

# PREMIER BORDEN TEARS THE TRUCE TO TATTERS

**Makes Strong Provocative  
Speech During Debate on  
the Budget**

**ATTACKS SIR WILFRID;  
THREATENS ELECTION**

**The Liberal Leader Refutes  
Charges — Vigorous  
Speeches During Day**

(Special Despatch to The Globe.)

Ottawa, March 16.—At an early hour this morning the Government majority in the Commons turned down by a straight party vote Sir Wilfrid Laurier's amendment to the Finance Minister's tariff proposals. The horizontal tariff increase of 7½ per cent. in the general tariff, and of 6 per cent. against all British goods, is to remain in effect until the country has a chance to decide whether it wants to continue the present regime of extravagant expenditures, increased taxes, increased profits to the favored tariff beneficiaries, and increased cost of living to the whole body of consumers, or whether it wants to put no additional barriers against British trade when Britain is fighting the world's battles, wants a cessation of the riot of spending which has practically doubled national expenditures in three years, a return to sane national finance, fair play to consumers as well as to manufacturers, and war taxes that really are war taxes, rather than an excuse for more protection. That the country will have a chance to pronounce on this issue was made pretty evident from the tone and temper of the speeches given by Premier Borden, Mr. R. B. Bennett and Hon. Arthur Meighen, the three Government speakers to-day.

**Took it as Question of Confidence.**

All three took the ground that the Liberal amendment was in effect a straight want of confidence motion, and that the Government would be justified in appealing to the country. Mr. Bennett said he would not wait twenty-four hours in accepting such a challenge. All three championed the cause of protection, and spent more time in justifying the increased tariff taxes on the ground of protection than on the ground of the necessities of the war. All three referred to the naval issue, and waved the flag, as a justification of the Government's course, and as an insinuation that the Liberals were not giving a proper co-operation to the Government in its war measures. All three speeches were evidently designed for campaign and stump purposes, and for a beclouding of the real issue raised by Sir Wilfrid's amendment.

**Liberals Press Real Issue.**

On the Liberal side Messrs. Carvell, Macdonald, Lapointe, Verville and Hon. George P. Graham brought the House back to the real issue before the country. They emphasized the fact that the tariff taxes were not needed for war purposes at all, since all the money for war was otherwise provided; that protection and not economy or revenue was the motive behind the Budget proposals; that the deficit which confronted the Government was due not to any "inherited situation," but to reckless financing and the dissipation of the revenue surpluses of the Laurier regime by the present Administration; that the new taxes bore heavily on the general consumer and lightly on the wealthy and protected interests, and that to impose additional barriers against Brit-

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ish trade at the present time was unpatriotic, ungrateful and unjust.

## Proof of the Protection Design.

The proof that the real design behind the tariff taxes was not revenue but protection, was given by Hon. George F. Graham, who spoke at an early hour this morning. He drew attention to the fact that while the tariff increases would affect importations to the value of about \$113,000,000, the total increased revenue, expected by the Minister of Finance was only twenty million dollars. But even on an average of only six per cent. higher duties, the increased tariff taxes should produce an increased revenue of at least thirty-two millions. Consequently the Minister of Finance practically admitted that there would be a restriction of imports this year, following the tariff increases, amounting to about thirty-seven per cent. The net result would be, therefore, that instead of being an increase of twenty millions in the customs revenue, as the Finance Minister said, there would be through the restriction of imports, following the raising of the tariff wall, a net decrease in the revenue of about ten millions.

## Sir Robert Borden Makes Vigorous Speech

The truce to Sir Robert Borden has become a mere "scrap of paper." The Premier tore it up; then he stamped all over the fragments. It was unfortunate for the Premier's personal Parliamentary prestige that he followed so closely after Sir George Foster. The latter sought to keep the tone of the debate high. He placed the supreme issue of the war first. He bespoke the unanimity and consecration of Canada. He pleaded for a Parliamentary atmosphere which gave the great things their rightful place. The Premier spoke as the politician. He concerned himself with the petty things. He harked in to the past to resurrect acrimonious party differences. He labored upon a campaign speech. He threatened a general election. And he charged Liberalism with playing into the hands of Germany when it opposed two years ago the proposal to abandon the unanimous decision for Canadian naval action and substitute a contribution for the building of Dreadnoughts. Sir George Foster and Sir Robert Borden delivered speeches diametrically opposed. In conception, thought, tone and character. One or the other was a failure. One or the other spoke the mind of the Conservative party in Canada.

