

THE DAFOE-SIFTON CORRESPONDENCE 1919-1927

Ramsey Cook

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General Editor: W. D. Smith

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To
George V. Ferguson

The General Editor's Preface

With some misgivings the Manitoba Record Society launched its publications a year ago but the reception according to *Manitoba: The Birth of a Province* edited by Professor W. L. Morton quickly dispelled these apprehensions. Now the Society is presenting its second volume, *The Dafoe-Sifton Correspondence, 1919-1927* edited by Professor Ramsey Cook of the Department of History, University of Toronto.

The arrangement of material and some of the editorial techniques differ from those employed in the first volume, moreover there are some innovations: the Biographical Index, References and List of Members. In the early stages of a series such as this some experimentation is necessary. Indeed it may prove over a succession of volumes that no rigid format is possible but, rather, that it must vary with the type of documents presented in each volume. In connection with the arrangement of material in this volume, I must point out that Professor Cook's manuscript contained, in addition to the material found in this volume. She source of each letter, the address of the recipient and the closing. In the interests of economy of space I excised this information except where an apostrophe was appended and then the closing was retained. As for sources, it can be assumed that the document is from the Dafoe Papers unless the Sifton Papers are specifically mentioned as the source.

An endeavour such as this is precarious; the Society's resources, in terms of finances and personnel, are limited. Consequently, any external assistance makes a fundamental contribution to the work of the Society. At this time, therefore, I would like to acknowledge certain assistance: The Centennial Commission of Canada, through Professor Cook, made a financial contribution towards the publication of this volume; the University of Manitoba made it possible for me to acquire the services of a research assistant. The efforts of the latter, Mr. A. I. McDonald, much lightened my tasks as General Editor, for which I am most grateful.

W. D. Smith.

University of Manitoba, 1966

EDITOR'S PREFACE

The correspondence in this volume represents the vast majority of the Dafoe-Sifton letters in the period 1919-1927. Those which have been omitted, for reasons of space are of lesser importance and interest, dealing with purely personal matters or repeating opinions and information stated elsewhere in the correspondence. The letters printed here are drawn from both the Debts Papers at the University of Manitoba Library, and the Sifton Papers, deposited at the Public Archives of Canada. Wherever the original letter exists, it has been used, though occasionally the lack of an original has necessitated the use of a carbon copy. J. W. Dabs, was much more fastidious in the care of his correspondence than his employer, even, fortunately, retaining some letters which Sifton suggested should be destroyed.

The editorial principles I have followed are few and simple. Since the letters for the most part form an unbroken dialogue, most of the incidents referred to are self-explanatory. In cases where an incident seems to require further explanation in order to give the letter its full meaning I have attempted, very briefly, to explain the reference in a footnote. I have also attempted to identify all the persons whose identity seemed necessary to an understanding of the discussion. A few names seemed hardly to warrant any comment. Identifications are contained in a biographical index for convenient reference. No attempt whatever has been made to "correct" or interpret opinions or judgments made in the letters. A volume of letters is surely not supposed to represent an objective historical record, but rather the views of the correspondents. For those who wish to read accounts of the period as they have been presented by recent historians I have included a brief, but by no means exhaustive, list of useful books.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Dafoe and Sifton families for placing these letters at the disposal of Canadian scholars. It is an example worthy of emulation. I would like also to thank the Manitoba Record Society for giving me the opportunity of preparing and presenting this volume. I owe a special debt of gratitude to my friend, Professor H. Blair Naylor, who kindly let me use some of his documentary material in the preparation of this volume. Finally, a word of appreciation to Professor W. D. Smith, the General Editor; he first asked me to take on this enjoyable task and has since gently prodded me whenever my energy flagged.

Ramsay Cook

Kirk's Ferry, P.Q.
June 6, 1965

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INTRODUCTION

I

The Canada that emerged from the Great War in 1919 was an uncertain and confused country. It had played, for a small nation, an important part in the winning of the war and it was therefore more conscious of its place in the world than ever before. Yet there was very little agreement among Canadians as to the precise definition of their country's status in the post-war world. All of the questions about Canada's relation to the British Empire that had plagued the out, in the war, had yet to be solved. Probably most Canadians agreed that Canada was a 'nation' and not a "colony" but shared agreement stopped abruptly.

Very few Canadians believed it was possible or desirable to return to the superficially same, though essentially colonial position of the years before the war. During the course of the war the Canadian Prime Minister, Sir Robert Borden, had repeatedly and effectively asserted his country's right to be regarded as a partner rather than as a subordinate in the British family of nations. At least nominally, and as far as Canada's limited power justified, that recognition had been attained. The Imperial War Conference of 1917 had officially declared that a status of equality existed among the British nations. But the difficult and controversial task of defining the precise and practical meaning of this new equality was postponed until the cessation of hostilities in Europe. Then in 1918 and 1919 Canada and the other Dominions were granted a place in the peace negotiations, and this was crowned with the recognition of the right to separate representation in the newly created League of Nations.

Despite these undoubted achievements the plainest fact about Canada's status at the end of the war was its ambiguity. Two paths to the future seemed possible and Sir Robert Borden had taken halting steps along both. Throughout the war the British Empire, or Commonwealth as it was slowly coming to be called, had followed common foreign and military policy. Was this practice the pattern for the future? The 1917 Imperial War Conference Resolution seemed to assume that it was, for it spoke of "continuous consultation" among the member nations designed to result in a common foreign policy. Yet, if this was so, why had each Dominion been so anxious to obtain independent representation in the League of Nations? Did this not imply separate foreign policies?

The truth is that no one had definitive answers to these crucial questions. Indeed the questions themselves were only dimly apparent at the end of the war. The fact was that the country seemed to want to have both a continued close

association with Great Britain and, at the same time, to occupy self-independent status in the world. The great debate on the national question in the 1920's related to the means of fulfilling these two goals. Nearly all the participants in that debate insisted that the two goals were completely compatible though there were differences of opinion about the relative importance of the two. Those who argued for a common Imperial foreign policy arrived at through continuous consultation and co-operation attacked their critics for failing to understand the importance of the British connection. Those who believed that full nationhood required the right to an independent foreign policy condemned their opponents as "Imperialists" The fact is that both groups were nationalists, participating in that most bitter of all wars, civil war, with each side maintaining that it had the only definition of the national interest that would guarantee the country's future. These conflicting definitions of Canada's place in the world, and especially her place in the association of British nations, formed the essence of one of the national questions that dominated Canadian public life in the 1920's. At the end of the decade most of the confusion, if not all of the contortion, had disappeared.

During these same years a no less obvious uncertainty and confusion reigned supreme on the domestic scene. If the war had destroyed the old, secure, isolated position of Canada before 1914, it had just as certainly destroyed the two-party system which had been the hallmark of Canadian politics for fifty years. Already in 1911 there had been signs that the system was crumbling, for it appeared no longer to meet the demands of Western farmers, on the one hand, or some French-Canadian nationalists on the other. But the instrument of the system's final destruction was, paradoxically, the movement to unite the two parties, which resulted in the formation of a Union Government in 1917. The nature of that government's composition belied its name for it was a coalition only of English-speaking Liberals and Conservatives. Since this coalition was united in its determination to carry out the policy of conscription for overseas service which Sir Robert Borden's Conservative administration had enacted in the summer of 1917, it was faced with the almost unanimous opposition of French-speaking Canadians, including Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the aging leader of the Liberal party. The conflict over conscription and Union Government illustrated in the starkest terms that there were at least two distinct ways in which the national interest in the war could be defined, and that on some issues these separate definitions coincided with the division of French- and English-speaking Canadians. What the immediate post-war years made obvious was that conflict over the definition of the national interest was not merely a French-English division, indeed the Convention of the Liberal party in August 1919 suggested that it might be much easier to heal the wound, of French-English friction than to prevent the appearance of several other threatening fissures in the unity of the nation.

Most obvious were the signs that profound and bitter class conflicts were beginning to break through the superficially egalitarian surface of Canadian life.

The spring of 1919 witnessed serious labour troubles in several of the country's major urban centres, Canadian workers, like their counterparts in most of the industrialized world, wanted the immediate implementation, of that better deal that the patriotic speeches of Allied leaders had been promising through the war years. Labour unrest in turn brought middle-class fitters, often based on the suspicion that every labour demand was the prelude to a repetition of the newly-successful Bolshevik Revolution. Nowhere in Canada was the clash between labour and middle-class society more dramatic than, in Winnipeg in the spring of 1919 during the weeks of what became known as the Winnipeg General Strike.

The industrial workers of Winnipeg were the inhabitants of a new Canada whose birth the war had greatly hastened. This was a Canada of industrialism and urbanisation. In 1921 for the first time more Canadians were classified as urban than rural dwellers. The strikers in Winnipeg, in a stark and inchoate fashion, realized that this was a world in which they would have to fight to preserve their dignity as human beings. In 1919 they lost the opening battle in a conflict that was to form a major aspect of Canadian life in the next two or three decades. But out of the Winnipeg General Strike came a new class-consciousness that was to mark Winnipeg and Manitoba, and even Canadian politics in subsequent years. Throughout the 1920's Winnipeggers elected labour mayors, aldermen and school trustees; they sent members of the Independent Labour Party to sit in the provincial Legislature; and in 1921 and subsequent elections they elected the Rev. James Shaver Woodsworth to Ottawa to represent the demands of the working classes.

The second and more spectacular wave of class protest which marked the 1920's was even more Western in origin than the striking workers. Yet no part of rural Canada, west of the Ottawa River, was left unmoved by the agrarian protest movement which took form in the National Farmers' Party in various provincial farmers' parties. The three prairie provinces, and Ontario where the first farmers' government was elected in 1919, all felt the immediate impact of rural discontent, while the 1921 federal general election resulted in the return of sixty-five members of the progressive movement. In a general sense, the same forces which created post-war labour unrest forced the farmers to take political action. Their protest, like that of their city cousins, was also self-bottom directed against an increasingly industrialized society. But where the industrial workers accepted the urban society of which they were a part and wished only to modify it to meet their needs, the farmer was anxious to control the growth and power of this new society. For the farmer a predominantly agrarian society organized to meet the needs of the family farm was the best society. But the demands of the war had hastened those developments which the Canadian farmer believed were antipathetic to the ideal society. Many a farmer had witnessed this change in a very personal way as he watched his sons leaving the family farms for the high wages of the new industries or for service to the military forces. Rural depopulation was merely the other side of the urbanization coin. It was against this trend that the

farmers revolted, though their general discontent was expressed in the demand for a series of specific reforms: lower tariffs, better and cheaper methods of transportation, and so on. The farmers' demands were all based on the assumption that the social and economic well-being of Canada depended on the healthy growth of the agricultural sector of the community. Had not the violence and bitterness of the Winnipeg General Strike demonstrated the dangers inherent in urban and industrial life?

By 1920 the organisations which farmers had founded to represent their views had reached the conclusion, indeed had been hurried to the conclusion by gross mass pressure, that if the farmer was to win adequate recognition in the Canadian polity he would have to adopt the method of direct political action. The object of that action would be to convince the people of Canada of the need for what was significantly called a "New National Policy." The traditional national policies had been based on a belief that government assistance in the form, for example, of tariff protection was necessary if the industrial sector of the economy was to thrive. - The farmers' New National Policy was designed to reverse this traditional trend by calling on government to adopt policies designed to stimulate agriculture. The farmers had slowly concluded that independent political action was necessary because neither of the "old line parties" was apparently willing to listen to the call of the agrarian community.

The Union Government, elected in 1917, had grown rapidly old in office and its members clung tenaciously to traditional protectionist tariff views. Its new leader, Arthur Meighen, though representing a Western constituency in parliament, was in fact the most consistent and forthright defender of the policies of economic nationalism which the farmer blamed for his difficult plight. For most English-Canadian farmers the Liberal party was hardly more attractive than the Meighen group. The Liberals had been the instrument of the anti-farm forces in 1911 and the farmer had been an ardent conscriptionist - at least as long as his sons had been exempted. No, did the Liberal, increase their popularity by the choice of W. L. Mackenzie King as the party's new leader in 1919. What was known about King in the West was slight: he was an anti-farmer and a former Minister of Labour. Neither fact endeared him to farm voters. Finally the Liberal platform, adopted at the 1919 Convention, was ambivalent, to say the least, on the subject that was the key to the farmers' political allegiance: the tariff.

Apart from personalities and politics the farmer often had a more general reason for suspecting that his voice would never be heard in the old parties. For years the farmer had had it drilled into him by the radical and not so radical politician and publicist in Canada that the old parties were nothing more nor less than the handmaidens of the very system that oppressed and threatened the farmer. Tight party discipline, the corrupting influence of patronage, the

suspected close association of party leaders and business leaders, meant that these parties could never truly represent the aspirations of the people. What the farmer wanted was a party as democratic as he believed his own organizations to be, parties in which members were delegates loyally voicing the opinions of their constituents rather than independent representatives mouthing the policies handed down to them by cabinet and caucus. Progressive policies would never be adopted until the hold of the oligarchic old parties was broken by a new, democratic, people's party. By 1920 the farmers of Ontario and the prairies, filled with cmsading zeal based on a profound sense of injustice, were prepared to stonas the bastions of the vested interests. As the leader of their cause they chose Thomas A. Coca, of Manitoba, a man who had served as President of the United Grain Growers' Grain Company and, in 1917, had joined the Union Government as a representative of the West with the Minister of Agriculture's portfolio. In 1919 Creme had won the loud approval of his Western constituents when he left the Union cabinet in protest against his colleagues' reftseal to countenance a downward revision of the tariff.

The decision of the farmers to enter politics as an independent group forcefully raised the second major question that faced Canadians in the 1920's: the place of the farmers and particularly of the prairie West in Confederation. Thus, the question of progressivism and nationalism were the twin axes on which most of the events of Canadian politics turned in the first post-war decade. Progressivism had ice roots in agrarian class-consciousness and Western sectional feeling. It therefore represented a challenge to national unity. Yet it was the political leader whose formula for settling the status of Canada in the world was most in conformity with the views of the Progressives who ultimately was able to becalm, if not annihilate, the prairie protesters. That leader was Mackenzie King. The triumph of Mackenzie King, which seemed ..red by the last years of the 1920's, marked the effective end of the debate over progressivism and nationalism, at least in the form that those sentiments had been esprressed for more than a decade.

II

No two melt participated more vigorously in the great debates of the 1920's than Sir Clifford Sifton, owner of the Marimba Free Press, and his editor, John Wesley Dales. Though they occasionally differed on details, their fundamental responses to national questions were the same. Together they formed a formidable combination and it is not entirely accidental that the character of Canada at the close of the 1920's bore a close, though not exact, resemblance to the Dafne-Sifton blueprint. Both mm were exerensely articulate, though Dabor, the journalist, was especially so. Moreover, now they rarely lived in the same city, Dried usually occupying his editorial seat in Winnipeg while Sifton made his headqsrters in Toronto, they corresponded regularly and as length. Their letters represent one of the moat important available records of the formulation of the ideas and strategies

of one of the parties in the public controversies of the 1920's. The Dafoe-Sifton letters of this period also represent the best segment of a correspondence which spanned nearly three decades.

The Dafoe-Sifton partnership, for it was a partnership rather than an employee-employer relationship, began in 1901. In that year Clifford Sifton, who had recently acquired control of the *Manitoba Free Press*, brought Dales from Montreal to assume the position of editor. By this time Sifton, the Minister of the Interior in the Laurier Government, was easily the most important political figure in Western Canada and, next to the Prime Minister, probably the most important man in the Liberal party. J. W. Dafoe, though only in his mid-thirties, was already widely known in journalistic and political circles as an effective newspaperman of strong, if somewhat independent, Liberal sympathies. Sifton appointed Dafoe to the editorship of his newspaper in the undoubted belief that the new editor would be able to make the *Manitoba Free Press* both a political and commercial success. The task was not a simple one, for obviously a paper which offered nothing but a steady diet of justification for the Liberal administration at Ottawa would never earn the trust of the critical Westerner. But, on the other hand, it was obviously not intended that the *Free Press* should become the mouthpiece of every Western grievance that won a supporter, in general Dafoe, to Sifton's complete satisfaction, took upon himself the role of explaining Liberal policies to the West and Western demands to the Liberal party.

The Dafoe-Sifton combination which was ably supported by E. H. Macklin who handled the business operations of the newspaper, was a surprising success when the strong personalities of the two men are taken into account. Sifton, succeeded in building the *Free Press* into a newspaper with an extensive circulation, thus reaching out and spreading the Liberal gospel across the prairies. And, increasingly, he confirmed the confidence that Sifton had shown in him. The two men thought very much alike on political issues. Both had unbounded confidence in the enormous potential of the West, and both were convinced that the potential could only be successfully exploited if the federal government adopted policies which would attract large-scale immigration and favour increased transportation facilities. Dafoe placed much greater faith in low tariff policies than his employer. Indeed the one major disagreement between the two men came in 1911 over the Reciprocity Agreement which had been arranged with the United States. Sifton, who was no longer a member of the Laurier Government in 1911, took charge of organizing the opposition to the freer trade agreement, while Dafoe used the *Free Press* as a powerful advocate of the agreement. That Dales, was allowed to take this stand in opposition to his employer was indicative both of the confidence which Sifton had in his editor, and also of Sifton's clear recognition that to fight Reciprocity, which was exceedingly popular in the West, might prove financially ruinous, to the *Free Press*. In one sense, both Dafoe and Sifton won in 1911. Sifton saw the defeat of the trade agreement which he firmly believed was a threat to

the national economy that had grown up behind the protective tariff. Was and the Free Press in fighting the farmers' cause built up a large store of confidence at the very time when the increasing radicalism of the farmer was often being expressed in a healthy suspicion of newspapers that were obviously mere gramophones playing the records provided by the old parties and big business. The stand of the Free Press in 1911 seemed that the paper never lose its influence in the agrarian community, even during the height of the farmers' insurgency in the early 1920's.

Six years before the defeat of Laurier in 1911 Clifford Sifton had resigned his portfolio in a dispute over the legislation establishing the new provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. His objection to the Autonomy Bills, as they were first drawn, was that they attempted to guarantee a system of separate schools in the new provinces. After his resignation the bills were recast and ultimately he supported their passage, but he was never again a member of a government - though Laurier at least once attempted to lure him back. Sifton and Dafoe were, on principle, opposed to separate schools, though they were willing to admit that in some provinces certain minor legal guarantees for these schools had to be respected. Moreover, they were both highly critical of "bilingual" schools though Dafoe at least was theoretically prepared to admit that the French-speaking minority outside Quebec was entitled to a small measure of special consideration on historical grounds, Sifton, as Attorney-General of Manitoba, had played a major role in the achievement of the so-called settlement of the Manitoba Schools Question in 1897 whereby the earlier abolition of separate schools had been upheld, but some small religious and linguistic privileges were granted to the minority within the public school system. Two decades later Dafoe and the Free Press led in the campaign which ended in the complete abolition of bilingual schools in Manitoba.

By this time both Dafoe and Sift. had become deeply involved in the war effort and seriously concerned with what they believed to be a faltering Canadian policy. As nationalists they believed that Canada was a full participant in the war, and that the country should therefore contribute by every means in its power to the successful conclusion of the hostilities. Neither believed that the Contarvages, in office since 1911, were capable of taking the steps necessary to guarantee the fullest Canadian contribution. They were especially fearful that party division would prevent the successful enforcement of conscription for overseas service which the Borden Government announced in the spring of 1917. Their fears were based on the suspicion that the legally necessary election which had to take place before the end of 1917 would result in the return of the Liberals to power. This prospect they judged a calamity, for a new Laurier administration, backed by a solid Quebec, would never enforce the compulsory military service measure. Already Dafoe and Sifton had effectively broken with Laurier over the issue of bilingual schools in Ontario. Now, late in 1916, they began to work for a coalition government that would, in effect, prevent Laurier's return to power and a measure that conscription would be enacted and enforced.

In October, 1917, after a long stunner of furious political in-fighting and negotiation, in which both Dafoe and Sifton played leading parts, a Union Government presided over by Sir Robert Borden and formed almost exclusively of English-speaking Liberals and Conservativja 'vat announced. In the election of December, 1917, Dales, turned the Free Press into a leading Unionist organ, expressing all the emotional patriotism and tharply anti-French Canadian sentiments that characterized the bitterly fought campaign. Sir Clifford made his contribution by applying his well-eetabliahsd talents as a political strategist on behalf of the powerful Union forces. In English Canada that cause easily triumphed. leaving the country deeply divided between French- and English-speaking Canadians.

For the remainder of she war Dafoe and Sifton staunchly supported the government that they had done so much to crests - a government whirled included Dafc,s'a close friend, Thomas A. Crerar, and Sifton's brother Arthur, former premier of Alberta. In 1919 Dafoe was invited to accompany the Canadian delegation to the Peace Conference in Paris and on this occasion he actrd not only as official press correspondent but also as a minor but important confidante to his now dose friend, Sir Robert Borden. In Paris Dafoe svas infected with enthusiasm for the League of Nations which his liberal faith recognized as a fundamental contribution to the future peace of the world. As a nationalist his enthusiasm for the League was naturally increased by the recognition of Canada's right to full membership. Slime, for his part, never shared Dafoe's sentiments about the League. Throughout the 1920's he adopted a much more characteristic Canadian attitude: he was an avowed isolationist.

Once the war was over and the peace treaties signed, the ardour of Dafoe and Stfton for the Unionist cause rapidly cooled. Borden's retirement too 1920 allowed Dafoe gracefully to withdraw his support, though Crerar's earlier departure was the signal that the West was not go be considered a Unionist present. Withdrawal of eupport from the Unionists, however, certainly did not mean a return to the traditional Liberal allegiance of the Free Press. Indeed in the years immediately after the war the Liberal party, and especially its new leader, had few more energetic critics than J. W. Dafue. Not the least reason for Dafoe's scepticism about King was a lingering belief that no man who, like King, had opposed conscription could be completely toasted. (King, on his side, never wholly boosted anyone who, like Dafoe and Sifton. had deserted Laurier in 1917). Yet, while unwilling to support King or the newly chosen leader of the Unionists, Arthur Meighen, Dafoe and Sifton did not become fully committed go the Progressive cause. There was an element of class consciousness in the farmers' movement that neither of them liked. Thomas Corner and most of the Manitoba Progressives who seemed go want go broaden the party's base, transformng it into a low tariff Liberal party, were quits acceptable. But men who, like Henry Wise Wood of Alberta, rejected all suggestion of co-operation with the old parties said talked of "group government" in which the farmers would preserve their class identity won nothing but shrill criticism from the *Free Press*.

In the political flux which characterized Canadian public life in the first half of the 1920's, Dafoe, Sheet and the *Free Press* occupied positions of greater independence than in any previous period. Generally speaking they enpowered the major demands put forward by Crerar and the moderate wing of the Progressive group at Ottawa. But Dafoe was always careful to insist that neither he nor the *Free Press* was willing to give blanket support to Progressive policies, nor was he prepared to look upon the Progressive party as a permanent addition to Canadian politics. Dafoe and Sifton hoped that the farmers' movement would knot the vanguard of a new political party formed of Progressive and low tariff Liberals, leaving the representatises of the Eastern "interests" to join Arthur Meighen's protectionist party. Both were involved in several series of negotiations between Liberals and Progressives between 1921 and 1925 which were designed to forward do, political realignment. The negotiations repeatedly failed. When the hectic political events of 1925 and 1926 almost led to the successful assumption of power by Arthur Meighen, Dafoe and Sifton, and most of the Progressives, lept forward to help save the sagging Liberal government. This action led very quickly to the absorption of the Progressives into the Liberal party without any of the polity guarantees they had earlier bargained far. The avenge of the stuaaatlcr of 1926 illustrated the previously unstated major premise of the political pasture of Mine and Siftnn: their independence always fell short of my temptation to allow Arthur Meighen and the Conservatives to achieve control of the machinery of stats. Their hostility to Meighen arose, in part, from a belief that his fiscal views, if put into practice, would prove disastrous for the West.

The second source of the opposition which Cable and Sifton so freely expressed to Meighen was related to the other great issue of the period: Imperial policy. By the end of the war both the editor and site proprietor of the *Free Press* were ronvinted that Canada should assume all the powers of independent nationhood in an association of equal British nations. Far them this meant that Canada should have the right to practise her own foreign policy. This foreign polity should be formulated in the light of Canadian rather than laaaperial interests, though else two were not considered to be necessarily in conflict. Arthur Meighcn, when he became Prime Minister, those go follow Borden in believing that Canada's interests could best be served if her foreign policy was formulated in the light of Imperial interests or, to put it another way, that Canada should errerrise the posters of fell nationhood be contributing to the formulation of s common Imperial foreign polity. This was quite unacceptable to Daloe and Sifton, who believed that Msigheoa either was acoesnpting to square the circle in trying to snake Canadian end Imperial interests coincide or, worse, was subordinating Canadian to Imperial interests. On the subject of Imperial policy Dafoe, Sifton and the Progressives found that they had much more in common with King and the Liberals than with Meighen and the

Tories. Though Dafoe and Sifton wanted to move more quickly than King toward a clear constitutional definition of Canada's autonomous status, they recognized that though this route was often circuitous the Liberal leader was at least heading in the right direction. Crucial to this conclusion was Ljafloe's attendance at the Imperial Conference of 1923. It was there that he discovered the essential soundness of King's view on the Imperial problem. Moreover, he was delighted go discover that the liberal Prime Minister, who in domestic politics seemed weak and inoffensive, was capable of fighting if his views on Canada's status were challenged. It never occurred to Duke, or Sifton, who chest thought the worst of Imperial Britain, that the battle King was fighting for Canadiso status was partly a mock' hauler the British acceded to every Canadian request once it became clear what exactly the Canadians wanted. After 1923 it was only a matter of time before the constitutional definition of Canadian statue, so dear to all Liberal-nationalists, was achieved. It came with the Balfour Declaration in 1926 and it was given its more prosaic legal formulation in the Statute of Westminster in 1931.

When in 1926 the so-called "constitutional crisis" was precipitated by Governor General Byng's refusal to grant Macicencie King a dissolution (which he very shortly gave to Arthur Meighen), the domestic and Imperial issues that had dominated the 1920'a were neatly drawn together. Meighen was at last in office end molest dislodged, Dafoe and Sifton believed, he would set about implementing domestic policies antipathetic to their moderate progressivism, and Imperial policies fundamentally at odds with their passionately-held Liberal nationalism. Both Dafoe and Sifton, in their determination to dislodge Meighen from power, adopted King's quite erroneous claims about the royal prerogative of dissolution, conjured up images of Meighen at the enemy of the West and of the nation, and helped to stampede the Western Progressive herds into the Liberal corral. The year 1926 thus mark; symbolically, the resolution of the great issues of the 1920's. That year saw the victory of King, the defeat and ultimate retirement of Arthur Meighen. King's new cabinet included Robert Forke who, in 1922, had succeeded Crersr es leader of the Progressive group in Parliament; in 1929 Crerar also joined the King Government. And in that same year the Balfour Declaration announced the triumph of the King-Sifton-Dafoe view of the Commonwealth. Nineteen-twenty-six was thus the crucial year in the debates over nationalism and Progressivism. In that year Dafoe said Sifson, like most Westerners, were skilfully forced by Mackenzie King to choose between Progressivism and nationalism. They unhesitatingly chose the latter. As to often, nationalism proved the Achilles heel of reform.

During the last three years of Sir Clifford Sifton'e life, he end Dafoe gave critical support to the Liberal party. They watched carefully for any sign of back. sliding in those areas where they felt a victory had been achieved, at least partially, by 1926 Nationalism, in the form approved by Dafoe and Sifton had triumphed completely. Progressivism had experienced some successes in transportation and tariff policies. But it a likewise true that the party system, more specifically the

Liberal party, had triumphed over the plans of Dafoe and Sifton for a more symmetrical party structure. In the process enough had been gained to make the insurgency of 1921 worthwhile, but not enough to tempt Dafoe ever to support a third party again.

The Dafoe-Sifton correspondence is most illuminating and exciting during the years of controversy and uncertainty. It throws a bright and sharply focussed light not only on the two men but also on the many issues and personalities which filled the period. Above all, perhaps, it is suffused with the sentiments that were both characteristic of, and helped to create, the climate of opinion of Canada in the 1910's. This is the collaboration of two strong-willed and intelligent men whose partnership lasted for nearly thirty years, and whose ideas and actions did much to shape modern Canada. That partnership ended with the death of Sir Clifford Sifton at the age of sixty-eight in a New York hospital on April 17, 1929. Another fifteen years of unceasing activity lay ahead for Dafoe, years that were filled with public controversy. They were also the years of Dafoe's most important activities: his defence of the League and his condemnation of appeasement and, secondly, his service with the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations. He lived to complete sixty years in Canadian journalism and also to see the world lapse once more into global war. He died in Winnipeg on January 9, 1944, in his seventy-eighth year.

July 16, 1919.

My dear Dafoe:-

I am just writing now to ask you to keep the Free Press entirely uncommitted on the subject of the Federal Government and its policies either as constituted now or as it may be re-organized, until I am able to get out and discuss the subject of policy with you and Macklin.*

Sir Robert Borden* failed to implement his promise to form his Union Government¹ on a fifty fifty basis, and he conspicuously [sic] fell down in one or two very important matters which are now how-ever things of the past.

Every sign indicates that his reorganized Government will be weaker than the present combination and so predominately Conservative that the Liberal element may be regarded as nonexistent.

Indications are also strong that a number of important positions having relation to the performance of important public functions are likely to be filled with entire regard to political exigencies and very little regard to the performance of the duties.

The financial situation calls for the most serious consideration, and one of the most serious features of the case to my mind is the total indifference of the press and their failure to call a halt in the reckless expenditure.

I call your attention especially to the enclosed article from the Evening Free Press. It appears to be written with extreme cleverness

* Denotes, on its first appearance, a name which is listed in the biographical index.

¹ The formation of a Union government, led by Sir Robert Borden, was announced on October 2, 1917. It was composed of Conservatives and those Liberals who broke with Laurier over the issue of conscription for overseas service. The supporters of the new government were popularly known as Unionists. Both Dafoe and Sifton had been prominent in the movement which brought about the coalition. See Ramsay Cook, *The Politics of John W. Dafoe and the Free Press*, (Toronto, 1963), Chapter V.

and designed to blunt the force of Chisholm's articles which were almost the only reasoned criticisms of public expenditures appearing in the Canadian Press. The effect of the article is to shut off as far as possible any criticism, in fact it constitutes [sic] a most comprehensive certificate of approval of the Government's financial policy.

Present circumstances demand that general questions of policy should be fully re-considered and definitely settled at an early date.

I am advising Macklin of the general tenor of this letter, and I expect to be out to Winnipeg within a few weeks.

If in your judgement the situation requires it, you can reach me any time by letter or cipher telegram.

July 21st, 1919.

My dear Sir Clifford,
I have your two recent letters.

I have been studying the political situation pretty closely since coming home and it does not look good to me from whatever angle it is viewed. It is really impossible to reach any definite conclusions, but surmises can be made; and some deductions drawn from what appear to be facts.

It appears to be the fact that there is going to be an attempt to create a permanent party which will call itself 'unionist'. The personnel and character of this party will be determined by the events of the early future. The proposition does not appear to be acceptable to the strong Conservative element in the present unionist movement and they may go ahead with their threat to call a convention to revive the old conservative party. Rogers* addressed a group of hard-shells in those terms in this city within the last two days. Should this be carried out it may destroy the proposal to have a union party. The probability however, I should say is that we have seen the last of the old conservative party, though there will be a group in the unionist party which will call themselves by this name and will mourn their lost power. Or conceivably this group may be so powerful as to

virtually control the unionist party. In the latter case the unionist party would be simply the conservative party under camouflage, virtually with old policies. Such a party will not get very far in the west. It might have a good deal of strength in the east, even in Quebec, if its policies are of a nature to appeal strongly to the special interests of the eastern provinces. But I imagine the idea is to try to make the new party in its policy attractive to at least a considerable proportion of the Unionist liberals who are politically at loose ends at present. The pending reconstruction of the government, the new programme then to be announced and the tariff policy to be forthcoming next session after investigation will supply the facts upon which a just judgment as to the worth of the new party can be made. I cannot say that I have any great hopes that the result will be satisfactory.

Opposition to the union government, however reconstructed, what-ever its policies, is bound to be formidable. It will bear the sins and blunders of the past four years, and as well an unpopularity which all governments in reconstruction have to bear, that of not being able to accomplish miracles. I think any person who holds office now or any time during the next five years is entitled to a measure of sympathy. It is going to be demanded of him that he do things that cannot be done; things that are mutually contradictory and destructive; and whatever he does he will have more critics than friends. A government not strong enough to do unpopular things will be a menace.

The opposition to the union government will have a common dislike to the government, but it will be made up of parties making war upon one another, between whom a union for administrative purposes will be difficult.

Take the case of the liberal party - I use the word in an elastic sense, including not only the official parliamentary party, but groups and individuals that regard themselves as liberal and are prepared to join in a common movement upon terms. There are two or three cross currents here. There is the eastern Liberalism that in its regard for financial and manufacturing interests is not very easily distinguished from Conservatism. There is the Quebec brand which is largely clerical in its direction and is identified with the bi-lingual movement, which waits in the scenes ready to come upon the stage at an opportune moment. The western liberals are not in sympathy with either form of eastern liberalism. Their ambition is to build at the

convention² which is to be held next month a policy that will absorb all the radical elements in the west and Ontario, thus heading off the third party movement which is in sight. I do not see how these various tendencies can be merged into a single party. If apparently common ground upon which they all can stand is discovered at Ottawa, will the resulting party be anything more than an organized hypocrisy dedicated to getting and holding office?

Then there is the farmers' movement. Perhaps you know that in every constituency in Alberta and Saskatchewan, thirty-one in all, there have been in the last three months, farmers' conventions at which resolutions were passed declaring for the nomination of a farmers' third party candidate before the next election. At each of these conventions, machinery for calling the nominating convention was created and money subscribed for the expense of the campaign. In one Alberta constituency, Battle River, a nomination was made. In Manitoba preliminary conventions have been held at Brandon and Portage La Prairie. Reports here are that the movement is very strong in Ontario, and at least one-third of the seats in that province will be contested by farmers or third party candidates. Add a group - perhaps a dozen members of Quebec Nationalists; a few soldier members elected on the ticket of increased gratuities; and a labor group of ten or twelve; and the next house will be a fine conglomeration. How are we going to get out of this mix-up a government that can steer the ship through the storms of the future? Yet if Canada has not efficient government during the next five years what will the consequences be?

I had a long talk with Crerar.* He says that he entertained for a long time the hope that the union government could be turned into a progressive body, behind which the elements which coalesced to form a government would permanently unite, but that he had abandoned this hope some time ago. He thinks the unionist party will be substantially the old conservative party. Even if the liberal element which remains with it succeed in getting considerable concessions - such for instance, as an extension of the British preference to 50% which he specifically mentioned - he does not think the

² A national convention of the Liberal party was made necessary by the death of Sir Wilfrid Laurier in February 1919. The convention was held in Ottawa in August 1919 and it elected William Lyon Mackenzie King as the new leader. See R MacGregor Dawson, *William Lyon Mackenzie King 1874-1923*, (Toronto, 1958), Chapter II.

programme can be made acceptable to any considerable proportion of western voters, who are now in [an] insurgent mood. He thinks that the unionist party will get a very considerable measure of support in Quebec. He says that Sir Lomer Gouin* is sympathetic to the government and would enter it if he saw his way clear to carry with him a sufficient proportion of the French vote. He also said that Lemieux* might also be induced to enter the new government. He thinks that the new unionist party if it gets accessions of this kind may be a very formidable creation, which may quite possibly be able to survive an election. I might say that I have information from a fairly high Unionist source that Gouin has been in touch with the government for some time and that both he and Lemieux are considering whether it would be safe to jump. There is, I am told, a contest going on in the French Liberal party between Lapointe who represents the Rouge tradition and Lemieux who is pretty tender to "the interests"; and that Lemieux realized that he is going to be dislodged from his position of leadership.

As for the liberals he thinks that there is a chance that as a result of the liberal convention to be held early next month, the dominion-wide liberal party may be revived under the leadership of W. S. Fielding* with an advanced radical programme. He thinks Field-ing is the only man in sight who can lead a re-united liberal party. He does not think that any public man who was active in opposition to the military service can lead the liberal party successfully through the next election. He does not regard Mackenzie-King* [sic] as a possibility. He says that E. M. McDonald* [sic] and D. D. McKenzie* [sic] have formed a combination and that whichever one seems to be strongest will be put forward as candidate for the leadership by the liberal stand-pat element.

I infer from Crerar's statement that his hopes are that Fielding will be chosen and that a platform will be drafted so radical that it will drive out of the party all those eastern liberals whom he regards as reactionaries and at the same time pick up bodily the farmers' movement in western Canada and in Ontario. This he seems to think is the only possible chance of a liberal party being formed which would have a look-in at the next election. He thinks that no matter how radical the party, a considerable portion of the French vote will adhere for at least the next election, out of a desire to revenge them-selves upon the union government.

I asked him whether in his judgment it was possible for the liberals to draft a platform which would head off the third party movement in Western Canada and in Ontario. He admitted that it would be difficult. In Ontario especially, much of the insurgent movement which is taking the third party form is conservative in its character; he agreed that it would be very difficult to induce them to support a liberal candidate. The difficulty in this direction, he said had been very greatly increased by the action in [sic] the Ontario liberals in electing Hartley Dewart as their leader.

The net result of my impressions after two hours talk, was that Crerar wants to see the liberal party reconstituted under Fielding with a platform going at least as far as that of the United farmers and that if this is done he will openly identify himself with the liberal party as the Manitoba leader and will use his influence with the farmers' organizations to induce them to repose their trust in the liberals and to support their candidates.

I asked him, what in his judgment would happen if the liberals at the convention at Ottawa took a course which he and other western radicals would regard as reactionary. In that case he said nothing could prevent the inauguration of a western radical party which would link up with the insurgent movement in Ontario. He told me that if this development took place, the Saskatchewan government would renounce its liberal allegiance and would throw itself in the new movement. It would, in fact, have no choice in the matter, because it is absolutely in the hands of the farmers.

My own information, which I think is pretty accurate, is that regardless of what the liberals do at Ottawa there will be a farmers' movement in western Canada, which neither Crerar nor anybody else can control. Especially in Alberta, the farmers appear to be determined to ignore both existing parties and to have their own candidates for both the federal and provincial houses. I understand the Alberta government is much concerned over the situation.

Crerar said he would not really know where he stood until four or five things which are due to happen within the next two months came off. These are the Liberal convention at Ottawa early next month; the reorganization of the Union government; the announcement of the new programme and the result of the Ontario elections, which will

be held apparently in September. He said that his opinion was that the farmers would carry about 35 seats in Ontario and of these 20 would be taken from the liberals and 15 from the conservatives. He said that the party would probably be led in the next house by Sir Adam Beck,* who intended to stand for re-election as an independent.

What Crerar said to me is, of course, semi-confidential, but there is no reason why you should not know about it as it is important to us in determining our own future course. Like Crerar, it seems to me that we must wait upon the events of the next couple of months. I do not see how, whatever may happen within the next two months, there can be any reasonable prospect that out of the existing chaotic conditions, there will come a political line-up which will give this country any certainty of stable and efficient government along party lines. I do not think it desirable that an election should be postponed beyond another twelve months. After the election is over I rather expect a House of Commons so divided that no party will be strong enough to carry on the government and that as a necessity to keep the country going, there will have to be some kind of a coalition, which will provide a government strong enough to initiate and carry through policies of retrenchment and reform that will be necessary for the country if it is going to be saved from economic prostration [sic].

I might say as a final observation that my personal sympathies are pretty much limited to the Unionist Liberals now in the Dominion Parliament who are in a very dangerous position. They are virtually debarred from taking part in the Liberal convention because their allegiance is on the other side of the house until the deal is called off; and they are not numerous enough to force a reconstruction of the government in personnel and programme that would make it easy for them to continue to support [it]. The result is that they may be isolated and slaughtered. This would be an outrage because the Unionist liberals were the only people who came out of the political crisis of two years ago with credit. The western Unionists who bolted the government - Davis, Clark,* Buchanan,* etc. - say that their inclination is to stand for re-election as independents - which will add one more complication.

Western Unionist Liberals who stayed with the government seem to be in favour of a permanent Unionist party provided it will make tariff changes that will give them a fighting chance. Among the things

they want are [an] increase in the preference to 50 per cent; a general reduction of about 10% in the tariff; a strong public ownership policy, and the abolition of all duties on farmers [sic] implements etc. A western Unionist liberal who is a farmer and fairly canny (Robert Cruise) told me that he would have no fear of the fight in Dauphin on this basis. Cruise is of course an ardent orangeman and he fears the ascendancy at Ottawa in the event of a change of government of the Roman Catholic church based upon an alliance in opposition to the Union Government of the French in the east, and the Catholic slavs of the west. Of this he thinks there is a real danger.

July 24, 1919.

My dear Sifton:

You will herewith find two letters. One I dictated; but as there were some personal things I wanted to say I am writing this covering letter.

You appear to be somewhat apprehensive lest the Free Press should be committed to the new Unionist party before the whole situation is canvassed. You need not worry; the Free Press, with my consent, will not be committed either to the Unionist, the Liberal or any other party - at least under existing conditions.

We are definitely outside the breastworks now; and I think we ought to stay there unless there are very good national reasons why we should identify ourselves permanently or temporarily with a definite political movement.

