.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: And they had nothing to do with cement. But my hon. friend from Assiniboia said "election," he did not say "elections."

Mr. TURRIEFF: Yes, and I meant the Dominion elections.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: Absolutely. That is what the hon. gentleman meant. What does my hon. friend from South Renfrew say to that?

Mr. GRAHAM: The hon. member for Assiniboia makes it stronger than I did that is all.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: But he puts my hon. friend (Mr. Graham) in error.

Mr. GRAHAM: Not at all. The Solicitor General (Mr. Meighen) will tell you.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: The hon. member for Assiniboia said that he had acted for political reasons having regard to the "coming election." Now let me say this: The Prime Minister of this country is about to introduce a Bill into this House for the extension of Parliament. We on this side of the House do not believe there should be an election at this time. Should there be an election, who will be responsible for it? Is an election to be apprehended? Did the Government take this action under the War Measures Act by reason of its expectation that there would be an election when, at the same time, it is about to bring down a Bill to extend the term of Parliament? What then, is the force and weight and validity of the argument of my hon. friend?

Mr. LEMIEUX: The ballot boxes were sent to England two years ago.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: Oh, we have heard all about that.

Mr. PUGSLEY: May I ask my hon. friend a question? My hon. friend has touched upon something that has nothing to do with the free wheat question.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: My hon. friend touched upon it for two hours last week.

Mr. PUGSLEY: My hon. friend says the Government is going to bring down a Bill for the extension of Parliament. I would ask if the Government intend to deal with that as with other Government measures and carry it through by virtue of the majority they have in this House?

Sir THOMAS WHITE: My hon. friend is an old and experienced parliamentarian, and I am surprised at him asking a question like that. My right hon. friend the Prime Minister is also an old and experienced parliamentarian, and I believe that when he brings down a bill to this House he will bring it down in such fashion that no fault can be found with his action. My hon. friend from Assiniboia says: "You are very blameable, you are really consumable because your action has pleased the West. He spoke with a sob in his voice. He said: Your action has pleased the West. I have to admit frankly to my hon. friend from Assiniboia that the fact that the West is pleased pleases the Government and pleases me. I am glad the West is pleased. We are all glad the West is pleased, and we are glad not as politicians but as Canadians. For the last five years of continuous campaign I have been represented as the sponsor for the big interests. The impression has been sedulously and persistently created through the West that the Government is hostile to the people of the West. I represent the interests in this House, all the interests in Canada, big and little, great and small, industrial, financial and agricultural. That in my conception of my duty, I have never favoured one interest at the expense of others, and if there is any interest in this country which I have favoured in this House, in the cabinet, and in the council of the Government, it has been the interest of agriculture. The people of the West and the people of the East are brothers; at the people of Canada are the children of Confederation. We have no favourites. Any public man who is discharging his duty to the state regards the interest of every individual and every section of the country and action is taken not in the interests of this section or of that section but in the national interest. That is the policy which we attempted to follow, and have attempted to follow, since our accession to power in 1911.

I desire to say, because this question has been raised, that the Government has done more for the West than all of the Governments that preceded it, and I am glad that we have. It is right that we should. Let me tell you some of the things that we have done. Our first action when we came into power was to enlarge the boundaries of Manitoba. We placed the finances of that province upon a second basis, we increased her annual subsidy, because we wanted to place her on an equality with the other provinces of the west, by \$600,000, and we paid over \$2,000,000 of back subsidies. We enlarged the boundaries of Manitoba. It was a proper thing to do and we did it. What have we done for agriculture? My hon. friend the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Burrell) introduced a Bill into this House whereby \$10,000,000 was set aside for agriculture in the East and agriculture in the West. My hon. friend the Minister of Railways (Mr. Cochrane) introduced a Bill for the building of highways throughout Canada. That would have been a good boon to agriculture both East and West but the Senate threw out that Bill.

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(To be continued.)

