

ACT IN ABEYANCE PENDING VOTING

Little Likelihood of Actual Enforcement of Draft Till People Have Spoken

UNION GOVERNMENT THEN

Decision ... Election is Generally Welcomed as Best Solution.

(Staff Correspondence of The Globe.)

Ottawa, July 19.—It is frankly admitted in Government circles to-day that there is little likelihood that the Government will make any attempt to actually enforce conscription before the coming general election is held. The machinery with regard to the appointment of local tribunals to hear exemption applications may be set in motion, and the appeal courts may be established. But the actual calling out of the first class of men subject to conscription will be left in abeyance until the people have spoken and a new Parliament is elected.

The act will meanwhile remain on the statutes. Its administration will be under a new Parliament, and, in all probability, under a new Government. Whichever side wins, the chances are that the new Government will be a union Government. Only under a "union" or "national" non-partisan Administration could there be established the public confidence and the public assent necessary to the practical and adequate enforcement of conscription. That is the excuse to be given by Sir Robert Borden for not proceeding promptly to enforce conscription as soon as the bill passes Parliament a week or so hence. That, too, is the attitude taken on the Liberal side of the House.

Union Impracticable at Present.

The political motives behind the Prime Minister's belated coalition proposals, the conditions of a discredited Cabinet personnel and a moribund Parliament, the manner and circumstances of the introduction of the conscription issue, have all combined to make union Government impracticable at present, as Mr. Pardee declared last night. With a new Parliament, fresh from the people, and having a general mandate from the people to carry through every step necessary to putting the whole resources of the nation into the struggle, and with leaders on both sides already committed to the principle of non-party administration of the war, the formation of a union Government will then be a much simpler problem.

Delay More Than Compensated For.

The delay of two or three months in actually applying the principle of selective conscription will, under all the circumstances, be more than compensated for by the avoidance of the grave troubles that would undoubtedly arise were the Government to attempt to enforce the measure forthwith, and by the added authority, and consequently more satisfactory results, that will follow the vigorous action of a new Parliament and a new Administration.

Shortest Cut to Unity.

The decision to hold an election is welcomed, in the main, by members of Parliament on both sides of the House, who realize that a continuation of present uncertain conditions was impossible, and who believe that the shortest cut to anything like unity of national effort and courageous Governmental action is by way of a general election.

As to the date of dissolution and election there is considerable uncertainty. The best guess is that Parliament will remain in session for another month yet. Dissolution may be expected a fortnight or so later, with the election fixed for some time in October or possibly early November.

Income Tax to be Passed.

Parliament has still considerable work ahead of it before it is ready for prorogation. Sir George Foster has promised that an income tax will be introduced and passed this session. Legislation of this kind is certain to be a subject of considerable controversy, and connected with it there will also be a general discussion of the whole question of further equalizing the financial sacrifices demanded of those who stay at home, including also the question of the cost of living.

Franchise Act.

The Prime Minister's intimation earlier in the session that a Dominion franchise act would be passed before a general election, giving votes for women, and the threat of a number of Conservative members that before an election steps would be taken to disfranchise the alien citizens of Canada of enemy origin, may produce further protracted debate. It is very probable, however, that the difficulties the Government would have to face in forcing through a Federal franchise measure on the eve of an election, with political motives apparent, would be so great as to risk its passage entirely. If the measure were to fail of passage, those whom the Government sought to disfranchise might be expected to express their resentment at the polls.

In regard to the women's vote it is pointed out that, if women suffrage is provided for, polling will necessarily be delayed for months, pending preparation of new lists. Although some Conservative members threaten that a Dominion franchise act will be forced through under closure, the saner heads are of opinion that the proposal should be dropped and the election fought on the present lists.

Other Questions to Deal With.

In addition to these questions still to be considered, there is the railway problem to be dealt with, involving the Government's proposal for another twenty-five millions or so for the Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific this year. That means another long discussion.

Then there is supply still to be passed, with its wake of administrative criticism. A new pension bill is proposed, and the bills respecting soldiers' settlement and the improvement of highways are still untouched. Parliament has still a busy month ahead of it before the decks are cleared for prorogation. After that it takes seven weeks as a rule to get all the machinery ready for polling.