The complete independence of the Free Press has been carefully safeguarded; we are free to take any line we like or place our support where we please without laying ourselves open to charges of breaking faith, etc. So far as we have been writing on questions of large policy we have been if anything nearer to the farmers' movement than to either of the regular parties. A complimentary reference to Sir W. S. [sic] White* upon his retirement or a statement favorable to the appointment of Tolmie* as Minister of Agriculture is no more - in my judgment - than a free expression of opinion quite in keeping with

our complete independence. We are no more committed than we would be to the Liberals if we said to-morrow that Fielding would be the wisest choice for leader. Re Tolmie, I took that line at Miss Hind's* suggestion. She says that all the farmers' organizations - particularly the livestock associations - are anxious for Tolmie's appointment, their information being that he is the only possibility from the West; his rival, who was strongly backed, - though I understand that Tolmie's appointment is settled - was Donald Sutherland of S. Oxford. The need of a "livestock" minister in Western Canada is very great at this moment; and if we had been an out-and-out opponent of the government our recommendation would have been in order.

You may perhaps have thought by taking this action we were blocking Rutherford's* chances for the job; but the doctor was never in the running. It was Tolmie or an easterner.

As for the article on the debt and the financial situation I should like you to read it again. I don't think it has the effect you suggest; and the motive behind it was certainly not what you think. I wrote it myself with the view to suggesting to the public that if we are to have reduction in national expenditure they must be consenting or co-operating parties - what I had in my mind particularly was this movement among the soldiers which is becoming quite formidable, to demand the distribution among them of a lump sum running from five hundred millions up. A campaign for a lower budget might very well be part of our programme; but it will have to be specific as well as general. That is to say, we shall have to attack concrete proposals for large expenditure, including this soldier proposition; it will not be popular though it may be salutary.

I see that Henders* has resigned the Presidency of the Manitoba Grain Growers, and I note that the Grain Growers' Guide in its current issue is whooping it up for independent political action. There is a certain amount of hypocrisy about this for some of the most influential leaders among the grain growers - Crerar, Langley,* Dunning* notably - hope to make a deal with the Liberals; but the fact is that they have started something they cannot control. The farmers' movement has its gradations of opinion running all the way from moderate to extreme radicalism of the North Dakota type. There are even elements in it more friendly to the Unionist than to the Liberals. I think from what I hear that any attempt to tie up the farmers' movement

with the official Liberals will blow both ends out of the barrel; there will be a certain number who will go into the Unionist camp, provided Jim Calder* baits the hook a bit and much larger element that will go off on its own linking up with the extreme city radicals. It was, I thought, significant that at the Farmers' Conventions for the three Edmonton seats (each partly urban, partly rural) there was a proposal made to make an alliance with the labor parties and the returned soldiers to divide the seats among them and prove their strength behind this common ticket. This proposal was not accepted, but their nominations are yet to be made.

My own personal judgment is, and has been for a long time, that a stable, orderly, progressive government, which is the need of the country, can only be made possible by a union of all the moderates in the country. Our moderate, well-meaning Canadians whose views on the issues that really matter are not far apart will be found in three camps. Some, repelled by the drift to the left which is in evidence in all opposition parties, will be in the Unionist party, which seems to them to give the greatest assurance of an ordered government during the stormy times ahead; others, repelled by their dread of dominant "big business" will be in the Liberal or Farmers' parties. My judgment is that after we school [sic] the chutes, bump into the rocks, set fire to the ship, etc. we'll have to come to this Union - if there's anything left to save. Much of this current "playing Politics" is like people playing on sand-bars while the tide rises between them and the shore. Anyone who doesn't realize how serious the possibilities are should have been in Winnipeg from May 15th to July 1st. That was an experience that confirmed all my fears for the future.

As to the Free Press we ought to discuss the political situation - its possibilities - with a good deal of freedom, indulge in speculations, etc. If we simply look on and make after-the-event comments we shall pass up one of the most interesting journalistic opportunities that has ever developed.

In this writing most of which I shall do myself, I shall neither break any window-glass or spill the beans. I am an old hand at this sort of game; and I don't think you will have any occasion to be nervous.

Further to our plans for the future [they] ought to include a definite programme which we ought to avow, champion and stand by,

making it perfectly clear that we shall take whatever political action will further this programme. We ought to get down to brass tacks about this and I shall be glad to go into it fully with you and E. H. M[acklin], at your convenience. This letter is already far too long and I shall not go into details as to my views; but I can say that in the matters that count they are pretty radical. I never would get wildly excited over any such proposition as that a 20 per cent tariff is the height of statesmanship while a 271½ per cent tariff is the last word in human iniquity. But there are other matters of real moment. For one thing the more I think about it the more I am convinced that we have got to come to a capital tax.

I enclose you some clippings that may interest you. You will see that F. Oliver* is quite convinced that you have come home to re-organize the Government.

August 26, 1919.

My dear Sifton:-

Many thanks for your clipping from the Montreal Gazette which I had not seen. I made it the occasion for a leader which you have probably noticed. With respect to the Peace Conference and Canada, there is one comment which is quite obvious and that is, that the developments at Paris have made more apparent than ever the anomalous situation of the Dominion and has reinforced powerfully the necessity for a new definition of our status. There was a very interesting recognition of this fact in a recent letter to the London Times by Prof. Keith,* which I have by me and which I intend to quote in an article which I have in mind. Prof. Keith's suggestion is on the right line, but he does not go far enough. A good many people who recognize the anomalousness of the present situation shrink from the logical consequences of the change that is evitable.

You may have noticed that in the discussions in the United States senate as the effect upon the international future of the League of Nations of the presence of six British representatives, there was an

interesting conflict of views. The Republican critics of the measure took the line that this provision gave the British Empire as an entity six votes in the League and to this they took exception. While Senator Hitchcock speaking for the democrats, said that in his opinion this concession of an international status to the British Dominions was likely to break up the Empire. In a sense that as a consequence of this international status the relation of technical dependency upon Great Britain of the Dominions must terminate, the senator was undoubtedly right. This is an inevitable consequence of the participation in the Paris conference of the Dominions and their further membership in the League of Nations. I am quite unable to follow Mr. Ewart's* reasoning that by this participation in the Paris conference the charge of imperialism has been more completely riveted upon us. What it has done has been to reveal [the] actualities of the situation. We cannot be at the same time a nation and occupy a position of subordination to any other nation. Ewart, I should say is too suspicious, both as to the designs against our independence by the British authorities and the supposed willingness of some of our public men to have these designs succeed. Three out of the four Canadian representatives at Paris were, so far as I could judge quite sound in their nationalism.

Yours sincerely,
J. W. Dafoe

[Handwritten P.S.; Sifton Papers]

P.S. I keep my ear to the ground politically. Everything I hear confirms the view that the Dominion Liberals have not improved their position in the West by their convention; King is a very heavy load. Unionist-Liberals who were in attendance are sore; this is particularly true of the Manitoba gov[ernmen]t who were treated with contumely. The feud between the Norris* gov[ernmen]t and the Laurierite Liberals is still on; & a combination between the latter & Rogers to fight Norris at next year's election is still a possibility. It looks more and more like a strong independent farmers' movement throughout the West. Sask[atchewan] farmers meet at Regina Sept 18 to prepare for [a] province-wide Dominion campaign; there are prospects of an ugly fight between the farmers & the Lib[eral]s unless the latter get out of the way wh [ich] perhaps they will find it necessary to do.

JWD

August 28, 1919.

My dear Dafoe

I have just read your article commenting on the doing of the London Defence Committee.³ It fills the bill exactly. It should be followed up when Parliament meets by a demand for information and a definition of the position.

Another matter requiring consideration is the proposed appointment of a Canadian Government representative at Washington. Such a representative would have no diplomatic status whatever. I cannot imagine a self-respecting Canadian statesman fit for the position accepting it. The representative of every little central American and South American Republic is a member of the Diplomatic Corps and entitled to recognition as such. Not one of them would recognize Canada's representative. To my judgment no such representative should be appointed until our national status is definitely established. A Canadian representative would not rank with an attaché or secretary of any recognized embassy unless he were pro-forma appointed to some such position in connection with the British Embassy in which case the inferiority of status would be definitely established and acquiesced in.

On dit that Foster,* Burrell* and Doherty* are retiring immediately after the session when a reconstruction is spoken of. The apparent inability of the Government to find a safe seat for anyone west of the Ottawa River is a pretty formidable obstacle to reconstruction. *On dit* also that the Government contemplates a Franchise Act of a character that will be a shock to democratic and liberal principles.

I am extremely busy with my own affairs and have little or no time for anything else at present. If the proposed franchise act materializes I don't see how you can support it. You had better instruct Chisholm to watch it closely and keep you fully advised.

Arthur [Sifton] * is here. I fear he is not at all strong and certainly not physically fit for any strenuous efforts.

³ Presumably a reference to the Imperial Defence Committee, an informal advisory committee which included representatives of Britain and the Dominions.

September 8, 1919.

My Dear Dafoe:-

I have yours of the 26th ultimo. In the main I agree with the last two paragraphs of your letter.

With respect to Ewart's position; it is quite possible that in a sense you are both right. Ewart probably attaches too much importance to the schemes of the British Imperialists which are undoubtedly a reality, also he lives pretty close to the members of the Government here and he knows that while nineteen public men out of twenty in Canada will profess themselves perfectly sound on these questions, there is not one out of the twenty who will stand up when the time comes.

I have been reading your editorials with much interest. I observe that there is a slight indication of hostility to the Laurier Liberals.⁴ As to the wisdom of showing this you will have to be the judge.

I should think that nothing could be better for Norris than a union between the Rogers Conservatives and the Laurier Liberals in opposition to him. Most of the good citizens would then have no doubt about how they ought to vote.

Note this morning's Citizen in its report of the attitude of the Dominion Council of Great War Veterans Association and also the report on the front page of a Meeting of Returned Soldiers in Toronto. This question is I think about the most serious thing we have to deal with in Canada today. It is the only really serious menace.

I find that there is no enthusiasm in the country for the Government Loan. Suggestions which have appeared looking to a capital levy and other suggestions that the Government ought to repudiate, still other suggestions as to confiscatory Income Tax collections are sinking into the minds of the people who have any money and I fear that there will have to be a show down before very long and it will have to be made clear what kind of treatment the people are going to get who have put up their money and have embarrassed themselves in order to find the means to subscribe to Government Bonds.

⁴ Those Liberals who had opposed Union government and remained loyal to Laurier in the election of 1917.

I am not expressing any opinion about the matter, except to say that the situation to my mind is becoming serious, and I look with the most profound misgiving on a Government who will be dependent upon the vote of dissatisfied labor agitators and returned soldiers. I still adhere to the view that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the returned soldiers will be industrious, capable and in every respect good citizens; it is the other quarter that will make the trouble. However, you have the problem at your door and have the opportunity of studying it much more effectively than I.

With kind regards,

Yours faithfully,
Clifford Sifton.

P.S. I enclose you an article from the Morning Citizen this morning on the Peace Treaty which is to some extent correct, although it is not true that adherence to the League necessarily means going to war or furnishing troops whenever there is a disturbance. Moreover, ratifying the Treaty does not compel continuance in the League.

Oct. 2, 1919.

My dear Dafoe

I have yours of 29th. I had not seen the Toronto Telegram statements until your letter arrived. They are so bad that I was tempted for a moment to write a contradiction but have abandoned the idea. There is nothing to be gained by contradicting a shameless persistent and incorrigible newspaper liar.

I have observed the situation in Assiniboine.⁵ If I were Martin* I should openly support the farmer and give my reasons and notify Motherwell* and his supporters that the candidature of the latter was undertaken against my judgment and that I would not support it. The bold course is generally the best.

The Gov[ernmen]t here is getting worse and more incapable all the time. Borden is impossible. It is of no use to expect anything

⁵ This was a crucial by-election because it gave the first tangible indication of the power of the farmers, and also of the difficulties that the new movement was likely to create for the Liberals. The election was won, by a majority of more than 5,000, by the farmer candidate, O. R. Gould, who defeated W. R. Motherwell, the Liberal who was a former member of the Saskatchewan government. See W. L. Morton, *The Progressive Party in Canada*. (Toronto, 1950), 82.

from Arthur. He's very ill and I fear his fighting days are over. He's physically incapable of fighting all day in a stuffy council chamber to hammer sense into 21 colleagues even if it could be done which I doubt. Calder seems to be quite submerged.

As the F[ree]. P[ress]. once said about an inept and unfortunate contemporary (the lamented "Call") "it is to be feared that ineptitude having been reduced to a science and the plainest precepts of wisdom persistently violated nothing remains but to await the arrival of the sheriff who will ere long be called upon to put an untimely end to the now useless existence." Macklin is still I hear haunting the waste places of the Orient. I have left word with him that I want to see him before he goes West.

Several times lately I have composed in my mind very eloquent and inspiring editorials for the F[ree]. P[ress]. Always however when it comes to dictating them I relent. You have a very slight conception of the value of what you have thus been deprived of.

January 16, 1920.

My dear Dafoe:-

Please do not throw any more boquets [sic] to Borden. I think this last performance is beneath contempt.

Maklin [sic] is having a very hard time at Ottawa, as of course you know, but he has not asked me for any assistance beyond the advice which I gave him when I saw him here on his way to Ottawa.

I have been reading the Free Press regularly since you were here and it generally accords with my views. You will know more than I about the prospects of the Farmers movement. The Farmers Govern ment⁶ here shows pretty clearly the hand of the amateur but it may work into shape, and there is a general indisposition to cause them any serious embarrassment just now. I think at the bottom of this is the idea that the farmers through the country generally would resent the overthrow of the Government before it

⁶ In October, 1919, the United Farmers of Ontario, contesting an election for the first time, succeeded in electing forty-three members. Though not a majority they formed the largest group and the Lieutenant Governor called upon E. C. Drury* to form a government. This minority government remained in office until its defeat in the election of 1923. See Morton, Progressive Party, 84-85.

had a chance to show what it could do and they would say that it was due to the trickery of the old parties, so it seems probable that they will have a session without very much in the way of embarrassment. The man who is likely to get them into trouble is Raney.* He threatens Legislation to authorize the searching of the cellars for liquor. Of course if he brings that in it means that there will be war declared on the Government of a different character altogether from what it has had to contend with heretofore.

You might write and let me have your views when you have time.

[Carbon copy (uncorrected) of memo sent to Sir Clifford Sifton Jan. 22, 1920.]

Memo re Political Situation, January 20, 1920.

It might reasonably be assumed that from the present very complicated political situation [. . . ? . . .] existing political group or party should [. . . ? . . .] Apparently there is good grounds for diversity of opinion as to who are to be the beneficiaries in the present state of chaos.

I have had a number of conversations lately with men pretty well on the inside of the farmers movement; among them Crerar and Lambert.* The impression left upon my mind by these conversations is that things are not going just as well with them as they would like and they are a little daunted by the responsibilities which they assumed and the difficulties which are rising in their path. For one thing the more moderate leaders of the party are being fired on from their own ranks by the more extreme element, who are naturally suspicious of any one who rises to a position of influence and are quite ready to suggest they are prepared to betray the interests committed to them. They are also disturbed about Drury's situation in Ontario, which they do not think is very pleasant.

Mr. Crerar said to me, confidentially, of course, that he quite recognized that the federal fight in Ontario will be a very different matter from the provincial contest last October. He realizes that the tariff policy to which the farmers are committed will run counter to the

self interest of many elements that in October were friendly to the farmers' cause. He says that already there is a vigorous organized campaign going on among fruit growers, market gardeners, raisers of livestock and others to excite hostility to the proposition to make [a] drastic reduction in the tariff. He said to me that he really did not expect that the farmers would carry more than twenty seats in Ontario in the next federal election. From other conversations I have had with him, I know that he does not think that the farmers will do much in either Quebec or Nova Scotia, perhaps a couple of seats in each province. New Brunswick he regards as a more promising field. Mr. Elkin, M.P. for St. John a liberal unionist who was in the city some three weeks ago gave out a newspaper interview that the present indications were that the farmers would carry eleven out of thirteen seats in New Brunswick. Probably an overestimate, but an intimation of how he regards the situation. Putting all these estimates, it would indicate that the farmers' strength east of Lake Superior will not in any case run beyond thirty five members.

In the west I should say that forty seats would be quite an outside estimate, in fact I fail to see how they can get that many, in view of the fact that they do not appear to have developed any strength in British Columbia, which is likely to go government, excepting in so far as labor or soldier candidates break in on the strength of the unionists. There will [be] some liberals and some labor elected in the prairie provinces and the unionists at the worst ought to get at least nine or ten seats in these three provinces. So I should think another thirty five west of Lake Superior would be quite as much as the farmers would hope to get. This would give them a possible total in the next Dominion Parliament of seventy members. I think Crerar would be quite satisfied with this result. I do not believe that he is at all anxious to be premier of Canada, but he does want to be in the next house with [. . . ? . . .] following to be a factor of first class importance.

Crerar appears to still entertain the belief that on [sic] alliance between him and his following and a radical wing of the liberal party led by Lapointe* is practicable. The result being probably a formidable opposition party. He appears to think that a very considerable number of the liberals who are elected in the next parliament will on business grounds be really sympathetic towards the government and that a

split in the liberal party is possible; the more radical element coming in with the farmers and the others joining the unionist forces. In this way we shall get back to a two party basis, with the division on lines of reality.

I have been hearing very interesting stories of political developments in the east. One is that the group of men who are virtually in charge of the unionist movement at present are not nearly so downcast as they were in October when they thought the ground was disappearing from beneath their feet. Apparently the projection of a radical tariff issue into the political arena by the farmers is bringing very considerable accessions of strength to the government as the only possible means by which this threat can be met. I am told that very powerful interests in Montreal, the C[anadian]. P[acific]. R[ailway]. the Bank of Montreal crowd and the allied interests have come to the conclusion that their only hope is in the government and that it must be put in a position by which it can make a fight. For this purpose, they have, so I am told, undertaken to help secure the consent of the big interests to modification of the government fiscal policy that will enable it to make [a] bid for support against the farmers in the west. I am told that these interests have specifically declared that Calder's views as to what is advisable must be met, at least to a point which will enable him to remain in the government and to undertake the campaign in western Canada. His stock, from what I hear has gone up a good deal lately and while I cannot find anyone who really believes he will land the premiership, [there is] a good deal of ground for believing that he is likely to acquire in the Union Government the position he so long held in Saskatchewan, that of the practical member of his administration, the man behind the gun, so to speak. I hear that Calder recently expressed himself as very well satisfied as the way things are going; adding "the farmers' prospects look a good deal better from the outside looking in, than they do from the inside looking out."

You have probably heard the story that the cabinet crisis at Ottawa in December was precipitated by Meighen,* who gave publicity to the story of Borden's intended retirement in order to create a situation from which he expected to land the premiership. The story as I have heard [it] is that it was arranged that the fact of Borden's intending [sic] retirement was to be kept dark until all arrangements as to his successor had been completed, when the transfer would be made some

time in January and the country would be confronted by an accomplished fact. Presumably Mr. Meighen feared that the choice of some other party, probably Sir Thomas White would be engineered and he sought to bring things to a head by letting the story of Borden's illness get out. My information [is] that in all probability Meighen has thus destroyed all changes [sic] of succeeding Sir Robert. Every-thing indicates that Sir Henry Drayton* will succeed Sir Robert Borden as premier. He will be reached by a process of elimination. I have no doubt that it is Sir Robert's intention to retire. I am told that Dr. Taven of Toronto told him in so many words that if he remained on his job as Prime Minister of Canada he would in a short time be a physical and mental wreck.

I look for a strong effort within the next three or four months to put the unionist party in shape to fight the farmers, whose spectacular rise in influence has sent a cold chill into many private offices in Toronto and Montreal. I see signs everywhere that the projection of the tariff issue into a political struggle by Crerar is going to lead to a great rally of the clans behind the government. The changing tactics of the Toronto world [sic] is a very good indication of what is going on. It has been on the insurgent track now for two or three years, but it [is] quite obvious that it is getting ready to make a fight for the tariff and share in the golden stream that will flow from the beneficiaries of the system. I understand that the Montreal interests already referred to have indicated that if due deference is paid to their views as to what should be done, there will be a campaign fund of unexampled size. Further I understand that [it is] said that given a little time, they will deliver from twenty to twenty five seats in the province of Quebec. I should think it highly probable that Sir Lomer Gouin is a party to the combination.

The position of the official liberal party seems to me to grow more hopeless every day. C. F. Crandall, the editor of the Montreal Star, was here the other day. He is an [sic] Nova Scotian and was formerly very active in liberal politics in the Maritime provinces. He knows all the liberal leaders down there intimately. He says that within the month Premier Murray of Nova Scotia said to him, that it was apparent that the days of the liberal party as it effected [sic] political force were numbered and that there would have to be new combinations formed. Crandall says that the combination that put Mackenzie King

into the leadership has been disillusionized. That was a combination of French Canadian liberals and Nova Scotian Liberals, who were united by a common dislike for Fielding for the part he played in 1917. Crandall says that he has heard that even so pronounced a fire eater as Lucien Cannon,* has said they made a great mistake in progress [sic]. I have heard from a fairly [... ? . . .] that there are members of the liberal party sitting in the house who have indicated a readiness to join up with the unionists, provided there is some change in the personnel of the government and such modifications in policy as [...? .].

Among the names which I have heard mentioned in this connection are, Duncan Ross and Fred Pardee.* I understand that Fred figures out that he jumped too soon. I see nothing before the Liberal party, but disintegration, even though it should come back to the next house with a considerable group. Sooner or later one wing of the liberals is bound to unite with the farmers to form a new party which will be in effect a liberal party although it will probably bear some other name. The other wing of the liberal party is bound to be forced by common economic interests into a merger with the other groups which now are loosely tied together to form the unionist party. If all those who favor the maintainance [sic] of things as they [are] with perhaps some slight modifications, get together they can hold the fort and Crerar will naturally become the leader of a fairly large opposition party, with perhaps McKenzie [sic] King as an associate. This would be my size-up of the present political outlook.

Febry 10. 1920

My dear Dafoe,

I see by the Ottawa journal that the F[ree]. P[ress]. has been publishing a series of letters by Chisolm pointing out that the Austra-lians or New Zealanders or both have been raising a larger porportion of revenue from taxation of "income & business" than Canada and that the F[ree]. P[ress]. says editorially that this is discreditable to Canada.

I don't see anything discreditable about it.

In what I say I am not alluding to taxation of "war" fortunes which is a question by itself.

There are three things to be said about income tax.

1st. The exemptions are too high. Everybody who is above the starvation line ought to pay something.

2nd The tax is not collected from the great bulk of the people. The rich men are making their returns and paying their taxes. The men who are worth from \$75,000 up are paying. Below that they are not paying at all where they are not hauled out & as for the farmers they are not paying at all. It is the men who are liable to pay & are not paying who are supporting the demand for more income tax.

3. The income tax is as high as it can safely be made as far as rich men are concerned. If you make it higher the first thing you know you will have a hegira of the brains and capital of the country.

I think I know as much about the business conditions of Canada as any other man. I certainly know a good deal more about it than men who have never done business or studied business. I make the statement now that if the crusade to revolutionize the tariff and put the taxes on "income and business" succeeds it will be followed by five or ten years of the most disastrous conditions that have ever been seen in Canada.

I positively will not allow the Free Press to lead any such movement.

I am perfectly satisfied that the F[ree]. P[ress]. should follow its traditional policy of low tariff and should if you think best refrain from the advocacy of policies which are supposed to be unpopular but there is not one in a thousand of your readers who has any views in regard to the questions of the incidence of taxation & such articles as that which I have referred to [; you] are only raising trouble for yourself.

I did not see Macklin before he left and do not know in what condition the question of paper supply is at the present time. As you will have seen we had a fire in Toronto - it pretty well upset things for a month.

Febry 12 1920

Dear Dafoe

I wrote you a few days ago regarding policy. What I said was negative.

There are some things of a positive character that you can do.

First you can make an insistent demand for economy.

Second all along the line, I gave Drayton some good advice when he took office & he is taking it to heart. You might refer to the rumor that he is cutting the estimates right & left and pat him on the back & tell him to go at it again & cut them more.

Next you ought to demand pointedly that the credits for countries abroad be cut off. With the exception of the credits to Britain for wheat & munitions & lumber there never was any sense whatever in the policy. The Roumanian credits was a fad of Loyd [sic] Harris. It was a sheer blunder but it netted Massey Harris & the Dominion Textiles several hundred thousand dollars. Some of the newspapers connected me with it. I had nothing whatever to do with it & no interest in it & I was opposed to it.

They ought to be cut off.

Public works votes of former years *where the work has not begun* should be summarily cut off.

I see the farmers are keeping warm. I don't agree with you that they will be seriously embarrassed by internal troubles before the next election but their leaders are going to be very frequently men who have been untrustworthy & unsuccessful in business & in the professions who have taken up farming as a *dernier resort* & are now taking up politics as a more profitable & easy occupation.

There is nothing in the report that the Bank of Montreal & the C[anadian]. P[acific]. R[ailway]. are in any financial combination to fight the farmers. It may come but I doubt it. If Shaughnessy* were at the head of the C [anadian]. P [acific] . R [ailway]. he would never do it. Anything of that kind that is going is likely to be engineered by the manufacturers but I don't think it is at all definite yet.

There is a nasty story going around about Dr. Reid* & the secret contract for equipment for \$20,000,000 let to the Canada Car &

Foundry Coy. It is claimed that there was a payment of \$350,000. It is so far as I now [sic] just a rumor but it is very persistent.

Look at the first page of Jack Canuck last issue for a somewhat humorous reference to your friend Borden.

All well

Yours Faithfully,
Clifford Sifton

About the Foreign credits the position is that the manufacturers have more export business than they can do of legitimate business paid for with real money & it is sheer nonsense to be inflating the situation & raising prices by gov[ernment] credits.

March 20, 1920.

My dear Dafoe:-

I was glad to see that the Government caucus apparently turned down any immediate action in regard to the Navy. I think the stand should be taken that no additional expenditures whatever should be incurred for a number of years and certainly not until after a general election.

With respect to the debate on National status, I think it shows very little grasp of the situation either on the part of the Government or opposition. Our stand should be that nothing in the way of committing Canada to constitutional changes should be done until after a general election and a constitutional convention called for the purpose of discussing the whole question. It is quite out of the question to suggest that the Dominion Parliament with the assent of the Provinces should change the constitution. That is altogether too easy a method. When our constitution is settled no change should be made except by a popular vote of three-quarters of the Provinces.

I enclose you an extremely sensible and comprehensive editorial from the Montreal Herald on this subject.

There is another subject upon which you ought to speak out. I see Serbia and some other European Governments are going to ask for

Canadian credits to buy stuff here. There is no reason whatever for granting these credits; it is wholly mischievous. The demand for all our products now *is* excessive, the prices are excessive and the inflation is continuing. *Every credit of this kind will raise prices and increase the inflation.*

Macklin is here. He has been having a bad time, but he had his head up and is quite cheerful over the prospects.

April 3, 1920

My dear Sifton:-

I duly received your two letters with enclosures. The clipping from the Montreal Herald had already been made by our exchange editor and had been used in part.

The policy we follow here, as you have of course noticed, is to assume that our national status is all that is claimed for it and put it in strong contrast with our legal position as set out in the constitutional document. This lends irresistible [sic] force to the argument that the law must be modernized to suit the facts. The action of the United States Senate also comes into play in support of this contention. I think this a much stronger position than that taken by some who show a tendency to cling to the definition of our status and pooh-pooh all claims that we have any actual rights beyond those set out in the text. Those who take this line are of two classes - those who desire the colonial status to continue and those who desire to find in the present situation something upon which they can build a grievance. I think a movement towards a status which will be equivalent to Canadian independence, is proceeding in a highly satisfactory manner. There is however, some danger that an attempt to direct or lead the movement will be made by individuals who have other ends to serve than the well-being of Canada. For instance, Lindsay Crawford by indentifying [sic] himself with the movement might set it back for years. Even John S. Ewart, although he is a trail-blazer, would be a load to carry. We want to keep all anti-English bitterness out of the propaganda. There are enormous reserves of pro British sentiment in Canada and it would be disastrous [sic] to antagonize it. It can mostly be kept in line if the matter is presented judiciously. I talked

on this subject a fortnight ago to the Canadian Club here to a large audience and carried them with me, although I could see that the doctrine was to many novel and disturbing. I have an invitation to speak to the Canadian Club at Portage next week, which I have accepted and am also asked to go to Regina later on in the month, which I shall accept if I do not go East. I intend to develop a theme in these addresses and note how it takes. I am discussing the question tonight before the Canadian Problems Club; a city club of business, professional and university men. The more I study this question, the more I am convinced that the thing can be put over almost by consent of everybody upon a basis of Canadian independence under the Crown. But if it falls under leadership, which gives rise to the suspicion that it is republican at heart, we shall have a devastating political controversy, which will do untold damage to the cause and probably to the country as well. I recall that I discussed this point with you when I saw you last. My views are still the same, only more so.

As you may have noticed I have been discussing questions of finance and economy and shall have something more to say next week.

I have been interested to note how the various political leaders and parties are trimming their sails in deference to the undoubted protectionist sentiment of Canada. Even Crerar is beginning to sound a quieter note. I believe the government could largely remove the tariff issue from politics by judicious revision, cutting down some of the unduly high rates and increasing the British preference. We have, as you have probably noticed, been saying that the thing for Canada at present is a tariff designed primarily to produce revenue. There is no doubt but that the farmers' taxation programme is vulnerable and I think they are beginning to find it out.

I had as you know expected to go East this month, but with both McCurdy and Macklin still absent this may not be practicable. A couple of weeks at Ottawa would be, I think very profitable. I get inside information from there which is interesting. For one thing I am told, on what I think is pretty good authority, that King is having a good deal of trouble with the Frenchmen plus Charlie Murphy.* It appears that he imagines he is leader and tries to act accordingly; and that they find it necessary periodically to advise him as to his actual status. On the other side of the house it looks as though Jim Calder is steadily working into the position he had in Saskatchewan - that

of the man behind. His plan will be to do the Walter Scott* performance over again - keep Borden nominally on the job and be himself the actual premier. It looks very much as though the government - if it does not get too badly mauled in by-elections - will stick out its term; and I do not know but what this is upon the whole in the interest of the country. I found Arthur pretty strongly of this view.

I am thinking of objecting to Viscount French* coming to Canada on several grounds - one being that his presence here will probably lead to trouble between the two Irish camps. I remember that Borden said to me in Paris that we did not want a soldier for governor general [sic] and that he thought the Dominion government should exercise a veto right over these appointments. I asked him why he did not go the whole hog and insist upon the Canadian government making the appointment; and he admitted that there was much to be said in favor of such a course. If I discuss the matter I may go this far.

Business is at flood-tide with us here; but this may be only piling up trouble for us later. I am very pessimistic about the paper outlook; and fear that everywhere, before the year's end newspapers will have to limit both the size of their issues and the extent of their issue - that is their circulation. If it were not for the paper trouble we would undoubtedly make an extremely good showing this year; but as matters are this is of course problematical.

Crerar is here I understand; and I hope to see him. He is not well - threatened, I am told, with serious kidney trouble. This seems to be the Western statesmen's disease; it is forcing A. B. Hudson* out of public life and is also threatening Charlie Dunning.

I haven't heard anything about the subject of my last letter to you, but am going on the theory that the matter has been satisfactorily dealt with. A merger between the Tribune and the Telegram with the latter top-dog is coming within the range of possibilities; and probably will be expedited, if Richardson* is disappointed in the matter about which I wrote. It would I think be to our advantage if these papers should come together and divide the field - one coming out in the morning, the other in the afternoon.

April 28th, 1920.

My dear Sifton:

I have not been able for office reasons to carry out my plan to go to Ottawa for a two or three weeks intensive study of the political situation. I do not know that I am losing much by this, as politics there just at present seem about as quiet as the proverbial millpond. I shall, however, be in Toronto on the 19th to attend the annual meeting of the Canadian Press Limited. You may have heard something about the merry war which is being waged in this association and it will come to a head at this meeting. The Toronto Star and the Toronto Telegram are in a combination to break up the whole association, because they find they cannot control it. But I think it unlikely that they will have any considerable following at the annual meeting. However, if they should decide to secede themselves as they threaten to do, the result might be unfortunate as it would increase [costs] pro rata to every other member of the association and most newspapers find the present burden about all they can comfortably carry.

I want to discuss with you at considerable length this whole question of the movement looking towards Canada's status as an independent British nation. You have doubtless noticed that opposition to this development is appearing in various quarters. We shall see shortly a concerted attempt to block all progress in this direction. I see that Toronto Saturday Night has been fulminating against the proposal. Sir Andrew MacPhail* has a characteristic slap against it in the current University Magazine. The Financial Post of Toronto is publishing old opinions by Sir Allan Aylsworth* [sic] against the abolition of appeals to the Privy Council. The French are being stirred up to resist the movement to secure the right to make our own constitutional changes lest they should, by these means, lose some of their present guarantees. Billy Martin out in Saskatchewan thinks we had better leave things as they are. I run across occasionally doubtful and sometimes angry persons, who do not want a change unless it is in the direction of centralization. It is evident that the new medicine is a little too potent for a good many of the people. If the Tory party re-emerges from the wreck in accordance with the plan of Bob Rogers et al, I have no doubt that it will constitute itself the special champion of what it will term "British connection" and a great many of the old-fashioned liberals will be on this question in agreement with them.

I cannot but think that this opposition will give the opportunity of bringing into Canadian politics a real issue which will force a division of the electorate into two contending parties. I believe the case for Canadian national equality can win. But only if those of us who favor it can carry with us a large percentage of the British and Canadian people, who still have strong sentimental attachments to the Motherland and to the Crown. This is why I think it is essential that the advocacy of Canadian national independence should not preclude recognition of the Crown as a symbol of a Britanic [sic] alliance; nor the further recognition that facilities for conference between the various British nations looking conceivably to common action in certain respects will be provided. The part the King living in England would play in our Canadian affairs would of course be almost nominal. He would have a representative here in the person of a viceroy, who would, of course, act upon the advice of his responsible ministers. That is to say that he would be, apart from his social functions, a mere figure-head. I do not see that it would be necessary for the Canadian government to be brought into personal contact with the king at all excepting upon the rare occasions when it would be necessary for them to recommend a proper party to act as viceroy. If the movement gets a republican tinge there will be, I fear, a violent reaction from the present aspiration for national status and since a continuance of our colonial position is out of the question, the beneficiaries of any such action would be our friends of the round table school.

I am going to Regina and Moose Jaw to speak at the end of this week. I am going to talk Canadian Nationalism to these clubs and will note how they take it. Mr. Macklin is going east again almost immediately on business in connection with our paper supply and I shall join him in Toronto before the 19th.

July 7th, 1920.

My dear Sifton:-

I have your recent letter from Montreal. What you tell me about the proposed steel merger is interesting and valuable. I think this consolidation is all to the good, provided there is no water in the

capitalization and that they are making no demands upon the Government for special consideration. If they were to do this there would no doubt be a good deal of unpopular feeling excited.

Re the Wheat Board⁷, we have not taken any very excited attitude. I had the situation pretty thoroughly canvassed a month or so ago during which time I obtained the views of Mr. James Stewart, in whose judgment I place great confidence. Stewart's opinion at that time was that the public interest might be best served by the continuance of wheat control for another year. Of course, he was not in favor of it as a permanent policy. The position we have taken has been that wheat control as a permanent policy is not to be entertained but that the decision as to when the control should terminate is a matter upon which the government is in the best position to make a decision. We have had a couple of articles but they have not gone beyond this.

The "Telegram" of this city -is making a very vigorous fight in favor of the termination of wheat control on the ground that it has depressed the price of wheat to the farmers. My information is that the probabilities are that wheat control will not be continued for another year unless the political situation is radically changed by the accession to the premiership of Mr. Meighen. There seems to be some reason to believe that Mr. Meighen is rather enamoured of the idea of wheat control as a permanent policy. There is no doubt a strong backing for such a policy among the farmers of the west, particularly in Saskatchewan, and the theory is that Meighen thinks that if he made this an outstanding feature of his programme he might be able to rally considerable farmers' support as against Mr. Crerar who is frankly on record in Hansard as against wheat control excepting as a temporary expedient. Subject to this contingency the Wheat Board is not likely to be reappointed, from what I can hear.

You will have noted the results of the Manitoba Election. The outstanding feature, of course, was the strength displayed by labor. They will have nearly 25% of the membership of the next legislature

⁷ In 1917 a Board of Grain Supervisors had been created by the Borden Government in order to stabilize the rising price of grain; in 1919, largely in response to Western demand, this body was transformed into the Wheat Board. In 1920, however, the act creating the Board lapsed and the fall in wheat prices brought demands for its renewal in 1921. The farmers were, however, by no means united in their support of government controlled grain prices. See Morton, *Progressive Party*, 108ff.

and, with perhaps one exception, all the labor members elected are Reds." This development spoiled all the election calculations. The strength of the Independent Farmer movement was about as expected by the Government and the results were, I think, a little *disappointing* to the parties responsible for these political ventures. There was, of course, no concerted movement to put farmer independents in the field. If there had been, under the auspices of the Provincial Farmers' Organization, they would undoubtedly have swept the boards. There is the judgment of Mr. Edward Brown* of the campaign throughout the province and it coincides with my own conclusions. This is the more remarkable because there was practically no criticism against the Norris Government or its programmes. It indicates the political strength of the new movement; foreshadows what will happen to the Dominion Government in this province in view of its great weakness in contrast with the undoubted general popularity of the Norris Government.

The Norris Government intends to carry on and the probabilities are that it will command a substantial majority in the next House. The situation may, however, be affected by the deferred elections in the north. Labor has some hopes of defeating Brown in Le Pas and if it should be successful the Government might interpret it as a notice to quit.

October 16, 1920.

My Dear Dafoe:

I have your letter of the 11th with enclosure. I entirely share your views as to the importance of the Wheat question, and I think that the Course which you have adopted heretofore has been very wise. My own judgement is that the Free Press should take no stand on the question at all. It is a very technical economic question and nobody is qualified to give an opinion unless he has complete access to full

⁸ Dafoe played a leading part in the anti-strike activities during the Winnipeg General Strike in the spring of 1919. He insisted then, and later, that the leaders of the strike were "reds", by which he meant, apparently, Bolsheviks and Communists. There was no foundation in this belief. See D. C. Masters, *The Winnipeg General Strike*, (Toronto, 1950), 134.

information respecting the world's markets, the requirements of the different countries and their financial ability to pay. It is obviously impossible for the Free Press to have the services of such an expert, and if you had he would probably be in line with one interest or the other. I do not think it is the place of a newspaper to settle questions of this kind, but rather to afford the fullest and fairest opportunity in its columns for the discussion of the subject and to refrain from coloring, distorting or suppressing news which might point to one conclusion or the other.

Respecting Mackenzie King. You may be entirely right but at the present time the Province of Quebec represents the only substantial popular element in Canada that can be relied on to stand for Liberal principles. Not all the followers of King from Quebec are genuine Liberals but the majority of them are, and the only hope for anything that can be called a Liberal Government or a progressive Government in Canada comes from an alliance between King and the farmers. If that is clearly repudiated you can look for a continuance of reactionary Tory rule. Meighen is showing great energy and capacity and unquestionably is strengthening his position very much, mostly due to the disunion of his opponents. The Sugar business⁹ has been a bad blunder for the Government but Meighen is likely to wriggle out of it without any serious discredit.

As I have expressed myself heretofore, whatever the political future may be, there is no place whatever for the Free Press in the support of the kind of Government that Mr. Meighen is likely to have. Its place will be independent criticism and opposition. The Government is entirely given up to scheming [sic] for the benefit of what you Western journalists call "the big interests." That was shown when they threw down the proposition for controlling the price of paper to the Canadian Publisher. It has been again shown in this Sugar order, which undoubtedly was made with the connivance of leading members of the Government.

⁹ The rising cost of living, graphically illustrated by the sky-rocketing price of sugar, was perhaps the most serious single problem faced by the Meighen government at the end of the war. See J. Castell Hopkins, *The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1920, (Toronto, 1921), 17-55.

Nov. 10th, 1920.

My dear Sifton:-

I duly received your letter giving me your views about wheat control.

As you may have noticed, the Council of Agriculture, at a meeting held here some two or three weeks ago, made a demand upon the Government for the re-establishment of the Board. I think this was merely a demand pro forma because there has been no apparent agitation from this source seeking to bring about the practical carrying out of this demand. It is rather significant that the Grain Growers' Guide has had but little to say on this subject, while Mr. Crerar ignored it in his recent speeches. Beyond doubt, Crerar and the interests which he specially represents are not really in favor of Government control of wheat selling. The only newspapers who have found in the circum-stance an occasion for an agitation have been the opposition press of Saskatchewan and I notice that in the columns of the Leader, in order to make their point, they have found it necessary to exalt Mr. Maharg,* M.P., at the expense of Mr. Crerar, representing him as the authentic voice of the Western farmers upon this question.

The incident is significant because it reflects an actual fact which is a considerable diversity of opinion and outlook [exists] between Mr. Crerar and the leaders of the farmers' movement in Saskatchewan. There has always been a divergence of view which may widen.

Just the same I am pretty well satisfied in my own mind that while the situation cannot now be remedied and things must be allowed to take their course, it would have been to the interests of the country to have continued the Wheat Board for another year. They would have put the initial payment of wheat at about \$1.75 per bushel, but this would not have deterred the farmers from marketing early as, with the experience of this year before them, they would have confidence that the supplementary payments would bring their receipts up to their expectations. As matters are the farmers are everywhere refusing to sell their wheat and this is making a most serious situation for business generally and for the transportation interests.