EGG CIRCLE MEETING

In order to thoroughly explain matters relating to the egg business and to convince certain members of the necessity of patronizing the institution for mutual benefit a meeting was held in Mont Carmel Hall on the 7th of May. The majority of the patrons were present together with the managers and directors. The meeting was further graced by the presence of Rev. P. P. Arsenault, president of the association who, in his capacity as member of the executive was able to cope with the different topics brought up and to solve all questions and diversify of opinion. By the Rev. Pastor was relieved of the task inasmuch as Mr. Cyrus Poirier had been invited beforehand to treat the matter. He indeed, was equal to the task and quoted matters so lucidly and in so plain a language that the most un-informed audience would have been convinced of the necessity of co-operation and even speculation. The latter bringing out the idea of cold storage eggs in summer.

In a few brief and intelligent remarks Mr. Poirier explained the matter relating to "Funds" both reserve and surplus to the satisfaction of all. He stated that whereas the egg dealers in Montreal, Boston etc., were buying and thirty days basis, it was impossible to work out the business without having a reserve in order to pay the members regularly who would otherwise cease to be members. He also stated that a farmer who would rather sell eggs to the merchants for the simple reason that state eggs and even worse yield him as big a profit as number one eggs, is an undesirable citizen. Even this reason was not a fair one for Mr. Poirier proved by figures and quotations received from stores in this locality every few days and by comparing this figures with the different prices received from the circle that in the Mont Carmel branch of the circle the average price for the eggs received by the circle in 1916 averaged 26.03% per doz. whilst the same number of dozens would have yielded at store price 23.3cts per doz. which meant an amount in the vicinity of \$600 more for the members of this circle. Mr. Poirier laid stress on the necessity of clean eggs of a good quality. Many good points in favor of the egg circle were brought up by members of the circle and these points proved by figures. Rev. P. P. Arsenault spoke on the necessity of seeing to scarcity of hen feed and gave members to understand that the Association through Mr. Kerr would do all in their power to buy feed co-operatively and at cost prices plus cost of transport. This news was applauded by the members in a body who lauded the energetic efforts of the President of the Association for his untiring efforts and extreme zeal towards the successful issue of the work of the Association thereby ensuring the welfare of the patrons in this time of stress. There was mention made of the collateral notes to be signed by the farmers. The questions relating to the tickets entitling patrons to a percentage of their returns of 1916 was settled when Rev. P. P. Arsenault stated that these could be cashed in the stores of the vicinity by paying a discount. Late in the evening the meeting adjourned.—R

A Personal Letter:

We seldom if ever speak about the credit end of our business. Credit is a good thing. The only evil is in its abuse, and we propose so far as we are concerned to stop the abuse. Our business year ends May 1st., and we are now making a complete survey of all accounts on our books, at the same time making some radical changes in this Department. The greater number of our customers pay their bills promptly. A few do not. The accounts of those who do not will be closed and placed by themselves for collection. Remember if you are a regular customer, and paying promptly, you will receive the same generous treatment as heretofore; or if you are not already one, and desire to open a charge acct. furnishing satisfactory references, we shall be pleased to have your business.

We are most anxious to extend to all our customers every accommodation; but the high cost of goods and the difficulty of obtaining same at the present time, makes it imperative that we safeguard our business in every possible way.

Faithfully yours,

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GOFF BROS

DAILY SELECTIONS FOR GUARDIAN READERS

Furnished by W. S. Louson,

SPECIALLY JIM.

I was mighty good lookin' when I was young. Peert an' black-eyed an' slim. With fellers a-countin' me Sunday night.

'Specially Jim.

Te hillest one of 'em all was he. Chipper an' han'som an' trim. But I tossed up my head an' made fun of the crowd.

'Specially Jim.

I said I hadn't no pinion o' men. An' I wouldn't take stock in him. But they kep on a-comin' in spite o' my talk.

'Specially Jim!

I got so tired o' havin' 'em round. 'Specially Jim. I made up mind I'd settle down. An' take up with him.

So we was married on Sunday in church. 'Twus crowded full to the brim. 'Twus the only way to get rid of 'em all.

'Specially Jim. —BESSIE MORGAN.