## Premier Assails Sir Wilfrid.

There was acrimony in the Premier's first sentences. He bitterly assailed Sir Wilfrid, Laurier's reference to the fact that the British precedent of consulting the Opposition in relation to matters of policy during the Parliamentary truce had not been followed. He could not communicate to Sir Wilfrid, he said, the Government's fiscal proposals, but he had on the Monday before the House opened taken to the Liberal leader the general program "as far as I could foresee it." Sir Wilfrid, he added, had promised to transmit to him the Liberal program, "but so far I have had not one word from him."

## Sir Wilfrid Refutes the Charge.

At the conclusion of the Premier's speech Sir Wilfrid rose in reference to this statement. He had not desired to interrupt Sir Robert during his speech, but he desired to make the facts of this conference clear. The Premier had come to him, pretend that this was to be a war session only. He had informed him that the measures were a further appropriation for war purposes, an act to indemnify Government Dominion notes, and further war tariff changes. "I told him," Sir Wilfrid added, "that we were quite satisfied with all legislation for the purpose of advancing the cause of the war, and if there was anything else to be brought up on our side of the House outside of the war I would give him notice. Nothing else occurred."

## Not Done in the British Way.

Premier Borden retorted warmly that he had been prompted to say what he did by reason of Sir Wilfrid's observations concerning the British precedent of consulting the Opposition. He did not think Sir Wilfrid's recollection differed in any way from his own, and he was not aware that there had been any violation of confidence. He had sent Sir Wilfrid a copy of every Government bill.

"If he suggests that the Opposition was consulted as the British Chancellor of the Exchequer consulted the Opposition leaders in the British House," responded Sir Wilfrid, "I can only say that he is absolutely mistaken."

## Sir Robert's Attack on Liberal Leader

Premier Borden accused Sir Wilfrid of seeking a want of confidence

vote on the Budget proposals by his amendment. The Liberal leader's proposals, he argued, were merely negative. It was imperative for the Government to raise increased revenue by the imposition of additional taxation, and Sir Wilfrid's amendment was "declaring to the country that Canada shall not continue to take her fair share in the war." (Liberal cries of "Shame!") On that issue, he was prepared to stand. He accused Sir Wilfrid of attempting to arouse a feeling of class against class, and denouncing the doctrine of protection so far as it was exemplified in the present Budget.

## Absolutely For Protection.

In what respect, argued the Premier, had the poor man been discriminated against? Sir Wilfrid, he said, was an excellent free trader in Opposition and theory, and a fairly good protectionist in power and practice. He likened the Liberal leader to a soldier recruit who "hopped first on one leg and then on the other." As for himself, said Sir Robert, he stood for protection in the west and in the east, in power and in Opposition. Protection provided the laboring man with a reasonable living wage. He would not have the standard of living lowered to the class of "certain other countries I could name." Protection had been adopted in 1879, had been kept up ever since, and would be kept up in the future, notwithstanding all Sir Wilfrid Laurier could do.

## Greatest Advantage Ever for Britain.

Sir Wilfrid, he proceeded, had protested because of the five per cent. increase in the tariff on British imports. British goods had now in Canada the greatest advantage that they ever had. Hon. Mr. White, he declared, had established a British preference three times as great as that which Sir Wilfrid Laurier had established. The Liberal leader had called the increased tax on British trade a German conception. "That passes by like the idle wind," exclaimed Sir Robert.

"We have shown where we were before the war came; we have shown where we were since the war came, and, please God, it needs be, we will show it again. No more absurd or ridiculous statement ever emanated from the lips of a public man in Canada." He challenged Sir Wilfrid to say what he meant by it.

## Handicap Five Per Cent. Heavier.

"I protested that British trade with Canada was being taxed five per cent. more than it had been formerly," commented Sir Wilfrid, amid Liberal cheering.

"Well, I think everyone knows that," retorted the Premier. "Does he mean that the preference has been decreased?"