I was present the other night at a gathering which represented most of the Credit Men and sales managers of the city of Winnipeg and at which representatives of the same interests in Saskatchewan

were present and there was general agreement that the situation was very bad with no probable hope of any amelioration in view of the continued weakness of the wheat market. Meanwhile the period of lake transportation is rapidly passing. The closing down of lake shipping will find a mere percentage of the normal fall shipments of wheat handled, which means a great slowing down of business, serious retardation in collections with the certainty that this wheat will have to be handled later on under conditions as to transportation and very likely as to sale, much more onerous than those which now prevail. Much of this would have been avoided if the Wheat Board had retained control and I think the probabilities are that a single selling agency, while buying conditions are as they are in Great Britain and Europe, would have really meant, taking the whole season into account, a considerably higher price for the growers of the wheat.

So much for that. I might perhaps say something about Western political conditions now that Mr. King has completed his Western trip. King had very large meetings everywhere and he got an attentive and careful hearing. I should say that he has improved his personal position considerably because, whereas he was previously just a name, he is now known personally to a very considerable number of Western people who have heard him speak.

I find no traces of any wild enthusiasm over his platform performances but he is regarded pretty [well] generally as [to] ideas. So far as putting the official Liberal party back upon the political map is concerned, the trip, if it was designed for this purpose, was a failure as I think Mr. King would freely acknowledge himself.

Mr. King was very discreet in his references to the political movements in the West which are outside the old party lines. He devoted his attack exclusively against the Government which, of course, was popular with Western audiences, and he gave his blessing, so to speak, to the Farmers' party and to the Labor movement and deplored that they were not co-operating with the Liberals in a common assault against the administration. He may have had hopes that some kind of an official alliance could be entered into by which there could be a division of constituencies in Western Canada, but, if so, he will by now have abandoned them if he has the faculty so necessary to a successful political career of seeing things as they are and refusing to follow phantoms.

There is not the slightest chance for any alliance of this nature and the number of constituencies outside Winnipeg in which the farmers will fail to nominate a candidate themselves, will be very few indeed. In Saskatchewan Langley and Turgeon have been trying to work out plans for a fusion and the immediate effect has been a strengthening of the ultra-radical elements in the Farmers' movement.

There are two practical political considerations which make an alliance of this character impossible. One is that if there was any apparent concerted action between the farmer leaders and the Liberal organization, a large number of farmers who were formerly conservative in their political leanings would return to their old allegiance, while, at the other end of the Farmers' party there would arise a rebellious movement against the existing leadership, inspired by a class feeling which would probably take the form of non-partisan league candidates for office. There are other considerations but these are the chief practical reasons why there could be no approximation to the political understanding which apparently Mr. King has desired to bring about. If Mr. King has got this idea firmly in his mind, as I think he has by this time, he will leave the West severely alone, protecting himself from any accompanying loss of prestige as well as he can by declaring that the Farmers' movement is a good enough manifestation of Liberal policy for him and that he will take his chances on being able to submit in the next Parliament policies which will commend its support.

I have been having some interesting conversation with leaders of the farmers' movement, notably Crerar and Lambert. In some respects Lambert is becoming the directing mind of the movement. Crerar is not very keen about continuing in public life and will do so, I think, only on his own terms. The Canadian Council of Agriculture, which is really the executive committee of the Farmers' movement, is, of course, aware of the necessity of retaining Crerar's services. I do not think that Crerar really knows that plans have already been made by which there is to be held, before the next session of Parliament, some kind of a Dominion wide conference or convention at which Crerar will be formally invested with the leadership of these forces and given the necessary powers of control. In the past Crerar has felt that he was leader on sufferance and that he exercised nothing but a moral authority. He has felt that if he were to continue he should be put in a position where he would have general supervision with the power

particularly of advising as to nominations in the Western constituencies. His wishes will be met in this respect and it can now be, I think accepted beyond question, that for the purpose of the next election at any rate, Crerar will be the recognized leader of this movement and that in the next Parliament if there are any combinations to be made, he will be the man who will chiefly pass upon their desirability.

This makes it important to know just what his views are on certain things. He talks very frankly with me because we are very old friends and have been associated in a good many political adventures. The one point upon which Crerar is completely uncompromising is that of the tariff. So far as I can see there are only two public men in Canada who really know definitely where they stand on tariff questions. One is Mr. Meighen. The other is Mr. Crerar. I notice that Mr. Meighen, with his customary acuteness, is beginning to point out divergences between the uncompromising tariff opinions of Mr. Crerar and the qualified statements of policy which are now being put forth by other Farmer leaders and by the Council of Agriculture itself. Crerar is a convinced free-trader and believes in its practicability, although he recognizes that it must be reached in Canada by a series of successive steps. He has grown firmer in his views upon this point with the passing years and is not now in the mood to disguise in any respect, out of regard for political expediency, his real opinions. He has said to me that if he had the making of the tariff he would build it upon a plan which would provide for the entire elimination of protection within twenty-five years at the outside. The revenue argument he meets by saying that if import duties had to be retained for revenue purposes, which he thinks is probable, he would levy countervailing excise duties. He would make this fact clear in the tariff as first applied so that there would be no doubt as to the purpose and intention of the Government responsible for this policy, and he would make a beginning by putting implements of production, particularly agricultural machinery, on the free list.

He seems confident that the farmers will stand for this policy although he admitted that recent statements by Mr. Burnaby, Chairman of the Council of Agriculture, Mr. Halbert, M.P., and other Eastern leaders of the farmers, had been talking in the terms of qualified protection. At any rate, I am satisfied that unless the farmers are prepared to follow Crerar implicitly upon this point, he will not stay in public life.

Further, assuming that Mr. Crerar carries his belief with him and succeeds in entering the next Parliament with a following of, let us say, seventy-five members, which is not at all beyond the possibilities, I am satisfied that a fusion of the Liberal and the Farmers for the purpose of carrying on a Government will be quite practicable, provided the tariff is made upon the lines which I have indicated. This, I am satisfied, will be the test.

I pressed Crerar as to his ideas as to whether the Liberals would agree to co-operate along these lines and he expressed the opinion that he thought the great majority of them would. He doesn't think that King would find any difficulty in accepting such a programme. He thinks that while there will be no secessions from the Liberal party to the Government party before the next election on the part of public men, there will be a steady drifting into the Government camp of business men, manufacturers who have in the past been regarded as Liberals. He says this process is already under way and that he knows that the Liberal managers are much disconcerted over the cutting off in this way of sources from which they had hoped to draw contributions for the party exchequer, but he thinks that the movement will not, in the time which will elapse before the next general election, be sufficiently serious to break the Liberal strength in Quebec and in the Maritime Provinces, and that the expectation that Mr. King will be the head of a formidable parliamentary group in the next Parliament will be realized.

He estimates that perhaps twenty-five or thirty per cent of the Liberal members elected would not agree to support, on either side of the House, such a tariff policy as he has in mind and that they would secede either to maintain the present Government in office or to swell the opposition to a Farmer-Liberal Government that might come into power as a result of a fusion.

I should say that if Mr. Crerar remains leader of the Farmers and Mr. King can control 75% of his parliamentary following in the next House, there would be no difficulty in fusing the Liberals and the Farmers into what would practically be a homogenous party on the basis of a complete acceptance of Crerar's views on the tariff. I think this tariff question is going to be the determining factor in the alignment of the parties which is now in process throughout Canada, and that in essence Mr. Meighen has got the matter correctly sized up.

If Mr. Crerar's views are met on the tariff, I think he would have no difficulty in conforming with the Liberal policy in other respects. The experience of office and his association with large business concerns has, I think, made Mr. Crerar rather critical of some of the policies to which the farmers are committed and I think he would make no particular objection if a considerable part of the farmers' platform were abandoned. I doubt whether he is really very much interested in Government ownership of utilities, upon which question the Liberals occupy a more conservative attitude than does the Government, and I notice that he has nothing to say any more about raising revenue by land taxing. The fact of the matter is Crerar is nothing more or less than a Liberal of the type with which you and I were quite familiar prior to 1896.

One thing more I would like to mention in this letter; - the coming municipal elections which are giving me a good deal of concern. It is not a good thing for the Free Press to have, year after year, to take the position apparently of fighting labor all along the line. It is not in keeping with our traditions, nor in harmony with our interests, yet we have had no alternative since Labor came under the control of its Red leaders.

A victory for Labor a year ago in this town would have had very detrimental consequences and I think we did the right thing in doing our bit to defeat Labor. This year the situation is not quite so bad. For one thing Proportional Representation has been adopted in all Manitoba elections. This was really the result of a Free Press crusade. It will enable us to keep pretty well out of the aldermanic contests because under proportional representation, Labor is entitled to a percentage of the representation and will get it almost automatically. The difficulty arises over the mayoralty.

The influence of moderate labor is beginning to revive and the moderates made an effort in the nominating convention of the Dominion Labor party to control the nomination for mayor. They put up Mr. Puttee* but he was defeated by Mr. Farmer* who was the Red candidate last year. If Mr. Puttee had been chosen, the Free Press would certainly have been neutral in the contest and I even think it possible that we would have supported him, a course which, if we could have taken it, would have done us much good. However, the result of the nomination makes it only too clear that the radical element are still in

control of the machinery of the Labor party. I know Farmer well. He is an impractical doctrinaire, very extreme in his views and I should regard his election as mayor of the city with great concern. He is not himself a labor man. His business is that of accountant to a grain firm and he first got into touch with the extreme elements of the Labor party during the war when he became very active in opposition to first registration and afterwards conscription. I really think he is a highly dangerous man. He is being opposed by Mr. Edward Parnell, a master baker of this town.

Parnell is relatively a newcomer to the city, belonging formerly to London where he had quite a successful municipal career but was finally defeated for the mayoralty by Sir Adam Beck. He was chosen by a Citizens' Committee as the best available man after Fowler,* who was the logical candidate, and also other sitting aldermen had declined the honor. I have my doubts as to whether he will prove a strong candidate. As the head of a big business concern and a man with presumably some money and also as President of the Board of Trade, he is just a natural mark, not only for Labor, but for thousands of other people who are discontented with present conditions. I am, therefore, rather disturbed over the situation but I am inclined to think that we shall have, at least in the later stages of the campaign, to oppose Mr. Farmer on his record even if we do not care to directly support Mr. Parnell.

It is perhaps a little unfortunate that I shall have to go East during the height of the campaign but it will be necessary for me to attend a meeting of the Canadian Press at Montreal towards the end of the month when the question of an enlarged cable service comes up for consideration. On my way back I shall stop over in Toronto and talk this and other matters over with you.

November 13, 1920.

My Dear Dafoe:-

I have yours of the 10th and I have read your analysis of the situation with great interest. I have no doubt it is substantially correct.

I note what you say about Mr. Crerar's views on the tariff. If his view really is as you say, uncompromising in favor of free trade with excise duties [to] countervail tariff duties, there is this to be said for his position –

First - It would be entirely impossible to maintain the fiscal and political independence of Canada with respect to the United States under any such policy.

Second - If brought into effect immediately it would bring wide-spread disaster.

Third - If brought into effect over a period of twenty-five years it would give rise to the most desperate disputes by those who saw that it was extinguishing our independent control of our own affairs.

There is only one basis of union. It is that of a revenue tariff pure and simple, and if duties such as implement duties should be taken off, purely revenue duties would have to be imposed, as for instance, duties on tea and coffee. The idea that there can be no substantial change made in the tariff is an entire mistake. The duties for instance on Sugar are outrageously high, also the duties on rubber and rubber goods, enamelware and hardware and many other lines the same, but these are lines of great consumption and effect the whole community. The duties on these articles could be cut in half and the country would be better off. There are a number of others in a similar case. However, as matters are going I do not see any cause to find fault. The farmers are reasonable and moderate in their views and it ought to be possible to find common ground as nobody wants to abolish the tariff in a hurry.

Wheat. I am very much disturbed over the wheat position and I agree with you that it would have been wiser to continue the control and it may have to be done yet. If you go in any direction at all, I think that is the direction to go.

Mayoralty. I think it is quite out of the question for you to take sides in the coming contest with any degree of definiteness. You might point out to the labor element that they are risking their position and incurring the probability of defeat by nominating an extreme candidate, but as for getting into the fight on behalf of the chap who is running on a citizens ticket, that, I think, is *quite out of the question*. One of the things that you will have

to consider is the extreme danger of being forced into an unpopular position. If you go away in the middle of the contest you had better leave a pretty definite arrangement that Mr. Macklin is to see any editorials on the subject before they are published.

November 18, 1920.

My dear Dafoe:

I have been reading Ewart's article in the last number "Canadian Nation" on the Japanese question. No doubt you have it on file. It would be worth your while to look at it. I think the Free Press should take [the] stand against the ratification of the Treaty (on renewal) in such a way as to permit [sic] the entrance of Japanese into Canada. The slightest relaxation would result in British Columbia being flooded and it would undoubtedly raise serious questions with labor. Nobody can tell what the future is going to bring forth, but this Continent is about the only decent place there is left in the world and it would be a good idea to keep it so.

While I am upon the subject of Immigration, I want to say that I do not agree with your editorials on the Immigration question, in which you say that as a matter of course we want English speaking immigrants. Outside of a few thousand British people who will come of themselves to Canada in the next few years of the more or less well-to-do class, there is no English speaking immigration to be got. I am of course speaking of the British Isles, not of the United States. The farmer class in England will not emigrate; they are doing too well and they are going to do better under the Agricultural Production Act. There is left then only the Agricultural laborer; they [sic] are a diminishing quantity. Their wages have lately doubled and they are going to stay up. They will not emigrate. [There] Remains only the mechanic, the artisan and the drifter in the Southern towns. These are the people that Frank Oliver got in by the thousand and which flooded Canada and would have precipitated a crisis in labor if it had not been for the war. The worst blunder on earth would be to encourage their immigration. They are hopelessly incapable of going on farms and

succeeding. Pretty nearly all the Great War Veterans Associations that are making trouble are composed of these fellows who enlisted in the Canadian Army when the war came on and want the country to support them for the rest of their lives.

The place to look for immigrants is Belgium, Denmark, and in a greater degree Norway and Sweden. From these countries the best agricultural settlers can be procured, who are perfectly competent when they arrive in Canada to take care of themselves and never want any assistance whatever from anybody. I told Calder this three years ago but he has never shown any capacity whatever to assimilate an idea on this subject and has shown himself, in my judgment, entirely incapable. I believe one hundred thousand first class farmers could be got in the next two or three years and they would be worth a million immigrants of the usual drifter class.

Nov. 19th, 1920.

My dear Sifton:-

I duly received the political pamphlets which you sent me. I have read them with interest. These are no doubt the forerunners of a perfect avalanche of similar publications. It is quite apparent that we are going to see a very well financed campaign of publicity on behalf of the government's tariff policy. The plan of campaign has evidently been carefully worked out. For everything which is appearing, whether by way of newspaper articles, pamphlets, circulars of the Canadian Industrial Reconstruction Association and speeches on the platform, they are all in the same key and have obviously a clearly defined objective in view. I should say that that view is not only the maintenance of the existing tariff but the stiffening of the protective principle which it involves. The speech by Mr. Robertson,* Minister of Labor, at St. Thomas last night is, I think, significant of this. Mr. Meighen, in one of his western speeches, made a reference to the British preference which lends itself to the interpretation that he has no sympathy with the proposition that the extent of the preference should be enlarged.

I hear from many sources that Mr. Meighen is in quite a hopeful mood. He regards his Western tour as a success. This view is confirmed by our staff correspondent who attended the Manitoba meetings addressed by him. Mr. Meighen appears to think that he has opened the door somewhat for future raids upon the forces of the enemy in this country. I understand they do not think they can do much in Saskatchewan although they hope to insure Mr. Crerar's [sic-Calder's?] election for the constituency of Regina, but they expect to make headway against the farmers' movement both in Alberta and in Manitoba.

The struggle in the Labor camp here which has been going on behind the scenes for some weeks, has now broken forth into open war. Mr. Farmer, the labor nominee for mayor, has, in consequence, renounced the nomination of the Dominion Labor party and is standing independently as the nominee of the O.B.U.¹⁰ or extremist section. It is difficult to estimate just what the consequence will be but it ought to make it possible for the citizens' candidate, if he uses discretion, to pick up a considerable vote from moderate labor which should very greatly improve his chances. The developments will relieve us at any rate of the disability under which we would have been put if we had been obliged by the exigency of the campaign into opposing Farmer as Labor candidate. He is now frankly the candidate of the extremists and is, therefore, far more vulnerable than when he stood as the standard-bearer of an apparently united party behind which all the Labor influences of the city were massed. I am rather hopeful that with the form the developments have taken, we shall be able to avoid any active participation in the campaign. I shall have a careful article prepared which I shall approve before I leave for the East and which will be published early next week. I think then that it will be possible for them to mark time until my return. If I can make the trip in the round week, which will bring me back the Sunday before election, there will still be five issues before election day and it will be possible for us to take a hand in the fight if this proves to be necessary.

¹⁰ The One Big Union was an effort by Western Labour leaders to bring all the working classes into a single organization. Its founders met at Calgary in the spring of 1919. Its success was extremely limited though it did make some progress in Winnipeg and its leaders were involved in the Winnipeg General Strike. See Masters, Winnipeg General Strike, Chapter I.

The meeting which I am attending is in Montreal on Wednesday. Macklin and I will both be in attendance, leaving here, as I understand, on Sunday morning. Subject to change I shall be in Toronto on Friday on my way home and I shall hope to see you for an hour [or] so.

Before leaving for the East to speak in East Elgin, Mr. Crerar got your address from me. I hope he found time to call in and discuss the political situation with you. I see that he virtually threw over the land taxation plank in the farmers' platform. No doubt he begins to realize that this is a very vulnerable point in his armour. Meighen attacked him very skilfully along this line in his speeches in this province. I know that there is also strong feeling among men who are directing this movement that the plank calling for complete abolition of the tariff against English goods within five years is inexpedient and impracticable. This was part of the original platform of the Council of Agriculture and when it was revised two years ago, Lambert made a hard fight to have it expunged but was unable to carry his point against the influence of Mr. Chipman of the Grain Growers' Guide who had fathered the original proposition. I think it probable that it will be quietly thrown overboard within the next two or three months.

November 19, 1920.

My dear Dafoe:-

I enclose you a couple of clippings from the "Star." The editorial is very good and will bear re-printing in the Free Press. The news item is a confirmation of what has all along been evident that there is in existence a persistent and determined plan to get this country mixed up in European and Imperial complications, and I hope you will promptly and emphatically declare that this proceeding might as well be called off.

I presume that you are observing the farcical proceedings at the League of Nations. It is already divided into a jingo party and a Liberal party. The aggressive [sic] military policy which has been followed by the Allies in flat contradiction of their professions while organizing the League of Nations has borne its first fruit in the Greek election where Venezelos [sic] has been repudiated by the Greek people solely because of his mad policy of conquest and war. France is doing the same thing, and presently her people will get up and kick the Government out.

England is doing exactly the same thing, carrying on a war of plunder and conquest in Mesopotamia which has alienated the Mohammedans of the world and thrown aside the result of one hundred years of statemanship [sic] in a campaign of pure loot and robbery. Presently the English people will throw them out, but Lloyd George* has the great advantage that the bulk of the English people are frightened to death of Bolshevism. Nothing else in the world keeps Lloyd George in power. Meantime the League of Nations is a preposterous and expensive farce and amounts to nothing more than a part of a machine designed to involve us in European and Imperialistic complications. Canada ought to call a halt on this business and do it at once. There does not appear however to be in the whole of Canada one Editor except yourself who will stand right out and talk business to them.

I had a long conversation with Crerar yesterday. I do not think he is by any means as uncompromising as your letter to me would indicate. I told him that your idea of a vigorous revision of the tariff on a purely revenue basis with radical reductions in cases where the duty is excessive such as sugar, rubber and rubber goods, enamelware and things of that description was in line with my own ideas and I think he will accept them. He obviously is not posted on the details but I think he is open to conviction. I suggested to him that while the Montreal contingent of the Liberal party is Tory and opportunist and cannot be depended on, especially under Lemieux's leadership, he being under the thumb of the Government, that probably two-thirds of the Province of Quebec is genuinely Liberal and could be depended on under the leadership of somebody like Lapointe. I do not think he has had any constructive ideas in that way, but I think probably he will give some consideration to it now.

I did not seek the interview with him. He came around to see me of his own accord. I think a great deal of Crerar and would like to see him stay in public life.

Yours faithfully,
Clifford Sifton

P.S. I have a letter from an old time politician in Saskatchewan who claims that Meighen made strength for the Gov[ernmen]t in Saskatchewan & that the Farmer party is weakening there. Is there anything in that? I can hardly think so.

December 3, 1920.

My Dear Dafoe:-

I read the article on the sales of Wheat which appeared when you were absent (if I understand it aright) and I have since read the very aggressive [sic] criticisms which have been addressed to you by Wood,* Langley and the Regina Leader. These people apparently are not anxious to make friends. They are all apparently desirous of putting you in the hole as an advocate of grain interests. The criticisms are atrociously unfair, but nevertheless the article was very injudicious, and if I were to give an opinion I would be inclined to think that somebody in the grain trade loaded up the writer of the article. You have got to get out of the position of being the advocate of the grain interest, and in my judgment the best way is the frank way, and if there is any mistake in your facts as alleged by the Regina Leader, better acknowledge it and frankly fake your stand by saying that no aggressive or hostile or unfair criticism will prevent you from being as you are - the advocate of the farmers interest and of square dealing in regard to the grain.

The Regina Leader indicated that there is a "nigger on the fence" about a large quantity of grain. They suspect it has been sold without authority. If such is the case you must stand for an investigation and not lend yourself directly or indirectly to apologizing for or explaining or defending any such deal. On the contrary you had better lead the attack.

I have no doubt this is all in accordance with your own view, but the matter is rather serious and there is no time to be lost in putting yourself right.

You have no doubt observed the result of the Ontario Conservative Convention. It appears to have been a Convention dominated by the baser element of party office seekers and party heelers. The election of Ferguson* is likely to put the Conservative party in opposition in Ontario for the next twenty years and will seriously injure Meighen. The proceedings of the Convention would reduce politics in the Province to the level of a bar-room fight. There has never been such an exposure of systematic, long-continued corruption and pilfering and violation of the law as there was in the case of the investigation into

the Crown Timber Department of Ontario. Ferguson admittedly broke the law corruptly, deliberately and frequently. His attitude is that of a thief who is caught with the goods and starts to make charges against the character of the officer who arrested him. It would appear as though the Conservative party had got into the hands of blackguards. It is certainly so in Manitoba; now it is so in Ontario.

Read the evidence of Billy Maclean* before the tariff commission. When Maclean and the paper makers fight, we can look on with absolute impartiality not caring how much they hurt each other.

December 4, 1920.

My dear Dafoe:-

The enclosed is from the Financial Times of Montreal, Calgary correspondent.

It discussed the question of a co-operative pool for selling Wheat with Crerar. He is disposed to favor it. Personally, I think that it is the solution of the difficulty. The farmers are never going to settle down to the grain trade being in control of the grain dealers. They have a committee who are now considering the question of the pool. I think the Free Press should support it and actively. There is no adverse feeling in Winnipeg except a few grain dealers whose friendship is more disastrous than anything else to a newspaper.

I also enclose an article on freight rates on the Pacific coast and there was one last week on freight rates as applied to the Atlantic coast. The Canadian Mercantile Marine is very well managed but it is managed as a private concern and it is in the Atlantic conferences and strenuously striving to keep rates braced up against the Western farmers. It is an interesting question why the public has spent sixty million dollars for these boats if they are to be used keeping up freight rates on Canadian produce.

Dec. 7th, 1920.

My dear Sifton:-

I have your letter with reference to the article in the Regina Leader and the statement by Mr. Langley with regard to the recent article in the Free Press dealing with the financial results of the sale of wheat by the Western Farmers up to the date of the article. I judge that you are a little alarmed lest these criticisms of the Free Press reflect a prevalent opinion among the farmers of the West. I do not think there is any substantial ground for an apprehension of this nature. We never fail to receive plenty of evidence of the disapproval of our farming readers if we follow any course to which they take objection. This comes to us in the form of letters of protest. We have had nothing of this sort whatever upon this occasion which rather tends to confirm me in the idea that the Leader and Mr. Langley are representing principally their own interests in an attempt to make a score against the Free Press.

It is to be borne in mind that the Leader is a very keen rival of the Free Press. In fact our newspaper is the only competition which is really inconvenient to it and far years it has sought every possible pretext to prejudice us in the eyes of the Saskatchewan people, especially the farmers. If you read the Leader with care you will see in it one of these days an article denouncing the Free Press as a tool of big business engaged in a nefarious conspiracy against the interests of the Western producer. They have an article of this tenor about once [every] so often and I should think the time is about due for another one. Langley is and always has been identified with the Leader in this campaign.

The fact that they are so watchful and suspicious makes it, of course, very desirable that we should not supply them with material which appears to give color to their charges. They evidently regard the article in question as a good pretext but I am inclined to think that their attack has been no more successful than previous ones inspired by similar motives. The fact of the matter is the Free Press is far stronger with the farming community at this time than the Leader is because the latter labors under the handicap of being avowedly more interested in the fortunes of one of the old parties than in the progress of the movement in which the farmers are particularly interested. Mr. Langley and the Leader have been trying for the last eighteen

months to hitch the farmers' movement in Western Canada to the Liberal chariot with practically no results, excepting those injurious to themselves and to the cause which they seek to forward.

Despite the fact that I doubt whether the article has done us any real harm I think it highly probable that I would not have passed it if it had been submitted to me before publication, simply because it would have at once suggested the thought that unless the calculations were beyond all challenge it might give rise to statements of the kind which were subsequently made. I think the general line of argument in the article is fair enough but I have some doubts as to whether the calculation is completely accurate since it is obvious that the result turns less upon the average price for a period than upon the ratio at which deliveries were made under the falling price. The article was written by our assistant market editor and I am satisfied from conversations I have had with him that it was not suggested to him by any interest in the Grain Exchange. The subject seemed to him one out of which an interesting article could be made and he acted upon this feeling. It was rather unfortunate that Miss Hind and I were absent at the time.

I am turning the article over to Miss Hind together with all the criticisms and am asking her to check them over and advise me as to whether there will be any necessity to somewhat qualify the statements and inferences. If she finds the article substantially right I think perhaps the wisest course would be to say nothing about it but if in her report on it the conclusions are not entirely justified we shall have to consider what course is best to follow.

Upon my return from the East I found two letters from you which had come in my absence but I notice that they deal mostly with questions which I discussed with you down East. I have the Ewart articles on the Japanese treaty by me but have had no time as yet to give them careful reading.

The municipal elections went off upon the whole very satisfactorily. We carried out our original plan of keeping pretty well out of the contest. Parnell, as I had indicated would probably be the case, did not prove to be a strong candidate but he has a safe margin over Farmer whose second defeat probably eliminates him from municipal politics.

Dec. 20, 1920.

Dear Dafoe

I am entirely disgusted and fed up with the conduct of the British in Ireland. As I am of bigoted Protestant Irish descent you may guess it has taken something to bring me to this state of mind.

Greenwood* is simply an ignorant bluffing ruffian. I am ashamed that he is a Canadian. Incidentally he is a monumental liar.

Don't let a squeak of apology for the doings in Ireland get into the Free Press.

The long cable screeds that come as special despatches to the New York Times & the Globe - I think you also get them are simply barefaced lying propaganda & should not be printed.

Can't you do something to cleanse the news service so that we can get news by cable instead of Government propaganda. It is apparently impossible to believe a word that comes over the wire.

December 22, 1920

My dear Dafoe,

I missed your Friday paper in some way but I saw the article on the wheat pool. It is quite all right, I think.

With respect to the American tariff bill. It may not go through; it may fail on account of difficulties in the Senate and Wilson may veto it, but the Republicans are pretty well committed to it, foolish as it is and it would appear as though they would be bound to put it through when they get in power in all three branches.

The political reaction here will help the Government without a doubt. There is nothing in any political party basing its fortunes on a policy which Canada does not control. I have been through it back wards and forwards. The practical certainty of a movement of this kind was one of my main reasons for opposing Reciprocity. As soon as we get settled down our banking, transportation, and business connections adapted to reciprocity something will happen to the United

States; a wave of feeling will flow over the country and they will repeal the whole thing. There is only one policy for Canada and that is to stand on its own legs like any other country. However, I do not think the effect of the American tariff will weaken the farmers. It is not strong on any particular policy. The policy is only secondary. It is a class movement because the farmers are tired of being governed by the town politicians, and I do not blame them much.

Respecting Quebec. There is no doubt that a certain section of what I might call the plutocratic Liberals are likely to ally themselves with the Government. The section however will be very small and will not exercise any appreciable effect. The Government would be very much better advised to stick to its old Tory supporters in Quebec and fight it out on that line but they will never do that. They have one or two gentlemen like Ballantyne* who have suddenly discovered that they are profound statesmen and they are anxious to show their ability in that line. I do not think there is anything in the world that can displace Meighen from the Leadership except death or an earthquake.

I think so far as the next election is concerned, the Liberals are quite solid in Quebec.

I am going to prepare a short memorandum for you on the Canadian Government Merchant Marine and I shall send it to you in a few days.

Dec. 29th, 1920.

My dear Sifton:-

I have your letter of inquiry as to the present political whereabouts of Isaac Pitblado.* I have had no conversation with him myself but I am informed that he is definitely identified with the Government forces in this city. He presided, you may recall, at the meeting which was addressed by Mr. Meighen and Mr. Calder some two months ago.

I have a pretty firm idea that Mr. Pitblado will be offered a portfolio in the Government when the reconstruction takes place before the general election. This is not based upon any definite information but is the result of deductions from facts known to me.

Mr. Pitblado was on the point of entering the Borden Government in 1917 when the need for his services was destroyed by the decision of Crerar, Calder and your brother to accept portfolios. This fact is not generally known but I saw the telegram at the time which passed between Pitblado and Mr. Meighen who represented or purported to represent Sir Robert Borden.

From all accounts Isaac Campbell* is in pretty much the same position as Mr. Pitblado. Unless Crerar leads in making an appeal to them, the bulk of the former active liberals in the city will be inclined to stay with the Government and this inclination will be particularly strong if my surmise as to Pitblado entering the Government proves to be correct. The King party is represented here by a group of utterly impossible persons and the only practicable alternative to the government is the progressive movement headed by Crerar. There are, I think, some grounds for believing that Crerar will succeed in securing the support of a considerable proportion of the Unionist Liberals.

The situation will be affected considerably by developments in these provincial fields. If the farmer members in the legislature go into opposition to the Norris Government, there will be reaction in the Dominion fields. I think Norris and all the Liberal members of the legislature are well disposed towards Crerar but if they get into a place in the legislature and possibly in the country too with the farmer group in the legislature it is bound to have a bad effect on future co-operation.

What is called the Independent Farmer group in the legislature is a very curious combination. It is made up of eight men who were elected as Independent Farmer candidates plus another eight men who were elected under other auspices but have attached themselves to the farmer group and are having a great deal to say in dictating its policy. Among the members who have thus joined the Farmers are two Ruthenians, two Icelanders and four French Canadians, among them that celebrated farmer, Joe Bernier.* It is quite evident that a game is being played and the surmise that the French Archbishop and Mr. Rogers are taking a hand in it is getting fairly clear.

I have no doubt that the regular Conservative opposition, made up of seven English speaking members with Jack Haig* as leader, would be quite ready to make a coalition with Norris. It would be a good stroke of business for

their Dominion friends. There is, in my judgment, no probability of this being brought about.

I am not [. . . ? ? . . . ,] the councils of the Provincial Liberal Party by my own choice because this would involve obligations that I might find onerous, but as I understand that [sic] the inclination of the Government is to meet the Legislature and go ahead with its business. If it does so I do not believe it will be in any danger of disruption, particularly if this should involve a general election.

January 4 [?] 1921.

My Dear Dafoe:-

I have your letter in reply to mine about Pitblado. I am sorry to see that our friend Isaac Campbell seems to be in the same category. I recognize the difficulty created by the undesirable element which has associated itself with Mr. King's followers. Still I think that it is impossible that the Liberals of Winnipeg can settle down to support the present Government even if they have to play a forlorn hope for the present. I think they should preserve their identity. However, I am so far away that I cannot take any part in the matter, but if any enquiring friends are speaking to you about my attitude you might intimate to them what I think about the matter.

Feb. 14th, 1921.

My dear Sifton:-

I have been called upon by several of the Western members on their way to Ottawa: Dr. Michael Clark, W. A. Buchanan and John A. Campbell.

I found them all pretty much of one mind as to the desirability, if it is possible, of having a redistribution before an election. They have not been speaking to one another but they all had the same general idea, which was

that there ought to be an understanding among all the parties at Ottawa that a Dominion election should be held at the earliest possible moment following a redistribution and that in the meantime the Government should merely carry on without attempting any legislative or administrative innovations. They all seemed inclined to think that if due diligence is shown in compiling the population statistics, a general election before the end of the present year would be practicable.

I have since had a couple of talks with Crerar and he is thinking along the same lines. Crerar will not be in Ottawa until the end of the present week and until he reaches there the National Progressive Party is not likely to take much part in the debate on the address. The question of what course to take in the event of King's moving an amendment looking towards an immediate election will then be discussed in caucus and some decision reached. I should say that Crerar's present idea is that if the Government takes the position that it is empowered to exercise all the attributes and privileges of a government he will be inclined to co-operate with the liberals in forcing the issue, but that if a frank recognition by the Government of its position as a stop-gap administration coupled with a pledge to facilitate the holding of an election at the earliest possible moment subsequent to redistribution is made, he will be prepared to co-operate to a reasonable degree in maintaining them in office until the redistribution can take place. The Western desire for full representation in the next parliament is undoubtedly strong and so is the inclination to strike at the Government, but I think that on the whole they would be prepared to exercise patience if they had a definite assurance that the election would not be postponed beyond October or November.

Crerar has gone to Regina to attend an important meeting of the Council of Agriculture. I have no doubt but that there is a pretty thorough understanding between Crerar and Drury and that they look forward to such a widening of the Farmers' party as will include all the Liberal and Progressive elements in the country. In short, I think they believe that the party can be turned into the Liberal party of the future, absorbing all those elements in the present Liberal party which are truly sound in Liberal principles.

Crerar tells me that he recently had a long conference with a prominent English Liberal of Montreal who advised him of developments in the

party's camp there. This information is to the effect that Sir Lomer Gouin is rapidly consolidating his position as the real leader of that element among the French Liberals who are interested in maintaining what might be called the status quo in tariff and allied matters. He thinks Gouin will be in the next parliament and that there will be thirty or thirty-five members in the House who will be his men. This group will be prepared to consider new combinations for the purpose of defending the existing system and the logical combination in the view of Mr. Crerar's informant is a union with the present Government party. He says that business interests of Montreal, irrespective of past political affiliations, are becoming more and more impressed with the desirability of securing Gouin's services as an administrator at Ottawa. He also says that they are rapidly losing confidence in Mr. Meighen, not only because of his obvious political weakness but because they doubt his capacity as an administrator. Crerar is inclined to regard this information as fairly authentic as it fits in with other information which is reaching him. A combination of this kind, he believes, would involve a new premier as Gouin would not serve under Meighen. Gouin's attitude towards King, according to the same informant, is not far removed from open contempt and defiance.

It is increasingly clear to me that Crerar looks forward to a fusion after the next election between the party which he leads and the more progressive element of the Liberal party and it will depend upon the numerical strength of the various groups whether this fusion will place Crerar in the opposition or in the Government. I don't think he really expects that the conditions that then prevail will make it possible for the Farmers to be part of the Government forces. He rather looks forward to some sort of a combination to carry on things pretty much as they are with the new Progressive opposition made up of his following and an element from the Liberals.

Crerar puts King definitely in what we might call the Liberal end of the Liberal party. He thinks his sympathies and his outlook are progressive but it is plain to see that he has no belief in King's capacity for the successful leadership of a party, either in the opposition or in the Government benches. I judge from statements which he made to me that while he might under certain conditions be willing to work with King, he would not serve under him. On the other hand, he indicated that he quite realized that King might not care to serve

under him. I have no doubt that in his mind he had Drury in view as the chief of the new party which he thinks is bound to emerge from the present confusion. Everything indicates that Drury is going to have the opportunity of playing a very large part in the future politics of Canada.

You probably noted in Saturday's paper our quotation of Smuts'* speech at Pretoria with editorial comments, and also Professor Osborne's* loud cry of anguish over these developments which appear to him to be fraught with peril to the Empire. As I said to you in my last letter, there is undoubtedly a considerable body of opinion which is pretty much in sympathy with Osborne's point of view. If there were not, he would not be identifying himself as the protagonist of this view because he has none of the moral fibre which is indifferent to non-popularity. Most of this sentiment is, however, due to lack of knowledge of the question and the work before us is very largely educational. It will have to be done with discretion and persistence. Everything suggests, however, that we did not begin a moment too soon. We wish to make sure that at the Constitutional Conference in 1922 our Canadian representatives will feel themselves obligated to see that full effect is given to the principles laid down in the resolution of the Imperial War Cabinet in April, 1917.

Yours very truly,
J. W. Dafoe

[Handwritten P.S.; Sifton Papers]

P.S. Crerar also told me that he believes there is a combination between Rogers, Labor & the so-called Independent Farmers by wh[ich] - if they think they can get office without a dissolution - they will defeat Norris and form a coalition purely on the office-holding job-dividing basis. This is Dr. Thornton's* view too; so there may be developments here before this letter reaches you. The U[nited]. F[armers]. [of] M[anitoba]. have repudiated the Independent Farmers, and they are thus outlaws with a brief political life ahead of them; they may decide to make the most of it. I think the U[nited]. F[armers]. [of] M[anitoba], are very well disposed towards Norris; they certainly helped McPherson indirectly in Lakeside.

Senator Sharpe* waited on Norris and proposed an alliance between the Norris and Meighen gov[ernmen]ts. N, s[ai]d No. So the Meigh-enites are after him too & they may influence Sir James [Aikens] * to

make trouble. The local opposition have been abusing him for failure to intervene & they have no standing with him.

D.

February 17, 1921.

My Dear Dafoe:-

I received your letter some days ago with regard to the South African election. I think you have a very just and comprehensive view of the whole situation, and I am sure that I cannot improve on the course which you are adopting by any suggestions whatever.

Re your letter of February 14th, I presume you have a copy of the letter, and, to avoid unnecessary verbiage, I am going to number the paragraphs of the letter and reply to them by number.

Paragraph No. 2. I think the arrangement suggested of an understanding with the Government is entirely impracticable. If an understanding were arrived at the Government would be unable to carry it out even if it tried to.

Paragraph No. 3. Comments on 2 apply to 3, with the further remark that if Crerar attempts to co-operate with the Government to keep them in power for any special purpose, I think he will get himself into fatal entanglements.

Paragraph No. 4. I note what you say. I hope it is true, but I have no information on the subject.

Paragraph No. 5. I think this indicates an entire misapprehension of the political position and principles of Quebec. This misapprehension is natural and is characteristically Western. Doubtless some of the Quebec Members and constituencies will return to high protection and the Conservative party, but it will not be done in any such crude or unprincipled way as suggested.

Paragraph No. 6. I think it will be extremely unfortunate if Crerar were to assume that the bulk of the Quebec Liberals are going to place themselves in opposition to the Farmers' party. Coming to that

conclusion in advance is giving away the battle before it is fought. As you express his views it looks a little as though he did not want to win.

Paragraph No. 7. Crerar's view as to King is no doubt in the main correct, and probably also his view as to Drury.

Paragraph No. 8. No doubt you are correct in this. I would refer you to an article in the last current number of the "Canadian Nation" on "War Dangers" by Ewart. I *direct your* attention to the danger which Canada is incurring in taking part in the League of Nations without the United States being there, and also in going to the Constitutional Conference in 1922 without a definite programme. My view is that we are in great danger of being committed to courses of action that will involve us in war, and I am wholly opposed to anything of the kind. I think Rowell's* mind is altogether confused. It is quite clear that he has not thought the matter out and has travelled so much and investigated so much that to use a common phrase - "He cannot see the wood on account of the trees." The plain fact is that we cannot take part in any European embroglio without great danger of getting into trouble, and we must always realize the fact that there is a danger of our jingo element and press stampeding the country into war complications.

With respect to your postscript. It is very interesting. There has been a rumor down here that "R" [Rogers] wants to be Lieutenant-Governor. What you say makes it quite clear what his reasons are.

Re Norris [Handwritten]

I do not think you should take any decisive stand in regard to the local situation or make a Free Press fight of it. The situation was very clearly put up to the people in the election and they are entirely responsible for anything that happens.

February 23, 1921.

My dear Dafoe:-

I have been following your constitutional article with interest. There is a good deal of talk about the Governor Generalship and how the appointment should be made. I have observed your contention that the appointment should be made on a nomination of the Canadian

Government. It will of course follow very soon that the appointment will be open to a Canadian, and in that event, the very undesirable would follow - that the Governor Generalship would become merely a matter of party patronage.

There are some methods of getting over this difficulty. One would be that the nomination should be made by a two-thirds vote of a joint session of the Senate & of the House of Commons. There is much to be said for this method, but curious as it may appear, there is also much to be said for the function of the Governor General being discharged by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. There are several objections to this, but the more it is thought out the more it appears to be on the whole worthy of consideration. For myself I am frankly in favor of the idea that the nomination should be made by Parliament in joint executive session.

In my judgment it would be quite out of the question to have a permanent provision that the nomination should be entirely in the hands of the Canadian Government.

I observe in the Globe this morning a statement to the effect that Norris made a statement to the effect which I interpret as meaning that he intends to appeal to the country if defeated. Of course you understand perfectly that he has no right in the world to appeal to the country. He has appealed to the country and been defeated as definitely and decisively as any Government ever was defeated. I am not criticising him for holding on, because the circumstances were very peculiar, but if he is now defeated in the House there is only one constitutional course to follow and that is to resign. Straining the constitution to save the country in despite of the electors is a poor business and never brought anybody any credit. Do not let the Free Press get identified with any such constitutional doctrine as that a Premier is entitled to ask for a dissolution in the first session after he has had a general election.

