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## Three Brave Addresses On Conscription Issue

DR. CLARK, OF THE WEST, COL. ARTHURS, BACK FROM THE FRONT, AND HON. MR. SEVIGNY, OF QUEBEC, MAKE NOTE-WORTHY SPEECHES THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY ALL.

There were many noteworthy addresses in the Canadian House of Commons last week in the debate on the "Military Service Act 1917," but the three bravest pronouncements were those of Dr. Michael Clark, of Red Deer, Alberta, Col. Arthur, of Parry Sound, and Hon. Mr. Sevigny, Minister of Inland Revenue. These three men showed differing types of gallantry, but the same true Canadianism. Dr. Clark risked the friendship of those whose work and affection he had so greatly shared in the ranks of party for many years. Col. Arthur, a hero of Vimy Ridge, thought more of the needs of his comrades overseas than of the French-Canadian vote in his constituency. Hon. Mr. Sevigny braved the apparent majority in his province for the greater cause of Canada. "Why should our minority be isolated on this continent, when we are surrounded by English provinces and by the American nation with her 100,000,000 inhabitants?" he asked. He made it plain that it was just such an evil isolation that would result from the present attitude of the Quebec leaders if persisted in.

"I do not think there is any doubt anywhere as to where I stand," Dr. Clark commenced. "I shall support the Government's measure, support it with a clear conscience and a stout heart, believing that it is absolutely in the best interests of the country, of the Empire, of the world, and of the cause of civilization for which we are fighting."

Dr. Clark, who has been long recognized as the leading Liberal Member for the West, disposed of the criticism of the Premier because of his alleged promise not to bring in Conscription, by pointing out that circumstances change and men must change with them or perish. Lloyd George had been a fiery opponent of Conscription, but the war had brought him to a different standard. Dr. Clark himself had always opposed militarism, but he believed to-day that this was a war to end war and a conscription to end conscription. "If the Prime Minister once declared there would be no Conscription and now resorts to it to save our soldiers overseas," said Dr. Clark, "then I am grateful only that he thus shows himself greater in the gifts of patriotism than in his gifts of prophecy."

Dr. Clark had severe criticism for Sir Wilfrid Laurier's attitude. He characterized Sir Robert Borden's proposals for a coalition as "magnanimous," and Sir Wilfrid's refusal as less worthy. He suggested that the people would believe that Sir Wilfrid was more concerned with winning elections than winning the war. He ridiculed the referendum idea and the proposal for a Liberal party government. If a general election were held and a majority of Liberals returned, "where would we be?" asked Dr. Clark. "Where would you get any effect in bringing in conscription or any other measure for the successful prosecution of the war?" he demanded. "A Cabinet constituted on such principles might be all right for the Millennium but it would not do for this day of Armageddon. The lion from Edmonston (Mr. Oliver) would lie down with the lamb from Quebec (Sir Wilfrid), with a little child—perhaps from Picton (E. M. Macdonald)—to lead them." Dr. Clark thought the war situation too serious to be thus treated. The men at the front needed support and needed it now. The war must be won, and Canadians must unite to win it. "I have a little toddling grandchild out on my farm to-day," said Dr. Clark. "His father was stricken by a gunshot in the neck two weeks ago. I say to you on my soul and conscience, gentlemen, I support this bill because it is part of the necessary machinery which will save that little fellow and thousands like him from having to go through what his father and his uncles are going through to-day."

Dr. Clark referred to Conscription as the only just method for raising troops now. "Who can plead," he asked, "that it is fair, that it is even decent that one family, one district, one province, should be sheltered in comfort and prosperity behind a flag for which other people, other provinces, are giving their life-blood?" (Applause).

Sir Wilfrid Laurier had argued that the proper place for Canadians to fight was on the soil of Canada, and in the quarters where that sentiment was repeated they were saying that this was England's war. If it was England's war, was England fighting

the war on English soil? She was fighting the war wherever the turban of the Turk or the helmet of the Teuton was seen.

"Talk about sending the right recruiting agents to Quebec," said Dr. Clark. "What was the recruiting agent that led the sons of the Empire to jump to the colors in every portion of the world? I tell you sir, in one word, it was Belgium. That was the recruiting agent. I wonder if those who hesitate about what they should do, on this bill, reflect that, at the present moment in France as the Teuton is compelled to retire, he has taken with him every French female above 14 years of age to work for him and God knows what else. These are the recruiting agents that appeal to the wide Dominions of the Empire. And I add, not uncharitably I hope, that if a man will not listen to these then neither would he listen to one raised from the dead."

It was, he believed, a slander to say that organized Labor opposed recruiting. If it were not, it was "an unfortunate thing for organized Labor—unfortunate and indefensible." Trades unionists were themselves conscriptionists. They determined hours of labor, time of work, and those who failed to observe them were called "blacklegs." Many representatives of Labor had gone to the front for service, and "if there are national blacklegs they are not in France and Flanders—they must be somewhere else."

Dr. Clark concluded with an appeal for the organization of the moral, material and man power of the country to win the war. "You cannot fight this war on the limited liability plan," said Dr. Clark.