Sir Wilfrid smiled. "I am too old a bird," he observed, "to be caught like that. I am sorry my Right Hon. friend has not apparently yet seen the point. What I say is that British trade to Canada is being subjected to a handicap of five per cent. more than it was."

"And I am too old a bird to think that I can get a straight answer from the Right Hon. gentleman," came back the Premier, amid Conservative cheers.

"The trouble with the Right Hon. gentleman seems to be that he is not able to twist my statement as he would like," responded Sir Wilfrid. "The fact speaks for itself."

"British trade is in an immensely superior position to what it was before," declared the Premier. (Liberal "Oh, oh's!")

## Threat of Election.

"I am prepared to leave the issue to this House, and, if necessary, to this country," declared the Premier. If the change had not been made in the duty on British goods, he argued, scores of factories would close and men would be out of employment. "We were thus bound to give consideration to the Canadian manufacturer."

Sir Wilfrid had charged that to increase the tax on British trade at this time was a German conception. The only proposals which the Germans had received with joy were the Laurier proposals of two years ago, the Premier declared with heat. The Hamburger Nachrichten, a German publication, in June, 1913, had alluded to the act of the Senate as a sign that the Empire was not united in its plan of defence. The disloyalty and lack of patriotism had been on the Liberal side, yet Sir Wilfrid had passed the challenge that to increase the tax on British trade was a German conception, and had chosen to fire a want of confidence motion upon it. "We do not shrink from the issues it raised," declared the Premier, amid the wild cheering of his followers. Conservatives were prepared to do their duty to the Dominion and to the Empire.

## Facts and Comparison Against Accusation

Mr. Frank Carvell declared that Premier Borden's accusations as to the breaking of the party truce by the Liberals were not at all borne out either by the facts or by comparison with what had been done in Great Britain. In Great Britain it had been a real party truce, the members of the Opposition had been consulted throughout with regard to

the financial proposals of the Government, and no attempt had been made to interfere with the fiscal policy of the country. Mr. Carvell drew a contrast between the speech of Sir George Foster yesterday and that of the Prime Minister to-day, declaring that the former's speech had been on a distinctly higher level as regards both, real patriotism and real argument.

Dealing with the Finance Minister's declaration that the need for taxes arose out of the liabilities left by the late Government, Mr. Carvell declared that, at the best, Mr. White could figure only on \$112,000,000 of expenditure during the past three years, which could in any sense be attributed to works begun or obligations incurred by the late Government; as against these had been surpluses totalling \$133,000,000, although the Government had spent forty-five million dollars more on current expenditure as compared with what the Liberals had spent in the three years.

## "This is No Time to Oppress the Poor"

"This is no time to increase the burdens upon the backs of the workers of our country," declared Mr. Alphonse Verville, the Labor member for Maisonneuve, in the course of a vigorous speech against the tariff additions provided in the Budget. "This is no time to increase the cost of foodstuffs and clothing and the necessaries of life. Why further oppress the masses of the consumers? Why make the poor poorer and the rich richer?"

## Manufacturers Ralse Prices.

Mr. Verville created considerable interest by reading communications from various manufacturing houses to their customers, notifying them that as a result of the tariff changes they would increase the price of their products. The first he read was from the Ames-Holden Boot & Shoe Company of Montreal, and was greeted with derisive laughter by the Liberals. Mr. Ames, however, was not in the House. "Prices go up," commented Mr. Verville, "but there is no announcement of wages going up." Sir Wilfrid Laurier had spoken well, the Labor man declared when he had described the tariff tax increases as made for the benefit of the privileged and protected interests, and at the expense of labor and the consuming public.

## Direct Taxation Suggested.

Mr. Verville came out with an alternative policy. If the extravagance of the Government had placed it in a position where extra taxation were necessary, he urged direct taxation levied in proportion to the ability to bear. He urged a tax upon revenue and income, and came out strongly in favor of the prohibition of the manufacture of liquors. Temperance and economy would, he believed, work wonders in alleviating the stress of existing conditions.

