

ATTEMPTS TO SAP CONFIDENCE OF PEOPLE IN  
GOVERNMENT'S WAR MEASURES MUST CEASE

If Canada is to Place the Maximum of Her Power Behind Great Britain, Attacks Must be Stopped, Declares Hon. Arthur Meighen

## OPPOSITION USING EVERY KIND OF TRICKERY AND MISREPRESENTATION

Mr. W. A. Boys, K.C., Again the Unanimous Choice of Conservatives of South Simcoe, at One of Most Successful Conventions Held in the Riding

From a Staff Reporter.

Cookstown, June 22.—In one of the most brilliant and convincing addresses heard in South Simcoe in many a day, Hon. Arthur Meighen, Solicitor-General for Canada, replied to Liberal charges against the Borden Administration, paying particular attention to recent utterances of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, before the Reform Club, at Toronto, and of Hon. Mr. Graham, at Durham. The town hall was packed to capacity, while even the window-ledges were pressed into service by those who could not get inside. Although one of the greatest Conservative strongholds in the country, South Simcoe has not often witnessed a more enthusiastic and optimistic gathering.

The occasion was the half-yearly meeting of the South Simcoe Conservative Association, and the business of the day was to nominate a candidate for the Federal House.

This went unanimously to the present member, Mr. W. A. Boys, K.C. After an address from the president, Hon. Mr. Meighen was introduced. This was the first time he has appeared in South Simcoe, but he captivated his audience at once, and throughout his address was repeatedly interrupted by the hearty applause which his pointed remarks aroused.

### Reasons for Change.

"The convention has met under no ordinary circumstances," said Hon. Mr. Meighen. "The ordinary light heartedness of such a gathering is not present with us. We are under the shadow of a great trial, and our hearts cannot but be affected by the terrible events which are now happening. Surely we might say that under such a shadow, a party speech is not in keeping with conditions, and that party controversy should be postponed. Not, of course, ordinary criticism. That is needed in war time. But we might well look for the postponement of party appeals and the drawing of party lines. I regret that this should not be the case. For seven months after the war broke out, I spoke on from thirty to forty different occasions, and not once did I utter one word of politics. You ask me, why the change? You will agree with me that the great duty of the Government is to get the maximum of power behind Great Britain. All else should be secondary to that. (Cheers.) We should bend all our energies towards that end. (Hear! hear!) If we are to do so, we must have the confidence of the people of Canada. To do our best, we must feel that we have the sole confidence of the people. (Hear! hear!) And, if the Opposition carries on a persistent effort to sap and undermine that confidence, we owe it to ourselves and the people to see that such efforts are stopped until confidence is fully restored. (Cheers.)

"During the past five months there has been no cessation of these attacks," continued the speaker. "No party trickery has been too low to resort to; no party passions too base to appeal to, no party line too fast to draw. Never before, in the history of Canada, has there been such a misrepresentation of party motives and deeds, as has taken place during the past five months.

### Best at Front.

"What do you think of a party, which when a Government is faced with the responsibility which faces the Conservatives at present, will do all in its power to tear that Government to pieces, from press and pulpit?" asked the speaker. "There have been accusations of fraud and connivance at fraud, all through the past five months. Have you ever heard of anything worked like the so-called boot scandal? But what has been the result? The re-

port of the committee finds that the boots were the best of any used at the front. As soon as there was a whisper of anything wrong, Sir Robert Borden appointed that committee. It held 82 sittings. What did it find? That of 82,000 boots served to the men, 7,000 were returned with complaints. Of these 7,000, only 1,771 were dug up to be laid before the committee. Of that number 68 were found to be defective, because the uppers were a little light. Is there any wonder that every soldier gave the same testimony—that the Canadian boots were the best worn by any troops." The Opposition did not say that of the boots examined and found unfit for further use, 112 had been burned by the soldiers themselves. Why didn't they tell the truth? Because it would have knocked the bottom out of the boot scandal." (Laughter and applause.)