Feb. 26th, 1921.

My dear Sifton:-

The statement made by Norris to the Legislature on Wednesday certainly conveyed the impression that he had the power to bring about a

dissolution. He modified this the following day when his authority to make any such statement was challenged in the House. He then said that what he meant was that if the Government were defeated the political conditions that would result would make an appeal to the people necessary. I think this is probably a correct statement of the fact for I very much doubt whether, with the present composition of the Legislature, any alternative Government is possible.

I am studiously refraining from identifying myself in any way with what might be called the Government's board of strategy, consequently I do not know precisely what they have in mind but I rather think that Norris, in the event of a defeat in the House, would advise the Government [sic] to grant him a dissolution but without any very definite belief that this would be accorded him. I have said to Ministers of the Crown with whom I have spoken that they could not expect a dissolution under the circumstances, but that, of course it was within the power of the Lieutenant-Governor to grant them one if he chose to take the responsibility. I have been careful in the Free Press to put in nothing that could be interpreted as supporting the view that Norris has the right to dissolution, though we have not indicated that under the circumstances he has no right, since the only effect of such a statement would be to complicate the political situation which is already mixed enough. If I had heard that Norris intended to make a statement of that kind I should have taken the liberty of advising him not to put it in just the way he did but to make it clear that he would disclaim any further responsibility for the administration of affairs unless it was clear that he possessed the confidence of the majority of the members of the House.

I do not know with what measure of discretion the Government will manage affairs in the circumstances that have developed. I have already saved them from one very serious blunder. I was told by a Minister in the course of a casual conversation before the opening of the House that it was the intention of the Government to insist upon having a majority of the members upon at least two of the questions, the law amendments and public accounts. I said that the Government had no right to a majority and that if they demanded it the opposition groups would be justified in rejecting the demand and the public would say that they were within their rights in doing so. The result would have been that the Government would have been defeated at the outset upon a question upon which they would clearly

have been wrong. The matter was reconsidered and the Government never put forward its claim.

The situation here is very uncertain and I should not care to make any prediction from day to day as to what might happen. No doubt very strenuous efforts have been made to bring about some sort of a coalition which would result in the defeat of the Government. The parties who are trying to bring this about are having their disappointments. At times they think they have the combination made only to find that it blows up over night. I do not believe that any combination can be made. The element in the Legislature which is determined to destroy the 'Government if it can is the opposition, that is, the seven Conservatives and the seven non-English speaking members who have allied themselves with the Independent Farmers' party for the tactical purpose of controlling its course if possible. I do not think Labor will enter into any combination nor is the Labor group a cohesive body in itself. There are at least four shades of opinion within the group.

I think it possible that the Independent Farmer group will blow up, one or two of the members going into the Labor party, the French-men forming a distinct opposition party of their own but co-operating in attacks upon the Government with the Conservatives, and the Farmers getting behind the Government though preserving perhaps some kind of an organization of their own. There are a good many influences, including the pressure of public opinion, tending toward this end and I think the efforts of the man behind the whole scheme, that is to say, Rogers, are now being directed towards preventing such a break-away. Norris has had direct assurances within the last two or three days from a member of the Farmer group who was elected at the last election with the support of the Government, that eight out of the nine Farmers are likely to virtually line up behind the Government. Whether this will eventuate I do not know but if it does not I do not think the Government will carry on even though it may not meet defeat in the House. I do not think Norris is actuated by any of the determination to hang on at all costs which was a mark of the politician of the older school.

D. H. McDonald is going East tomorrow and says he intends to call upon you. I had a brief talk with McDonald at the Rowell dinner last night.

The last time I saw him he seemed to be a supporter of the Dominion Government but, judging from his remarks last night, he was gone into opposition and appears to be in general sympathy with the official Liberals. There would probably be no other camp for him as he has always been hostile to the Farmers' movement. I inferred from some of his remarks that he was harboring the idea that the Liberals, if they contested Western seats, could elect some members, particularly in the constituencies where there is a heavy foreign and Catholic vote. The constituencies that I think he has in mind specially are Saltcoats, Humboldt and McKenzie. I do not claim to have any special knowledge of those constituencies but I have a well defined hunch that once the campaign is opened the Farmers' movement in Saskatchewan will be quite irresistible and that it will carry every purely rural seat and probably the partially urban constituencies as well. The only effect of any participation on a large scale by the Liberals in Western Canada in the election contest will be to give the Government a chance to elect its candidates in constituencies in which otherwise they would be undoubtedly defeated. I am more and more convinced that the tactics for King are to make a virtue of necessity and to renounce his right to contest the prairie constituencies with a fine gesture of apparent disinterestedness. He ought to be advised along these lines and it will be infortunate [sic] for him if McDonald should be able to convince him that he should insist upon Liberal candidates being put into the field throughout the West. McDonald tells me that Turriff has written him that careful calculation at Ottawa shows that the Government will be able to command a sufficient majority to get through the session. This may be true so far as divisions which are foreseen are concerned but I shall be very much surprised if they are not ambushed and slaughtered at some point during the session, if the opposition groups are really determined to defeat them. My impression, however, is that there is a certain amount of make-believe in the tactics of the Progressives. They will support the Non-confidence motion because it is obviously the politic thing to do with the expectation that it will not carry and that the Government will carry on. Crerar said to me that the one contingency which he dreaded was Meighen's resignation following a defeat in the House. If he took this course and recommended the calling of King, the political effects, in Crerar's judgment, would be very serious to both Liberals and Pro-gressives. He said the only real safeguard against such a course was

Meighen's temperament which would suggest to him under these conditions that in place of resigning he should go to the country.

The Board of Trade dinner to Rowell here last night was quite an event and Rowell made an undeniable impression. I had a brief conversation with Rowell and expect to run across him to-day and have a further conversation. If there is anything worth while I will write you on Monday.

March 2, 1921.

My dear Dafoe:-

I have your letter of the 26th February, which I am destroying as there are one or two things in it which it would be indiscreet to risk continuing on paper.

I note what you say about Norris and his Government.

With respect to D. H. MacDonald [sic] and the constituencies in the West. I am entirely in agreement with you. I have just been at Ottawa and saw Crerar two or three times and discussed matters with him at length, also with King. I think they are handling the situation fairly well, but the Government supporters are very well in hand and determined to prevent the defeat of the Government at this session at any cost. On the whole it is not very likely that the Government will be defeated by a surprise vote, though, of course, with such a small majority it always may be possible.

I note what you say about Rowell. My opinion has not changed at all, and I think the speeches which he is making are futile and are not thought out to any intelligent conclusion.

With respect to your postscript¹¹ on the subject of general election in South Africa. I am quite sure that Smuts would have an iron-clad understanding

¹¹ This reference is to Dafoe's letter of February 26. The original, which contained the postscript, was evidently destroyed by Sir Clifford Sifton as indicated in the first paragraph of this letter.

with the Governor General and that the latter would do whatever Smuts thought best and if it conflicted with constitutional doctrine it would be so much the worse for the doctrine.

April 30, 1921.

My Dear Dafoe:

I enclose you a despatch that was printed in the "Star" last night. It is very significant.

It is entirely evident that the dominant view in England is that they are going to take Canada in and make her responsible for every-thing that the British Government' does, and it will as a matter of fact be accomplished in a few months unless there is a determined fight opened on the subject. You might as well open the fight now and my judgment is that the best way to do it is to take hold of this statement and declare war on the subject at once. Let it be known that the project is understood and that it will be fought from the beginning in the most unqualified way.

I was very much disappointed in the Debate at Ottawa the other day. King's amendment was clearly right and should have been accepted, but outside of Lapointe nobody seemed to have the slightest under standing of the subject or what they really have to decide. Rowell was, I think, the worst of all.

May 2nd, 1921.

My dear Sifton:-

I am in receipt of your three letters, two of which arrived this morning. Until the first came to hand on Saturday I did not know you had returned. I trust you had a pleasant visit down south.

We have not really discussed the Shaughnessy proposition" in the Free Press. We carried a couple of notices which stated quite clearly that we are opposed to it. It did not seem to me that there was the slightest likelihood of it being seriously considered and I, therefore, did not get down to the business of analysing it and discussing it in detail. The scheme is open to all the objections you cite and others too. One of its purposes is plainly to enable the C.P.R. shareholders to get away with all their extraneous assets and another is to safeguard the C.P.R. shareholders in perpetuity against all vicissitudes of private ownership of railway stock by transforming it into permanent debenture stock guaranteed by the Government and bearing, presumably, 7% interest. All the country would get out of it would be the possibility of better management. It might get this for the time being but ultimately the last stage would be worse than the first.

I had a long talk with Crerar at Easter, particularly about railroad matters. He came expressly to talk over with me my own scheme of having trustee shareholders for the Canadian National roads representative by [sic] all the varied interests of the country. I looked up the draft proposal which I made some years ago and spent the afternoon over it. He said that this corresponded to the idea he had in mind and he may bring it up in the special committee. Crerar told me of talks he had had with your [sic] in Ottawa and also of the precautions he had had to take to discourage Mr. King in his plans looking towards a merger of the Farmer and Liberal parties. Crerar was very cautious in what he said about King but it is easy to see that he has no high opinion of him. All my information from Ottawa this session is that King is in no way demonstrating an increasing fitness for his position but rather that he is steadily losing in comparison with both Meighen and Crerar and also in comparison with some of his supposed lieutenants, particularly Lapointe and Fielding.

Mr. J. A. Aikin, formerly editor of the Saskatoon Phoenix, who has been in Ottawa during most of the session and who is a very competent observer, tells me that King's dependence upon Fielding is

¹² Lord Shaughnessy, president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, proposed in 1921 that the publicly owned railways and the Canadian Pacific should be combined for operating purposes, though ownership would remain unchanged. This proposal for the creation of a railway monopoly found very little support in Western Canada. See A. W. Currie, *The Economics of Canadian Transportation*, (Toronto, 1954), 447 ff.

so very obvious as to excite comment. I think the Liberals in Parliament must realize that King's leadership is one of the very serious handicaps under which they are laboring. I have been told that more than one of them have [sic] expressed the belief that Crerar would make an acceptable leader of the combined party if the Liberals and the Farmers could be brought together.

There have been no very obvious developments in Dominion politics in the West during the past two or three months. I think I see indications that the friends of the Government are a little more confident than they were that they will be able to make some kind of a fight. They are counting upon getting some measure of political advantage out of the adoption by the United States of the Emergency Tariff Bill which is certain to excite resentment against the United States in the minds of a good many grain growers and stock raisers in Western Canada. Then they hope that the investigation carried out by themselves in the Grain Commission will injure Crerar and the United Grain Growers. It is quite possible that this will be its effect. The Commission is purely political in its inception. It is the suggestion of W. D. Staples and it is the intention that he shall direct the investigation and determine the report, though I imagine that J. H. Haslem, who is a member of the Commission, will have something to say about the kind of report that will be made. The primary idea behind the investigation is to expose the breaches of the Grain Act of which apparently all the Terminal elevators at the lake front have been guilty, including those controlled by the United Grain Growers of which Crerar is the head, and also the Saskatchewan Co-operative Company. There is, as you know, a prohibition in the Grain Act against the unauthorized sale of wheat stored in the terminal elevators at the lake front. There is a provision in the Act for punishment both by fine and imprisonment, and also breach of the law involves the possibility of cancellation of the license under which the companies do business. I am informed that this law has always been pretty much of a dead letter and that the breach of it has been a matter of common knowledge to the Board of Grain Commissioners. The terminal elevator companies have taken advantage, when circumstances permitted, of a premium on cash wheat and have been in the habit of protecting their customers by buying options for future delivery; that is to say, they sold the wheat entrusted to their care and hedged the sale so that they would always have available wheat to fill any selling orders coming forward

from owners. During the two years that the Wheat Board was in operation there was, of course, no opportunity to do this but during the past season, owing to the very attractive premiums on cash wheat and to the accumulation at the lake front of large supplies which the farmers refused to sell in the expectation of higher prices, there was an extraordinarily favorable opportunity and it was taken advantage of by, I imagine, every elevator company at the lake front. I have heard an estimate that the amount of hedged wheat approximated 20,000,000 bushels.

These facts were known to Staples and he saw the political possibility of an investigation in which the elevator companies' [sic] and particularly the United Grain Growers would be discredited and by virtue of which the Government would appear as a defender and vindicator of the interests of the Grain Growers. Of course, it is quite clear that the Board of Grain Commissioners, in permitting these irregularities, was guilty of a serious breach of duty and the inclusion of Mr. Staples in the Commission of investigation casts a doubt upon the bona fide of the whole transaction.

We pointed out in two or three editorials the impropriety of having Mr. Staples serve on the Commission and formal objections to his presence there have been registered by the United Farmers of Manitoba. Though this will militate to a considerable extent against the Commission my impression is that the exposures will have a very considerable political effect and they may put Crerar in a defensive position. I do not think he will be personally connected with the breaches of the law but he is the general manager of a company which will be shown to have sold farmers' wheat entrusted to its care in order to realize upon the cash premium. The defense that the beneficiaries of this transaction are the farmer shareholders of the Company in place of capitalist owners may not go very far. Apart from this the farmers' movement in the West appears to be in pretty good shape. They expect to win the by-election in Medicine Hat. It is possible that there will be four candidates in the field, but I think the more there are the greater the probability that the farmers will be successful.

The local provincial political situation has been very interesting and not without its amusing features. The Legislature is now within two or three days of prorogation and I do not think that anything will happen in the interval, though one can never tell. At the outset of the session there

was undoubtedly some kind of an understanding between the leaders of the three opposition groups that if opportunity offered they would get together and take over the government, but the Norris government has so far weathered all storms although it has had one or two close calls, and will apparently complete the session having carried through its legislative programme pretty much as it planned. Personally the situation has done Norris a great deal of good. He has had to exert himself and he has shown up very well in the debates and is to a very marked degree the dominating personality in the House. Mr. Johnson,* the attorney-general, has also been very much in evidence. On the other hand none of the leaders of the other groups have [sic] done well. Robson,* the leader of the Independent Farmers, is well meaning but weak and ignorant; there is general agreement that Mr. Haig, leader of the small Conservative group, has been a complete failure; while the labor group has been by no means united in its attitude towards the Government. The closest call which the Government had was over a freak resolution moved by Smith* of Brandon in favor of replacing the present Government by an executive elected by the Legislature on the basis of each group having its due proportion. This was defeated by the casting vote of the speaker. If the government had been defeated upon this issue it would have advised a dissolution and under the circumstances it is the general belief that it would have been granted. This fact becoming generally known, the attractive-ness of the group government proposition diminished and when last week the proposal was revived in somewhat modified form by Mr. Bernier and the government made it a want-of-confidence proposition, they were sustained by a vote of 20 to 9 which has been generally interpreted as an indication that the Government has been accepted as the only possible administration in the present Legislature.

A general election is in sight in Saskatchewan and will probably be over by the middle of June. The situation is not unlike that which prevailed in this province a year ago and the result may be much the same. There is no attack being made upon the Martin Government but nevertheless Independent candidates are appearing in all parts of the province and my information is that the movement may become quite formidable. In addition, a party which professes itself to be in close alliance with the Dominion Government has been organized and will contest a considerable number of seats. It is not at all clear that Mr. Martin has strengthened his Government by taking in J. A. Maharg, the President of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers.

The complaints of the radical element in the Grain Growers for some years past have been that there is too close a connection between the Saskatchewan Government and the executive of the Grain Growers and the inclusion of Maharg in the Government is confirmation of their suspicions. His selection is more apt to strengthen than to discourage the Independent movement which is largely inspired by hostility towards the recognized leaders of the Grain Growers movement. The Martin government ought to win on its record and its merits and I think it will, but it is possible that the experience of Manitoba will be repeated and that it will find itself menaced by a tendency towards group representation.

I judge from your letter that you didn't see our comment upon President Harding's message re the League of Nations. So far as I have observed there has been an almost complete silence on this subject by the Canadian Press, but we paid some attention to it and for your information I enclose the editorial page of the Free Press containing the article and also a summary of press opinion.

I shall write you at greater length one of these days about this and also about some other matters, among them the Imperial Conference to be held in London in June. It looks as though Meighen is going to be pretty sound on these questions. I understand he has written an article for the Centenary number of the Manchester Guardian in which he puts himself pretty well in line with advanced Canadian public opinion. The article, I am told, was prepared in the first instance by Mr. Christie.* This is encouraging because if he relies upon Christie he will not go far wrong. However, I hope to write you at length on these subjects within the next few days. The present letter is doubtless as much as you want to hear from me at present.

Mr. Macklin will no doubt give you information as to the business conditions in the West. They are not any too cheerful but we are doing very well here and have legitimate right to be gratified at the prospects.

May 18th, 1921

My dear Sir Clifford,

With the Imperial Conference called for the middle of next month I judge there will be a very lively interest in the questions of Empire relationships

and kindred matters and I am planning to run a series of articles, some of which have already appeared and which I presume you have seen. Others are on the stocks and will come along at the rate of a couple a week. One article which has not yet appeared is a signed review by myself of Mr. Hall's* book which will appear in our next monthly book number which comes out on Saturday, May 28th.

I noted carefully what you wrote me after your return from your month's trip in the United States. I don't think there is much probability of Canada being in danger of any immediate entanglements by reason of her association with the League of Nations. There are no doubt possibilities of trouble for us in this direction, bearing in mind the attitude which the United States has taken, but it seems to me that the circumstances are bound to compel some kind of readjustment. The U.S. has simply got to get back into the international game. There are many signs that they will do so just as readily as they can act without repudiating their recent past too violently. The League of Nations or a similar association of nations without the U.S. would tend to become an agency for carrying out the programmes of the chancelleries of Europe, that is to say, an attempt would be made to put it to Imperialistic uses, whereas the moral conception which the League is supposed to embody is democratic and anti-Imperialistic and my own view which I reached in Paris was that France had no use for the League of Nations until she saw an opportunity to make it an agency through which she could carry out her European policies. The dropping out of the United States facilitated these purposes. There were, of course, signs of this tendency at Geneva last November and I thought the Canadian representatives did valiantly in standing up against these tendencies. In Great Britain there is on this, as on all other major questions, marked divergency of view. The Foreign Office is as Imperialistic as the French Government and would no doubt combine with France to degrade the League to a sort of annex to themselves but there is, of course, a very powerful element in English public life which has a truer view of the functions of a society of Nations. I should be inclined to ' think that with the increasing evidence of the United States returning to International participation, the League of Nations would simply mark time and engage in no risky experiments until the situation develops. Meanwhile the Canadian government should be careful to protect itself against being involved in any European or Asiatic adventures under the auspices of the League and this

can be readily done if the government at Ottawa is on guard. Meanwhile membership in the League is a simply invaluable argument at the disposal of those who urge the opinion that the Dominions have obtained sovereign power. The centralists have only realized how fatal the implications of Dominion membership in the League are to the conception of the Empire as a diplomatic unit and there is no way out for them excepting a demand that the Dominions renounce their connection with the League which I see is the policy urged by an Australian writer named Eggleton in one of the British quarterlies. I have not seen the article but there was a lengthy reference to it in a recent issue of the Times.

Much more dangerous than any complications that might arise from our association with the League of Nations is the possibility that the Dominions will be entangled in internal Imperial questions as to which there is marked difference of opinion among the political parties of Great Britain. It will be, I judge, part of Churchill's* policy to induce the overseas Dominions to consider the Mesopotamian problem, the question of the independence of Egypt and possibly the problems of India. They may also be asked to take a hand in the Irish trouble. If the Dominion premiers were to do anything of the kind the consequence might be very awkward. If they were induced to take Mr. Churchill's view which, of course, would be his idea in bringing the matter before them, they would at once find themselves in conflict with a great body of Liberal and Labor opinion in Great Britain, while if they disagreed violently with Churchill, which I am inclined to think would be the case, they might easily find themselves dragged into a British political controversy which would not encourage good feeling between the various British peoples. The only safe course is to refuse to consider problems having to do with the internal difficulties of what might accurately be called the British Empire problem, that is to say, the United Kingdom and its territories and protectorates. It would be a great triumph for Mr. Churchill and his friends if the Imperial Conference could be induced to consider these questions because they would thereby assume a moral responsibility for policies which they approved which would compel them to implement their decisions in some practical fashion.

I shall be glad if you will watch the articles on Imperial questions and give me the benefit of any suggestions or advice. I think the course to follow

is to be perfectly clear in principle but to express it with moderation and in particular not to confuse the Imperialistic tendencies of powerful elements in the British population with Great Britain itself. The struggle between these elements and the body of Liberal opinion in Great Britain is at this moment approaching a climax and it may easily happen that before the time comes for dealing decisively with the question at issue, there will be in power in Great Britain a government wholly divorced from the Imperialistic tendencies which are now so much in evidence. The criticism that I have to make of Ewart's writings is that he does not make this distinction and that he imports into the discussion a touch of bitterness which while justified perhaps in being applied to the matters under particular discussion tends to encourage bad feeling between the Canadian and British peoples and which is altogether unnecessary for the carrying out of the views which he holds and is undesirable on other grounds. Politically, that is, with a view to, getting political results, it is not judicious. I have been studying this question now for a long time and I have had the very valuable experience of addressing a large number of audiences on these questions, and I find that it is possible to carry any normally constituted Canadian audience with this view. The time has come for Canada to become in the face of the world an independent and sovereign power, attaining such status she will feel herself free and willing to co-operate with other British peoples in matters of common concern so far as the methods of co-operation which are worked out meet with their approval. That strikes the average Canadian as an entirely proper proposition. But Ewart's line of urging Canadians to secure their entire independence in order that they may have nothing to do with Great Britain which he represents as a hopelessly reactionary Imperialistic nation, will not get him anywhere. For one thing it runs against a deep inherited tradition in the Canadian people, and if the whole body of facts supported the view, which it does not, it would take a generation of propaganda and agitation to remove from the minds of Canadians the predominant ideas as to the character of Great Britain which now hold the field.

Of course, Mr. Ewart has never been interested in considering questions from a political standpoint. He is primarily a controversialist and if he makes out his case and scores his points against his opponent he cares very little what the political consequences are. I have a very clear recollection of the speech which I believe ended Ewart's career as a possible politician. It was

delivered in this city at the provincial election of 1886 which you doubtless remember very well. As you will recall, the whole Liberal plan of campaign in that contest turned upon the capturing of the large body of Conservatives who were opposed to the railway policy of the Dominion government. At a political rally in Winnipeg just about thirty-five years ago this month, Ewart was one of the speakers and he took as his theme "the native and congenital cussedness of all Tories, past, present and future" and he proceeded to demonstrate and prove his argument by citings from history. The result would have been laughable if it had not been so unfortunate. Conservatives with very angry faces began to stream out of the hall and later that night reverberations which some of the citizens of Winnipeg possibly took for an earthquake were only the free opinions of Ewart being expressed by Mr. Luxton* in the editorial offices of the Free Press: Ewart's spade work is really invaluable but the political limitations of his agitation. are very marked in my judgment.

I enclose you a letter from Stevenson.* I am inclined to think that the Canadian cause will be in good hands in London next month. It is encouraging to see that Meighen is travelling to London without Guthrie* or Ballantyne. I should regard both of them with great apprehension as advisors to Meighen in this case. He is taking Christie with him and presumably will rely upon Christie's knowledge and experience. I understand that Christie was in the main the author of the article in the Manchester Guardian. I don't know anybody in active public life today who would do as well as Meighen in telling Mr. Churchill where he gets off at if the need arises.

General McRae yesterday showed me a telegram from Smith in Toronto saying he had talked over the Western Colonization scheme with you and that you approved. I was glad to hear this because we have more or less identified ourselves with the movement. I have been making a pretty close study during the last two or three months of colonization and immigration matters and will try to write you one of these days about them. This letter is already too long. I think the Federal Immigration Dep't. might just as well be wiped off the slate during the continuance of the present administration. As a friend of Mr. Calder's said to me only yesterday, a man who is at present in the Dominion service and an appointee of Mr. Calder's - Calder has now got

the point [to] where he uses his ingenuity in forming objections to any proposition that may be put up to him.

I am going out of town for about a week to my cottage on the shores of Lake Winnipeg but upon my return I will write you further about the colonization situation in the West.

May 30, 1921

My Dear Dafoe:

I have yours of the 18th with the enclosures. I have concluded that it is just as well not to say anything directly about the Commission of Conservation. The action of the Government has been of a most contemptible character and Meighen himself is the man who is mainly responsible. The whole course of the conduct of the Government in respect to this subject is entirely discreditable.

I think it would not be a bad idea for you to get Senator Edwards Speech in the Senate Hansard of May 19th and either print the whole of it or a summary of it.

I return Mr. Stevenson's letter in case you require it.

My opinion about the League of Nations is not changed at all. Harvey's statement in London makes it perfectly clear that the United States is not going into it either directly or indirectly, and the result is that it becomes simply an Agency for the European countries to use in settling up their disputes, which we have absolutely nothing to do with. Our participation is expensive, will do us no good and may possibly get us into trouble.

I expect to be up in Winnipeg about the first week in July.

Please do not commit the F[ree]. P[ress]. to the new League of Nations Society. It is just another edition of the busybodies who don't know where they are getting. The Duke seems to be an easy mark for them all.

June 30, 1921

My Dear Dafoe:

I have been reading your articles on the Japanese Treaty¹³ and they are excellent. I think, however, the time has come when you should take a stronger line and declare *unalterable hostility to the renewal of the Treaty in any shape or form unless the United States is an assenting party*.

I have thought this matter over very carefully and am entirely certain that this is the best policy for us to take.

June 30th, 1921.

My dear Sifton:

I did not write you about the colonization and immigration matter I had in my mind as it had relation mostly to the prospective season's work of the Western Canada Colonization organization, which is at present in a state of suspended animation and may possibly never come to life again.

I understood from General McRae that he had had a long conversation with you and that you were in general agreement with the policy which he had mapped out. I am satisfied that there will have to be some such machinery as that which he had in mind if settlement on any rapid scale is to be accomplished in the West. The larger land companies who are still operating in bringing in settlers are engaged in something which is not far removed from a confidence game. They sell wild land as high as \$50.00 or \$60.00 an acre to Americans who are led to believe that average yields of fifty or sixty bushels to the acre are common occurrences. No such large influx is possible under these circumstances.

¹³ The renewal of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, first arranged in 1902, was the major question considered at the Imperial Conference of 1921. Arthur Meighen, the Canadian Prime Minister, opposed its renewal on the grounds that the United States believed that the alliance was directed against American interests in the Pacific. Thus the alliance complicated relations between Canada and the United States. Meighen's opposition was successful and, in part, led to the termination of the alliance and the calling of the Washington Naval Disarmament Conference in 1921-22. See Roger Graham, Arthur Meighen, *And Fortune Fled*, (Toronto, 1963), Chapter III.

You have doubtless noticed the result in Medicine Hat¹⁴. I am inclined to think that the sweeping nature of the victory is something more than Crerar and his friends counted upon. It is likely to give a great boost to the Alberta scheme of participating in politics with which Crerar is not in sympathy and is calculated to increase greatly the prestige of H. W. Wood who, I am told, is on record as saying that a head-on collision between him and Crerar is bound to come.

At the outset of the campaign in Medicine Hat the influence of Wood, or at any rate of some of his immediate adherents, was directed against inviting Crerar to speak in the constituency. Later the campaign managers decided that they needed all the help they could get and came down from their high horse, making also appeals to the Liberals of the constituency and to the Labor forces, both of whom they had rather flouted at the opening of the contest. If they had had any idea that such a sweep was possible I have no doubt that they would have so engineered it as to give Mr. Wood the entire credit. There was no expectation of a victory of the dimensions which was recorded. Norman Lambert, Secretary of the Canadian Council of Agriculture, spent four days in the constituency campaigning; he said there was no doubt of the result but he [. . . ? . . .] the majority [. . . ? . . .] are about a thousand. Of course, the result is very discouraging to the Government forces so it makes their position in the West even more hopeless than they thought.

You have no doubt been following the developments re the grain inquiry. I have not been able to make up my mind yet whether Crerar has injured himself or not in permitting the U[nited]. G[rain]. G[rowers]. to identify itself with the Winnipeg Grain Exchange in appealing to the courts as to the validity of the inquiry. He has no doubt given a talking point to his critics, but I hardly imagine that there is or can be any political damage to the third party movement. It seems to me to grow in strength daily.

I understand the [sic] Stewart,* Premier of Alberta, who has brought on an

¹⁴ This by-election was another storm warning for the old parties in Western Canada. Held on June 27, 1921 it was a two party contest between the Unionists and a candidate nominated by the United Farmers of Alberta. Robert Gardiner,* the U.F.A. nominee, easily won the seat. The result was widely interpreted as a repudiation of the Meighen government in the West which, in 1917, had been a stronghold of the Unionist cause. See Morton, Progressive Party, 110-112.

election, expects a victory; but I should think it practically impossible for him to get any working majority in view of the active participation of the farmers in the contest. They will contest more than half the seats in the province and, under the prestige which has come to them from their Medicine Hat triumph, they are likely to win a very considerable number of them.

As I understand you are coming West shortly, discussion about the very interesting situation which is developing by virtue of the Conference in London can wait. Apparently the Anglo-Japanese Treaty has been practically knocked out and a great measure of credit for this is coming apparently to Canada. I have been particularly interested in Meighen's attempt to provide at one and the same time a voice for the Dominions in foreign policy and a theoretical diplomatic unity for the Empire. His plan appears to be that the Canadian view as to Imperial policy would predominate in matters which Canada is particularly interested in and that the Imperial Government shall execute this policy upon the advice of the Canadian government. If you have read Mr. Hall's book carefully you will find the germ of this idea in it. Of course, the whole scheme is utterly unworkable and I can hardly imagine it even being tried. It is reasonable to assume, however, that the discussion of foreign policy will begin and end simply with discussion, since no actual decision could be reached without infringing upon the domain of the Constitutional Conference to be held later. Meanwhile the discussion is of value and the credit must go to Mr. Meighen that he has had the courage to insist upon Canada's right to determine her foreign policies in matters of prime importance to her.

We are having abnormally hot weather here but I don't think that any substantial injury has been done to the Manitoba crop as yet. The Deputy Minister of Agriculture told me to-day that the situation in Dacotah [sic] and Minnesota, where he has been visiting, is very serious but that his advices are that everything is hopeful in this province so far.

July 4, 1921.

My Dear Dafoe:

I have your letter of the 30th ultimo and note what you say.

The Medicine Hat election was, of course, a stunning blow to the friends

of the Government, and, as you know, it makes the position of Stewart in Alberta very uncertain.

In any collision between Wood and Crerar, of course my sympathies are entirely with Crerar, although I think he made a very bad mistake in the injunction proceedings in Winnipeg. His obvious course was to write a letter to the Chairman of the Commission and demand an immediate session in Winnipeg open to the public for the purpose of giving him an opportunity of refuting the charges. The fact that he did not do so must create the impression that there was something that he was afraid of.

I agree with you that it will not make the slightest difference in his political strength or in the political strength of the Farmers Movement.

With regard to Meighen's proposition about constitutional matters and foreign policy. I think he is hopelessly involved. He apparently does not see that his proposition makes Canada responsible for everything that is done by Great Britain or the Empire in matters of foreign policy. There is only one possible conclusion and it might as well be faced and that is - Canada will have to conduct her own foreign policy and let Great Britain do the same, neither having any responsibility for the other.

The telegram that I sent you respecting the Japanese Treaty was due to the fact that I know certain busybodies in Canada were transmitting press despatches to London which were entirely misleading. I have no doubt that your message if it got there had a good effect. It is obvious that the British Government found itself in hot water and had to resort to the expedient of getting an opinion from the Lord Chancellor to put an end to the discussion.

This, of course, is all very interesting but what is much more interesting is the state of the Western crop, and I trust your anticipations will prove to be well founded.

Aug. 8, 1921

Dear Dafoe

So your prize package statesman Meighan has sold the pass - gate, moat, portcullis and drawbridge.

His Quebec speech¹⁵ means a United Empire with consultative council of premiers and the whole Empire responsible, financially, militarily and navally. There is absolutely no room for dispute and his speech shows that he knows what it means.

It means responsibility for Great Britain's foreign policy in Europe and the whole world. It means we are a part of the quarrelling and warring world of Europe instead of the peaceful world of America. It means responsibility for every iniquitous job of the F[oreign]. O[ffice]. (e.g. Mesopotamia)

Meighan must be challenged at once or very soon. This is a specific issue and it must be definitely settled. It will settle all the others. I shall be out here about two weeks yet. We must find out where Crerar and the farmers stand on this at once but I have no misgivings about them.

Oct. 14th, 1921

My dear Sifton:-

I have been trying to find time for some days to write you but have been too busy to do so. There is nothing very special to report excepting that the political campaign is developing along definite lines and that there have been no surprises as yet. Crerar goes East tonight to open his campaign at Brampton where he speaks Monday night. The Farmer organization is proceeding apace in this province, where a very excellent lot of candidates are being put in the field; and I hear that everything is in first-rate shape in Alberta. In Saskatchewan, however, there is considerable confusion and a possibility of the movement being damaged by factional fights in many of the constituencies. The organization created altogether too much pre-election machinery and they found great difficulty in getting candidates into the field without undue lack of time. The political committee which has had

¹⁵ Apparently a reference to Meighen's speech welcoming the new Governor General, Lord Byng of Vimy, who landed at Quebec in August, 1921. See Graham, Arthur Meighen, 107.

charge of the campaign, had the bright idea of inaugurating primary elections and these primaries are now being held. The result has been to develop an army of aspirants in every constituency and to delay to a much too late a date, the holding of the nominating conventions. It has also given an opportunity for the growth of factional contests. I understand the situation is fairly serious in some three or four of the seats, although it is expected that everything will be squared away by about the end of the month, which will give them ample time to compose their differences before election day. A member of the staff who spent ten days travelling in Saskatchewan, thinks that the Farmers are quite unbeatable in all the rural seats unless they quarrel among themselves. He does not think the Government has any show except in Saskatoon constituency; while the best chance the Liberals have to get a representative at Ottawa is in Regina constituency, where it is possible that Motherwell will not be opposed by the Progressives.

From what I can hear Martin and Dunning are trying to make a bargain with the Progressive organization by which they will throw their weight behind the Progressive movement elsewhere in the Province in return for this consideration for Mr. Motherwell. On personal grounds, of course, Motherwell is fairly satisfactory to the Progressives and I should not be surprised if an arrangement of this sort were made. Here in Manitoba, as I have said, the Farmers are getting their candidates into the field with great rapidity and the nominations thus far have all been good ones. I think the Progressive strength is increasing every day. The likelihood is growing that they will pick up all the rural seats West of the Red River with the probable exception of Portage la Prairie. Rogers expects to win in Lisgar but my information from the constituency is that he was stronger on the day he announced his candidature than he has been at any time since and that there can only be one end to the contest. If you have been reading the Free Press you may have noticed that the Liberal party in this province, which at best is only a rump, has been split down the middle and now consists of two camps, one headed by A. E. Hill of Brandon and the other by the delectable John Knott of Winnipeg. Hill and his associates constitute the official party as they are recognized by the National organization; but Knott and his crowd may nevertheless be the real Simon pure Liberals, and they are planning to put their own candidates into every constituency in the Province. They have already made a nomination, Billy Hogarth, in South Winnipeg. The movement is of no political significance excepting that it

makes the Liberal impotence still more marked. J. B. Molloy, the old member, is likely, I think, to hold Provencher for the Liberals. I imagine that Crerar will be quite well satisfied if the Progressives do not oppose him. They may also have a chance in Springfield, if they nominate a candidate who can get the bulk of the French vote in St. Boniface and La Verendry. Their nominating convention is being held this afternoon. Should they nominate Tom Molloy they might possibly get the constituency, though my impression is that a Farmer-Labor candidate who is in prospect would be unbeatable.

Here in Winnipeg the situation is still quite obscure. But there is a Committee of citizens working quietly with a view to getting Independent candidates in the three seats, or having suitable candidates nominated by other bodies. They have Hudson in sight for South Winnipeg and Puttee for North, but there is no assurance yet that they can be secured. If the Canadian Labor party had sense enough to nominate Puttee and Hudson were to take the field in South Winnipeg as an Independent Liberal, there would be no question whatever of the result. Centre Winnipeg, with its voting population of 40,000 people, is at this stage nothing but a riddle; the only candidate actually in the field and at work is J. S. Woodsworth,* representing the Independent Labor party.

The enclosures herewith may be interesting to you. The copy of the letter from Mr. Hall, the young Australian who wrote the much quoted book, "The British Commonwealth of Nations," contains some things of interest. In my letter to him I mentioned Arthur's work at Paris which will explain one reference in the letter. I was interested to see that he is very hostile to the abandonment of the Constitutional Conference, and I also noted in the news despatches that Sir Robert Borden had also taken strong ground on this point in his lecture before the Toronto University. We have never discussed in the Free Press this question of the abandonment of the Conference. I had been waiting for Meighen to make some announcement which would give me a text and then when the election campaign broke I came to the conclusion that not much is to be gained by writing articles of this character. I think, perhaps, we should say something, particularly in view of the developments in connection [with] Canadian representation at Washing-ton. I enclose a copy of an editorial which appeared in this morning's issue dealing with Canadian representation at Washington.

The statement by Mr. Lawrence* interested me but I did not pay much attention to it until Crerar showed me a letter which he had received from Tom King,* recording a confidential interview which he had had with Senator Underwood. Underwood told King that it had been the intention of the United States government to issue direct invitations to the Dominions but that it had abandoned the intention because it got a hint that such a course would not be acceptable to the British Government. Senator Underwood said he had no documentary evidence of this fact but he was personally absolutely sure that his statement was correct. I am following up to-days' [sic] article with a second one which I will base upon a Washington despatch to the New York Times, and it will give me an opportunity of saying something about the postponement of the Constitutional Conference.

What I propose to say is simply that in view of the abandonment of the Constitutional Conference, the road is now open for Canada to go ahead under her own steam, so to speak, and by definitive pronouncements by the Canadian parliament or otherwise, make our international position clear to the World.

I duly received the book by Keith which you returned. I am ordering another book by Keith which is just out. When I get it I will forward it to you. I have to thank you also for the article from the National Review. We get this publication here but I had not noticed this article. As you may not see the Times, I am enclosing you a rather interesting and significant letter sent to it by Willison.* From its tone there is no doubt but that Mr. Meighen, when he visited Toronto, made his peace with Willison and his friends.

October 21, 1921

My dear Dafoe:

I wrote you a letter a day or two ago about Political Prospects. There have been some developments since. Crerar has had two or three meetings and undoubtedly there is every indication of unity and enthusiasm amongst the farmers.

It is also very clear that the Manufacturers are getting frightened and I look to see most of them on the Tory side before the election is over. General Mewburn* has gone over completely, and I think most of the Liberal Manufacturers in Hamilton will go too.

James Murdock is likely to run in central Toronto and unless the Tories get at the Liberal Organizations with financial influences - which is not impossible - I should say that Murdock had a good chance to win. I cannot tell anything about any of the other Tory ridings. On the whole the developments of the last week are encouraging to the farmers.

October 29, 1921.

My Dear Dafoe:-

On the editorial page of the issue of October 25th, there is an article entitled - "Giving up the Pass" - The first part of the article is all right but the last part of the article is as much wrong as it is possible to be. The words being used - "But upon this point where the United States Government has invaded our rights and sought to put us in a humiliating position, Mr. Meighen has submitted with a meekness which is an indictment of his intelligence or courage or both".

I also agree that Meighen was wrong. He should have taken the same stand as Smuts, but the statement that the United States Government has invaded our rights is sheer nonsense.

No foreign country can be expected to recognize Canada in foreign relations until Canada has defined its status and declared its position. We have not defined our status. If we do not define our status we cannot expect foreign -Governments to do it for us. The persistent statement that Canada is a nation is entirely untrue and falls down at the first test. There are two ways and two only in which the status can be immediately achieved - one by a definite declaration of the Canadian Parliament by resolution, which will probably have the effect desired and the other is by an amendment to the British North American Act passed by the Imperial Parliament. The fact that as between Great Britain and ourselves, we conduct our own business pretty fully but not altogether, has no relation whatever to foreign nations,

and we have no business whatever to expect foreign nations to embroil themselves in the settlement of domestic questions such as constitutional status between Canada and Great Britain.

Another phase of the question is that even if the charge were true, it is entirely useless and undesirable for the Canadian press to foster hostility to the United States. Our only real foreign policy must be with them, and the main business of Canada in foreign relations is to remain friendly with the United States while preserving its own self-respect.

There is, however, a still worse fallacy in the article. It is perfectly well known down here to people that are on the inside that the United States Government fully intended and desired to issue direct independent invitations to the British self-governing dominions. Necessarily before doing so they had to consult the British Embassy and they were given an intimation, probably in a round-a-bout [sic] but none the less effective fashion, that the British Government did not desire independent invitations to be sent to the dominions.

The fact that the direct invitation was not sent is the fault of the British Government and it alone, and, if you are in a slugging mood, you can go after them without offending me in the least.

In case you have any difficulty in laying your hands on the article, I am cutting it out and enclosing it.

I have not very much information about the elections, but everything so far indicates that the farmers are getting stronger. The Liberals are showing a good deal of fight, but as far as I can see, not getting any additional voters. Unless some arrangement is made there will be five or six seats in Ontario lost to the Opposition by three-cornered contests. It is possible, however, that these cases may be adjusted before long.

October 31, 1921.