Col. Arthur said that there was no difference of opinion on the subject of this bill among the men at the front. They needed reinforcements and they wanted them right away. They took no interest in what Sir Robert Borden or Sir Wilfrid Laurier said about conscription in 1914, or the Militia Act in 1904. He spoke for these men, having been with them in the field, and he voiced their sentiments when he said that no one to-day was opposing conscription except from some selfish personal, political purpose. The voluntary system, Col. Arthur said, had broken down because a great many patriotic men who were willing to serve would not enlist unless and until the slackers were made to do so. In his own district of Parry Sound many French-Canadians had been brought in to take jobs which had been held by men who had gone to the front. Col. Arthur said that if Quebec had done her duty there would be no need of Conscription. In his own Battalion a number of French-Canadians had enlisted, but the majority had either deserted or asked for their discharge, "bringing evidence to prove that they were afflicted with every disease from lunacy to household's knee." Some had gone to visit friends in Quebec and never returned. Some had deserted to join French-Canadian regiments, thus making the Quebec enlistments appear larger than they were. There was only one French-Canadian Battalion, the 22nd, at the front, but he

gave them the highest praise. Politics, he charged, had caused the poor recruiting in Quebec, where certain men circulated the idea, "Let the Ontario men go; so much the better for us." Reinforcements should be given without delay, he concluded, in order that gallant Canadians who had laid down their lives for Canada and freedom should not have died in vain.

Hon. Albert Sevigny, the first French-Canadian member to flatly support Conscription braved the opposition of his native province with rare courage. He gallantly risked his political future. "I know," he said, "that in the performance of my duty I may end my political career, but such a sacrifice is much less than the one made by our soldiers who have fought on the field of honor, making for us a bulwark of their breasts."

To the insults that had been hurled at him and even the threats that had been made against his life, he replied: "My intention is to admire and help the 400,000 of my fellow Canadians who have died for my country, or are ready to die, facing the enemy, far from Canada where they might have remained instead of sacrificing themselves for their country. To those who threaten my life and the lives of my family I say that still I am not in more danger than the soldiers in the trenches."

Hon. Mr. Sevigny took a different line regarding Quebec to any of the previous speakers. He admitted Quebec had not responded as it should and he placed the blame squarely on those who had preached that it was "England's war," and that Canada was to be "ruined." He scored "the men of talent, in newspapers or in public meetings" who denounced participation in the war, and he showed how Canada was as vitally interested as France or Belgium. Only the British navy protected Canada, and Canada to-day was not fighting for England or France but with them for the civilization and decency of the world. He pointed out how foolish it would be to lay Canada open to pillage, plunder and ravage by waiting until the foe reached these shores. The debt to England, he said, was so great that only the services rendered by the Canadian boys in France and Flanders allowed us to be unshamed.

To show that French-Canadians do their duty nobly, when not misled, he pointed to those of the race at the front, those who had responded in other provinces and those who had made such a wonderful response in the U.S.A.

Mr. Sevigny made it clear that if he and his colleague, Col. Blondin, left the Cabinet now, the Premier would have no alternative but to turn to men of English-speaking origin, and the inevitable result would be a union of the English-speaking people of both parties and the isolation upon this continent of a French-Canadian minority. It was against that calamity that he was striving, confident as he was that the French-Canadian people once they understood the situation would loyally give their support to the cause of civilization.

Touching on the Conscription measure he showed its fairness and that it would be no particular injury to Quebec's present great prosperity. He concluded with the following eloquent words:—

"For our glorious ancestors dead on the battlefields of history; for our brothers who died or are ready to die in the trenches of to-day; for the sacred cause of justice, religion, democracy and civilization; so that our children may be proud of us as we are proud of our ancestors; to have understanding between the two races which God has placed in this young

## EATING FISH MAY CONSERVE OTHER FOOD

Ontario Fish May Release Other Food Stuffs for Export to Europe.

The Ontario Organization of Resources Committee has on several occasions shown itself very helpful and effective in patriotic ways. Its services to the British Red Cross, to the organization of munitions-making, to the supplying of farm help, and to many other equally commendable causes will not soon be forgotten. It is a non-partisan union of patriotic men always looking for something to do to help in the better winning of the war, and with an expert organizer, Dr. Abbott, at the head to give effect to any plans that may be outlined.

Just at present the Resources Committee is concentrating on the Fish question. The Committee draws persistent attention to the general depletion of the food supplies of the world through the effects of the great war. It is pointed out the withdrawal of so many men from their former agricultural occupations, the devastation of so much farming land overseas, the failure of crops and wastage through loss of cargoes on the seas, brings the world face to face with a food crisis both now and for after the war. The Committee emphasizes the fact that every means must be taken to overcome as far as possible the present difficulties regarding the food supply. One of the suggestions of the Committee is that the people of Ontario release other foodstuffs for export by consuming more of their native food fish. It is a recent circular sent to The Advance, the question is discussed from many angles. "Reasoning it easier to handle two hundred pounds of fish than one hundred pounds of fish," says the circular, "if the people of the Province took this matter up seriously and consumed twenty or thirty per cent. of the annual catch instead of less than ten per cent. there might be a substantial attack made on the high cost of living. Dealers say that fish can be sold cheaper if the demand enabled a larger supply to be handled. In the meantime it is necessary to make the supplies of other meats go as far as possible. Before the war is over some countries will be in want for food. Nobody can foresee what will happen, but the plain fact is staring us in the face that a little patriotic co-operation by the people of Ontario may mean that the exportable surplus of our foodstuffs may reach countries and fill the months that would otherwise languish with hunger. It surely is not too much to ask at this time. Fish is recommended by expert dietitians as a most desirable article of food, high in proteins and easily digested."

and great country; so that our fellow citizens in other provinces be treated with justice; so that our compatriots of the United States who set us such a noble example may be proud of us; so that France may live with our dear mother tongue; so that the British Empire may still be the greatest power of the world and give us the pride to continue to bear our title of British subjects; so that Canada and the American continent may never be threatened by Germany; so that we may take part in the triumph and not be isolated and despised when the bell of victory shall ring,—for all this, I say, it is worth while to shed our blood. Others may say what they will, but for my part, I accept."

# MURAD

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