### Only Twelve Present.

"Then when the matter came up before the House for debate, when the death-knell of the Borden Government was to have been sounded, only twelve Liberals were present. The debate drizzled out into an academic discussion of whether the Canadian boots were heavy enough in design. At half past one, when the debate was brought to an end, there were five long, lorn Liberals standing at its grave." (Laughter.)

The Liberals, said the speaker, are continually talking of their patriotism. Following the visit of Sir Wilfrid Laurier to Toronto, recently, The Globe had come out with an editorial in which it had declared that the leader of the Opposition had "thrown the petty things of party strife behind him, with scorn," but the report of his speech in the news columns of The Globe had told a different story. Continual reference was made to this speech, and to one delivered by Hon. G. P. Graham at Durham recently, the speaker sarcastically referring to the declarations of non-partyism, and the attacks on the Government.

### Was Too Late.

"In a report on Mr. Graham's address, The Toronto Globe tells us that he 'dealt with the Transcontinental Railway in a masterly manner,'" said the speaker. "I am only sorry that he did not deal with it in a masterly manner when he had charge of it." (Laughter.) "He also dealt with the so-called boot scandal and the naval question. I will read you some of his speech, so that you may know the difference between a party speech, and high and patriotic utterances." (Applause.)

Hon. Mr. Meighen referred especially to Mr. Graham's criticism of the question of the purchase of horses and concluded this phase of his remarks by declaring, amid prolonged applause, that "a Judge of the Supreme Court of the Province of Quebec has been appointed to get all the facts, and that Sir Robert Borden had stated that if there had been the wrong-doing charged, both the man who passed off the unsound horses, and the officer who accepted them, would be punished."

### Carried Big Burdens.

"It has been the lot of the Conservative party to carry the big burdens of this country's government ever since Confederation," continued Mr. Meighen. "It was its lot to carry the burden when Confederation faced the spectre of complete failure. It was its lot, later, to resist the repeated efforts of the Liberals, chiefly under the leadership of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, to entangle Canada with the United States, which would have resulted in Canada becoming subservient to the Republic to the south of us. But it has never been its lot to face responsibility such as this. On top of the depression which began in 1913 comes the awful burden of the greatest war ever faced by an Administration, and under that burden, so as to reserve all the country's powers to meet the call, the Government, as far as possible, removed all cause for party strife. Sir Robert Borden appointed a non-party purchasing committee, but what are we told by Sir Wilfrid Laurier? That this very act is an admis-

tion of the incapacity of the Conservative members. I ask Mr. Graham to look at all the legislation which the Government has put on the statute books, and then hold up his hands, if he can, and say that this is an admission of incapacity. If it is, then the appointing of the Railway Committee by Sir Wilfrid Laurier was also an admission of incapacity. (Cheers.) What do you say of a leader of the Opposition who, while hiding under the cloak of non-party discussion, charges an Administration with incapacity because it buys in the best markets? (Loud applause.) That is a high patriotic appeal to unanimity."

#### Submarine Purchase.

The speaker again referred to The Globe's report of Mr. Graham's speech, in which it was said he "next showed up the robbery of the McBride purchase" of submarines. "That statement by Mr. Graham—and The Globe says he made it—was a most cowardly one," declared Mr. Meighen. "We were told at the outbreak of the war, that we would receive the assistance of the Opposition. Everyone said that all criticism of a party nature would be deferred as long as there was danger at the front. Those were Sir Wilfrid's own words. But the session had not been long opened when Mr. Pugsley, of sweet and happy memory (Laughter), stood up in his place and after saying he had no charge to make, told of a trip he had taken to New York, where he heard that a hundred thousand dollars, or more, of graft had been secured in connection with the purchase of the submarines. Mr. Graham is grieved to think that all the money paid over by Sir Richard McBride did not go to the men who made and sold the submarines. He was invited to ask for an investigation, and he would get one at once. Did he say he wanted one? Not yet."