My Dear Dafoe:-

There are a great many things about the political situation here which are interesting and to some extent puzzling. I had an interview with King today. I told him that the thing I was most concerned about in the election was that

all parties should be definitely bound not to turn the Railways over to the C.P.R. and not to put them under one management in any form - that is to say - to keep the two systems distinct and competitive. King fully agrees. He thinks that he covered it in his speech in the East, but I told him that it would be wise to make another statement here of a very uncompromising character. He readily agreed to do so. Of course he has a wing down at Montreal working in the opposite direction and a public declaration by him is the safest way to head them off.

There is a rumor that there is a scheme afoot to get the C.N.R. back into private hands. Some facts that I know tend to confirm this. I may know more later. If there is such a scheme it is likely that Meighen is a party to it and it is probably fathered by Mackenzie.* I shall let you know as soon as I have any definite information. The evidence accumulates that the management of the Canadian National is very bad - extravagant and I fear corrupt especially in regard to the letting of contracts. Nothing but a thorough cleaning out would be of any service there. I cannot get any kind of a line on the attitude of the Railways in the actual election contest. My belief is that the C.P.R. will pursue its usual course. Its help will probably be given in about equal proportions to the Liberal and Conservative candidates, money contributions ditto. As to the National Railways there is nothing very evident except that the management is distinctively and definitely Tory, and I would expect to see it work pretty efficiently wherever it can be done for the Government candidate.

There is a good deal of confusion in Ontario due to the multiplicity of the candidates. I am taking a hand in this with the object of straightening it out.

I have been reading your editorials lately and they seem to fit the case very well, but it seems to me that the time is coming or has come when you should make a definite front page frontal attack on the Government. Meighen's policy is entirely negative. If there is stagnation and unemployment as he says, the Governments that have been in power for eleven years are responsible - not the Opposition, but the main thing is that upon the three Departments of Administration that are of primary importance he has totally failed. The first is that of Finance. The policy has been one of wholesale extravagance and no effort has been made to cut down expenses.

The second is the question of Railways, and upon this he goes to the country without a single word as to what he proposes to do. He has carefully refrained from committing himself in any way whatever, and I would not trust this Government over night on the Railway question. I think they would sell out the Railways to the C.P.R. in a minute if they thought they saw any political advantage. In my judgment, Bennett* is in the Government at the demand of the C.P.R. or as the result of a C.P.R. intrigue and he can be relied upon to act as their Attorney. The third question is that of Immigration, and upon this they have fallen down so completely that even the Montreal Gazette has made a full frontal attack on them and denounced the policy they are following as an economic menace. I think these three Departments should be taken up and dealt with vigorously and without reserve.

How is the campaign going in the West? How do you think the seats will be divided in the four Western Provinces?

Nov. 5th, 1921.

Dear Sir Clifford:-

I am in receipt of your letter asking me to let you know in some detail what I think will be the probable outcome of the election contest in the Western provinces.

The situation is like that in Ontario, rather confused, and there is bound to be considerable guess work in any estimate which is made. There are conflicting factors and those are of changing value so that an estimate which today might be justified, might be modified by developments before polling day. I don't however, believe that there can be any marked change in the fundamental factors of the Western situation which are wholly adverse to the Government, although it is understood that the Government intends to make a desperate fight here during the last fortnight of the campaign, in which it is expected that money will be very freely used in the foreign settlements and wherever there is a corruptible element in the electorate.

The important thing is to consider the number of supporters of the Government that can be elected, since Liberal or Labor members

elected from Western Canada will, I think it very probably, be to all intents and purposes part of Mr. Crerar's following, particularly if there should be a conflict between him and Mr. King upon questions affecting the tariff policy of the next Government of Canada.

In Manitoba I should say that at this moment the Government is pretty sure of only one seat, that is Portage la Prairie. From my own sources of information, which I think are pretty reliable, I don't think Meighen will be beaten, though there are plenty of prophets who think that he will. I think he will get a much larger majority in Portage town than his opponents concede and by some means or another, possibly by a third candidature, some of the French vote will be deflected from the support of the Progressive candidate.

In Lisgar Mr. Rogers is carrying on a very persistent and skilful still hunt [sic] campaign and professes himself certain of the result. J. L. Brown, the Progressive candidate, who was in town last week admits that he is doubtful of the result. Brown is not a good candidate and on personal grounds a good many people will find it difficult to vote for him owing to a certain acidity of manner. At the same time Brown is a man of considerable intellectual qualities and is a very good platform man. One of our reporters who spent some time in the constituency gave it as his opinion that the situation in the constituency favors Brown and this is, I think, the real situation. If the constituency is lost it will be through the incapacity of the Farmers' organization. I understand that they are jacking up their organization and that the central organization here is pretty certain that they can land the seat. In all the other rural seats West of the Red, with the exception of Selkirk, the Farmers have so much the best of the situation that I think a clean sweep might be predicted. There may be some question about Dauphin where the Government candidate is a first-class campaigner, and there are very confident predictions in the Government camp that General Dyer who is running as an Independent, will defeat Crerar. Dyer's position is most illogical. He is supported on the platform by Government speakers and he is backed by the Government organization but his line of talk is that he cannot support Meighen because he doesn't believe in protection. I don't think that these combinations will prove very formidable. I had a talk the other day with the Progressive organizer for the constituency. He says that, excepting around Minnedosa where General Dyer is bound to get a pretty substantial complimentary vote, his candidature displays no strength and

I should say that this is the case. The Liberal candidate is withdrawing which will help Crerar some though I am told that some of the older type of Liberals are going to support Dyer.

In Selkirk the situation is pretty much as I indicated in my last letter. There are already four (now five) candidates in the field with a probability of one more at least and possibly two. The Knott group of so-called Liberals have put in the field an Icelandic Radical who is not far short of being an anarchist, and a Ruthenian candidate may still take the field. We have a staff man out in the constituency at the present time trying to size it up. In such a division of forces the Government candidate, who is the late member, would seem to have a cinch, but I should be in no way surprised to see the Progressive win in spite of this as I think our investigation will show that he will draw a considerable vote from all the sections of this very much mixed constituency with the result that his total vote may easily be the highest. The situation in Springfield is pretty much what it is in Selkirk and I should not care to venture a prediction. Both the Liberals and the Progressives have first-rate candidates in the field. I should be inclined to think that the situation rather favored the Liberal candidate, Tom Molloy. He is a very good candidate for the constituency as he will get a strong backing among the French. He is perfectly at home in the language and his wife is a daughter of the late Chief Justice Dubuc. He is further a first-class campaigner; is indeed the pick of the Molloy boys who are all good political fighters, as you know. On the other hand I think that Jack Molloy's chances in Provencher are much more uncertain than they were as the Progressives have nominated an active and intelligent young French farmer named Beaubien. If, as is highly probably, the French rally to his support on radical [sic] grounds, he ought to beat Molloy by a considerable margin.

Here in Winnipeg the situation is clearing up in the south constituency where there will be a fight between Hudson and Jackson with two other candidates, one representing the Knott group the other the Socialist, who will poll very small votes. I think Hudson can win by a safe margin though the Government has many sources of strength in this constituency including the active participation in the campaign of a number of men who were formerly active Liberals but who have been attracted by Meighen's protectionist policy.



Courtesy of the Winnipeg Free Press

J.W. DAFOE

The Government people profess great confidence in their ability to elect candidates in centre and north Winnipeg. I have not been able to understand this confidence, but an active Government supporter, formerly a prominent Liberal, told me yesterday that their confidence is based upon these considerations: they know that the Liberal party as such has no strength in either of these constituencies; they know that Labor is disorganized and its members are fighting among themselves. From these facts they infer that the Government candidates with a vigorous organization behind them can be elected. I think their inference is all wrong. In spite of the division among the opposition forces which will take place in both these constituencies, I am pretty sure when the ballots are counted it will be found that an opposition candidate of some sort will emerge at the head of the poll. If matters remain as they are I should think it probable that W. B. Simpson, standing as the Dominion Labor candidate will be elected in centre Winnipeg. There is some possibility that the Liberals in centre Winnipeg will nominate W. H. Trueman, K.C. If they should do so he would have a chance of election as the Liberal strength would be re-united behind him and he would get a very considerable Labor vote. The members of the Dominion Labor party, comprising the members of the crafts unions, will only vote for Woodsworth if no better choice is in sight. To sum up, the Government has one sure seat in Manitoba and they may be conceded a fighting chance in three or four more. I should say that on the law of chance, three seats is the best they can possibly do in this province. The rest of the seats will be opposition. They may include one or two Liberals or one or two Labor.

Our staff correspondent who has been in Saskatchewan for the last month attending Progressive nomination Conventions and keeping tab on the situation, returned to the city yesterday. His estimate of the outcome in Saskatchewan is that at the worst the Progressives will carry not less than ten seats, while it is quite possible that they will get fourteen. He thinks a clean sweep such as the Progressive optimists are forecasting is hardly among the possibilities. There is a real feud in Saskatchewan between the Liberals and Progressives, and it has put the opposition candidature in jeopardy in at least three seats, Regina, Saltcoats and McKenzie. He thinks the Government candidate almost certain to carry Regina. In the other two seats mentioned the likelihood is not so great. I should think that in McKenzie the rejection by the Progressive Convention of the sitting member, John Read, who was the best man in the Progressive parliamentary

group after Crerar, would give Dr. Clark a chance and personally I should not in the least object to seeing the Doctor in the House in place of his Farmer opponent. Woodward, our correspondent, also reports that the Conservatives are hopeful of carrying Qu'Appelle and also of carrying Saskatoon. He does not think their hopes with respect to Qu'Appelle well founded but as to Saskatoon he thinks that if the contest remains as at present, the Government will win, whereas the nomination of a Liberal who would split the city vote, would throw the seat to the Progressive. He says this fact is thoroughly understood in Saskatoon and that the Liberal Executive is considering whether it really prefers the Government candidate or the Progressive. If they thought the Government had a chance to win they would keep out and thus secure the election of Wilson who is a cabinet minister; but the chances are that they will nominate for the express purpose of electing Evans, the Progressive candidate.

The wheat pool is a live question in Saskatchewan where there has always been a strong feeling among the farmers in favor of the national marketing of grain. Meighen and the Government intend to force this issue to the limit during the last two weeks of the campaign and I would think that the Farmers are a little nervous as to the possibilities of damage resulting. There is to be a conference of all the Progressive candidates to decide upon a policy and if they should decide to stand for the re-establishment of the Wheat Board, it would be a rather awkward circumstance for Crerar because I know that he is not in favor of any such course.

Woodward met R. B. Bennett in Regina and had a long talk with him. Bennett told him, in confidence, of course, that the Government only had a chance in two seats in Alberta, his own, West Calgary, and East Edmonton. He said that he thought Mackie's chances were better than his own. It is admitted that the Liberals have no prospect of electing any of their candidates with the possible exception of Frank Oliver. I think it would be safe to say that there will be ten Progressive candidates elected in Alberta at the worst. Taking the three provinces together I should say that at the worst there will be at least thirty supporters of Crerar elected and there will be another half dozen who will be opposition members of one sort or another. This is a minimum calculation. I should not be surprised to see thirty-five Progressives elected.

As for British Columbia, I have no very definite information. My brother, Wallace, who has abandoned political journalism at the Capital for fruit ranching in the Okanagan Valley, is taking the road in British Columbia almost immediately in order to report on the situation. He writes me that in the constituency in which he lives, Yale, the Government candidate is practically certain of re-election, though he could have been beaten if the Liberals and Farmers had agreed upon a joint candidate. Bennett told Woodward that the Government's information was that they would carry ten seats in B.C., but this does not accord with other information which reaches me to the effect that if they get half the seats they will be lucky.

November 8, 1921

My dear Dafoe:

I have yours of the 4th, also your other letter on the subject of the elections.

The explanation of the appearance of the Foster article is quite intelligible. It, however, illustrates the fact that it is just as well to have an understanding with your man on the subject so that he will not make mistakes of that kind again.

I do not know if you are aware of it, but the whole Government entourage is working overtime on publicity. They are trying to hire everybody that knows how to write to put up any and all kinds of articles that can be got into print, the whole purpose being to impress the country with their importance and keep them in the public eye.

Most emphatically I do not want the Free Press to give any assistance to this campaign.

Respecting the Washington matter. I am afraid that I put the matter rather brusquely, and I am glad that you did not take offence at the way in which I expressed myself. I am, however, very clear on this whole question, and perhaps it is as well that I should state it as it appears to me.

By interpretation and custom we have, it is true, arrived at a National status very different from what we had immediately after Confederation. It is, however, still absolutely and entirely true that there has been no definite changing of status - first with regard to the case of Great Britain's wars in which we are technically involved whether they are small or great, and second with regard to our relations to foreign countries. This status cannot be changed by newspaper articles or speeches in Parliament. It must be changed by a definite recognized official document of some kind. Our participation in the Peace Conference does not change it. India participated in the Peace Conference the same as we did; nobody claims that India is an Independent country or has independent relations with foreign countries. Supposing the case of India were not there to kill the claim, it would still be the fact that it is our business to get it settled and notify foreign countries. It is not the business of foreign countries to go to the trouble of finding out what our status is. Until we secure the exact definition of our status we have no grievance against any foreign country.

I am beginning to think that the way of getting at this question is to submit a series of resolutions of a general character to the House of Commons and wind it up by perhaps a resolution for a Committee to strike a plan calling the Constitutional Convention to determine the lines upon which the Constitution should be amended.

I wish you would think this out.

Nov. 11, 1921.

My dear Sifton:-

You will be interested in the following extract from a private letter which I have to-day received from Tom King:-

"I saw David Lawrence at lunch to-day and he said President Harding told him just what Senator Underwood told me, i.e., that Great Britain had vetoed any separate invitation being issued to Canada; but he can no more quote the President than I can quote the Senator."

November 14, 1921

My dear Dafoe:-

I have yours of the 11th, which confirms what I wrote you. The blame for our position in Washington" rests entirely with Great Britain in the first instance and with Meighen in the second. I am not sure that it is altogether a bad thing in view of the present proposals of the United States.

I have telegraphed you today saying that I think all Canadian papers should strongly support the United States proposals and demand that Great Britain accept them as Japan has already done.

There is no doubt that this proposal of the United States, which is the finest thing I remember in International affairs, has been made in the face of tremendous domestic opposition in the United States and every effort will be made to try to get Hughes to modify his plan and whittle it down until it means 'nothing. I am, however, entirely confident that Hughes, who obviously dominates Harding in all these matters, will stand to his guns if Great Britain does the right thing.

I do not know whether you understand the strength of the armament and munitions clique in England but it is tremendous and every effort that they can make will be bent to preventing this programme being carried out in good faith. The strongest card against their machinations will be a determined uncompromising demand on the part of the leading organizations of public opinion in Canada in favor of the United States proposals.

The proposal of the United States will be welcomed with joy by every reasonable and disinterested man in England, but the trouble is that the whole official entourage is not disinterested but tied up and connected with the armament and munitions ring in every possible way. George has the press under his thumb. He may conclude that there is a chance for a domestic coup and direct his press reporters to support the United States

¹⁶ This Conference held in Washington in 1921-22 was an attempt to guarantee the status quo in the Pacific and to negotiate a measure of Naval disarmament. Sir Robert Borden, recently retired from the Canadian Prime Ministership, attended as part of the British Empire Delegation. Characteristically, Liberal-nationalists like Dafoe and Sifton were more concerned about the implications that Borden's position had for Canadian status than they were about the substantive issues before the Conference.

proposals. If he does the battle will be pretty well won, although they will move Heaven and earth to nullify the arrangement and defeat it by disputes over matters of detail.

My view is that the proposal should be accepted wholeheartedly and without any quibbling over details.

There is nothing new about the elections here except that there are some signs of an impending collapse of the Government campaign. It is clear that Crerar and King are both gaining. Crerar had a very fine meeting in Massey Hall. I went and occupied a prominent seat on the platform. He had an excellent reception and made a good impression.

Yours faithfully,
Clifford Sifton

P.S. As a significant illustration of the English view since dictating the above letter I have been in conversation with a very prominent English merchant of Liverpool. He regards it as quite out of the question for Great Britain to accept the United States proposal, remarking that England has always been supreme on the sea and intends to remain so. He suggested however, that if it was diplomatic to seem to accept them, some arrangement could be made to put one over the United States by having the Dominions construct Navys [sic]. The idea being to under the cloak get around the arrangement. This is precisely what I would expect. It is very significant and [sic that a?] professedly religious gentleman from Liverpool should happen in opportunely to confirm my views.

Dec. 7th, 1921.

My dear Sir Clifford:-

I have not time to write you at any length but I thought I might give you a note about a conversation which I had to-day with Mr. Crerar. He told me that he had received the day before the election a letter from a well known correspondent in Montreal, who, he says, has never been wrong in his information, warning him that there had been a combination formed against him which would probably affect to his material disadvantage the results in Ontario and in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Crerar's correspondent said that while he was sure as to the fact he had

not secured the details. He said that certain persons in Montreal had told him that matters had been so arranged that the Progressive representation for all Canada could not exceed forty seats. He intimated that in his opinion the arrangement was that in Ontario there was to be an understanding between the Government and the Liberals with respect to certain constituencies by which in some constituencies the Government influences would be thrown to the Liberal candidate while in certain other constituencies the compliment would be returned. The result in Ontario would seem to bear this out, and I have no doubt an analysis of the figures will actually confirm it.

With respect to Saskatchewan, the Montreal correspondent suggested that the clue was probably to be found in the conference which had been held in Montreal between Senator Ross* and Senator Calder. He also said there was some connection between the arrangement and the change of tone in Mr. King's speeches. You may recall that in his first speech in the West at Melville, Saskatchewan, Mr. King took the line of denouncing the Progressives as a class movement and declaring that he and the Liberals would have nothing to do with them. This was the signal for a very bitter and intensive campaign against the Progressives throughout the province of Saskatchewan. All the Martin Government's election machinery and their officials were put into the fight in every constituency where the Liberals were thought to have a chance of election. It is surmised that the arrangement was that the Government was to throw its strength in Saskatchewan to the Liberals in the hope that they would carry a sufficient number of seats to put a crimp in Mr. Crerar's expectations. Many things support this surmise. For one thing a highly placed C.P.R. official who was here the other day, talking to one of Mr. Crerar's supporters, told him that the Progressives were due for a serious disappointment in Ontario and Saskatchewan. He spoke very confidently as if the matter were no longer a speculation. Further, the vote in certain constituencies in Saskatchewan is strongly confirmatory. In all three Saskatchewan cities, Regina, Moose Jaw and Saskatoon, the Liberals got heavy votes at the expense of their Conservative rivals. This is only explainable on the theory that the Conservative vote where it could be controlled, was switched to the Liberals. In Regina the tactics were successful, Mr. Motherwell going out of the city with a majority so large that the Progressives could not overcome it in the rural polls. In Moose Jaw the result was different simply because the weight of the vote was in the rural districts, although, as you know, Moose

Jaw is a C.P.R. and a Conservative town. Knowles was presented with a majority of 2,000 in the city, which was thought to be quite sufficient to insure his election but the rural vote overtook this and gave Johnson a substantial majority.

Of course, we are very well satisfied with the results in the three provinces. Nothing more could have been hoped for and as you know, the result exceeded the expectations which I set forth in my earlier letters to you. Crerar appears to be quite satisfied with the situation but rather thinks that Mr. King will have his troubles in forming his government and still more when he begins to map out his policies. Meanwhile his attitude, I judge, will be one of watchful waiting. I don't think he proposes displaying any feelings of resentment or hostility to the King government, but he will be prepared to give it ample scope to develop its policies. I don't think he will have much confidence in it.

It may be expected as certain that A. B. Hudson will be offered a portfolio in the coming Liberal government, but I think it may be assumed that he will not accept. He really ran as a Progressive and this was perfectly well known by everybody who was acting in his support.

If the thing develops further I will write you again.

Yours faithfully,
J. W. Dafoe

P.S. Would like to h[a]v[e] your views.

D.

December 8, 1921.

My Dear Dafoe:-

I wired you this morning to endeavor to see that neither Crerar or Hudson committed themselves to King without full consultation. Of course I know nothing of Hudson's views, but as the Free Press was a prominent supporter of his I assume that he will be likely to consult you before he does anything.

As you observed, King denounced coalition in his pre-election speeches. I saw him here and indicated to him a few days before the close of the campaign that I thought he was making a mistake. He was very stubborn about it however and repeated his denunciation [sic] the next day more strongly. Also, you will have seen that the only thing he has said since the election is to denounce the idea of a coalition. The indications are that he intends to form a straight party Government. At present he has a majority of one or two. Of one hundred and sixteen supporters apparently eighty-nine come from east of the Ottawa River and about twenty-seven scattered over Ontario and British Columbia. Of course this would be a case in which Quebec and Nova Scotia would be governing the Dominion. The Liberal party would in effect be a Quebec and Nova Scotia party with a Rump from the rest of the Provinces. Two courses would be open to him, either he might take the men who are elected as his supporters and choose his Government from them or he might attempt to go outside and form a more representative and able Cabinet. The latter course would be fraught with great difficulty. If he takes the former course he has nothing except the leftovers of the Laurier aggregation with the exception of Lapointe, Gouin and Walter Mitchell.*

I do not see how such a Government can hope to successfully attack the problems which present themselves for solution, and in fact I do not know anybody who would then be in the Government who has any comprehension of what the problems are. Walter Mitchell is probably the most up-to-date and capable but obviously he has no knowledge of Ontario and the West. I would think that such a Government would find that like man - its days would be short and full of trouble.

It is likely that King will be immediately surrounded by a crowd from Quebec and Nova Scotia hungry for spoils, reinforced by a certain clique from Ontario in which Charlie Murphy will be a prominent figure. Believe me, the people of Canada will not be likely to look upon such a combination with lasting favor, and for myself I should certainly decline to avow myself a supporter of it.

The Progressives did badly in Ontario. I think their appeal was based on pretty narrow lines, and the Farmers organization in Ontario will want jacking up if it is to be permanently successful.

You will gather from the above what my views are.

Unless King offers a coalition with Crerar on a fifty-fifty basis with a definite recognition of the fact that Ontario and the West has [sic] an equal representation and a definite recognition of its policies, Crerar should stand out and the attitude of the Free Press should be that of being willing that King should have a fair chance and be judged on his merits but very definitely independent.

The resume that I have given you is probably one that would not occur either to Crerar or to Hudson and it appeared to me that the views presented ought to be present to [sic] their minds before they come to any decisions.

I have very slight acquaintance with Hudson and no reason to believe that he is particularly friendly to me - rather the contrary. He, however, will have to take the responsibility of what he does.

As to Crerar, I am naturally very anxious that he should not make a mistake, and I am entirely assured that the present view of those in control of the Liberal organization is that they should sit at the head table and the Farmers organization should take whatever crumbs that are offered to them.

The matter is so important that I almost think that if Crerar comes East soon you should come also so that we might have a consultation here.

It is, of course, of vital importance that we should get to a clear understanding on the attitude to be adopted by the Free Press.

I need not tell you to be very careful of this letter and to destroy it as soon as you have digested the contents. You might wire me when you have received it and advise me of any developments.

Yours faithfully,
Clifford Sifton.

[Handwritten note]

Parties here seem impressed by assurances, Policy & membership imply rejection Montreal bunch. King goes Toronto to-night to consult Drury[:] no engagement will be made here without consultation.

December 12, 1921.

My dear Dafoe:-

I have your letter of the 7th and your wire of the 11 th. I have telegraphed you this afternoon as follows:-

"Morrison* will keep everything firm here. Writing" which I now confirm.

First - With regard to your letter of the 7th, I have no doubt there was a deal of the kind you speak of. Furthermore, the Farmers had very much the same kind of a combination against them that I had in my last election. The Banks, the railroads and the two political parties coalesced within the last ten days to drift the Farmers wherever possible. The suggestion that the matter was arranged at a Meeting between two Senators in Montreal is doubtless to a considerable extent correct.

Please refer to my letter of the 8th. It represents my considered opinion at the present date and I cannot add anything to it. I read it to Morrison this morning and he said that he agreed with every letter of it and would write in that sense to Crerar today. Morrison is the man that can be relied on in Ontario by Crerar and he is the man that the Farmers look to to see them through. I should not depend anything on Drury. It is not unlikely that he has been approached, but I understand that he makes a practice of consulting the wrong people and is getting very much weaker in consequence. You understand the subject is a delicate one and that is all I care to say at present.

Signs are absolutely abundant that King is regretting his bold declaration against coalition and would prefer now that he had taken my advice when I warned him. He, I imagine, will try to pick off the leading Progressives and disintegrate the party knowing that some of the followers would drift towards him. I told Morrison today that the future of their Farmers party would be decided in the next two weeks. If they have the brains and grit to hold together, doing nothing except through their accredited leader and that after the fullest consultation, they may acquire strength. Any other course is bound to result in disruption.

Morrison agreed with my suggestion that Crerar and any of his Western lieutenants whom he wishes present should come to Toronto for a full consultation. I told Morrison I thought you ought to be here.

I think that is all there is to say. I am writing Crerar this afternoon.

Yours faithfully,
Clifford Sifton

[Handwritten note]

It looks as though Drury would put up a good fight in North Oxford.

December 14, 1921.

My Dear Dafoe:-

I received your message last night as follows:-

"Parties here seem impressed by assurances policy and member-ship imply rejection Montreal bunch. King goes Toronto tonight to consult Drury. No engagements will be made here without consultation."

I replied today: -

"Festina Lente. Timeo Danaos dona Ferentes."

There is not much for me to add to what I have already written. The Liberal papers are full of inspired articles undoubtedly suggested by King which are all in the direction of climbing down from his original position. So far as I can judge however his idea is naturally to get three or four prominent Progressives into the Government on assurance as to what the general line of his policy will be. Once they are in without anything more definite than that the Progressive party as a political force comes to an end.

The policy of the Government will be dominated by Quebec and anybody that does not like it can have the privilege of getting out but in the meantime he will have fatally compromised his political position.

The problem of bringing about a coalition is a very difficult one and can only be successfully accomplished by elaborate consideration of all the details and I think by a written agreement in regard to some matters of policy. Otherwise, the Progressives will share the fate of the Liberals who went into the Union Government, with the absolute certainty that if the Progressive movement stays alive the followers will turn upon the leaders

who have gone into the Government and regard them as having betrayed their principles.

I understand King is over here [Toronto] today but I have not seen him. I do not think he wants to see me. He is probably aware that I would not be likely to be taken in by any apparent concession. My information is that he will not find Drury very hard to handle, but if Drury goes to King assuredly he will not carry the Farmers party of Ontario with him. Just now Drury is engaged in a very hot fight in North Oxford. If he wins that he will be considerably strengthened, but his Government is very much in need of strength in some particulars.

I confess that I would like to see you down here if an arrangement is made because I do not think any of these gentlemen have sufficient experience to tell where they are getting. I have seen it happen half a dozen times and so have you.

Yours faithfully,
Clifford Sifton

[Handwritten note]

Since dictating above I have [sic] a telephone message from a man whom I think will say that he is acting on behalf of King. Some-thing may develop but I am in a rather suspicious frame of mind.

Don't think that the Montreal crowd are going to lie down without a fight.

December 16, 1921.

My Dear Dafoe:-

I have agreed to write an article for the *Canadian Historical Review*¹⁷ on constitutional questions in Canada. You have three or four books that have come out lately; I wish you would send them to me so that I can run through them.

Respecting the Government matter. I do not wish to create the impression that I am opposed to a coalition - quite the contrary. I am entirely in favor of

¹⁷ See Sir Clifford Sifton, "Some Canadian Constitutional Problems," *Canadian Historical Review*, III, 1, (March 1922), 3-23.

a coalition but I am opposed to a coalition which swallows up the Progressive party. King was here yesterday and it is reported that he saw Drury.

The newspapers here report Haydon's* trip West. It does not seem to have been kept at all quiet. There are no developments.

COPY

J. W. Dafoe to Clifford Sifton

Telegram

18/12/21 - Sir C. G. - Letter 14 rec[eive]d. Think course suggested already adopted parties second part. Hudson went Ottawa to-day inform King arrangement only possible basis coalition with written engagements. Progressives meet Tuesday Saskatoon. Drury and Crerar in agreement. Drury wires cannot go in. King's proposition insin-cere my judgment. Am mailing books asked for. D.

Dec. 19th, 1921.

My dear Sir Clifford:-

I sent you last night, upon receipt of your two recent letters, a rather long cipher telegram which gave you a pretty complete summary of the situation to date.

There were a number of conferences last week, between Mr. Haydon on one side and Mr. Crerar and his friends on the other, and a number of telegrams passed between Mr. Haydon and Mr. King and Mr. Lapointe in the East. I have no direct personal knowledge of these conferences but Crerar kept in touch with me and on Saturday night there was a small gathering which I attended. At this meeting Crerar read a long telegram from Drury, the latest of a series he had received from him. I should say from reading this telegram that Mr. Drury bit at the proposition to go into the Dominion Government at first but the more he considered the question the more dubious he became. In his telegram on Saturday he said he did not think it would be wise for the Progressives to go into the Government unless means were taken to preserve the identity of the party and written guarantees were given of the

acceptance by the Liberals of the basic principles of the Progressive platform. He also said that he did not think that he could possibly take a portfolio himself upon any terms. This statement of views by Drury exactly corresponded with the opinion which the meeting had reached itself. There was practically unanimity in the view that co-operation could only be possible on the basis of a formal coalition with public guarantees which would be a protection for Mr. Crerar against his own people. Mr. Hudson, who was present at the Conference, left the following morning for Ottawa to make these terms known definitely to Mr. King. Mr. Crerar will be in Saskatoon tomorrow in conference with his Western supporters. He and Hudson will keep in touch with one another over the wire. Some definite step may be taken. If King shows himself agreeable to the proposition and the Progressive members in their caucus show an inclination to meet Mr. King half way, Crerar may go direct to Ottawa from Saskatoon for further conference. Hudson had virtually made common cause with Crerar and will, I think go in with him or stay out with him.

Personally I have no expectation that anything will come of these negotiations because I do not think that Mr. King even yet has any real appreciation of the reasons for the strength of the Progressive movement. His idea appears to be that if he can get Mr. Crerar and Mr. Drury into his government, where, of course, they might find themselves in a hopeless minority, the whole Progressive movement could be headed off and destroyed. When he finds that he can only get the Progressives upon terms which will safeguard their identity and give Crerar a position in the government not unlike his own, he will try to get along without them and will make up a government out of the Liberal antiquies who are now congregating at Ottawa. It will not be much of a government and I should not be surprised if its life should be brief and far from merry.

Re my own position I should not object to going to Toronto if there were to be conferences and consultations there between the Eastern and the Western Progressives, to which you would also be a party, if it were felt that my services would be of value; but, even if invited which I have not been and am not likely to be, I should not care to go to Ottawa to be a party even indirectly to any negotiations between Crerar and King, as it might seriously affect our future freedom of action. I think we should let it be known publicly that we think the occasion is one for a bona fide coalition, that,

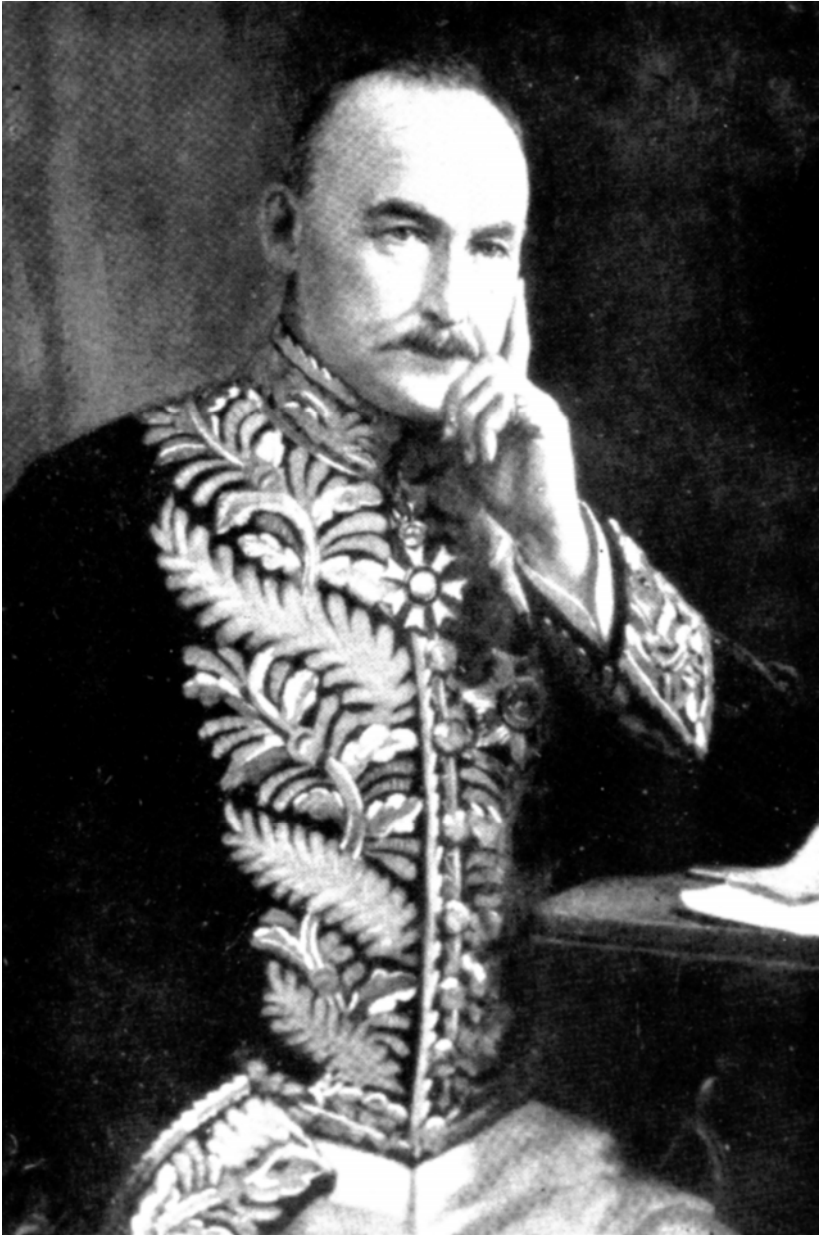
in our judgment, the Progressives, given reasonable terms, should not reject the responsibility of playing a part in the government of the country and then stand pat and await developments.

With respect to your request for books, on the constitutional question, I am sending you by this mail the Duncan Hall book, though I think it possible you may have this; if so you might return this copy as it is in fairly constant use. I also send you Keith's latest book which is really monumental in respect to the information which it contains. I have not included the smaller book by Keith as I think the larger work comprises everything which appears in it. I also enclose you a couple of small volumes which have come in but which I have not myself read as yet, in which the Centralist programme is advocated. Both of these books are by writers hailing from the antipodes, one an Australian, the other a New Zealander.

You have doubtless observed the remarkable statement made by Lloyd George in his speech¹⁸ on the Irish question, about the responsibility of the Dominions for the policies carried out by the foreign office. This is the explanation of the more or less vague reference to some new arrangement which we find in the post-conference speeches of the Prime Ministers of Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Lloyd George's verbatim statement is reported in the New York Times cable despatch which appeared in our paper last Thursday, I think. I intend to comment upon this announcement by Lloyd George and enter, so far as we are concerned, a disclaimer as to Canada being bound by any such arrangement as that which he outlines short of formal approval of it by the Canadian Parliament. Lloyd George's formal declaration of Dominion responsibility for foreign affairs really precipitates the issue and makes it necessary for the new Canadian government to face it without further evasion. I may say that I have very little confidence in King with respect to these questions.

Yours faithfully,
J. W. Dafoe

¹⁸ This speech by the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George, Prime Minister of Great Britain, was delivered in the British House of Commons on December 14, 1921. In this statement he presented the view that in future the Empire would follow a common foreign policy with the Dominions both participating in its formulation and assuming responsibilities in its execution. See A. B. Keith. *Speeches and Documents on the British Dominions, 1918-1931*, (London, 1948), 83 ff.



Courtesy of the Winnipeg Free Press

SIR CLIFFORD SIFTON

P.S. I am enclosing you a letter which I have just received from J. S. Woodward who has been doing special work for us in Saskatchewan, for the last six weeks. Woodward is an old Saskatchewan newspaper man and a pretty sensible fellow. His political affiliations have been Liberal. His views will be of interest to you.

December 30, 1921.

My dear Dafoe:-

The political crisis is now over and the Government has been formed. Perhaps it is well that I should tell you just what happened here.

Crerar came down, was met at the station by the U[nited]. F[armers]. [of] O[ntario], people and taken up directly to consult with Drury. He went from there directly to a Meeting of the U [nited] . F[armers]. [of] A[lberta]. Members elect; from there he went directly to the station and went to Ottawa. On his return he called on me at my house. It was merely a social call. He was very friendly but noticeably reticent in regard to what had taken place. He merely said that Haydon had put before him in Winnipeg a list of the proposed membership of the Government which seemed not unsatisfactory. When he got to Ottawa and saw Mr. King the list of proposed members was materially changed and when he saw the changed list he declined to proceed further or to consider going into the Government. He said that he did not discuss the matter further with Mr. King or enter into the question of policy or any other matters.

He further said that it was his impression that the Montreal element had got to work on Thursday and Friday and practically put the pistol to Mr. King's head, forcing an alteration of King's proposed list of Members. Crerar further said that the Ontario Members elect of the Progressive party were pretty generally opposed to a coalition but he apparently did not attach much importance to that. I judge that he thought that if otherwise satisfactory they could [. . . ? ...] got to come in.

This was all he said. It was, as you will notice, extremely meagre. He did not volunteer anything further and of course I did not question him.

A man came to me yesterday saying that Mr. King had telephoned him and discussed the situation with him. King said that the Progressives had intimated to him that they wished to deal with him directly. Circumstances corroborate this statement.

My feeling is that the matter was very badly managed and it was done in a crude and amateurish fashion with the result that we see. Having failed of the coalition King is making the best of the situation providing he gets a seat for Charlie Stewart. Obviously it would have been better for him to get two or three men of outstanding capacity from Ontario and the West but this was a matter of great difficulty because if he found such men and they were willing to go into the Government they were confronted with two obstacles - first the difficulty of getting seats and second the fact that there is no certainty as to the Government's tenure of office.

I am very much disappointed that a more systematic and thorough effort was not made to form a strong Government that would grapple with the problems that are pressing for solution. I do not know what King will do with the Railway question. The whole influential group who will dominate the Government has, I think, the wrong point of view. It seems quite probable that the railways are being looted pretty extensively at present. What kind of a change will be made and whether the change will be an improvement is very hard to say.

It is clear that the Progressives must take the responsibility for having refused to come in. I suggest to you that the Free Press should not under any circumstances endeavor to carry the responsibility for them but that the attitude should be equally independent towards the government and towards the Progressives.

I am going to Calgary for a Meeting that takes place on the 26th of January and shall be in Winnipeg for a day en route.

I have read the books that you sent down. The book by Moseley is very clever; the other little book is trash. The one by Duncan Hall is very good until the last few chapters in which the suspicion grows very strongly that he is a worse Imperialist than Curtis.* His elaborate discussions of group organizations tired me so that I roughly skimmed through those chapters. They are absurd and impracticable. I shall send the books back to you as soon as I am through with them, I also got Keith's books - four large

but I have not had time to look into them yet. I shall get through with them in the next few days.

Wishing you the Compliments of the Season, I am,

Yours faithfully,

P.S. I am sending you a copy of an Address that I delivered before the American Association for the Advancement of Science. You might re-print what you think worth while. If you use it I would suggest that you put it in the Saturday edition and the Weekly. On further reflection I think you had better make a feature of reprinting this address. Leave out the beginning i.e. - the welcome to the Americans. I have a special reason for wishing this done in the most effective way.

P.S. I am very much disappointed that you did not act on my suggestion about a series of articles on the far Eastern question with special reference to the Washington Conference. It is quite evident that Great Britain and Japan and France are not going to give up anything and the policy to throttle China is to continue. I had hoped if there was a spontaneous demand on the part of the press that they should all cease the policy of loot and set China free that it would have been done. United States was strong for it. It is now announced that nothing is to be done; that may or may not be true but looks as though it were. Japan will remain in possession of Shantung and it will be a case of grab all around. It is time for the press of this country to show some independence in matters of this kind. You have a great chance to increase the position of leadership that you have attained. It is not too late to act yet in this Chinese matter. An exhortation to Hughes to take a strong stand might have some effect.

C.S.

Dec. 31st, 1921.

My dear Sir Clifford:

I have not been writing you about the recent political developments as I imagined that you were in an even better position than myself to know

myself to know what was actually going on. I have not seen Crerar since his return from the East but I have had some conversations with A. B. Hudson and so am fully posted. I might say there is great indignation among the McKenzie [sic] King Liberals at his [Hudson's] refusal to go in and pressure is still being brought to bear upon him to get him to reconsider his decision. I understood from him that when he parted with King, King also expressed the hope that it would be possible a little later, when an expected vacancy will occur through the appointment of D. D. McKenzie [sic] of Nova Scotia to the first vacancy on the bench, to make an opening for Hudson. I don't think, however, that Hudson has any intention at present of entertaining any such proposal.

If, as may well happen, developments in the future tend to separate the Liberals and the Progressives more and more into distinct parties, Hudson, alike by his inclinations and his interests, will be drawn into the Progressive camp. All through the negotiations, so far as I have observed them, he was far more self-controlled and in command of the situation than Mr. Crerar was. In fact, Mr. Crerar who, as you know, is of a boyish and trustful nature, was very much inclined to take a chance and go in and I think it was his friends who saved him from putting his head in the noose. There is no doubt in my mind that under no circumstances could Crerar have taken the whole strength of the Progressive movement with him if he had gone into the Government, even though he had had his due proportion of colleagues and there had been provision made for preserving the identity of the Progressives. Correspondence which I am in receipt of from farmers out in the country makes it clear to me that they regarded the whole movement as one of the old fashioned manoeuvres by which they were to be buncoed in the interests of the big corporations.