## "Made-in-Canada" a Farce.

The Labor man severely scored the exploitation of the made-in-Canada propaganda. It was "one of the biggest farces the human brain ever conceived," calculated to deceive the workers, to hand the best weapon to the big corporate interests, to encourage the spread of inferior goods at top prices, and encourage unscrupulous dealers to put fraudulent stuff upon the market. Mr. Verville said he was prepared to furnish proof of the fact that a large corporation had employed the services of a number of girls at pitilessly low wages to eliminate the words "Made in Germany" from certain imported goods on hand, and to substitute the words "Made in Canada." That was the kind of thing which was being imposed upon the public.

## Opportunity in Ship Building.

Why had the Government opposed the establishment of a great ship-building industry in Canada two years ago? If this enterprise had been carried out, Mr. Verville maintained, there would now be employment for thousands of workmen who found themselves without employment. Moreover, at the conclusion of the war there would be an unprecedented demand for the construction of ships.

## Reckless Propose to Make Poor Pay.

In vigorous words the Labor man scored the Government for its share in responsibility for present conditions. "By their fruit ye must know them." They had been called to administer the affairs of the country when times were prosperous, when there was an overflowing public treasury, when employment was plentiful and prosperity abounded. They had "spent their heritage in riotous and reckless living," and now they proposed to make the poor pay.

## Will Lead to Economic Disaster.

Mr. Verville rejoiced that Sir Wilfrid Laurier had challenged this increased domestic taxation by an amendment which, as the representative of Labor, he would heartily support. Labor was playing its part nobly in the war. Over 80 per cent. of the Canadian contingent in the ranks were the sons of labor homes. They were doing their part in the trenches well. They had earned Kitchener's "well done." It would be good news to them if they were permitted to hear that the big business interests and corporations were also doing their part at home. Instead, the tidings was to be transmitted that the folks at home were called upon to pay increased taxation on the necessaries of life. "The Government's policy is not patriotism," concluded Mr. Verville, "and it will lead to economic disaster."

## Mr. Bennett Indulges in Much Flag-waving

R. B. Bennett of Calgary followed for nearly two hours with a characteristic panegyric on the loyalty of the Conservative party, the audacity of the Liberals in questioning the attitude of the Government on fiscal or Imperial questions, and the great benefits of the protective system to Canada. He went even farther than Premier Borden in intimating that in view of the Liberal Budget amendment—"a want of confidence motion"—the Government would be justified in going to the country. Mr. Bennett did much flag-waving. He said it was a shame that Canada had not given the \$35,000,000 for Dreadnoughts two years ago, so that they might have taken part in the engagement off the Falkland Islands. He declared the people of Canada would know whom to praise for the part Canada had taken in the war, and the speedy despatch of the 30,000 Canadian troops to the front. The people of Canada would also welcome the chance to turn down Liberal "free trade theories" and pronounce again for protection and the made-in-Canada idea.

## Right to Criticize Asserted.

Mr. E. M. Macdonald, in one of the most brilliant speeches of the debate, roused the Liberals to repeated outbursts of prolonged cheering. He asserted his right to criticize the Budget proposals in the national interest, pointing out that not one dollar of the money it was proposed to

raise by increased taxation would go to the war, and would have been unnecessary had the Minister of Finance proved at all competent to handle the task he had undertaken.

Mr. Macdonald dealt with the Finance Minister without gloves. He described Mr. White's egotism and perpetual use of the personal pronoun as the "ecstatic admiration of his new financial Colossus for himself and all that pertains to him." The man who had handed down to him from better and abler hands the fullness of prosperity of a great country, which was, under Sir Wilfrid Laurier, passing through the first golden age in its history. Mr. White had attempted to excuse himself by arguing that his extravagance to Mackenzie & Mann and other beneficiaries had been inherited. "They were babies found on my doorstep," he had claimed.

## Finance Minister a C. N. R. Baby.

"The fact is," exclaimed Mr. Macdonald amid prolonged laughter and cheering, "that the present Minister of Finance was a Canadian Northern baby left on the doorstep of the Premier when he set out to form his Cabinet."

In scornful language Mr. Macdonald dealt with the proposal to increase the tax on British trade. "Quibble as they may," he declared, "they cannot get away from the sordid thing, that hereafter, and at this time, they have increased the tax of every \$100 worth of British goods coming into this country by \$5. The difference and difficulty of transportation at this time more than makes up the

2 1/2 per cent. they seek to quibble over, and they know it."