#### Fully Investigated.

The speaker declared that the Auditor-General had fully investigated the deal, and had been satisfied that every dollar had gone to the men who made and supplied the submarines.

"I ask you what you think of a man who aspires to be the First Lieutenant of Liberalism in Canada, who says, as Mr. Graham did at Durham, that there was 'robbery in the purchase of the submarines'? I spared Mr. Graham his deserts when I only said he was cowardly." (Prolonged applause.)

Dealing with the question of a Canadian navy, Mr. Meighen maintained that Canada should wait the outcome of the present struggle so as to see what Britain's policy would be.

"Who knows what the naval limitations may be?" he asked, "I still cling to the hope that as a result of the war there may be a system of international law, and that the nations' armaments may be reduced by the terms of peace. Who, then, can say what we should do, until we know the policy of Britain? Whatever it may be, however, we will measure our own duty by the needs of Britain. (Cheers).

"Sir Wilfrid Laurier says he did not block the Dreadnoughts Bill, in the Senate. I lay it at the door of the Liberals that at the time when the emergency should have been plain to any reasonable man, they stood between Canada and the Empire, and held back the hand of the country. They turned the House of Commons into a cock-pit and disgraced the name of the country in a determined effort to balk the Administration. They made fun of, and scoffed at all who spoke of danger. I don't wonder that they don't want an election, and have all their speeches read from every platform in the country. They told us they knew more of the Empire's needs than we, and ~~that~~ we had been hoaxed by a man named Churchill, and one named French. Mr. Lemieux said he knew there would be no war, especially with Germany, because the Prince of Wales had gone for a holiday to Berlin (Laughter). Sir Wilfrid had even a better reason. The talk of emergency had vanished like the summer mist. The great bulwark of peace for the Empire was found in the one great man who sits as Emperor of Germany. This man had been the mainstay of the peace of the Empire for 35 years. Why should we send \$35,000,000 to help strengthen the British navy, as long as we had the Kaiser behind us? (Laughter and applause). Oh, I know they don't like these things said now, but I want to tell Mr. Graham that if they continue trying to undermine the Administration, they will be met with them on every platform.

#### In the Common Defence.

They say they have a policy, but if ever men were blind, they were. I can quite understand them wanting to shift the next election as far away as possible from the naval debate. The Conservative party has a policy—one policy, now and always—that whenever it is a question of Empire, whenever it is a question of defence, Canada shall act as one with the Mother Country in the common defence of all."

"The Toronto Globe tells us that Sir Wilfrid has 'thrown the petty things of party behind him with scorn.'" continued Mr. Meighen. "Yet he charges us with trying to spring a khaki-election. He says he supported the Borden Government in its votes of \$150,000,000 for war purposes. So he did, but is that his whole duty? You people who have bank accounts know that before you sign a cheque you must have the money in the bank to meet it. It is easy to vote credit, but difficult to devise a system whereby the money may be raised, to the satisfaction of the people. Wouldn't that be where you would expect Sir Wilfrid to come in, instead of trying to get the people of Canada dissatisfied with paying the war tax, by declaring that it is not a war tax at all? I ask you, would it be a straightforward, honorable thing to borrow \$150,000,000 and make no provision for repaying it? Our revenue has gone down by leaps and bounds. We will lose this year \$28,000,000, and expect to raise by war tax \$25,000,000. What do you say of men who tell you under these circumstances, that every war stamp is a lie? I tell you that the War Revenue Act was the only square and decent thing for Canada to pass.

#### Hard Party Line.

"Yet Sir Wilfrid drew the party line as hard as it has ever been drawn during the three weeks' de-

bate, and never once made a suggestion of how the revenue could be raised. Why, even their own financial expert, Mr. Fielding, in his Journal of Commerce, stated that Mr. White had devised the best method of raising revenue that could be devised. (Cheers.) Sir Wilfrid says they did nothing to balk the administration. All they did was to attack the Government's measure, vote against it, and, if they had been able to have secured votes enough they would have defeated the Government. That is all they did.