There is no doubt an inclination in Regina on the part of both the Progressives and the Tories to fight Motherwell and there have been suggestions of a common campaign against him, but I understand the judgment of the leaders of the Progressive movement in Saskatchewan is against any such course and I expect Motherwell will be elected by acclamation. The man in Saskatchewan that the Progressives are after hot foot these days is Premier Martin. He was in town a day or so ago and had a conversation with Frank Fowler. He told Frank Fowler that he realized that he had "cooked his goose" and that there was nothing left for him but

to get out at the first convenient opportunity, turning the premiership over to Dunning who may be able to placate the Progressive following of the Martin Government. I think the idea is to enlarge the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal to five and have Martin appointed to the vacant judgeship.

As for Stewart, I think he has taken office with nothing more than a hope that by some means he can secure a seat in Alberta. Premier Greenfield* and Stewart are on very good terms and I think there has been an expectation that Greenfield would go to some trouble to secure Stewart a seat for Ottawa, but I have reason to think that there is no foundation for this expectation. Jack saw Greenfield when he was in Calgary some ten days ago and he was certainly in no mood then to facilitate Stewart's replacement of a Progressive member.

I think the political situation so far as the Free Press is concerned is quite satisfactory. We can pursue a thoroughly independent course, giving the Government fair treatment and await results.

March 30th, 1922.

My dear Sir Clifford: -

Just before leaving Ottawa I dropped you a line saying that upon my return to Winnipeg I would write you further with respect to some of the things I learned during my Eastern trip.

I saw practically everybody that I planned to see and had the benefit of a number of very confidential conversations with various parties. I inquired particularly into the railway question because this is the one issue before the country which might have immediate political consequences.

I think I told you in Toronto some of the things which Sir Joseph Flavelle* said to me. He said that there were indications that the present Government intended to interfere with the administration of the National roads to a much greater extent than was the case under the former administration. I may say that I received confirmation of this from other sources. When he was in opposition Mr. Fielding advocated in the House direct control by Parliament over the expenditure on the Government roads.

Apparently his idea was that they should be administered as a Department of the government which would mean that the railway officials would be virtually civil servants. I think it probable that there is some such idea still in the minds of some of the members of the government. Nothing could be more fatal in my judgment to railway efficiency than this.

Sir Joseph Flavelle, commenting upon the report that the government on account of legal difficulties proposed to co-ordinate the rail-ways in place of amalgamating them, expressed his view that there were no difficulties in the way of a virtual amalgamation which would still respect the corporate entities making up the combination by the creation of a holding corporation to be known as the Canadian National Railways. Unless this were done the government, he thought, must be held to be trifling with the question. He told me that he knew that Montreal interests were urging the government to keep the Grand Trunk out of the amalgamation, in the expectation that they might be able to buy it from the government in the course of a couple of years. He said that Mr. Clergue of Soo fame was active in this connection.

I had a long and interesting talk at Ottawa with Mr. Herbert Marler,* M.P. who defeated Mr. Ballantyne at the last election. Mr. Marler seems to be a very capable man, relatively young, who might be held to be a typical representative of Montreal liberalism. He is probably very close to the crowd which is in control from that district. He told me that the government had no intention of amalgamating the railways, that for the time being they would co-ordinate them under a common management and see if they could improve their financial condition, having it in mind, however, to dispose of these railway properties, singly or collectively, if an opportunity should occur in the future. I believe that Mr. Marler, if he did not speak for the settled policy of the government, spoke at least for a very powerful element in the government which intends to make this the government's policy if this be possible.

From all I could learn at Ottawa, the probable government plan re railways is something like this. They propose to clean out the present management and directorate. Mr. Hanna and Mr. Mitchell will go and also the present board of directors. They hope to secure in the United States a railway man capable of taking charge of the whole system. They propose to co-ordinate the railways, retaining their present corporate capacities under this general

management. The road is to be divided into three sections, one administered from Moncton, one from Montreal and one from Winnipeg. Toronto, apparently is not to be on the map at all. The government will exercise its control through a small body of directors, whom it will appoint. As to the proposed general manager, I heard no names mentioned, but it is believed that A. E. Warren will have charge of the Western division and Mr. Hungerford of the Control. The name of the Eastern Manager has slipped my mind.

With respect to the matter of the Crow's Nest Pass¹⁹ arrangement, there has been nothing done in the open as yet by the railways. I understand from a good source that the matter has not been considered by the government. Senator Watson,* I learned at Ottawa, has been active in advising the ministers to leave the matter severely alone. It is, of course, known that the railways, particularly the C.P.R., are making plans to escape the consequences of the revival of the Crow's Nest Pass agreement next July. Mr. Symington* who has been associating with them for the past month in connection with the freight rates case at Ottawa, is of the opinion that they are framing up a compromise, which will amount to an offer of reduced freight rates throughout Canada upon certain commodities, contingent upon the Crow's Nest Pass agreement being wiped off the statute books. The effect of such an arrangement would no doubt be to make the advantage of the West much less than that which would be given by an enforcement of the Crow's Nest Pass agreement and at the same time to give the Eastern provinces some freight concessions which would be in effect a bribe to induce them to support a measure of this kind. Of course, the government would have to take the responsibility of fathering any such proposition and I should think they would be very chary of doing it unless the railways could bring them the proof that the bill would get a measure of support from the Conservatives and also perhaps from the Eastern Progressives.

¹⁹ Under the Crows Nest Pass agreement of 1897 certain railways, in return for subsidies granted by the federal government, agreed to reduce freight rates on grain and other specified commodities moving east and on certain commodities important to Western farmers moving west. In 1918 this agreement was suspended for the duration of the war. In the years immediately after the war Western farmers demanded that the agreement be fully restored in its original terms, while the railways pressed for its continued suspension or, at least, its modification. After much controversy the restoration of the agreement as it related to grain and flour was achieved in 1922. See Morton, *Progressive Party*, 156-57.

I asked a prominent Conservative whom I knew very well what the attitude of the Conservatives would be towards any such proposition and his answer was that while he thought the inclination of Mr. Meighen would be to oppose it, joining hands with Crerar, he was not at all sure that the C.P.R. could not deliver a very considerable body of votes to the government for this occasion. Whatever has been done thus far has been behind the doors and I don't think the railways will move in the open until they are satisfied that they have sufficient Parliamentary backing to attain their ends. Mr. Marler, in his conversation with me, professed entire ignorance of the whole Crow's Nest Pass phase of the railway situation. He said he had no idea that an issue of this sort was pending and that no person had spoken to him about it until I drew his attention to it.

I had a long and interesting talk with Grant Hall. I found him in quite a pessimistic mood. I judge from his conversation that the C.P.R. are very apprehensive, first of the possible political strength of the movement to force rate reductions, and secondly of the growing inclination of the public, which he admitted, to support their own road against the C.P.R. He said he quite recognized that the people in an attempt to make the Canadian National Railways self-supporting might very speedily destroy the solvency of the C.P.R. and that they were realizing the vulnerability of their institution. There are no doubt accumulating instances where public pressure is being put upon the C.P.R. by more or less veiled threats to switch business to the public roads in the event of a refusal of demands made. Thus, I am told that the British Columbia men who have been at Ottawa fighting for reduction in rates from the Coast to the prairies, have been privately telling the C.P.R. officials that Vancouver business will be switched to the Canadian National Railway if the C.P.R. does not meet their views at least in part. I talked with a good many men in Montreal and I am inclined to think that the C.P.R. and its friends are beginning to realize that its participation in politics for the purpose of having something to say in the determination of the railway policy of the country may prove to be a very disastrous thing for the Company.

Unless the railway question emerges in some form which will precipitate a crisis, I don't think the government will have any trouble this session. The Progressives are not apparently inclined to take any aggressive attitude. They are getting their bearings, are familiarizing themselves with Parliamentary life and are prepared to bide their time.

Crerar appears to be extremely well pleased with the situation and with his following. The Progressive group has undoubtedly made a very favorable impression upon both Parliament and the country. From what I saw at Ottawa I am more and more of the opinion which I have held now for some time, that unless the Progressive party is wrecked from within by an insistence upon class narrowness, it will develop into the real Liberal party while the present Liberal party will come to be recognized as in reality a moderate Conservative party absorbing most of the present Conservative strength. I think the Conservatives are beginning to realize the hopelessness of their position. All the powerful interests upon which they rely for support are really enlisted behind the Government and they have as leader a man who is never likely to develop in strength either in Western Canada or in the province of Quebec. Their situation is apparently hopeless and the developments to date in the House do not indicate that Meighen, has any real capacity for dealing with the situation.

I had a couple of talks with Meighen and, as I wrote you, he gave me his copy of the confidential report of the proceedings at the Imperial Conference. I took very full note of this document and I shall extend these notes in the next few days when I shall send you a copy. Mr. Ewart and A. R. McMaster,* M.P., have been collaborating in the drafting of a resolution and the preparation of a supporting speech designed to commit Parliament to a declaration repudiating the constitutional innovations which resulted from the Conference of last summer. The tentative form of the resolution was in explicit terms a censure of Mr. Meighen but I suggested that it might be desirable to put it on somewhat broader grounds and affirm the disagreement of the Canadian Parliament with the declaration as to policies which had been determined upon at this Conference which had been made by Lloyd George, Mr. Meighen and others. This, it seems to me, would be wiser than what might appear to be a personal attack upon Mr. Meighen. The report of the Imperial Conference which I read indicates pretty clearly that Meighen was out of his depth in the Conference. He was dealing with matters about which he had no real knowledge. As I think I wrote you, he probably has a pretty good alibi with respect to the matter of Canadian representation at the Washington conference. The report confirms the positive statement made by Mr. Christie to me that the matter of Dominion representation was never discussed at the Conference.

Christie says that the expectation of the secretaries of the Dominion was that the Dominions would be represented at Washington and that they would be present, and he is quite at a loss to know the justification for the statement made by Lloyd George, Westminster, and by Mr. Hughes,* Australia.

I had quite an interesting talk with Sir Robert Borden. He said he was then engaged in reading your article which he had not finished. Like Mr. Ewart he is a little dubious about the advisability of putting these questions up to a vote of the people in their present state of ignorance. I asked him if he thought the present government would appoint a minister at Washington. He said he doubted it. "You know," he said to me, "my successor was very lukewarm on the proposition."

I got home on Tuesday night and have since been trying to familiarize myself with the local situation here, [sic] Matters are in a terrible mess. I should not like to express any settled views as to what is likely to happen. I am, however, going to write to A. B. Hudson and I will enclose a copy of my letter. This letter is really as much to Mr. Crerar as to Mr. Hudson. I had several talks with them before I left Ottawa and they were hoping that developments would take a certain line. As you will see from my letter to Mr. Hudson, there is strong probability that they will take a different course in which case I foresee some troublesome questions for us to face here in the Free Press.

I shall probably write you further on this matter in a day or so.

June 8th, 1922.

My dear Sir Clifford:-

The pamphlet containing your address to the Ottawa Canadian Club came to hand. The address looks to me like a very shipshape piece of work. We are reproducing it in, I think, its entirety in an early issue of the Free Press, probably Saturday week. If you can send me half a dozen additional copies of the address I can put them to good purpose as I have some correspondents in various parts of the world who would like, I am sure, to get a copy of your address.

I am enclosing you a letter from a Saskatchewan woman, pretty much along the lines of the letter which you sent to me. I didn't think it wise to publish this letter but I am sure you will be interested in seeing it.

My information as to what has been going on behind the scenes at Ottawa is rather interesting. There has been quite a flare-up in the Progressive party but the result has been, I think, very greatly to strengthen Crerar's authority. The reports in the Eastern newspapers of what happened, were, I am informed, on altogether the wrong track, though they were inspired, it is believed, by John A. Stevenson, who has developed into quite a bitter critic within the Progressive party of Mr. Crerar.

When Fielding delivered his budget address, Crerar in consultation with a few friends, including A. B. Hudson, drafted an amendment to the amendment, which he subsequently moved. A caucus of the Progressive party was called at which the amendment was considered. Some of the more radical members thought it did not go far enough and the caucus was adjourned to permit further consideration. A couple of the Alberta members - the names I have heard are Shaw,* Garland* and Gardiner - consulted with Stevenson and they drafted an alter-native amendment which called for specific reductions. Stevenson is supposed to have inspired the newspaper stories, which were largely inventions because they attributed the leadership of the movement to Mr. Hoey,* the member for Springfield, who in point of fact is one of Crerar's most devoted supporters. I understand that there were only about five or six members all told in the caucus, all of them from Alberta with the exception of one Ontario member in the person of Miss McPhail* [sic]. Crerar and Stevenson had a very lively set to over the matter, in which Crerar used extremely plain language; and the whole question was put up to the Progressive caucus at Ottawa last Saturday, at which Mr. Crerar made it quite clear that he expected the solid support of the party or it would be necessary either for disciplinary measures to be enforced or he would retire. I understand that practically the whole party rallied to his support and that there is for the moment complete unity of the party in support of the line which he has taken in the House.

Mr. Symington who is back from Ottawa, thinks that the fight for the Crow's Nest Pass agreement may possibly end in a victory for the West, though,

of course, this was not on the cards two weeks ago. He says that the Canadian National Rly. officials and the C.P.R. officials had a long conference upon the subject which ended in a wrangle. The C.N.R. officials were willing to accept the Crow's Nest rate on grain going East provided that some of the other commodity rates on westward bound freight were amended. The C.P.R., however, would not hear of this and thinks it is powerful enough to impose its view upon the House. The committee was, of course, framed for this purpose. Symington says that he never saw anything quite so barefaced as the way the special representatives of the C.P.R. lined up in front and undertook to badger all the witnesses who had a word to say for the agreement. Among the members of the committee who were conspicuously on this job were Ned McDonald [sic], Walter Mitchell, Vien,* Archambault and Boys, only the last being a Conservative. The committee was so constituted that it was thought the railways would have an easy victory, but Symington thought that this was not quite so certain as it had seemed when he left Ottawa.

I have pretty straight information that the schedules of tariff changes which Fielding announced in the budget were not the schedules which he originally prepared. At the last moment Gouin and his crowd put a gun to the heads of King and Fielding and compelled great modifications. I hear that King made an observation to Premier Greenfield of Alberta that he hoped the time would come when it would be possible to have a really Liberal government at Ottawa in which men like himself and Mr. Hudson could take part.

We had a very close call from frost in the West last night, but I think the danger is past. The crop prospects are all that can be desired and there is undoubtedly a great improvement in public feeling throughout the West.

July 10th, 1922

My dear Dafoe-

I have your letter of the 7th. Just at the moment I have not time to write the article that you speak of. In any event, in this particular case, I think you had better do it yourself. I am afraid I have lost the clippings, but no doubt

You can get a copy of the Leader which contains them.

If I might suggest a point in connection with the article, I think it would be well to take the line that the trouble with the Editor of the Leader, and his correspondents, is that they have not either listened to, or read carefully what I said, and are arguing and talking in the terms of fifty years ago.

I note what you say about the election. The course you have taken is quite satisfactory to me. I expect Norris will do better than you had anticipated and I think the visiting Orangemen from Ontario will have a very considerable effect.

With respect to Ottawa matters, I have been watching your editorials in which you gave credit to Crerar and Hudson for what was accomplished. I have no objection to what you have said, but I think you have given them all the credit they are entitled to. I watched the situation pretty closely and I was at the Session at its beginning and talked with different people there. I am entirely convinced that the whole trouble arose from the wabbling [sic] of Hudson and Crerar at the beginning. If they had presented an uncompromising front no attempt whatever would have been made to put through a suspension of the Crows Nest Pass Act. Hudson left the Progressives and voted with the Government on a critical vote early in the Session and Crerar did not leave on the minds of anybody the impression that he was ready to fight. I talked with him for two hours and his mental attitude was very unsatisfactory. In my judgment both Crerar and Hudson were very weak and they were brought around to a fighting mood largely by the attitude of some of their own Party and the general attitude of the Western Press. The Government was entirely convinced that neither Crerar nor Hudson would fight them. That was the reason the combination was made to try to pull the Amendment to the Railway Act through.

July_y 11, 1922.

My dear Sir Clifford,

The Progressive members are coming back from Ottawa and from conversations with them, and with other parties, I am beginning to

get a fairly good idea of the inside situation at Ottawa which I think you will be interested to learn.

There is no doubt a condition of affairs which may lead to some rather startling changes if Mr. King has the resolution to act in accordance with what appears to be his wishes. It is, however, a rather large "if". It appears that during the last session there was an uncommon amount of fraternizing between the Progressive members and those members of the Liberal party who found themselves more or less in sympathy with the views held by the Progressives. These Liberals, I am told, are more numerous than had been expected; they include most of the members from Western Ontario and most of the Maritime Province members, with a considerable group of French-Canadians, mostly from the lower part of that province. These Liberals, representing about half the membership of the party, became increasingly restive under the obvious subordination of party interests to Montreal dictation applied through the agency of Sir Lomer Gouin.

The trouble really began with the division on the McMaster resolution". There was great resentment that Gouin had put his colleagues and the party generally in the position of having to vote down this resolution. The feeling in the party was that Gouin should have been happy to give up his directorships in exchange for membership in the Dominion Government. This feeling was sharply accentuated when Gouin delivered his speech on the budget. A considerable number of Liberal members left the Chamber in resentment while he was speaking. This was on a Thursday; on the following Saturday a number of Liberals members constituted themselves into a delegation and waited upon Fielding. They asked Mr. Fielding if they were to hereafter regard Sir Lomer Gouin as the mouthpiece through which the fiscal policy of the party should be made public. They found Fielding in a very sympathetic mood and he is reported to have used some very plain language with his colleague. From Fielding they went on to King himself with whom they had a heart to heart talk. They told King, so I am informed, that if he did not "get" Sir Lomer, it was only a question of time until Sir Lomer would "get" him. They told King that it was quite obvious that Sir Lomer Gouin regarded himself as the real head of the administration and that he had gone down to Montreal that day to attend a dinner given in honor of

²⁰ A. R. McMaster's resolution, presented to the House of Commons in 1922, called on cabinet ministers to relinquish all company directorships. It was defeated.

Mr. Walter Mitchell with this in his mind. They advised Mr. King to look out from [sic] the Monday papers for proof of the truth of what they said. Sure enough at this dinner Gouin took the position that the disposal of Cabinet portfolios was within his power.

It was owing to these feelings of unrest and resentment in the Liberal party that Mr. Crerar, Mr. Hudson and the Progressives generally were able to defeat the C.P.R. movement for the suspension of the Crow's Nest Pass agreement. Sir Lomer Gouin was directing the C.P.R. campaign on behalf of the Government. There is no doubt about this because I am told that Walter Mitchell informed Mr. Crerar that the course he was taking in the Committee was in accordance with the wishes of Sir Lomer Gouin. The form in which the question came up gave the anti-Gouin forces in the Liberal party a chance to administer a severe defeat to him and they took advantage of it. From all accounts the Liberal caucus on the subject was the liveliest one that has been held in Ottawa for years. Ned Macdonald and Walter Mitchell attempted to control the proceedings of the caucus, making speeches on behalf of the C.P.R.'s point of view. Malcolm* of North Bruce, who was elected as an Independent Liberal, led the revolt with a very flat-footed and emphatic declaration of his intention not to submit to the dictation of the railways. He was vigorously seconded by Mr. Euler* of North Waterloo and then Frank Cahill of Pontiac, who was for many years a resident of Saskatoon where he made his money in real estate operations, [and who] made an extremely severe assault upon Ned Macdonald. By this time the caucus was in a complete hubbub, but it became quite clear that the majority of the members were disposed to follow the road marked by Malcolm and his associates; and King intervened and stopped the discussion by saying that he was satisfied that a sentiment along the line as suggested by Mr. Crerar and the committee was the only practical one. The defeat of Gouin was very severe and it may have important political consequences.

It appears that there is a possibility of a definite understanding being reached between the Government and the Progressives if King takes the initiative and makes a demonstration of good will and of his ability to give effect to his wishes by making changes in his government. Gouin's disappearance from the government and from parliament is, I understand, the first essential. The retirement of other ministers is also hinted at,

among them Mr. Robb,* Minister of Trade and Commerce, and Geo. P. Graham,* both of whom are regarded as unduly sympathetic to the corporation point of view. Upon the basis of King making these changes and giving certain assurance as to policy, the support of the Progressives can be assured. I understand that King, while professing his dislike for a coalition announces that he is quite prepared to enter into an alliance with the Progressives. Just what the difference is between the two propositions, I am myself unable to see; but possibly the agreement is that the Progressives will simply support the Government and not expect representation in it. As to this point I am really not informed. No doubt in the event of an arrangement of this sort being entered into, Hudson would go into the Government, probably as Minister of Justice in place of Gouin. The Progressives might regard Hudson's presence in the government as justification of giving it general support. I am told that the great bulk of the Progressives, about fifty-five out of the total strength of sixty-five, are friendly to some such alliance or coalition, and that the movement looking for it has come more from the rank and file than from the leaders. The Ontario contingent which, as you know, bucked the idea of an understanding between the Liberals and Progressives last December, are said to support the proposition with only a few exceptions, the other dissenters being about half a dozen men from Alberta.

A feature of the situation at Ottawa is the growing division in the supposedly solid Quebec contingent. The feeling between Lapointe and Bureau* on the one hand and Gouin on the other is reaching a point where an explosion is inevitable. Lapointe has expressed his opinion very clearly to certain Progressive members with whom he is in confidential relations, but professes himself unable as yet, however, to raise the standard of revolt as he says Gouin has the backing of all the money interests and the support of the Quebec government and the ear of the Quebec press, both French and English. He is, therefore, biding his time.

The general understanding is that King is to take action of some sort within the next month or two. Personally I might say that I doubt whether anything will happen during the Parliamentary recess. I don't think King has the courage to "bell the cat". Matters will probably drift along until the next session of Parliament then a crisis may develop; but I thought you might be interested to hear the facts that have come to me.

I have nothing to add to my earlier letter about the provincial situation. Things are just about as they were with perhaps the prospects for the farmers a little better during the last few days of the campaign. There are signs that the Liberal rally has spent its strength. I hear that the Progressive members returning from Ottawa are refusing to take any part in the campaign, perhaps as a result of the developments at Ottawa. The fusion of the Liberals and Farmers after [the] election is well among the possibilities if neither is strong enough to carry on the government. Up to a month, ago I should have said that a fusion under Norris was possible but this is now highly improbable as the Farmer campaign has been largely directed towards proving their charge that Norris, despite the good work he did for the province which they willingly concede, is entirely too good natured and easy-going to make the administrative reforms which conditions in the province call for.

Sept. 18, 1922

Dear Dafoe

Three months ago at Ottawa I said the Canadian Gov[ernmen]t was liable to get a telegram calling upon it to take part in a war in Asia Minor.²¹ It was taken somewhat as a joke but the telegram apparently is here.

I have wired you today that the policy of the Free Press must be one of opposition to sending troops. This is unalterable & final. In my judgment the whole question of autonomy vs entanglement in European & Asiatic wars must be fought out now. I don't believe the Canadian people will stand for the folly that is proposed.

As to the method that must be left to you. Whether to take the bull by the horns or to go gently at first[,] I rather favor the last, contrary to my usual disposition.

²¹ On September 15, 1922, the British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, publicly appealed to the Dominions for aid in meeting the Turkish threat at Chanak in Asia Minor. The reply of the King government was, in effect, negative – King said it was a matter that Parliament would have to decide and since Parliament was not in session this was, in fact, a negative answer. The outcome of this incident is usually noted as a significant stage in the evolution of Canada's right to determine her own foreign policy. See Dawson, *Mackenzie King*, 401-22.

Already there is the usual display of columns of military enthusiasm, swashbuckling & froth. I see Currie* is out with one of his solemn platitudes. The -whole thing is just what I expected. I told Wilison [sic] three months ago that if Lloyd George were not put out he would have Europe in a blaze in a year. Anything more insane than his call to arms it would be hard to imagine. Note the Montreal Gazette of today. Obviously they would be willing to get out of it by sending a very little contingent & let the principle go. No objection to you showing this to Crerar. I hope he will stand firm.

Yours
Clifford Sifton

P.S. Of course the idea of sending a small contingent is worse than taking part on a considerable scale. We should probably get news some day that it was captured or massacred & then all Canada would resound with a demand for vengeance.

It is possible that the Canadian people have learned nothing and are prepared to bequeath to their children the legacy of warfare hate & bloodshed which makes Europe a shambles?

October 4th, 1922.

Dear Dafoe

I received your letter 29th here and wired you today "Avoid Further Discussion until you receive my letter written today."

I infer from your letter and also from one which I have received from Macklin that you are quite all right so far. The ravings of the Tribune are I think a help rather than a hindrance. I recognize however in your last article on the necessity for defining our political status a pretty acute fear that there are ructions ahead.

I am going to give you in a few words my considered opinion of the whole matter. Each part of it is as important as any other part.

The F[ree], P[ress]. has taken its stand i.e. that only the Parlia-ment of Canada directly or indirectly can involve Canada in War. No iteration or repetition of that is necessary or desirable just now. It is up to the

Gov[ernmen]t which has affirmed the principle also to act on it. The Gov[ernmen]t may safely be trusted to do so. (The only man in the outfit I am afraid of is Fielding but the others will take care of him) The Gov[ernmen]t being in possession of the necessary facts will take the responsibility of calling Parliament or not doing so. If it calls Parliament or refuses to do so I would not in the F[ree]. P[ress]. find any fault with its action.

I would not in the meantime discuss the question of political status or participation in war at all. I would give the best available news service & the best possible elucidation of the situation - a good map would be very desirable to issue with the weekly or Saturday Free Press, but I would not discuss the issue of participation. You have done your work; more effectually than you have any idea of. The whole press of Canada was on the verge of an hysterical shriek for war. Your first article steadied them. I think the danger is over. Your articles have been the admiration of the whole country & have made thousands of converts. But if you have any fault in these matters it is in driving the argument too hard. That won't do in this case. Let the people alone now. Let them think, they will come out all right.

I don't think there is one chance in a million that Parliament as at present constituted or as it will be constituted after an election will order any Canadian troops abroad. If there is stiff fighting & Britain is in it no doubt we shall have ructions in Canada but there is no particular reason why the F[ree]. P[ress]. having now taken its stand & done its duty should pull any ones [sic] chestnuts out of the fire or to vary the metaphor should hang around on the street corner until it gets its head broken.

Particularly I would avoid offensive jibes. I don't like your reference to flag flapping & flag waving. It does'nt [sic] do any good & unnecessarily offends.

Macklin at my request wrote me a memo on the subject with which I quite fully agree. Get him to show it to you. I don't think it will be necessary for you to come down unless the Mudania conference breaks up & fighting begins. I suggest that you take Macklin fully into confidence & conference on the subject & collaborate on the policy. I shall be satisfied with whatever you two agree on.

I have had rather a misfortune. I got a bad attack of tonsilitis, it poisoned my

system turned to rheumatic gout & I am laid up crippled. [I] Am forbidden to take any violent exercise for fear of reactions on the heart. No riding no hunting no golf for two months. I hope then to be as good as new.

Nov. 2nd, 1922.

My dear Sir Clifford:-

I have been stirring about a bit lately and have been getting a line on political developments. In particular I have had a number of conversations with Mr. Crerar, the substance of which you will doubt-less be interested to hear.

In the first place, Crerar tells me that he has definitely made up his mind to retire from the leadership of the Progressive party. This decision is primarily due to the necessity that he devote all his time to the Management of the United Grain Growers' Grain [sic] Co. This company is in a rather bad way financially. The current year's operations will show a loss in excess of half a million dollars which will have to be met out of reserve and I am informed, though not by Crerar, that at the annual meeting the regular dividend will be passed. It looks as though Crerar is the only man who can administer this company. Owing to the form in which it is organized it is particularly subject to internal friction and there has been a lot of this during the past few years while Crerar has had his attention concentrated upon politics. I think these are the considerations which are inducing Crerar to take the step which he has determined upon. He is not influenced by any disinclination to continue in public life and I judge from his conversation that he would not be disturbed by the evidence that there are elements in the Progressive Party which are very critical of his course as leader. He feels that if the United Grain Growers were to come to grief it would flatten out the whole movement and that his immediate duty is to devote his energies to re-establishing the company as a profit making concern.

The caucus of the Progressive members takes place here a week from Friday, November 10th, I asked Crerar. what he thought they would do. He said he would advise them to put the affairs of the party in the charge of a small executive committee and to have some man

act as their spokesman in the House. As to who this spokesman would be he declined to make any prediction but he said he thought the choice might fall on R. A. Hoey, M.Y. for Springfield. He also thought that Forke* was a possibility in this connection. He thought that the caucus would be pretty harmonious and that there will be no particular disagreement as to the policy which they are to follow. He thinks the party will remain intact under its own leaders and that it will watch developments in the House of Commons. Apparently with Crerar dropping out all immediate prospects of fusion or an understanding between the Progressives and the Liberals lapses.

As I wrote you before, I have been of the opinion, though this is not based upon any direct information given by Mr. Crerar or Mr. Hudson, that both these men had a sort of understanding with Mr. King that they would go into the government if certain conditions were fulfilled, the first of which was the retirement of Sir Lomer Gouin. Crerar told me to-day that the Government had definitely offered the Canadian Ministership at Washington to Sir Lomer Gouin and that King had pressed him for a reply and had been promised a reply by the end of December. Crerar said that ten days ago when he saw Hon. Chas. Stewart here in town he was informed that Gouin had the matter still under advisement and that it was pretty well realized that he did not intend to smooth the way for Mr. King by accepting. Crerar's information is that there are parties in Montreal working to bring about an understanding between the Gouin wing of the Liberals and the Conservatives, the scheme being to make Sir Thomas White the leader of the two forces if they should unite. He doesn't look for any immediate developments but thinks it highly probable that there will be a smash within the next two years.

Crerar has not made up his mind yet whether to retire from the House of Commons or not, but my impression is that he will retain his membership, at least for the coming session, though his business responsibilities will make it impossible for him to attend continuously.

As perhaps I wrote you earlier, Crerar lost one of his two children about six weeks ago, a girl of eight years. She died very suddenly of diphtheria while her father was absent from the city. He is pretty badly cut up by it and this may have been a minor factor in reconciling him to a course which will enable him to stay at home.

Crerar gave me some interesting information about the situation at Ottawa following the receipt of the cablegram from Winston Churchill on September 16, asking for the promise of Canadian co-operation in the event of hostilities in the Near East. He saw all the cable correspondence. The earlier cables were quite insistent that Canada should formally commit herself. King's first telegram in reply contained a strong protest against the procedure which had been followed. Later King cabled asking the British Government to consent to the publication of the interchange of telegrams but this consent was not given though Churchill wired a form of statement which he suggested they should put out. Crerar thinks the Government will be anxious to have all the correspondence laid on the table of the House at the next session of Parliament if this be possible. Crerar also told me that Fielding cabled from Europe urging the government to agree to send a contingent, but that this proposition got no real support in the government.

December 14th, 1922.

My dear Dafoe-

I have your letters of the 10th and the 11th.

On the subject of Immigration, I think you have a copy of the Address that I delivered. I worked pretty hard at it and covered pretty nearly everything that is essential. The only fault that I find with Stewart is he is puttering and talking and erecting more machinery, when in fact no talk whatever is wanted and much less machinery than he has. This is as to the form. As to the actual nature of the work, Central Europe is the only place where we can get any number of peasants ready to go on our Northern territory - Ontario, Manitoba and the Western Provinces. That is where the work ought to be done and it is quite evident that Stewart has no intention whatever of doing it. He is, as Maxie of the National Review says, trying to "fobb" us off with twaddle, which is exactly what was done by useless Ministers thirty years ago. It should be put up to him to get after the hard-working peasants that we require here.

As to the question of Western Immigration Association, I have never had much faith in it, but I think the proper policy for you is

to give them your blessing and friendly co-operation, but take no responsibility for either success or failure.

The difficulty with the land owners, which you refer to, is as old as the Northwest.

I noticed some of the discussions of Crerar's statement about war, but did not notice that anybody had held you or me responsible for it. In my own mind, however, I accept full responsibility for furnishing Mackenzie King with a ready-made policy. His declarations on the subject were almost word for word what I said in an address at Ottawa where King was present.

What is the matter with Gordon Waldron? He is generally wrong, but I should have thought that upon this point he would be right.

I doubt if King will compromise on the question. I am expecting to see him stand firm. As to whether you have labored the argument too much I would express the opinion that you have not. At the same time I think you have said enough about it until it becomes an active question again and then if I were you I would remember that I had already covered the ground very fully and endeavor to deal with the questions that arise briefly and in very simple language. I find that the average man has little capacity for following an argument on this question unless it is stated with the utmost brevity and simplicity. To sum up, I would not shrink from discussing it when it arose, but I would make the discussion short and to the point and I would entirely avoid the appearance of dragging in the subject in a way which was not entirely necessary.

I observe that you have been entirely right about the Street Rail-way matter. Now as to the Banking Question - As this matter will of necessity be discussed at length, I may as well go into it fully and I shall take up the different proposals of the Council of Agriculture seriatim.

1. Concentration of Banking capital. This has proceeded to an extent that is almost criminal. Recollect that it means not only the banking capital, but the entire savings of the country, which are lodged with the banks and are loaned out by them, and this huge aggregation of capital is practically controlled today by six or eight men. White is largely responsible for it. The tendency was evident

when he became Finance Minister. *Amalgamation of banks should be stopped absolutely.* Banks should be notified that not under the guise whatever would amalgamations or purchases be approved. Banks should be obliged to carry out the terms of their charter or wind up or liquidate and go out of business. There should be absolutely no exception of this rule.

2. In the second place the banks and the Bankers' Association should be notified that their opposition to Banking Charters would not be tolerated and that their presence at Ottawa on such missions is entirely unwelcome.

3. We should have a line of Banks of a capital from \$100,000 up, under proper provisions. The Americans have such a system of banks and it works with perfect satisfaction. Any man who has \$100,000. and wants to put it into a bank and carry on a banking system should be allowed to do so. In other words we should have comparatively free trade in banking. This is especially necessary in the Western country.

As to whether any steps should be taken to mitigate the present monopoly of the present institutions, I am not prepared to say. If they could be definitely held down to their present position and other banks started, the country would in time bring about an equilibrium.

As to the present position, the obvious feature of the case is that the actual banking capital paid in by the shareholders is trifling as compared with the deposits and the general capital which the bank controls. The present institutions could probably be curbed effectually by some measure requiring them to have paid-up capital or reserve of a certain proportion to their total assets or to the amount of business which they did. I am not wedded to this idea, but it would be one method of curbing the evil and, make no mistake about it, the evil is a serious one. It has not shown its head very definitely yet, but the position is so bad at the present time that no man with large business interests would dare to antagonize the leading banks.

Most of the Canadian Council of Agriculture's statement is mere wind and I will just deal with what seem to be the main points.

As to their provision for Royal Commission, I am entirely opposed to it. It is sheer nonsense. It is the business of the Members of the Government and the expert officials whom they pay, to inform them selves and deal with these subjects.

This country has gone Commission crazy. We paid more for Commissions in the last year than we have for actual Ministerial salaries. Furthermore, if you get a Commission it will be controlled by the leading Banks, and if you get any Legislation there will be a joker in it making it ineffective.

As to the creation of a Bank of re-discount similar to the Federal Reserve Bank, there is no particular necessity for it now, though if a line of small banks were created a bank of re-discount would probably be necessary to support them in times of emergency. The danger of course is that it is liable to abuse its privileges of issue, although the Federal Reserve Bank of the United States has certainly not done so.

I am entirely opposed to withdrawing from the banks the privilege of issuing notes and I am wholly and entirely opposed to any Department of the Government issuing notes in excess of what it does at the present time. In fact I think the power to issue Dominion notes should be more strictly limited. Section "C" of the Farmers report is pointing in the right direction - Amendments should be framed in such a way as to induce local capital to engage in banking.

I think this covers the case pretty well. If you would like me to deal more fully with any of the points of which T have spoken, I shall be glad to do so if you will write me.

Needless to say I am entirely opposed to the Government banks and while I am on the subject I may say that the idea of Western Canada suffering from lack of banking facilities is sheer nonsense. The whole of my observations throughout life have led me to the conclusion that borrowed money is too easy to get and more men are ruined by easy loans than by inability to get loans at all. I suppose you cannot take a very strong stand upon the question, but the Western Governments ought to steer in the direction of closing up and winding up their banking ventures as soon as possible, otherwise they are likely to land in disaster.

Wishing you the compliments of the season, I am,

Yours faithfully,
Clifford Sifton

The trouble in the west is not that there is not enough money loaned. It is that the Banks should be to some extent local & sym pathetic to

& conversant with local conditions. It cannot be cured in a year but we can call a halt & start in the right direction. At present we are headed in the wrong direction.

Jan. 2nd, 1923.

Dear Sir Clifford:-

During the past fortnight I have, so far as my opportunities have permitted, been carrying on a sort of survey of conditions in the West. I have been talking with a considerable number of people in a position to be informed, and other members of the staff have also been making inquiries; a member of the editorial staff goes to Regina tonight, where he has appointments with Mr. Dunning and other notabilities.

There are features of the situation which are somewhat disquieting. I said to you in a letter about a month ago that so far as I could make out there had been a considerable material improvement throughout the country but that the mental state of the farming population of Western Canada was about as disturbed as ever. That I think roughly describes the case except that there is some reason to think that the farmers are even more disgruntled to-day than they were a year ago. Then they had a belief that if they could only get a big crop they would be lifted out of their troubles; they have had a big crop and it has not much more than paid current expenses with little surplus which has been absorbed in paying back interest. They have been hounded by an army of creditors; many of them have been subjected to very unreasonable legal penalties and the mental attitude of a somewhat alarming proportion of the farmers is that which might be summed up in the slang phrase, "What's the use?" The exasperation is suggesting various lines of action: one, the downright abandonment of the farm; two, the restriction of production next year; and three, a demand from the government of all kinds of special help, something along the lines of the movement in the United States. It is this feeling which is behind the renewed demand for a wheat board. Dunning's suggestion is regarded by most informed farmers that I have met as affording about the only way out, but I am inclined to think that the average farmer who wanted the wheat board regards Dunning's proposal as simply an attempt to bunco him and this has made him more determined than ever to force the government to establish it. Premier Bracken* tells me that he is advised by Greenfield that the farmers of Alberta are more

determined than ever before to have the government do something for them along the lines of national marketing. The Manitoba Government doesn't want to deal with this question but may find themselves forced to. Whether the proposition to have Manitoba go in with the other two provinces in the creation of a wheat board would secure the support of the present Manitoba legislature is doubtful; it will depend upon the attitude which labor takes. I think the greatest danger is the possibility that there will be a considerable abandonment of farms. If the farmers stay on the farms the threat to reduce production may be forgotten when the spring comes, but when a man picks up his movables and leaves the farm for the city there is, of course, a definite area of land which is bound to be withdrawn from cultivation.

As you have doubtless noticed in Ontario the shortage of labor in the manufacturing centres of the United States, due to their immigration restrictions, is drawing artisans and rough labor from the Canadian cities southward. This process is going on here too though not to so marked a degree; and this makes an opening in the cities for people coming in from the farms who are willing to do rough work. We thus have a double process going on, people going from Winnipeg and other western cities south and their places taken by men from the farms. I think the financial, banking and commercial houses are pretty generally concerned about the situation. The difficulty is primarily psychological. The actual condition of the farmer has undoubtedly improved in the last twelve months, but his mood is to consider the conditions as too onerous, not making it worth his while to stay with the job. The vague proposition put forward by the Canadian Council of Agriculture to fund the farmers' debts on some basis of amortization is, of course, a reflex of this feeling throughout the country. A committee of the Council headed by Mr. Rice Jones, vice president of the U[nited]. G[rain]. G[rowers]., is working on the project but a solution along these lines seems to me quite impossible. The problem if it is to be solved will have to be solved upon the basis of the individual farmer who is hopelessly involved, dealing with his own set of creditors and securing a readjustment upon lines which will permit him to stay on the farm. Creditors will have to learn that it will be much better for them to keep the farmer on the land than to drive him off it. Some of them are very slow to learn this lesson.

The conditions to which I refer are, of course, by no means universal and it is quite possible that as we get into the new year and the winter begins to pass, there will be a revival of confidence. When we get all our information together we may publish a few articles intended to help the situation.

I had a long confidential conversation the other day with James Stewart. I don't know that you know Mr. Stewart but just at present he rather fills the Western imagination as about the greatest business man in Western Canada. He is very quiet in manner and reserved in conversation but he certainly gives one the impression of great shrewdness and ability. I judge that his attitude towards his colleagues on the Canadian National Railway Board and towards Sir Henry Thornton* too, is largely one that might be indicated by a large question mark. I inferred from his conversation that one or two very important decisions had been made by the Eastern directors without consulting him and that he had registered very emphatic protests. One was the decision to switch the bank account of the Canadian National Railways from the Bank of Commerce to the Royal Bank, which has raised a tremendous stir in Eastern financial circles, as no doubt you have heard. I have been told that this was really Mr. Fielding's work. The other matter was the decision of the Eastern directors in consultation with the government to tear up the rails of 120 miles of the Hudson Bay Railway. I hear that they are not likely to be torn up after all but the intention was quite clear. Stewart told me that he had been studying the problem of the Hudson Bay road for some time and that more and more as he goes over the data, he believes that a bold attempt to open up the northern road would be a good stroke of business with very large chances of success, and with the certainty that the embarking upon the enterprise would have a moral effect upon business in Western Canada which would make it well worth while. He thinks that if the road were built to Tidewater and a couple of transfer elevators built, the road could be tested out in a small way without any excessive outlay of capital, and further expenditures could be made as the road developed in a natural way. He would not build storage elevators at all and in the off-season he would operate the road with the lightest possible equipment, possibly gasoline cars, using the rolling stock on other parts of the National system.

