

The Ottawa Spotlight

By Wilfrid Eggleston

Ottawa, Feb. 25—The Liberal party shows signs of being vigorously alive and even in a state of mild revolt. Last week the government received as many jolts from its friends as from its opponents. "Gerry" McGeer (Liberal) locked horns with the authorities on shipping subsidies. Jean Francois Pouliot (Liberal) sought to introduce a bill on the trans-lation bureau over the expressed opposition of the Secretary of State. W. A. Tucker, Liberal of Rosthern faced right up to the Minister of Finance on the monetary question, and was warmly applauded not only by the 'south east corner' where the Social Credit and C.C.F. members sit, but from radical fringes of the Liberal benches as well. All in all, it looks like a fighting session, with the impatient and radical members of the Liberal party jabbing the ministry from within, while the official opposition jabs it from without. Liberals profess to believe in free speech, and in general the ebullition this week is regarded as a healthy sign. A fighting parliament wouldn't be a bad idea in these days when so much is wrong and cries out to be set right. Mr. Mackenzie King, being a democratic leader, is prepared to move forward just as fast as the rank and file demands. He sees no value in being miles ahead of the party, doesn't see the use of reforms if the country and the party are not solidly behind them. The present Liberal party has a lot more fire and fight than the representation in the 1926-1930 parliament appeared to have.

(A Fine First Effort)

The government policy on public works as a cure for unemployment was defined with much clarity and eloquence early in the week by Hon. Norman Rogers, Minister of Labor, in a speech which won general commendation, although scored by one member of the C.C.F. party. Mr. Rogers disposed of the idea that this was a government of supermen, all-wise and all-powerful. He disavowed any notion that without help this or any other government could cure unemployment. The government realised he said, its profound responsibility in the matter; and the expectations of the people. It would not shirk its responsibility. But it believed in enlisting the support of all possible agencies in the provision of work. The government was satisfied that an orgy of government spending did not offer a way out of the depression. On the contrary, if persisted in, it would bring about chaos.

"It is taking a short view of the duty of the government to the people of Canada to assume that we can continue with unbalanced budgets and at the same time expect the co-operation of private and corporate enterprise in supplying more employment to this country. I do not believe public employment through a vast scheme of public works is anything more than a palliative for our present economic ills. I believe that ultimately it would create far greater economic distress than that which now exists," the Minister said.

Students who are curious as to the probable course of this government in the next year or two will probably find the kernel of the matter in a statement of the British government made in October 1934, and quoted with approval by the Minister of Labor:

(The Liberal Attitude)

"The expansion of normal activity will most surely and rapidly be brought about by the creation of confidence by steady policy—in particular, financial confidence by a balanced budget, the lowering of rates of interest with resultant cheap and plentiful capital and, in so far as government action is possible by the creation of facilities for and the removal of hindrances to trade."

That theory is to be tested by the Liberal government, it will be assailed as timid, as undramatic, as unimaginative. But the indications are that it will be adhered to as closely as the demands of democratic government, the cries for freer spending and elaborate programs of works will permit. The Ministry will probably set their faces hard against any extravagant spending programs of any sort. The test will come in a year or two, when the employment rolls are counted. The government knows that its fate in the country will not depend on the debates it wins or loses in the House of Commons now; but on the employment and general prosperity of the country when its policies have had time to take effect.

Judging by the remarks made by chief counsel at the beginning of the textile inquiry, it is going to be a humdinger. The government considers that the whole textile industry is on

trial; and must now justify the protection it enjoys in terms of workers wages and consumer costs.

The government announced that an adjustment to wheat farmers who received less than 60 cents a bushel for their 1930 pool deliveries would be made; it is unofficially estimated this will cost \$6,000,000.

(Freight Rates on Grain)

Thomas Reid, bag-piping member from New Westminister, B.C., introduced again his bill to equalize freight rates on grain, so that the consumers of it on the coast do not have to pay much larger freight charges than what is paid on export grain. He has been at it five years now, and threatens to keep on until the inequity is righted.

Abraham Albert Heaps M.P. for Winnipeg precipitated a lively debate which spread over two private members days when he asked the House to instruct the government to bring in legislation "granting adequate retiring allowances" to all citizens over sixty years of age, the idea being that many citizens over that age would retire at once and make a place in the field for some of the younger men now unemployed.