"The Toronto Globe says they 'lodged their vote against it, and let it go at that.' I can understand the electors not wanting an election just now, but I fail to understand any man who attacks the main measure of the Government, who tries to induce as many as possible to vote against it, and then who turns around to that Government and says, 'Don't you dare go to the people.' Tell me what else Sir Wilfrid could have done? He went as far as any party leader could go, and he afforded the administration every reason to make an appeal to the people.

"The Globe says: 'He could have gone farther—he did not say to the Senate, 'throw it out.' What does that mean? That Sir Wilfrid Laurier could have said to the Liberal majority in the Senate 'throw out the bill,' and they would have done so? Either Sir Wilfrid Laurier went the whole limit of his power, or else he controls the Senate, and the Borden Government is compelled to carry on business with the master of the situation sitting as Leader of the Opposition. If we are in this position to-day in Canada that the Government in power with the responsibility of this war upon it, can have its war measures blocked and thwarted and defeated at the will of the Leader of the Opposition, no Government should remain in power. Sir Wilfrid will have himself to blame and no other, if an election is brought on at this time.'" (Applause.)

#### Asks for Assurances.

"Only by refusing to take Sir Wilfrid seriously can the Government refuse to call an election," continued Mr. Meighen, "and I hope it will be possible for the Government to refuse to take him seriously. (Cheers.) He asks why we do not give assurances that we will not hold an election, and says that if we do, he will support the Government. And yet, Sir Wilfrid himself admitted in Parliament, that there was no constitutional authority for any Government to guarantee that there would be no election within any fixed time. All that can be said is that unless reasons arise which are not present now, there will be no election. Sir Robert Borden has said again and again that it is his wish that there be no election just now. The one man who is doing more than any other to force an election, is Sir Wilfrid Laurier—that is, with the possible exception of the Editor of The Toronto Globe." (Laughter.)

"I assure you, the Government will continue to hold office as long as it is convinced that it has the

confidence of the Canadian people. It is only too ready to appeal against the challenges of Laurier and the Liberals. It is only too willing to take the verdict of the Canadian people on any issue, and I venture the opinion that when the day of reckoning comes, we will carry the war into the enemy's country, and that there will be great slaughter."

The speaker was interrupted at this point by a great outburst of cheering and applause. When quiet was restored, he apologized for the warmth he had put into his words. "But it is hard to keep one's language restrained," he added. "when members of the Government are described in the terms of the veriest blackguardism." As an explanation of his remark, he referred to an editorial in *The Globe*, where "Hon. Mr. Rogers is linked up with the Roblin Government, when the Liberals know he left long before the present troubles arose." Mr. Rogers had even offered to go into the witness box, but the Liberal counsel said he couldn't call him.

"Knowing that, they yet dare to link Mr. Rogers' name with all that has been revealed. That is high patriotism for you."

### Sinister Shadow.

In conclusion, the speaker touched upon the question of the Transcontinental Railway issue, which he described as a "monument to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, throwing its sinister shadow on the Atlantic and the Pacific. That is where the money went which is needed for the war," he declared, amid resounding cheers.

"We are compelled to bear the heavy loss that Sir Wilfrid might have a monument. Why, the interest alone cost \$1,000 for every hour of the day, and the Government has to pay the loss in operation over and above that. There is the ball and chain which the Liberals have placed around this country for generations to come. And the worst political tragedy of any country is, that the man who was responsible for that blunder should stand on a political platform, and say that the Transcontinental Railway is a credit to him."

Mr. W. A. Boys, K.C., the present member for South Simcoe, was given an enthusiastic reception, and "three times three." He spoke briefly of the question of the investigation into the army boot supply, and the purchase of horses. He pointed out that the Boot Investigation had vindicated the Government, while the two principal witnesses, upon whom the Liberals rested their charges in the horse-purchase issue, had been thoroughly discredited. A number of other leading Conservatives spoke but only briefly.