He thinks that the withdrawal of the cattle embargo would make it a very effective road for cattle from Northern Saskatchewan during the first two months of the season when grain would not be available for shipment.

Our local legislature is to meet in about two weeks' time. I think the Bracken government will be pretty severely badgered by the old time politicians, but I doubt whether any deliberate attempt to defeat them will be made. I am inclined to think that Bracken has made a pretty fair impression upon the public and that the feeling that he is trying to discharge a very difficult task and should get support will grow. He has been telling me confidentially something about the real state of affairs in the province. He says that the deficit for the calendar year 1922 will not fall much short of a million and a half dollars. They have effected some economics [sic] since coming into office but these have almost offset by increased interest and maintenance charges upon public buildings, additions to the insane asylums at Brandon and Selkirk and the Deaf and Dumb Institute which has just been completed. He thinks it possible that they may reduce the provincial expenditures by perhaps half a million a year when they get their plans matured and that they may be able to increase their revenue from various sources without imposing an income tax meanwhile by about \$500,000. I think his idea at present is to proceed along these lines, meanwhile keeping the idea of an income tax in reserve if it is found necessary later to equalize the budget. They have had some very awkward legacies left to them as for instance the provincial hydro electric enterprise. The province has invested some two million dollars in it. Being operated at a deficit of \$200,000 a year there is no possibility of this deficit being reduced upon the present mileage of lines. The advice of the engineers is to double the capital outlay, carrying the lines into Brandon and other points in the Western part of the province, when it is thought the system might carry itself or perhaps turn in a slight surplus. This is merely one of a series of problems which the new government has to face and considering that they are all, without exception, totally without experience as administrators, it will have to be admitted that they have a rather large job on their hands and that they are entitled to sympathetic and considerate treatment by the people generally.

Jan. 13th, 1923.

Dear Sir Clifford:-

Pursuing the subject about which I wrote you some ten days ago, I have had long interviews with Mr. Dunning and Mr. Bracken. What I have been trying to do has been to inform myself as to the actual conditions instead of the apparent. There are times when they are not the same.

I found Dunning more cheerful over the situation than Premier Bracken is. Apparently this is typical of Saskatchewan opinion this year. Observers agree that conditions are better in Saskatchewan than in either of the two other provinces and that the people are more hopeful. This appears to be due to the fact that Saskatchewan, being almost wholly a grain growing province, has escaped the shock resulting from the [bottom] dropping out of the market for livestock. After all there was more money in wheat than in livestock during the past season. I see by the table of values of crops in the various provinces quoted by Sir Edmund Walker* in his address to the Bank of Commerce, that Saskatchewan alone among the Canadian provinces had a larger gross revenue from these - i.e. farm - sources this year than it had in 1920.

Dunning has come up since you were active in public affairs and possibly you have not met him often enough to have a thorough knowledge about him. He is, I think one of the most efficient public men now in the business and I should not be the least surprised to see him some day Premier of Canada. He is a product of the Scott-Calder political school but he is an improvement upon his teachers. He plays politics pretty hard but I think his real concern is for the public and that he knows pretty well where to draw the line. He is very capable and hard-headed and I think has an excellent idea of Western conditions and what is necessary to be done to put these provinces on their feet. As you know, he came out from England a boy in his teens, took a homestead and has been through the mill.

With regard to rural conditions in Saskatchewan, he seemed to think that things were on the mend and that some of the processes which were going on, while drastic, would be to the ultimate good of the province. One of the problems throughout the West is what to do for the farmer who from a variety of causes is so submerged in debt that there is no likelihood that he can emerge by his own efforts.

Dunning says the Province of Saskatchewan is going to work up this problem through the agency of its Debt Adjustment Bureau. This is *in* the charge of Mr. Oliver whom you doubtless know as he was a former official in your department at Ottawa. He has a bureau at Regina and the field agriculturalists of the Department of Agriculture have been given districts throughout the province. Farmers in difficulties communicate with the Debt Adjustment Bureau and the case is given individual attention. They have dealt this season with some four or five thousand cases and it is the intention to continue the agency for a period of years. The province has a general moratorium act vesting large powers in the Government but it has not been invoked as yet. Dunning said that at the coming session power would be taken to declare individual moratoriums for the purpose of enabling the Debt Adjustment Bureau to apply pressure to stubborn and unreasonable creditors. I asked him if they had had this power this year whether it would have been largely used. He said in a very small number of cases. I asked him if the Debt Adjustment Bureau was doing anything more than merely securing accommodation for debtors. This does not really meet the situation in many cases. What is needed is a reduction in the debts to a point where the farmer has some chance of paying them and making a living if he remains on the farm. Dunning indicated that a good deal of this sort of thing was going on by direct negotiation between the creditor and the debtor. He mentioned several cases to me. In some instances where land was sold at high prices a new agreement has been substituted with a very considerable reduction in the price. *In* others there has been a remission of arrears of interest. Mortgage companies are extremely reluctant to adopt an open policy of reducing principal or remitting interest because once this is done they will be flooded with demands. Dunning says, however, that in many cases they make arrangements with their debtors by which the latter turn over their property without involving the company in legal costs, and repurchase it at a lower price. He thought that with the activities of the Debt Adjustment Bureau plus the operation of ordinary laws of business the situation would be fairly well taken care of. He agreed that a very considerable number of people would be forced off the farms but he struck me as a little cold-blooded in his attitude towards this prospect. He seemed to think that men who were driven from the farms under these circumstances were not fit for country life and that the sooner they moved on the better. He told me there was a small but steady stream of settlers coming in from

the United States to pick up the farms thus given up. In a small settlement near Swift Current which he visited recently there were eleven new American families who had bought land which had been virtually abandoned by the original owners at prices which would probably enable them to make a successful attempt at farming, given due industry and knowledge on their part. There is a movement in Northern Saskatchewan instigated by one of the extreme Progressive M.P.s, Campbell of Mackenzie, for a three year general moratorium for farmers. Dunning said the movement was spreading very fast and he foresaw trouble for himself and his government but he was prepared to fight it. Dunning has a strong following among the organized farmers and I very much question whether he can be ejected from office by any purely farmer organization.

Mr. Bracken was pretty pessimistic about the situation. Of course, these problems are quite new to him and he is rather staggered by them. He said to me that his energies up to the present had been devoted to the production side of agriculture and it was only now that he was being driven to study the marketing and financial end. He said that he had never known the morale of the farmers so low in Western Canada and that he feared the consequences, not only with respect to abandonment of farms but also as to production the coming season. He said it was clear to him that systems of co-operative selling on a really extensive scale covering practically all the products of the farm would have to be inaugurated if the situation was to be met and that he intended [if] his government remained in power to make this the prime object of his administration. He is thinking of sending experts to Ireland and Denmark to make a close study of co-operative methods in those countries. You will have seen his statement about the wheat board at Brandon. He thinks it probable that the farmers will have to be given a wheat board for one year as a moral rather than a commercial necessity.

I also had a talk the other day with a Mr. Gurthrie of Reston. You probably know him as I think he was a supporter of yours. He is engaged in the loaning business at that point and he came in to see me at the suggestion of Mr. Forke. He had with him the documents relating to a farmer for whom he had acted this season as an intermediary between him and his creditors. The figure showed that the season's crop which was a good one and harvested

largely with the help of the family so that labor costs were low, worked out as follows:

Arrears of interest up to 1922 were paid but nothing was paid on the current year. Arrears of taxes paid up to the current year. 11% of all current and open accounts was paid and \$600.00 cash was kept to keep the family going during the coming year. He said this was upon the whole better than the conditions on the average farm. His point was that this man would pull through if his creditors would abstain from legal action, but he said that if two or three of his creditors were to enter suit and get judgment it would mean that this man would abandon his farm and move out of the country. He thought this case was typical of thousands and he seemed to be of the opinion that something like the Saskatchewan machinery should be adopted in this province with the possibility of individual moratoriums where the circumstances seemed to call for it. He had, I understand, some conversations with the local government.

I also had some talk with Mr. Dunning about immigration. Upon the whole he is not very friendly to immigration from Central Europe. He says the country doesn't want any Poles at all. Ruthenians are a good deal better but he seems to think that they deteriorate in this country particularly if they are educated. He says they can be educated all right but that they cannot be civilized, at least not in one generation; and that the educated Ruthenian is a menace to his own countrymen and to the community. He is also dubious about Swedes. Those who come to this country are, he says, almost without exception just one remove from anarchists. That was, of course, our experience with the Swedes of Manitoba during the war. Of all the elements we had they were the most dangerous being markedly Red in their sympathies and beliefs. Dunning thinks that the only real prospect of getting immigrants into Western Canada is from the United States. The supply of farmers from the British Isles is bound to be limited but he thinks there is no doubt but that immigration from the United States will be constant and will increase in volume. He doesn't seem to be altogether easy in his mind over this development, but he declares that it is inevitable and that if the country is ever to be settled they must look for immigrants to that source.

January 16th, 1923.

My dear Dafoe-

I have your letter of the 13th, which I have read carefully and with very great interest.

The general situation amongst the farmers in the West as you describe it is just about what I had anticipated, although I was not aware that there were cases where the creditors were proceeding to such extremes as to drive the farmers off their land. It would appear that the Saskatchewan method of dealing with the case is about the best possible, and possibly it would be wise for Bracken to follow the example of Dunning. I entirely agree with what you say about Dunning. I think he is very able and has real constructive capacity as well as courage and political ability to maintain himself. I sincerely trust that nothing may cause his retirement from public life.

Bracken is entirely right about the co-operation. I have said so for years past. Co-operative selling and to some extent buying, not only in the West but in other Provinces, is the only salvation of agriculture. The difficulty is that our people have been so fed up with Government schemes of all kinds, that they do not seem to possess the idea that it is their own business and that they have to do it themselves. Any help or interference by the Government is all to the bad. (except scientific or expert advice)

I think Bracken's idea of sending to Ireland and Denmark, especially the latter, for information is extremely good and should be carried out promptly.

Regarding immigration, I am very much interested in what Mr. Dunning said. I agree absolutely about the Poles. What he says about the Ruthenians being injured by education may be true. There are some undoubted cases where it has been shown that a virtuous and substantial peasantry cannot always be educated to fill a higher position in society. I hope it is not generally true about the Ruthenians and in any event they have so far shown no particular disposition to leave the agricultural life.

I entirely agree that so far as the Western Prairies are concerned, the supply of farming settlers must come from the United States and for many years I have never thought anything else. As to the rough lands of Northern

Manitoba and Ontario, the only people that will ever settle them and stay on the land are the European peasants of the Ruthenian and Hungarian type. I do not think a few hundred thousand would be any peril to the general community, and they would fill a place that is very necessary to fill in the present economic condition of the country.

While I would not be inclined to minimise the seriousness of difficulties, I need only remind you that this sort of thing has occurred to a very much worse extent in some former years. When there has been a good deal of misfortune and difficulty, the disaffection seems to culminate about the middle of the winter, due to the fact that during the long days of winter and especially the long evenings with nothing to do, the farmers brood over their troubles. I should say the thing to do is to pray for an early Spring and fine weather. That has always cured the trouble in the West and I have no doubt it will be the same in this case.

I call your attention to the fact that it is not only amongst farmers of Manitoba that over-expenditure and too much spreading out has resulted in disaster. All through Eastern Canada there is a percentage of business firms quite as large as that amongst your Western farmers who are in trouble. They have been carrying on on the strength of their past credit and volume of business, but in many cases they are scaled up to a pitch which it is impossible to maintain. Note that the failures last year in the United States were the largest in number and total liabilities of any year in the history of the country. I have not the Canadian figures but I imagine that they will show a similar condition of affairs. It is after all the result of inflation and of men getting out of their depths.

So far as the West is concerned, a persistent action in the way of reducing charges, such as freight rates, and the adoption of co-operative buying and selling will put them on their feet in the course of time.

I think your policy should be directed to the support of such measures.

Jan. 29th, 1923

My dear Sifton:-

I am in receipt of your letter with the enclosure of your speech to the Canada First Club, which I have read very carefully and with the

reatest interest. It was particularly interesting because it outlines and suggests a possible line of action.

It has been coming home to me more and more that we shall keep on stalling on this question indefinitely unless the parliament of Canada can be induced to make a declaration which will tend to bring matters to a head. The question, I am satisfied, is purely a domestic one. If Canada acts there will be no trouble whatever with the British government or the British parliament though doubtless the Imperialists will rage in the monthly reviews. I have never tried to draft a declaration but I have given some thought to the line it should take. I have realized that it would have to be drafted with extreme care because it must be, on the one hand, explicit upon the point that so many of our autonomists are willing to be vague about - that of the sovereignty of our parliament; while on the other it must deal gently with the sensibilities of all those elements in our population which for a variety of reasons are disinclined to see a forward step taken. I have sometimes thought that a resolution declaring that the government of Canada should be vested in the King and the Canadian parliament[,] thereby giving effect to the doctrine of equality which has been laid down as the new basis of relationship between the British nations, might be acceptable. Your resolution amounts substantially to this but it is more diplomatic in its wording; the declaration that our status must be identical with that of Great Britain raises the issue definitely and theoretically at least should be opposed only by those who believe that Canada should be content formally to occupy a subordinate position.

The effect of such a resolution if formally submitted to the House would be to precipitate much that is now cloudy into something definite and understandable. The object which you indicate as possible in your covering letter would be, I think, at once forthcoming from the French-Canadians. Implicit in the resolution is the recognition of the need for the overhauling of the constitution; and they would, I think, take instant alarm as to the possibilities in this revision of their special position in Confederation being endangered. This is one of the great difficulties. If, like Australia, we had definite workable machinery for the amendment of our constitution which would satisfy the French that their privileges are safeguarded, we would perhaps carry the French-Canadians with us though in the past their viewpoint has been abjectly colonial - they want Great Britain to protect them as against the world but to leave them quite alone in their domestic

field. I hope the new generation is different; Lapointe and McMaster say it is. But even they, I fear will shy at a general declaration involving constitutional change in advance of a definition of the machinery by which the change is to be effected. I have sometimes thought that it might be necessary to deal with this question of constitutional amendment first; but this is a tedious business involving consultation with the provinces and might take up years of time. Perhaps a clause such as you suggest, in your letter, might be added to the resolution which would quiet these apprehensions.

Unless the government were prepared to father or support such a resolution its submission to the House would probably do nothing more than provoke a debate; it would be side-tracked or smothered by some parliamentary device, such as an amendment postponing consideration pending a constitutional conference, or consultation with the British Government, or some equally transparent excuse behind -which could be massed all those who, for a variety of reasons, want delay. Still a debate might be worth while even if it ended in the question being hoisted.

While the better way to deal with this question would be to bring it up in the House by a resolution when it can be discussed with deliberation and thoroughness, I have a feeling that this is not the way the solution will come. It will come suddenly some day as the result of a storm and it may take the form of a convulsion. If Lloyd George had gone to war with the Turks last September in the desperate hope that he might by doing so save his government, the issue might have been settled by now. Canada would, I think, have refused to take part in any such war; and would perhaps have felt it necessary to defend her action by declaring her equal right with Great Britain to exercise her own judgment in these matters. This would be the worst possible way of settling the question but it may prove the only way of doing it.

Sir Robert Borden has been writing me about this question, sending me copies of his recent lectures. I can follow Sir Robert Borden easily enough up to a certain point and then I find myself in a fog. I don't know whether he does not know his way forward from that point or whether he does not think it discreet to declare his views as yet. I cannot but think that he realizes that to make the foreign office the sole agent for all the British nations in foreign

matters subject to our right to tender advice, which need not be taken, is to give up, in actuality, everything for which he has striven. I sat down the other day and wrote him at some length; and I have taken out those parts of the letter dealing with this question and put them in the form of a memorandum which T have added to my notes on this matter. I enclose you a copy of this.

I inferred from your letter that your address to the Canada First Club was to be regarded meanwhile as a confidential document. I should like to publish the whole or part of it and will be glad to do so if the time comes when you think it advisable to release it.

To turn to another subject it appears from all I can hear that the Western Canada Colonization Company²² is about to blow up if it has not done so already, through internal dissensions. It looks as though a small coterie of influential subscribers in Montreal have wrecked the enterprise. This group is led by Shaughnessy and Holt* and may perhaps be regarded as pretty close to the C.P.R. A year or more ago they refused to honour a call upon their subscriptions on the ground that the full quota, \$1,500,000, had not been promised. The promise by the Dominion Government of a yearly grant of \$100,000 for five years was regarded as meeting their objections on this point and it was generally understood when Sir John Willison took the presidency of the association that his choice was acceptable to them and that they would co-operate in the future. However, when the special meeting of directors was held here in December they were met by a refusal of the same group to pay their calls on the ground that they wanted a reorganization of the company which would result among other things in the elimination of Mr. Brown, the vice president and the actual promoter of the enterprise, and Mr. Frank Smith, the secretary. The resignation of Willison followed by that of other directors was, I think, the result of a feeling that the attitude of these people made it impossible to work out the scheme. At least one ex-director of the company with whom I have talked admitted that he had a suspicion that their attitude is due to a realization that if the organization should function successfully it would inevitably settle

²² The Western Colonization Company was a privately operated organization whose object was to bring settlers to Western Canada. It was founded in 1920 and had as its president, Sir John Willison. See J. Castell Hopkins, *The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1922, (Toronto, 1923), 278-79.

far more immigrants along the Canadian National than along the C.P.R. lines; but it is difficult to believe that big men could have such little minds.

Jan. 24th, 1923.

Sir Robert L. Borden,
"Glensmere," Ottawa, Ont.
My dear Sir Robert:-

I duly received your letters of January 5th and January 6th with enclosures. The Dalhousie Review containing your address at Ann Harbor has since come to hand and I have seen the manuscript of your New Haven address which you lent to Mr. Crerar. For all these courtesies I am obliged. I read the articles with interest and profit. There are many indications that we are at last getting into close grips with this question of Canada's future. One sign was the address recently delivered by A. R. McMaster, M.P. before the Canadian Club of New York of which I have a manuscript copy. There is bound to be a discussion of this and allied questions at the coming session of the Dominion Parliament. The incidents of last September make this inevitable.

I agree with you that it is desirable that a considerable period of time should elapse before the holding of a Constitutional Conference in order that Canadians may give some real consideration to this question and find out what their desires in the matter are. I find that young Canadians have fairly definite ideas on the subject but the average educated Canadian over fifty does not want the question raised. It might oblige Canadians of this class to do a little thinking, a prospect which is abhorrent to them. They have systematically pooh-poohed the whole question as purely academic and now that it is coming up in concrete form they are disturbed. This has been my experience in talking with people here. I have no doubt that when they have to face the question they, in the great majority of cases, will reach a true conclusion. Nevertheless, among some of them queer ideas linger. Some are convinced and even passionate believers in a status of defined

and continuing subordination; they have what I call "The crown colony mind." Others are still under the influence of the centralist conception of Empire. I took part in a public discussion of the question of Canada's status some two weeks ago. One of the speakers was Professor Osborne of the University of Manitoba. I was astonished to hear his line of argument. He thinks that everything that has been done in the last six or seven years was a mistake; that we shouldn't have demanded separate representation at Paris; that we should not belong to the League of Nations; that we should not send a minister to Washington, etc. etc. All these decisions are, he claims, steps along the certain road to "separation." He was quite severe upon you, Mr. Rowell and your colleagues for taking the responsibility of making decisions upon these questions without, so he claimed, any mandate from the people. Apparently he thinks there should have been a plebiscite before Canada decided to take part in the Paris peace conference. His idea is that the British Government should continue to act in all external matters for the whole Empire, the Dominions being limited apparently to tendering advice which might or might not be accepted, until ultimately some machinery for common action by the whole Empire can be developed. Of course, this is the old Curtis scheme²³ in a new guise; and there is nothing practical about it. The steps that have been taken can never be retraced and the conception of a common parliament is more than ever a dream. But this shows the ideas that are abroad and the necessity for a completely frank discussion of the question.

I have been giving most of my spare time for the past two years to studying and thinking about this matter and I have done some speaking about it to Canadian Clubs and other organizations. I go with you as far as you go; I think that perhaps I go a step further, though as to this I am not quite clear; I find it difficult to understand or accept the doctrine that the Empire is in world affairs a unit by some sort of imprescriptible right to which in the last analysis all our theories of national status have to be adjusted.

²³ Lionel Curtis, an Englishman, was the leading spirit in the Round Table Movement which was an organization, begun in 1909, and devoted to the promotion of Imperial unity. In 1916 Curtis published his book, *The Problem of the Commonwealth* in which he detailed a scheme for the establishment of machinery that would allow the Dominions to participate in the formation of Imperial foreign policy. The idea was anathema to nationalists of the Dafoe and Sifton school. See Carroll Quigley, "The Round Table Groups in Canada, 1908-38," *Canadian Historical Review*, XLIII, 3, (September 1962), 204-24.

To attempt to reconcile these conflicting conceptions of Canada as a nation and at the same time an integral part of a unit which in itself has the characteristics and powers of a nation is to find oneself in a fog; at least this is where it leads me. Some of those who hold this doctrine are driven to queer shifts to explain it. Oppenheim seeks to evade the difficulty by saying that the relationship between the British Dominion defies definition. Mr. Hughes, driven into a corner in the Australian parliament by questions which he could not or did not care to answer, took refuge in the subtleties of theological terminology; he quoted from the Athanasian creed: "As also there are" "not three incomprehensibles but one incomprehensible," and he added, "This is simply to be accepted as an article of faith which cannot be explained." My mind is incapable of embracing this refinement and my faith is weak. It seems to me that implicit in this theory is a belief in the existence of a sovereignty external to Canada which in the last analysis has the power to intervene and to make a decision to which we must conform. If this power is the British Government then despite elaborate disguises we are still a colony. If it rests with the commonwealth as a whole, then Canada is subject finally, even against her desires, to a majority opinion; which amounts in the long run to an acceptance of the Centralist conception of Empire. I am thoroughly convinced that no solution which leaves Canada either a colony or the province of a centralized empire will be acceptable even to Canadians of this generation, to say nothing of the future. In the public discussion to which I have alluded an address was delivered by Walter H. Trueman, K.C. In the main he marched with me; but he arrived at the conclusion that Canadians only wanted national status if this could be made to conform with Imperial unity. He had, in my judgment, the facts in reverse sequence. Canadians will insist upon the status of nationhood; if there is to be Imperial unity it must be adjusted to this governing fact.

I am entirely of the opinion that there can be a moral unity of the Commonwealth which will insure common action on all occasions when this is necessary. This we have always had; but it seems to me to be now in danger because of insistence upon the doctrine of the legal unity of the Empire in its relation to the outside world. The theory of the new foreign policy for the commonwealth as defined by Lloyd George in the British Parliament in his speech upon the Irish Treaty is full of peril as the events of last September demonstrated.

It amounts to this: that the Foreign Office is to act for the whole Empire; while the Dominion on the Strength of a nominal right of consultation which is in practice not exercisable, is bound to accept a full measure of responsibility which means participation in any wars which may be the consequences of these policies to the extent of our powers. The danger lies in the certainty that this assumption of an obligation on our part will be challenged and denied by the Canadian people the moment an attempt is made to involve them in a war which they consider no affair of theirs. We might have had this showdown before this if the people of Great Britain had not removed the government of adventurers from office; but it will come as sure as fate one of these days - if things continue as they are - and great will be the spill? After the last Imperial Conference pains were taken by the British Government to let it be known that there was an Empire policy with respect to Silesia and Egypt. If, however, the Germans and Poles were to begin fighting over Silesia and Canada were called, upon by virtue of these consultations in London in 1921 to intervene in the dispute with her money and the lives of her sons, there would be, in my judgment, an emphatic repudiation of the whole proposition. Likewise with Egypt. The result would be a terrific shock to the real ties which bind Canada and Great Britain together.

On the other hand the British Government's freedom of action should not be limited by a supposed necessity for consulting with Canada on matters of policy affecting her own interests. I recall a member of the British House of Commons --- Mr. Page Croft, I think - demanding that the British Government should come to no decision with respect to Mesopotamia until it had discussed the matter with the Dominions. Canada cannot, it seems to me, give the British Government any advice about Mesopotamia. We dare not tell them to stay because the government which did so would be taking a responsibility in the way of supporting Great Britain in the consequences [of] which Canadian people would not implement. On the other hand we could not properly advise Great Britain to get out of the country. We are not competent to express an opinion upon that point. This a matter which Great Britain must decide for herself and she must accept the full responsibility for her decision. If as a consequence she should be landed in a great war with the Moslem world, a situation so serious might develop that it would be necessary for Canadians to consider whether they should do something; but there could be no limitation upon their right to decide the question upon

what might seem to them to be its merits. A similar situation might develop in a dozen other places; for instance the Sudan. These difficulties are certain to arise if we adhere to the doctrine that the British Commonwealth must have a common foreign policy to be carried out by the British foreign office under the conditions noted. An attempt to meet the problem was made by Mr. Meighen at the Imperial Conference of 1921 with his curious plan of dividing the world up into districts with a particular British nation determining [sic] British policy in the area allotted to it. This, of course, is wholly unworkable. Canada, for instances, is not competent to determine British policy with respect to the United States. If we tried to do it we should make trouble for both ourselves and Great Britain. I can see no way out of the difficulty but a frank recognition that each British nation must look after its own foreign policy, with facilities for adjustment where a conflict of interest promises to arise; and facilities also for common action where it is the wish of the various nations to pool their interests and their strength as in the case of the great war.

This involves the development of Canada to the status of actual nationhood; a real international entity recognizable as such by all the nations of the world. We need this status in view of our constant participation in international conferences and in the annual meetings of the Assembly of the League of Nations. We cannot, it seems to me, go on, relying upon our cherished doctrine of constitutional right, to explain the anomalies of our position in these conferences to the other nations of the world who sit with us about the council board. We cannot quote the Athanasian creed to them. Our right to take part in these gatherings is bound to be challenged some day. There seems to have been some question about our status at Genoa, judging by a paragraph in the June issue of the Round Table.²⁴ All that is necessary to bring the matter to a head is to have present at such an international conference some power disposed to make trouble. Russia, for instance, would be delighted no doubt at some international conference to ask the British Dominions what business they had there, pointing out in support of this challenge, that their legal position as defined by their own constitutions is that of subordination to the British government. The Dominions would have to elect then and there whether they could claim the rank of nations or subside into colonies; a forced

²⁴ *The Round Table*, the journal of the Round Table Movement, was published quarterly in London.

decision under these conditions might have very awkward consequences. I should prefer to see the question settled quietly, decorously, by agreement among the British nations themselves. Promptly too; I believe that delay is dangerous.

The only possible status for Canada, in my judgment, is that of complete nationhood on the basis of equality with Great Britain. Our relation to the king then would be identical with the relation of Great Britain to the King; our relations to one another would be identical. The executive government in Canada would be vested in the king "advised by his Canadian ministers," thus filling in the blank left in the British North America Act. I do not think we need a constitutional conference to accomplish this change. It is a case for negotiation; and for joint declarations or legislation by the parliaments of Great Britain and Canada. Some of the Dominions are doubtless ripe for this development; certainly South Africa and Canada are. New Zealand wants to be a glorified colony; there seems to be no objection to her continuing to play that role provided she does not try to hold back the procession as she is now desperately seeking to do. Australia plainly wants to be a nation but is a little afraid of the attendant responsibilities.

If these developments with respect to some or all of the Dominions were to take place the Empire would transform itself into a Britannic alliance or a league of British nations. The words "alliance" and "league" are perhaps too formal. The relationship is really a closer one than that which they connote. The term used by President Cosgrave of the Irish Free State, "brotherhood," is perhaps the right one. We should have then a brotherhood of equal, kindred, independent states with a common king, a common citizenship subject to residential qualifications, and any formal ties which might subsequently be fixed by treaty or convention. The voluntary limitation by a nation of its sovereignty by virtue of a treaty with another power is not uncommon occurrence. It is a vastly different thing from the limitation of sovereignty by the prescriptive right of an external power to exercise final authority. One is a case of free agreement; the other of imposed subjection. Sir John Macdonald, in planning Confederation, plainly had the idea that Canada and Great Britain should be two kingdoms with mutual obligations defined by formal treaty. I haven't explored this province very thoroughly yet; the possibilities of co-operation can be fully

considered when the power to co-operate exists, as it will when equality of status becomes a fact and not a phrase. I am, however, very certain that there could be a degree of co-operation between Canada and Great Britain or between all the British nations on the basis of this status of nationhood which will never be attainable under the existing condition of a changing, doubtful, questioned status at the mercy of every new development. Each Dominion prime minister, it seems to me, takes his political life in his hand when he goes to an Imperial conference lest he be induced by the pressure of circumstances into subscribing to some doctrine or agreeing to some action which will give his political enemies at home an opening to charge him with giving up the rights of the country, yielding to Imperial dictation, selling the pass, etc. etc. He protects himself by agreeing to as little as possible; and the conferences tend to develop into mere ceremonial occasions.

Unconscionable as this letter is in length I have only succeeded in giving you in very general outline my views on this question of national status. I hope some time soon to have an opportunity of setting them down with more particularity. I feel like apologizing for inflicting so prolix a letter upon you. In conclusion I should like to say that I think your suggestion that you might make a report to the Dominion Government with respect to the status of Canada's representative at Washington is one that should be acted upon, in view of the extremely legalistic interpretation of this status by Sir John Salmond in his report to the New Zealand Government. The divergence between the views of Sir John Salmond and those to which General Smuts gave expression in the South African Parliament last year is so wide that it is obvious that some kind of an authoritative statement of the facts is much needed.

Yours faithfully,
J. W. Dafoe.

February 1st, 1923.

My dear Dafoe-

I have your letter with enclosure of the memorandum which you sent to Sir Robert Borden. I have Sir Robert's speech but I have not read it yet.

I don't find him very helpful. He seems to be in somewhat of a fog. Your memorandum should help to clear it up. I think your memorandum is very comprehensive and I am taking it home to study carefully tonight.

Do not print my "Canada First" speech just now. I am going to speak in Guelph and London and I will re-cast it and probably amend the resolution with reference to constitutional guarantees. I shall write you again if anything occurs to me.

I sent a copy of my Address to Crerar at Ottawa. Perhaps he is not there. If he is in Winnipeg I wish you would get him in and discuss it with him. My notion is that the best thing possible would be for Crerar himself to move the resolution which I have suggested. As you know, I have been at constitutional law for a good many years and most people who try to draft things of this kind are wholly at sea, do not say what they mean and do not produce anything which means what they intend. I am quite sure that the resolution I have drafted will cover the whole case and it is pretty hard to imagine how any-body can vote against it on its merits. If Crerar would move the resolution we would have the matter definitely anchored. I understand that King is going to submit a resolution on behalf of the Government, but I presume that his resolution will only go the length of saying that Canada can not be committed to active participation in war except by the action of the Canadian Parliament. Of course it will be a fine thing to have even such a resolution as that passed, because it practically settles the principle.

Feb. 12th, 1923.

My dear Sifton:-

Last week was a busy one; and it was not until Thursday that I was able to discuss with Crerar the subject matter of your last letter to me. He told me that he had duly received your letter which had been forwarded from Ottawa and that he had written to you. Crerar, as he has doubtless explained to you, is prepared to go as far as he is sure he can command a support in Parliament that will make it worth while. He is afraid that this support might not be forth coming and that by attempting to force the issue he might

do the cause injury. I judge, from what he said to me, that he would like to be assured of support from the ministerialists and perhaps from some members of the government, (he has Lapointe and Murphy in mind), before raising the clear issue that would be embodied in some such resolution as that which you suggest.

There is certainly something very curious about the reluctance of many Canadians to accept the logical consequence of theories which they accept without question. I was talking about this yesterday with Frank Fowler, who is in complete agreement with our views; and he commented upon the fact that so many with whom he talked were agreeable to the view that Canada was a nation and yet deprecated any attempt formally to define nationhood with a consequent acceptance of special responsibilities. This is my experience too. I find very few of Sir Allen Aylesworth's way of thinking; and not many who believe in any formal scheme of centralization; but towards any proposition that Canada should have her powers of self-government in external affairs defined there is, on the part of many, an obvious lukewarmness. They shuffle all around the point. They will admit that the situation is anomalous; but "after all we're getting on pretty well; why not let things stand? What's the use of stirring up controversy, etc. etc."

There is undoubtedly quite a large number of Canadians who are chiefly concerned in seeing that nothing is done at all and they swing from one camp to the other and back again. They block the Imperialists when they try to commit Canada to schemes of organic union or to foreign adventures; and they also resist any attempt to advance along the only other road to the future. They are mentally lazy and timid. These Canadians will be behind the government in its attitude of refusal to go to war without the consent of Parliament; and their support will make it possible for this great advance to be made. Yet they might block the adoption of a resolution affirming the constitutional equality of Great Britain and Canada though this is the logical and inevitable consequence of the very policy to which they have given support. This, of course, is illogical; but there appears to be no greater illusion than to assume that an unanswerable argument is conclusive with the public; it gets nowhere unless it is agreeable to them on other counts.

Some such thoughts as these are in Crerar's mind; and give him pause. I don't think he plans to go east for some time yet. When he does he will

doubtless consult with you. I judge that if he can get the assurance of a reasonable support on both sides of the House he will be prepared to bring a resolution of the kind indicated before the House. If in the interval the government would seek and obtain from Parliament formal approval of the doctrine that Canada is at war only when the Canadian Parliament says it is, a great step forward will have been taken which will make the proposed proposition merely the next step along a clearly outlined road.

I have been reading Ewart's monograph "Canada and British Wars" with interest. It is, having in mind the purposes in Ewart's mind, a fine piece of work. He has no difficulty in proving his case. Yet I wonder if perhaps the pamphlet may not injure rather than benefit the cause he has at heart. It has a weakness which has marred much of Ewart's work and has detracted from the influence which, by virtue of his talent and his industry, he ought to exercise. The case for Canada's assumption of national status rests upon considerations of abstract right; we have reached the point where for our interests and dignity it is essential that we should move up and take this position. But Ewart is not prepared to argue the issue solely on this plane, he must supplement the argument by concrete illustrations of the dangers and the impropriety of being associated as a subordinate with Great Britain in world affairs. He, therefore, ransacks history for illustrations and he uses the incidents which he cites in the manner of a controversialist - that is, he makes the most of them. As a result he enrages those elements in our population which for sentimental or other reasons are pro-British; and he weakens his influence with a much larger number of Canadians who do not see why it is necessary to be so sharply critical of British policy and motives in setting forth the case for Canadian sovereignty. The sound reason why Canada should not be automatically involved in British wars is that this course is inconsistent with our interests and dignity as a nation; but the casual reader of Mr. Ewart's monograph would be apt to infer that the real objection arises from the character of the wars which Great Britain wages. If these wars were all beyond criticism the principle that Canada should not be committed to war except by her own parliament would be unaffected. The argument should never descend to the lower plane. The case as you presented it to the Canada Club is quite strong enough to be effective with any intelligent Canadian audience; to attempt to strengthen it by representing that, upon general grounds, we should not have too intimate

relations with Great Britain is to weaken it and to lose the support and sympathy of many who will respond to an appeal on purely national grounds. There would be more justification for arguments of this kind if there were official or organized opposition from Great Britain to our development to national status; but, as you say in your Toronto address, probably not a single member of the British parliament, or a single British newspaper would oppose the passage of the resolution which you suggest. The trouble is here at home, primarily with timid, colonially-minded Canadians; and getting them into a braver and more self-respecting mood will perhaps still involve a considerable amount of campaigning. I should not be surprised to see an attempt to revive the Imperial Federation project in some form; it is the only conceivable alternative to national sovereignty. Colonialism of the Aylesworth type is out of the question; and the practicability of a common foreign policy on the basis of consultation is surely believed in no longer by any intelligent [sic] person who has noted the events of the past few months. The case for national sovereignty therefore holds the field undisputed unless there should be another definite attempt to bring about a consolidation of the British communities under a common parliament. I think this may be attempted; but it can only end in a defeat which will be final. The end is in sight tho it may not be immediately attainable.

We set forth the case for Canadian sovereignty the other day in the most direct article we have yet published, holding that the King and his Canadian advisers constituted the Canadian Executive and that the King could not take advice on matters affecting Canada except from his Canadian ministers. You probably saw the article. It made something of a stir. The case thus presented, it seems to me, is quite incontestable except by the alternative proposal that a government of the whole Empire should advise the King - a contention which, if put forward, can be satisfactorily met.

February 15, 1923.

My dear Dafoe-

I have your letters of the 12th.

I have secured the official copy of the Macdonald letter.

I received Crerar's letter and read it with great interest. His letter and yours of the 12th present a very sound and sensible view. I read your article in which you put the case for Canadian sovereignty directly. Curiously enough you had followed out the idea of my pro-posed resolution to its logical conclusion, and I am doing the same thing. In fact you will see by the copy of the Address, which I shall send you in a day or two, that the words are almost identical. I think perhaps it might be well for you to print this last Address as soon as it is delivered. I speak on Monday (February 19th) at Guelph and on Tuesday (February 20th) at London. I am pretty well prepared to stand or fall by this Address. I do not think there are any pitfalls in it. In other words I think as we get farther on, the conclusion will be forced upon the people that the suggested solution is the right one.

I shall not make the mistake which Ewart makes. I have long recognized it and deplored it.

With kind regards, I am,

Yours faithfully,
Clifford Sifton

PS. I am extremely sorry to hear of Frank Fowler's loss and I have written him a letter this morning.

February 12th, [sic] 1923.

John W. Dafoe, Esq.,

P.S. I forgot to say what I intended to say when I started the letter, that none of you seem to have appreciated the fact that when King sent his cable to the British Government he definitely nailed down the theory which his cable embodied, namely, that Canada cannot go to war except by the decision of her Parliament. Unless the King Government is overthrown on a direct resolution of censure based upon his action, there is no getting around the fact that a definite constitutional advance has been made. You will note also the fact that while this theory was declared in one way and another for thirty or forty years, there never was an explicit statement of it until I made it at Ottawa in the Address which I delivered there. I did it for an express purpose, namely, of furnishing and defining categorically a platform upon which anyone could stand, and Mr. King promptly stepped on it and made it his own. Now my object in mentioning it to you is to point out

that that is a step in advance. It has been made. It is an accomplished fact. Your staff correspondent at Ottawa, who wrote a long despatch to the Free Press some time ago on this question apparently was asleep when these things were happening, because he stated the problem as if it was in the same position as it was before King sent this cable. As a matter of fact King broke new ground and settled the matter and declared his policy and that is now the constitution of Canada, unless Parliament upsets it, which is entirely remote and impossible. Don't go back of it any more. It is a mistake to debate a case that has been won.

C.S.

March 1st, 1923.

My dear Dafoe-

Yours of the 26th ult[imo]. to hand. By this mail I am sending you a copy of the Guelph Address, printed in the Guelph "Mercury", together with an editorial article which appears in the same issue. The report is a pretty fair report of what I said. I don't wish you to print this at the present time. You will notice that I developed the idea of direct connection with the Crown and I wish to enlarge on this a little, and I think I shall take this Speech and a couple of others and combine them, cast out some parts which are now more or less unnece-sary in the present stage of the discussion and try to make something that is entirely practical and as short as possible. Then I will send it up to you and you can print it, perhaps in a month or so.

My own judgment is that if I were you I would not deal with the question of foreign relations at all just at present. I think the whole thing is going very well. Considering the flat-footed and radical stand that I took at London and Guelph the favorable reception was simply amazing but there are signs that it cannot be pushed too fast. People will only take a certain amount of this kind of discussion. If I were you I would let it stand for at least a month, or perhaps more.

I think I shall run over to Ottawa for a day or two pretty soon, spend some time with Ewart and Forke. I had no time on my recent visit.

I had to make a speech to the Research Convention and then I had to get ready for the meeting in Montreal, and whatever others can do. [sic] I cannot speak to any effect if my mind is diverted from the subject within a day or two before I have to speak. I think I shall go over to Ottawa and spend a couple of days there just to size up the situation.

There is a rumor that Fielding is going to be appointed Minister to Washington. His appointment would be most excellent and I think it would be a very good idea for you to come out in a leading Editorial and say that this is rumored and advocate the appointment very strongly, taking the ground that there are few men in Canada who are entirely fitted for the post, and Fielding is one. Fielding has conspicuous weaknesses as a Minister of Finance, although he is fairly good, but he would be a Prince of Ministers at Washington. He is courteous, diplomatic, has plenty of common sense, understands all the questions and nobody can handle the British Embassy' any better than he can. Besides that it is a principle of Fielding's public life to be polite to everybody under all circumstances without any exception. He never loses his temper, he never allows his irritation to interfere with what he says or does. These are invaluable qualities in an Ambassador. I have not felt very much enthusiasm about a Canadian Minister being appointed at Washington until our status was defined, but I think I was wrong in that and the appointment will help to define the status. Moreover, Fielding's appointment would reconcile me to the plan almost of itself.

You can make the article just as strong as you like. It would be a quite distinct and definite National step in advance if Fielding were appointed. I am afraid of some kind of an intrigue. You will understand what I mean. I have no doubt for instance that Charlie Fitzpatrick* has been working for the last year. I don't wish to be misunderstood with regard to Fitzpatrick.²⁵ He would be a very good man for the position, but I can hardly be expected to be enthusiastic about it.

Yours faithfully,
Clifford Sifton

²⁵ Sir Charles Fitzpatrick and Sifton had both been members of the first three Laurier administrations. The two men had frequently differed over policy matters, especially on questions relating to Roman Catholic separate schools. Sifton believed that it was Fitzpatrick who had drawn the original clauses relating to separate schools in the 1905 Autonomy Bills which had resulted in Sifton's decision to leave the Laurier government.