(Opposed to Inflation)

The proposal was supported, opposed and commented upon by a considerable number of members. The Minister of Finance, speaking for the government, said that while he and his colleagues had every sympathy with Old Age Pensions, and were anxious to extend the present bill as rapidly and as far as possible, they did not feel that with the finances of the country as they were now, the government would be justified in proceeding with such a step. By orthodox means the money could only be obtained through borrowing. He rejected the proposal to inflation as not being in the best interests of Canadians generally. In this stand he was supported by Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett, leader of the opposition, who clarified for the House what he said in favor of pensions at sixty in his election radio addresses. His idea was, he said, that provision should be made for persons building up an annuity fund for themselves by weekly or monthly savings. He wanted a contributory scheme; and criticised the proposal to make the pension available to everyone without effort or saving on their part. He urged the house to consider the effect of these social measures upon the morale of the people.

Objections were offered to the bill for various other reasons. T. L. Church, wartime mayor of Toronto, opposed it because it was state-socialism' and because many people in history had done their best work after sixty. R. J. Deachman, Liberal, North Huron, opposed it on the ground it would lower the real wage of the workman, that it would decrease total national production; that it would add a further burden to the export industries; and that it would thus result in an actual decrease in employment.

(Ways of Finding Money)

The supporters of the bill, however, suggested ways and means of finding money. Angus MacInnis read some of the salaries and bonuses paid tobacco executives; and suggested there was a source there. Miss Macphail quoted from the government estimates the sum spent on the Royal Military College and on cadets: that would provide enough to give pensions to the incurable invalids. The member for Rosthern, Saskatchewan, suggested a means whereby the government could get large sums of money from the banks for nothing, or next to nothing.

The House spent one day voting supply. Nothing very exciting happened, except near the end, when the redoubtable "Gerry" McGeer and Hon. W. D. Euler took a mild tilt at each other on the question of subsidies for steamship services, with the Minister of Trade and Commerce rather decrying the 'heroics' which the Vancouver member indulged in; and the Vancouver member winding up further heated comment with the sentence:

"If I spoke in a way that could place my utterances in the realm of heroics beyond the constitutional capacity of the minister, may I say to him that I am only beginning, and if I have worried him to-night he is going to have a rather bad time in the future," to which Mr. Euler quite calmly replied: "Go as far as you like!"

(A Curious Turn)

The "retirement at sixty" debate took a curious turn after two sittings when a private member got up and objected to the whole discussion as being out of order. He was supported in this by Mr. Bennett, and although

the Speaker had previously ruled that it was in order, he reconsidered his decision and ruled the contrary. This was appealed against by Mr. Woodsworth, but the Speaker was sustained by a vote of 158 to 22, only the Social Credit and C.C.F. members voting against the Speaker's decision.

The Senate did not sit during last week, having exhausted the limited amount of business before it; but it is now sitting again.

LASKAY

Over an hundred gathered in the Institute Hall on Saturday evening on the occasion of the 80th birthday of Mr. George Patton and to wish him many happy returns. Rev. D. Davis, in his capable humorous manner, acted as chairman and led in the community singing. Musical numbers were given by The Old Tyme Quartette of Mrs. D. Ross, Mrs. A. Jones, Miss Alice Ferguson and Miss Jessie Gellately accompanied by Miss Francis Ross. Vocal solo by Mrs. Simpson of Windsor and readings by Miss Mona Pierce of Toronto, short addresses were given by Mr. A. (Sandy) McMurchy of Strange, who celebrated his 81st birthday a few weeks ago, Mr. W. Rolling and Mr. C. Walkington of King, who all spoke of the esteem of Mr. Patton in the entire community. A couple of games were played under the direction of Mr. Marvin Hunter after which a few old time dances were enjoyed. After partaking of a lovely lunch including a birthday cake, which had 80 candles on it, a very happy evening came to a close.

Members of the family who were able to be home were Mrs. C. Barnes, Toronto; Mrs. F. Boys, Strange; and Miss Gertie Patton and of course Mrs. Patton who celebrates her seventy-fifth birthday next month. Mrs. Badger of Toronto, a sister, and Mr. J. Patton of King, a brother, were also present. Guests from Toronto, Windsor, Elgin Mills, Maple, Eversley, King, Strange and Laskay were also at the gathering.

SLATS' DIARY

(By Oliver N. Warren)

Sunday: Speakin about the mitey fine dog Jake missterously come to be the propprieter of which. Jake got to cryin on the side walk this p.m. & sed it was becoss the dog went home. A man sed well why doant you go to & Jake sed he don't no where the dogs home is at.

Monday: Blisters mebbe aint so dum as he sum times actes. In S S yistiddy the S S teach er ast us wot will we do wen we get ded. Blisters nudged me & sed He tell you when we git out & then he sed when we was out Hunt for sum thing for burns.

Tuesday: Pa put a good 1 in the noosepaper on witch he works at this p.m. He sed on a st. car a man standen up told a ladie ditto she was on his foot. Beg parden she replide. I thot the ft. belonged to this fellow setten down. Moral—I xpect she koveted the sete.

Wednesday: Mister Mackentosh, are skottesh naber across the st. must spend a lotta munney. Enney how I herd him say he had to buy sum thing & it hurt worsen ever.

Thursday: I stopt a noosents to day I bleeve. & all for my deer parence. They diddent like to here the littel boy next door beet his drum. Witch dident bother me none. But to Oblidge them I loaded the littel boy my knife & ast him did he no what was inside the drum. He does now.

Friday: I have notised that they aint never the jam gotten in chirc they are gotten out & menshened it to are hot stove leege tonite. Ant Emmy up & sed if evry boddie else would do like her & keep their seet

till the others got out they wooddent be no jam at the dore.

Saturday: L diddent see nothen funny about it, but all the rest laft at supper tonite when Unkel Hen told of a bride groom who sed he gessed she aint that dangerus when a ensurence agt. told him he needed ensurence becoss he went & got married.

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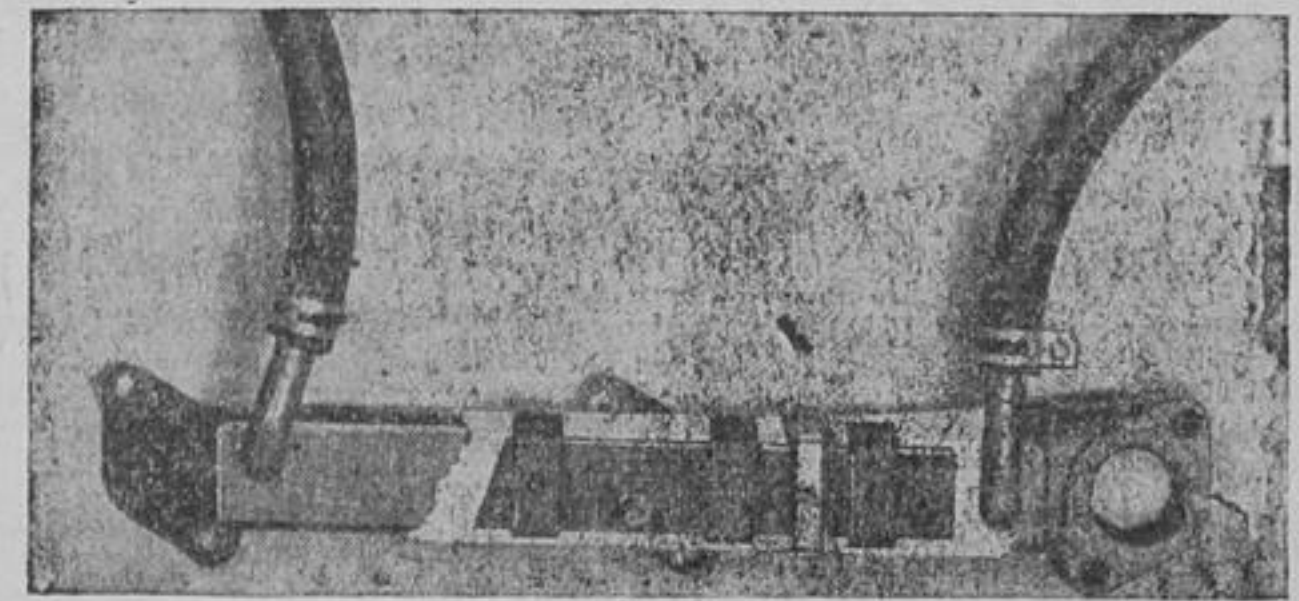
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NOT MANY FARMERS HIT BY INCOME TAX SAYS MORGAN BAKER

Ontario's new Income Tax will not hit the Ontario farmer, said Morgan Baker, M.L.A. for North York, when the bill was being passed through the committee stage this week in the Ontario Legislature. W. A. Baird (conservative) Toronto High Park in criticizing the bill remarked that any farmer unable to pay his tax promptly would be subject to a penalty.

"I represent a farming constituency," interposed Morgan Baker (Liberal, York North), "and I say that not one farmer in 10,000 will be paying income tax as levied under this bill. If there is one single farmer whose income reaches the point where he is liable to this tax, he will be the happiest man in Ontario."

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A Whale of a Story of a Whale

An advertising expert talking about the psychology of propaganda said: "A boy boarded an excursion steamer where every seat was occupied. "Seen the whale tied to the pier on the other side?" he asked his fellow-passengers. His whale story was laughed at, but he kept repeating it. Gradually, one by one, the passengers got up and crossed over. The boy got a seat. Soon he could have had one hundred seats, for everybody had hurried over so as not to miss the whale. He sat alone for some time. Finally he hopped up and rushed to the other side of the boat, muttering, 'Maybe there is a whale there after all'".

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