Enclo.

I don't see what you are driving at in your articles about economy in Provincial Gov[ernmen]t expenditure. You seem to be trying to prove that it is impossible to effect any economy and that anyone who suggests it is a fool, viz Haig.

March 5th, 1923.

My dear Sifton;-

I am sorry you were not able to accept the invitation to speak in Winnipeg; you would get a good hearing here.

I am going East in a couple of weeks. First to Ottawa where I shall put in about a week before the Easter holidays sizing up the situation. Then I am going to spend a week in New York. I haven't been there - excepting passing through on the way to Europe - for ten years; and it will brush me up a bit to swing around the circle and see things.

I shall go home by way of Toronto when we shall be able to have some conversations about policy and other matters.

The J.A.S. who wrote the article in the New Statesman is Stevenson of whom I have written to you before. He is a clever political writer but is too much influenced by his personal feeling. He has a blood feud with King, with whom he was formerly friendly. I don't know the cause but probably Ottawa was not big enough to hold two such thorough-going egotists. Stevenson is also at outs with Crerar whose praises he once sung upon every possible occasion. He has a dirty attack on him in the last issue of the Canadian Forum; he is the Forum's political editor. His quarrel with Crerar is really due to his fear that he might coalesce with King; to drive King into the wilderness is the governing purpose of his life just at present. Stevenson was the Ottawa correspondent of the Toronto Star but I understand Atkinson* terminated the engagement because of Stevenson's penchant for getting in side-swipes at King upon every possible occasion.

I have known Stevenson for about fifteen years since he came to this city from Oxford University; he studied law with J. D. Cameron*

and for a while practised here. I have always got along very well with him and at times have used him. He is a very competent writer; and if he could eliminate the personal factor, would be a very valuable political correspondent, but I think his weakness in this respect quite incurable.

Just at present I think Stevenson is one of the little coterie of journalists who were advising and boosting Meighen on all possible occasions; with him are Grattan O'Leary* and Blacklock.

Absurd as it seems I am told that some of the Conservatives think a Conservative-Progressive combination possible when it becomes a little more evident that Quebec is in the saddle again. Billy Sharpe has been talking along these lines to Crerar. Stevenson, who is a pal of some of the more radical Progressives, may have some such idea in his head.

I hear that the English-speaking Liberals at Ottawa are pretty blue. They know they can make no headway West of the Ottawa under the conditions and they realize that the bloc is losing strength in Quebec.

The great Western conundrum just at present is the wheat board. I believe it is a fact that all three Western governments are against it, even for a year; but the Alberta and Saskatchewan legislatures have already identified themselves with the one-year project; and Manitoba, at the instance of the Bracken government, will do likewise. They all hope that something will turn up which will make it unnecessary to go ahead with the scheme. Crerar came out flatfooted against a wheat board at the Brandon meeting of the U[nited]. F[armers]. [of] M[anitoba]. The crowd cheered him and next day voted unanimously for a wheat board.

Beyond doubt there is considerable opposition to a board among Manitoba farmers, but they are afraid to speak out. Miss Hind tells me that she believes there will be a considerable shrinkage in wheat acreage in Manitoba if there is to be a board; farmers will grow other grains whose sale they can control. Bracken told me on Saturday that for the first time he is beginning to hear protests - privately uttered - against the project from farmers.

All the governments have underlined their intention not to have the board for more than a year - merely to permit the working out of plans for a co-operative pool; but the driving power behind the demand for a board means

to make it permanent. So, in any case, the premiers are only postponing trouble.

I have sat down a dozen times to write about the question; but after mulling over for an hour have given it up. But when the question comes up in the legislature in perhaps a week's time we can hardly keep silence.

About the only thing we could say safely would be to put ourselves in line with the premiers; deny that a permanent compulsory board is a possible solution; say that there might be justification for a temporary board for a year if the time is to be employed in making preparations for a voluntary pool to continue the work; emphasize the necessity of getting good administration in view of the heavy contingent liability; and generally damn it with the faintest of faint praise. There is nothing very heroic about this, I admit. I have no doubt even a one-year board will be roundly damned by our Manitoba farmers the moment it begins to operate, for the evils it is specially supposed to cure are absent from grain marketing here. Manitoba farmers take full advantage of the Grain Act; they ship in carload lots escaping the spreads; and they retain ownership of the wheat in the terminals until they are ready to sell. A forced sale at a fixed price, with a participation certificate for part of the value will not suit them at all when they come up against it.

Things pretty quiet here. Nothing for it but to plug along, saw wood and be as cheerful as possible.

Since writing the above I have received yours of March 1st, the contents of which I have noted with interest - particularly the suggestion re Fielding which is quite in keeping with my own feelings.

As to economy, in Manitoba we have, I think, a pretty fair chance of getting something worth while done by this present government. They have made about a half million dollar cut and expect to do a good deal more. The only possible successor to the government is a Tory government which is by no means an impossibility. The first thing a Tory government would do would be to think up some scheme of capital expenditure out of which they could get enough graft to start a party paper to bedevil the newspaper situation here. For these, among other reasons, I am not helping Jack Haig to put anything over in a political way. Some of his specific suggestions such as

the merging of the University and the Agricultural College are worth considering and I am looking into this a bit.

Yours faithfully,
J. W. Dafoe.

[Handwritten P.S.; Sifton Papers]

P.S. Re foreign policy I agree with you it is just as well to go slow for a bit unless there are developments to compel comment. I know that Meighen has been in communication with members of the late British gov[ernmen]t. He may be preparing an attack upon the governments [sic] position. That w[oul]d perhaps be the best thing that could happen.

JWD.

4.30 pm

Your cypher just to hand, ok. D

March 8th, 1923

My dear Dafoe-

I have yours of the 5th. I shall be glad to see you. There are a number of matters which require discussion.

I suspected that Stevenson was the man who wrote the New Statesman article. He is the type of English journalist who is a curse to Canada, comes here expecting that he will become very important and when he does not, gets venomous and does all the harm he can. I have known several of them before.

I think the Government is heading for a fall as soon as the elections come on, unless they make a radical change in their arrangements. They are gaining no strength and presently the opposition will begin to consolidate. In fact the leadership of Meighen is the only asset that the Government has. Nobody wants to see Meighen Prime Minister. He is too extreme and vindictive. In a lesser capacity he might be very useful because he is a hard worker, has plenty of ability and in some directions very sound ideas.

I think your position on the Wheat Board should be that you would accept no responsibility for it, that it does not present a solution of farmers'

difficulties and would be likely to prove a failure, but that as the matter is in the hands of the farmers' representatives them-selves, they will have to take the responsibility and make the decision, and that you would offer no opposition to any course that they might adopt. That seems to me to be the only possible position for you to take.

I appreciate your view regarding Haig and the Conservative party in Manitoba.

Re Foreign policy - There is a various [2] perceptible hardening of opinion against any more wars. The change since Meighen's "Ready, Ay [sic] Ready"²⁶ speech, is very pronounced. I spoke with complete freedom on the subject at Montreal and declared flatfootedly that the policy which King adopted in reply to the British Government's cable was the policy of Sir John Macdonald, Sir Charles Tupper and Sir Wilfred [sic] Laurier, and that any of them would have. given the same answer. I further said that the continued participation in British wars meant absolute ruin for Canada. The audience cheered me very enthusiastically when I sat down and there was no pronounced sign of dissent. There were no Frenchmen there.

The Montreal Gazette commented on my remarks by saying that the warning was unnecessary.

I should think Meighen would hardly have the courage to make an attack, but if he does I have no doubt King will come out flat-footedly.

March 12th, 1923

My dear Sifton:-

I got your cipher telegram late Saturday night but as my code book was at the office I was not able to do anything about it until Sunday. After I had decoded it I spent some hours in considering the matters touched upon in it, including an interview with Mr. Crerar himself and also a consultation with

²⁶ In his attack on the King government's refusal to send aid to the British at Chanak in 1922, Arthur Meighen had argued that Canada's reply should have been "Ready, Aye Ready." See Graham, *Arthur Meighen*, Chapter VIII.

Frank Fowler whose judgment on these matters is perhaps the safest we have. I then wired you.

The proposition did not appeal to Mr. Crerar at all. I think Mr. King might as well give up any expectation of getting Mr. Crerar to join his Cabinet while matters remain as they are. When the present Dominion Government was formed Crerar was rather willing to join it and I think he was in something of the same mood last session. There was perhaps an element of self-interest in this as his personal position was not very comfortable and a cabinet position might have offered him a congenial and satisfactory avenue of escape; but in the main he was prepared to take this course because he felt that a coalition between the Liberals and the Progressives upon the conditions which he suggested as a basis for such a coalition would give this country a more stable, more efficient government than could be secured in any other way. He has a good deal of confidence in King as a man of fundamentally sound principles who wants to do right and he also has a high regard for Lapointe, and I think until a comparatively recent date he would have been willing to go in with them if the way had been made clear for him. Just what the conditions that he stipulated were, I do not know; but I imagine that he made it clear that he would not enter a Government in which Sir Lomer Gouin held so prominent and active a place as that which he holds in the present Government.

I think Crerar's present belief is that the time has passed when, during the life of the present parliament, there can be any arrangement reached by which the Liberals and the Progressives will co-operate in carrying on a government. He thinks the government is falling more and more under the control of interests and influences which are hardly distinguishable from the interests and influences which could be expected to back and support a Tory government. He does not think the Government has any future. It is bound to lose some of its support East of the Ottawa and West of the Ottawa it cannot hope for any marked increase in its strength if, indeed, it can add at all to its strength. I think he expects Mr. Meighen to make headway in Ontario, against both the Progressives and Liberals. He expects that the Progressives, unless they destroy themselves by internal warfare, will hold the West which in the enlarged House which will be elected at the next election, might easily given [sic] them the balance of power. I think he looks forward then to a showdown which may bring the Liberals and the Progressives together as the only alternative to a Conservative government.

I would not be justified in saying that Crerar has said all this to me in so many words; but from various conversations I have had with him I infer that he is thinking along these lines. I think that personally he has determined to keep out of politics pretty well for the time being. He has pulled the United Grain Growers out of the hole in which it found itself and is, I think, very happy in being able to concentrate upon its management. He is, however, by no means out of politics and is constantly consulted on matters of Progressive policy. In the event of developments two or three years hence along the lines indicated above, I should expect him to re-emerge as the chief of the Progressives.

As to McMurray* I cannot write of my personal knowledge, never having been upon anything approaching intimate terms with him. He is not well thought of in the city. He is pretty much police court lawyer and has no particular standing in his profession. He is regarded as a man of very ordinary ability and not at all likely to measure up to the requirements of such a position as that of Minister of Immigration. It might be a risky business for the Government to open North Winnipeg. He was elected in 1921 in a field of four candidates, on a total vote representing about thirty-six per cent of the votes cast. Our municipal elections for the last four or five years have shown that if Labor is united it is in complete control of North Winnipeg. At the last Dominion election there were two Labor candidates in the field, both Red, and McMurray got a substantial vote out of the more Conservative [sic] trade unions. He also got quite a bit of support from the foreign elements. If the seat were opened I think it would be a certainty that the Conservatives would contest it. Conservative prospects are improving in this province and I do not think they would let an opportunity like this go by. If Labor put a single candidate in the field and he should be a man appealing to all factions, his election, I think, would be almost a certainty. For instance, Alderman Heaps* who has headed the Labor poll in North Winnipeg for several years, would, in my opinion, carry the seat easily against McMurray. Heaps is an English Jew who seems to keep in with all the Labor factions. Of course, I do not know that he would be a candidate but I should think it very likely that he would be put in the field by Labor if they made up their mind to go after the seat, as I think they would. Organized Labor in Winnipeg, as elsewhere, is dead against immigration, as you know; and this would be one reason why a considerable vote

which went to McMurray last time would be against him in the event of a by-election. On the other hand it is possible that being a Minister would help McMurray somewhat, though this advantage is not as great as in the old days. McMurray is very keen to get into the government and I have no doubt is representing that the seat is quite safe; but it doesn't look that way to me.

I should say that it would be ten times more sensible for Mr. King, if he wants a Westerner as Minister of Immigration, to give the portfolio to W. E. Knowles of Moose jaw, who is to contest that seat in the by-election now pending. Knowles is an incomparably abler man than McMurray and he has had long parliamentary experience both at Ottawa and Regina. Knowles is really not very suitable material for a Cabinet position. When he was in the Saskatchewan Government he gave such poor satisfaction that Martin got rid of him, but on every count I should think he would be far better than McMurray. Knowles has been making the statement in Moose Jaw that he is to be taken into the Government if he is elected, claiming to have a positive pledge from King to this effect. If there is anything in this claim by him, it would be the sensible thing for the Government to take Knowles in before the voting as it might possibly mean the difference between defeat and victory.

Moose jaw is, as you know, a peculiar seat in that the electorate is divided just about evenly between the country and the city. I was told in Saskatchewan last month that an arrangement had been made by which the Conservatives, Liberals and the C.P.R. could combine to deliver a practically solid vote in Moose Jaw to Knowles, which, with the support he can count upon in the country, would assure his election. This was based upon the assumption that Johnson would again be the Progressive candidate. I imagine the Progressives have broken up this combination by nominating Mr. Hopkins, who is a prominent resident of Moose jaw and will be certain to get a substantial vote in that city. Hopkins has hitherto always been identified with the Conservatives and this may give Knowles a better chance in the country districts, which were formerly strongly Liberal. I should think the chances are fairly even in Moose jaw, with perhaps the odds slightly against Knowles; and a portfolio might put the odds on the other side.

Personally I have no use either for McMurray or Knowles. They can be safely put down as inveterately hostile to the Free Press and to everybody

connected with it. We gave McMurray some help in the last Dominion fight. I think perhaps an article we wrote had something to do with his being elected, but I do not think he has ever felt himself under any obligation to us in consequence of our attitude at that time.

March 26th, 1923.

My dear Dafoe-

I have your letter of the 25th. The situation regarding the Fisheries Treaty" is very interesting. Curiously enough I wrote a memo on it yesterday, of which I enclose a copy. The situation is clearly stated in my memo. The Treaty as it stands is a Treaty between Great Britain and the United States. On behalf of Great Britain it was signed by our Mr. Lapointe, who acted under a Commission issued by the King on the advice of the British Government. The whole Empire is undoubtedly bound by the Treaty or will be when ratifications are exchanged. The United States Senate was entirely right in putting in the proviso which they did if they thought there was any doubt about the other nationals of Great Britain apart from Canada being bound. There is, it seems to me, nothing in the world to do except send the Treaty along to the British Government for ratification in the ordinary way.

I suppose it is perfectly clear that our Government desired to make a Treaty independently on behalf of Canada without binding the rest of the Empire. Our present status would not permit them to do so, but of course, status is acquired by acts. If the Government intended to make a Treaty on behalf of Canada without binding the rest of the Empire, they started out all right but at the critical point they made a mistake. When the draft of the Treaty was first submitted to them by a communication from Geddes they should have

—

First - Requested the name to be changed. This, they did, but allowed themselves to be deceived by Geddes into not insisting on it.

²⁷ The signing of the Halibut Fisheries Treaty between Canada and the United States in 1923 was an important step in the recognition of Canada's right to conduct her own foreign policy. For the first time a Canadian, Ernest Lapointe, Minister of Marine and Fisheries in the King cabinet, signed an international agreement without the support of a British co-signatory. See Dawson, Mackenzie King, 432-39.

Second - They should have caused Lord Byng* to advise the Duke of Devonshire* that they wished this Treaty to be made by Canada with the United States for Canada alone, and that they desired facilities whereby the Canadian Government could communicate with His Majesty directly and secure his commission to Mr. Lapointe on their own advice without the intervention of the British Government.

This, I think, would have been the better course, and it would have at once brought up the question whether the British Government was prepared to stand aside and allow the Canadian Ministers to communicate their advice to His Majesty direct. Doubtless the British Government with much hesitancy and searching of heart would finally have agreed, in which case we should have practically acquired our national status.

Our Government clearly slipped at these two points and it seems quite clear to me that having signed the Treaty as it reads through their representative Mr. Lapointe, who in signing, accepted and acted upon a commission issued by His Majesty on the advice of the British Government, that the Canadian Government cannot now say that it did not intend that the British Empire should be bound. As a matter of practical politics, while I am as anxious as anybody to advance, I should be sorry to see our Government make a mistake, which it will clearly do if it tries now to back up on what it has done.

My advice is, send the Treaty on for ratification, state to the House that Mr. Lapointe was the representative of His Majesty, as such spoke for Canada and the whole Empire and let it rest there. No doubt the British Government will be very glad to ratify and say nothing.

It is a little disappointing that when the government intended to take the step it has not succeeded in it but the experience will be valuable and the Government will know what to do next time. The episode will further make it clear to our Government that there is no way to side-step the issue. They must advise His Majesty directly and when a commission is issued it should give authority to act for and on behalf of His Majesty in respect of the Canadian Dominion.

Yours faithfully,
Clifford Sifton

P.S. There is no real need to take any step like closing the Ports to British nationals other than Canadians, in order to give effect to the Treaty. It binds

all British subjects wherever they are.

Encl.

In the late Fisheries Treaty with the United States, Mr. Lapointe, a Canadian Minister, was commissioned to act on behalf of His Majesty in the signing of the treaty at Washington. The British Minister at Washington did not sign. There has been much confusion both here and in England in the Press and in Parliament with regard to the nature and effect of this step. What happened was that the Canadian Government requested *the British Government* (not His Majesty) to cause full powers to be given to Mr. Lapointe. The British Government acceded to this request. The commission was issued to Mr. Lapointe by the King on the advice of the British Government which advice was given at the request of the Canadian Government. In acting under this commission Mr. Lapointe was acting on behalf of His Majesty and His Majesty's Government in England and his action was binding upon the British Government, and therefore upon the British Empire. If the Canadian Government had the right to communicate directly with His Majesty as the British Government has, the Canadian Ministers would have advised His Majesty directly and the Commission to Mr. Lapointe would have issued directly on the advice of the Canadian Ministers. In that case British Ministers would have had nothing to do with the matter, would not have been responsible. The British Empire at large would not have been bound. Canadian Ministers have not yet the power to communicate with His Majesty directly and up to the present time cannot advise him except through the British Ministers.

March 30, 1923

My dear Sifton:

Upon receipt of your letter I went over to Mr. King's office. He was not available at the time so I left it for him. Yesterday he tried to reach me but I was out on business; but finally we met and had a brief talk just as he was leaving for the train.

He is inclined to take the view that the King appointed Lapointe on the advice of his Canadian Ministers, the Colonial offices functions being purely mechanical and that the treaty is between Canada and the United States. He believes Geddes responsible for the present developments. They have not heard from the Colonial office yet with respect to Geddes assertion

that the effect of the U.S. reservation is to extend the provisions of the treaty to the whole Empire.

I made an appointment with him to go into the whole question with him later, so I shall come back here from New York. By that time there will probably have been further developments. I shall then go on to Toronto when the whole matter can be considered.

He told me two very interesting things.

Fielding is very much put out over the government's course. "Almost weeps" said Mr. King at these developments which he says he fears lead to "separation."

Lord Byng objected strenuously to the publication of the despatches wh[ich] were put upon the table without advising him. I judge that King wrote a pretty stiff line in reply. He s[ai]d to me that he was tired of being forbidden by [the] Colonial office to give Canadian people information that they were entitled to have.

I am going on to Montreal where I have quite a bit of business to do; then early next week to New York where I shall be for ab[ou]t a week. My addresses will be: Montreal, Mt. Royal Hotel until Tuesday night; New York, Park Avenue Hotel.

March 31st, 1923

My dear Dafoe-

I have your letter of the 30th.

There is nothing whatever in the idea that the function of the Colonial office in transmitting advice to the King is merely ministerial [sic]. The British Ministers are responsible for everything that the King signs. He has no responsibility whatever. A document that comes to him for signature comes from his British Ministers. He can plead their responsibility, but not that of anybody else. When a document goes through the Colonial office to the King it goes through the responsibility of the British Ministers. If our Premier tries to work any other line he will find himself engulfed in difficulties.

There is only one way to bridge this chasm and that is to settle the matter with the British Ministers and get a practise [sic] established of communicating with the King's Private Secretary, just as the British Ministers do.

It was not the action of the United States which made the Treaty applicable to the whole Empire. It was applicable to the whole Empire when Lapointe signed it. There are no qualifications in Lapointe's commission. He represented the King and the King's Government in England fully and completely, and what he did bound them. There is absolutely no other view to take and I hope our Premier will not make a mistake.

I am in favor of taking strong ground, but I want to be sure that my feet are on it instead of in the air. There is no doubt that they slipped a cog at a critical time, apparently because they had nobody who understood the question and was watching it. I know the way these matters are decided. They are decided generally by a hasty discussion in council unless there is some very competent man in charge who watches it all the time.

August, 1923

My dear Dafoe,

I enclose you a letter which I have just rec[eive]d from King. I have replied that I recognized the importance of the matter, that no doubt efforts would be made to misrepresent Canada's position, that efforts would also be made to involve Canada in unwarrantable commitments and that believing that his Gov[ernmen]t would resist any such commitments I recognized the duty of strengthening their hands in any way possible. I further said that the idea of you going had not been discussed and I would write immediately and ask me [sic] to wire me your views.

I am impressed with the view that this conference may conceivably result in a showdown in which case there is good warrant for thinking that King will stand by the right views. I am rather glad that so far as this conference is concerned he will be alone except for the esteemed Prof. Skelton* who it is announced is going as adviser. I suppose Skelton's influence will be in the

right direction though I am not impressed with the profoundness of his grasp of the subject.

This letter indicates to me that King is a little alarmed at the fact that he is apparently the subject of a concerted attempt both in the Canadian and English press to discredit and misrepresent him. In my time there has been no Government that has succeeded in so completely divorcing itself from every possible agency and association which could conceivably be of any use to it. What do you think of the idea of going yourself. You would undoubtedly have great influence with King and might very conceivably exert a determining influence on vital matters. It is most important that no principles should be compromised and equally important that no rupture of friendly relations should take place.

The Economic Conference is also extremely important and Robb should go over and get to work with the British Authorities on Immigration. I am told they will probably concede any terms he asks. On the whole it looks to me as if the Free Press can hardly afford to take a second place and I favor the idea of you going somewhat. At the same time I should like to hear what Macklin has to say. You and I perhaps attach undue importance to these things from a newspaper standpoint, I mean the standpoint of dollars and cents. If it is not thought well that you should go it will be easy for me to say that internal office arrangements make it impossible for you to go. In that event what about sending Chisholm or McCrae* [sic]? Discuss it fully with Macklin and wire me following your wire with a letter.

Sept. 12th, 1923.

My dear Sifton:-

I am just in receipt of your letter asking me to run across to Brockville to see you when I go East next week. I shall go East by way of Toronto as my accommodation and transportation are fixed up that way, but I shall arrive in Ottawa on Tuesday morning at eight o'clock. This will enable me to catch the forenoon C.P.R. train to Brockville, which arrives at one o'clock. This is in confirmation of my wire to-day.

I received the manuscript of your address and have read it care-fully. I am taking a complete set of your public addresses with me. They will prove useful.

I think it possible that you are a subscriber to the Round Table. If so, I suggest that you should read carefully the opening article in the September issue upon the Imperial Conference. This article is, I think, very important because it probably foreshadows what will be attempted at London in October in the way of constitutional commitments. I have private information that this and the leading article on the same subject in the previous issue are by Philip Kerr.* They undoubtedly represent pretty accurately what the Milner-Curtis group will attempt to secure and I think a big drive to this end may be looked for at London next month.

When Kerr was here last year he seemed to accept the view that the constitutional problem for the Empire must be worked out upon the basis of equal status; but he has now reverted to his earlier belief in centralization. He cannot escape the obsession of the need for a unified state. But if you have the article at hand you will note how ingeniously he tries to water it down. While insisting that there must be a common foreign policy he admits that it is unreasonable to expect the Dominions to accept responsibility for Great Britain's multifarious foreign commitments and he seeks to meet this situation by declaring that Great Britain must withdraw from European and Old World commitments and have only such foreign policies as the Dominions can be interested in.

Of course, the principle implicit in any such scheme is precisely that avowed by Lloyd George in his statement on the Irish question and to accept it would be fatal to the claim of the Dominions for equality of status. Moreover, once we were definitely committed to any such scheme the inclination of British statesmen as well as the inexorable pressure of events would enlarge the orbit of British foreign policy to include all these questions which at present for strategic purposes the Centralists are willing to see dropped by Great Britain.

In one of your addresses you make a distinction between status and policy. Much of the confusion in thinking and writing about the question of Imperial relationships is due to the fact that this distinction is not observed and apparently is often not realized.

The danger in the situation is that those taking part in the coming Conference may consent to the question of status being left in suspension while they discuss policies which may qualify or destroy the present status of the Dominions. If things are not taken in due order we may find ourselves in a bog from which extrication would be difficult. I must say that I have very little confidence in King. I am afraid his conceit in his ability to take care of himself is equalled only by his ignorance and I should not be surprised if he should find himself trapped.

I have no intention of becoming an unofficial member of a board of strategy to assist him while the Conference is on.²⁸ This might involve commitments on our part that might be very awkward later. But I want to take with me to London a very clear idea in my own mind as to what should be done and just what traps should be looked out for. It is with this end in view that I particularly want to discuss matters at some length with you.

It seems to me that King ought to take the position that questions of policy must wait upon status; thereupon submit a resolution embodying the implications of this doctrine of equality which has been so long avowed. He should take the position stoutly that he is not prepared to discuss policies or machinery till the question of our constitutional position is definitely cleared up. What do you think of this? Do you think King has the sand to take this line? If there should be an attempt by the other members of the Conference to stall on this point, he could declare that this resolution embodied the policy of Canada and that his attitude towards all other questions committed [sic] must be subject to the implications of his declaration.

I am in complete agreement with your view that the Canadian attitude should be firm but quite friendly. Where I differ from Ewart, as you know, is that I object entirely to the acidity with which he discusses these questions. We want to make a clean sweep of all the old-time misconceptions and grudges and look at this question in the light of what is practicable and

²⁸ Dafoe attended this Conference in London where he acted both as correspondent for his newspaper and as an "unofficial member" of the Canadian delegation which was led by the Prime Minister, Mackenzie King. See Ramsay Cook, "J. W. Dafoe and the Imperial Conference, 1923," *Canadian Historical Review*, XLI, 1, (March 1964), 19-40.

what is desirable, bearing always in mind that a reasonable measure of co-operation between the British nations will under all circumstances be desirable and might be very necessary in view of possible world developments. On status not a point should be yielded; but if a satisfactory settlement on this point is obtained, I believe the Canadian attitude should be one of sympathy and willingness to go considerable distance in co-operation in policies of economic advantage.

These would be business rather than political policies, dealing with such questions as migration, special advantages in one another's markets, improvement in inter-communications, etc. etc. Upon all such questions we should show ourselves desirous of co-operation to the greatest extent possible with Great Britain and the other British Dominions.

The real heart of the Conference from our point of view will be the discussion of the question of status and it might well be that at this Conference the forks in the road will be reached.

There will be a concerted, carefully worked out, insidiously advocated and plausible plan to keep the question of status in suspension while committing us to policies as to foreign affairs which will hopelessly prejudice our claim to equality of status. Every attempt to bring up this question will be blocked or side-tracked by one ingenious excuse or another. King will certainly need all the help he can get if he is to be saved from the pitfalls which will be carefully and specially dug for him.

I question whether it would be wise to make any effort to syndicate the service I shall send to the Free Press. If after it is known I have gone to London any paper asks for the service it might not be advisable to refuse it. I shall be very glad indeed to talk over with you the matter of how best to deal with the developments of the Conference and know from previous experience that your suggestions will be of value to me.

Yours sincerely,
J. W. Dafoe.

P.S. Professor Keith has a very interesting and valuable article on the Imperial Conference in the current number of the Edinburgh Review. The only copy I have seen has been at the Manitoba Club.

I shall try to get copies of both the Round Table and the Edinburgh Review to take with me to Brockville on the chance that you have not seen them.

Dec. 27th, 1923.

My dear Sifton:-

I have been intending to write you for some time about the developing political situation, but I thought it well to wait until the two provincial by-elections were held for whatever illumination they might cast upon it. In Carrilon [sic] the contest was mostly personal; but there was some enlightenment in the Mountain election. It is, as you know, an old Liberal stronghold but the farmers captured it in 1922; their candidate had been, until two weeks before he was nominated, president of the Liberal association, a position he had held for twelve years. This time the Liberals did not nominate and the interest centred in what the 900 votes that were cast last time for Jim Baird would do. Cannon, the Government candidate, increased his former vote by something less than a hundred, while Fraser, the Conservative candidate in both 1922 and 1923, increased his vote by over two hundred. Cannon thus held the Liberal vote which he got before but there were several hundred Liberals who would not vote for him, even as against a Conservative candidate.

The Liberal provincial party is quite moribund with, so far as I can see, no prospects of revival within the next few years. The only alternative government to the Bracken government is a Tory government; and there is going to be a tremendous push to bring one in. Tarte* used to have a saying about the attractions of "the smell of the soup;" but it is the fumes of the whisky business that has galvanized the old Tory war horse into life again. The government sales of liquor promise to run to about five million dollars a year. Just imagine what opportunities for graft the old Roblin*-Rogers machine could find in such a business; opportunities too for debauching the electorate. The present liquor Commission refuses to buy through local agents - they deal with principals and in some cases get the benefit of the agent's com-mission. There are a couple of hundred individuals in this town who are determined to force a change in this policy. - they will make quite a fighting force for the Tories next elections.

In the event of a change of government with a complaisant liquor commissioner and a toll-gate the Conservative machine could pick up at least a half million dollars a year. We should have the old business over again including for the Free Press the competition of subsidized newspapers.

The prospects for the success of the Conservatives at the next provincial election are sufficiently good, I think, to justify us in perhaps taking a somewhat more active part in provincial politics than we have been taking. What is needed, if it can be brought about, is a fusion between the government and the Liberals. The government is anxious for this and I think Bracken is prepared later on when the election is nearer, to have an open coalition; meanwhile, he is looking for Liberal support in the Legislature and in the country in the event of by-elections. A good many Liberals are also well-disposed to some such development but there is, as always in cases like this, the embittered rump looking for satisfaction. I am told that Norris is privately very sore though he gives no public evidence of it; and I hear that Thornton, who was rather well disposed towards Bracken, is hardening his heart against him. Brown is supposed to have ambition to revive the Liberal party with himself as leader, but he, of course, has no influence or following - Norris and Thornton are, of course, in a different class and could easily prevent any formal coalition. In that case, the situation may be saved at the next election by the operation of the transferable vote which is to be adopted by the Legislature at the coming session. If Liberals and Progressives give one another their second choices, there will be a Liberal-Progressive majority in the next Legislature which can then come together in a coalition. I think the Free Press in its own interests and in the interests of the country, should use its influence - so far as this can be done quietly and judiciously - in furthering a Liberal-Progressive bloc which will keep the Tories out of power in the Province.

Of course, this provincial problem may be solved by developments in the larger Dominion field. King must see that he is steering straight for the rocks. If he ran into an election now he would probably lose a third of his support east of the Ottawa River where the two-party system still holds the field. This would reduce his following in the House to about ninety unless he could make gains in the other provinces, at the expense of the Progressives since it is fairly evident that Meighen can hold the seats

that he carried in 1921. This I don't think he can do - in Ontario perhaps, though I doubt it; certainly not out here. All this talk about the revival of Dominion Liberalism in the West is just moonshine. Most of it comes from Bill Motherwell who would be beaten out of his boots in Regina if he were to contest the seat to-day. King made the mistake of letting the old Laurier Liberal rump in Western Canada undertake to rebuild the party, after the victory of 1921, by putting behind them the prestige of the government and putting patronage into their hands. These parties really thought that the Unionist Liberals would flock back into the party, eat humble pie and ask forgiveness. Nothing like that has happened; and I do not think that if an election were to be called at present, the government would do much better than the Liberals did in opposition in 1921. With three-cornered fights in the absence of the transferable vote, the Conservatives would pick up quite a few seats. There is a good deal of canvassing of the Western political situation by Western Liberals who are not supporters of the King government, most of them nominally Progressives, and they would, I think, favor a getting-together here in the West of Liberals and Progressives for the purpose of creating in parliament some kind of a Western bloc which would hold the balance of power in the next Parliament and force a realignment of parties on Liberal and Conservative lines. I think the Saskatchewan government would favor some -which [sic] development as this. I could imagine Dunning at the head of such a movement; I think he is regarded with confidence by practically all the Progressives. In fact the average Western Liberal and the average Western Progressive are twins and they are bound to come together, given time.

In the dangerous position in which the government finds itself could it make peace now with the West and get the Western Progressives behind it in the present Parliament? I had a talk with Crerar the other day and could see that he has been speculating in his mind over the possibilities of the situation. Crerar was always disposed to go in with King if the latter made it possible and I think he is still of this mind. From various things I hear and from natural inferences drawn therefrom, I think King might be able to do business if he is prepared to pay the price. He would have to make such public engagements as to policy as would make it possible for Crerar, Dunning and Hudson to go into the government - I am pretty sure there is an understanding between these three. I think perhaps a Progressive from

Ontario would have to be taken in too - Drury possibly. The basis of the fusion would have to be such that these men could carry their following not only in Parliament but in the country, with them. Otherwise the result would be disastrous, for independent candidates would bob up everywhere at the next election to the great advantage of the Conservatives. I do not myself believe that anything like this can be pulled off. King has not the courage nor the authority in his party to do this. His idea is that these parties should go into his government and then trust him to co-operate with them in modi-fying the policies to which they object. He will never get anywhere by that course. Another possible difficulty is King himself, but as they have no obvious candidate for the premiership the Progressives would probably accept him.

Failing some such adjustment as this we may see a forced election within a few months following an abortive session of parliament. Such an election would result in another dead-locked parliament. I do not see where Meighen is going to get the additional seventy-five members necessary to give him a bare majority in the next House. If things should take this turn we ought to hope for a solid Liberal-Progressive bloc from the West. This can be easily insured if the Liberals and Progressives will join hands at Ottawa next session and put through a bill providing for the transferable vote. Such a bloc could in the next Parliament bring about a Liberal-Progressive coalition which would in time harden into a fusion.

The session at Ottawa is likely to be very important. We are going to be represented there by a new man. We had to let Chisholm go and he ceases to be our correspondent at the end of the year. His trouble, of course, was drink. Chisholm has great experience and a large connection at Ottawa which he has built up during the twelve years he represented us at Ottawa and it makes me sore to think that we have lost all this; but in view of his persistent and continuing default we had no alternative. We are sending the likeliest young man on our staff for this kind of work - A. G. Dexter.* He has been with us since he was a boy less four years overseas; and is very keen over the new job. I think he will give a good account of himself. It is, of course, a little unfortunate that he should have to take on this work at so critical a time, but if there are any startling developments I can drop down to Ottawa myself.

Well, this has been an interminable screed and you will no doubt be glad to see the end of it. I should be glad, if you can find time, to write, to have your views upon some of the matters I have touched upon.

I had intended saying something about the civic situation here. When the Street Railway in 1921 set out to induce the City Council to give it a ten years' extension of its charter and lined up in support of its plan every non-Labor alderman - save one, who was later forced out of the council by business pressure - I ventured the prediction that all they would accomplish would be to turn over the city to the Labor party. I think I said that in a letter to you at the time. This is exactly what has happened and while the Street railway issue remains, openly or under cover, the Labor party will be very formidable in civic politics.

Yours faithfully,
J. W. Dafoe.

P.S. A Liberal-Progressive understanding w[oul]d help forward our newspaper plans in Saskatchewan, too.

D.

Jan. 5, 1924.

My dear Sifton,

Crerar leaves for Ottawa next Tuesday morning.

Lapointe has been carrying on negotiations with him since before Christmas; and he now goes to Ottawa at an urgent invitation twice repeated from King.

From conversations which I have had with him I infer that he is prepared to go into the gov[ernmen]t if he is satisfied on the points of personnel and policy.

As to policy he wants a public statement by King on the tariff, economy, immigration, railways etc which will be acceptable to western public opinion both Liberal & Progressive.

Lapointe has been giving Crerar assurances that his views on all these points w[oul]d be met. He even went so far as to say - through an intermediary - that Crerar c[oul]d be Minister of Finance if he wished to take on the job.

Crerar thinks that given the necessary changes in personnel and policy commitments the great bulk of the Progressives w[oul]d support the government though perhaps they might for a time retain their present organization. He realizes that a new left wing party w[oul]d make its appearance comprising Labor, some of the Alberta Progres-sives & perhaps Miss McPhail [sic] from Ontario.

Crerar told me that Dunning and he had come to a general understanding some weeks ago: but that last week when he tried to get Dunning to come down to see him here D[unning] was evasive and wouldn't come. From which he thinks that perhaps C[.] A[.] D [unning] is playing his own hand.

Crerar says he talked over the possibility of going into the gov[ernmen]t with the Progressive whips when they were here & they agreed that this sh[oul]d be done if satisfactory assurances c[oul]d be given.

You will see that Crerar's idea is that if the Liberal government is made over right the progressives will, though perhaps not immediately, give up their separate organization and become Liberals.

I think perhaps he over-rates their willingness to fuse. I know there is an opposing view that if the progressives are to join forces with the Liberals it sh[oul]d be on a definite coalition basis, and that anything short of this will mean that a formidable progressive group will continue and will gradually become antagonistic to a Liberal gov[ernmen]t even if it contains Crerar et al.

I don't think anything immediate will result from Crerar's trip to Ottawa but he may lay the basis for co-operation.

If King takes the line that his heart is in the right place and that if Crerar will only come in he will help him to get policies agreeable [sic] to him adopted he will get nowhere. Crerar is undoubtedly willing to go in - perhaps a little too keen to do so, but he will not go into any "unsight, unseen" proposition.

Feb. 13th, 1924.

Dear Sir Clifford:-

I have received from various sources copies of the article on the tariff from the Kingston Standard, which you sent me with an added notation. Apparently it is being widely distributed throughout the West. I have no doubt your estimate of the strength of Eastern business opinion in support of the views therein set forth is strictly accurate. I wish that someone to whom they would listen would tell the Eastern business men that a boost in the tariff at this particular juncture would put a severe strain upon the fabric of confederation. I have never known the West so set on the question of these tariffs. In fact it is a kind of obsession. There is considerable protectionist sentiment in Winnipeg and there are little pockets of it here and there throughout the West; but I do not believe that those who hold this opinion amount to anything like one-tenth of the voting population. Our poor old friend Haslam will never come into my office any more to bore me to extinction with his theories. He used to complain bitterly that the Western mind was so taken up with regarding the tariff as the chief source of Western troubles that he could never get hearing for his panaceas. In the old days the Conservatives in the West out of a sense of party loyalty stood up for protection, but this party has now disintegrated. I see that Mr. Meighen, speaking in Quebec a few days ago, admitted that his talk on the tariff in Western Canada had been very unpopular.

I was in Regina and Moose jaw for a couple of days and saw a good many people. The Dunning Government has quite recovered its position in the province and could, I think, quite safely appeal to the people. Dunning is an extraordinarily capable politician as well as an able administrator. I talked with him and some of his colleagues. I could not see that there is a shade of difference between their general political views and those of the Progressive leaders; though they call themselves Liberals and are careful to differentiate between them-selves and Eastern Liberals. They say they cannot do anything for the Ottawa government unless it gives them policies which they can go out and commend to their people. Of course, King cannot do this without getting in Dutch with his Eastern supporters. I do not see a chance in the world in Western Canada for the Ottawa government at the next election. Meighen, simply by virtue of being in opposition, will probably stand better in the West than King. The Progressives of

Saskatchewan have a paper of their own called the Progressive which is published in Saskatoon. I noticed that it said in a recent issue that if the West had to choose between King and Meighen they would decide for Meighen, but that fortunately they had not to support either one. Everything is shaping up for the production of a Western bloc in the next parliament. It may be partly Liberal in its complexion, particularly if the transferable vote is adopted; but it will probably be quite solid on two or three issues, among them the tariff and the construction of the Hudson Bay Road. Perhaps also with respect to the natural resources, though this is not a burning question in Saskatchewan. From what I can gather I do not think the Western Progressives are planning to spill the government this coming session, and if King handles himself with discretion he ought to be safe enough for the time being.

I have been discussing the question of lake freights and ocean cattle rates with Miss Hind who returned from Ottawa some time ago. She tells me that the legislation which the government is planning to bring down with respect to lake freights is principally to confirm the regulations made last fall by which the American ships came in and took their share of the carrying trade. Miss Hind says that after the American boats came in last fall, grain was carried East at the lowest rate on record and she thinks legislation of this character added to the legislation of last session will pretty well meet the situation on the lakes. The increasing competition by way of Vancouver will also have a tendency to prevent a hold-up on the lakes. The situation in this respect thus appears to be fairly satisfactory.

With respect to the ocean rates on cattle, of course, the situation is far otherwise. She had talks at Ottawa both with Mr. Lowe*, Minister of Trade and Commerce, and with the Agricultural department officials. She said that Mr. Lowe had an appointment to talk the matter over with you and held out some hopes that something might be done in the way of getting a lower rate.

The Department of Agriculture has also been carrying on conferences and our Ottawa man reports in a dispatch published in yester-day's paper that the best they can hold out is that they may succeed in inducing the shippers not to raise the rate of \$30.00 a head which they are now charging. I made a comment upon this which you will no doubt see in to-day's paper.

I am afraid the government will make a complete mess of this and that it will be necessary for us to go after them hard with the biggest club we can find.

I am sending you three enclosures which may interest you. The letter from Salmon Arm, B.C., is no doubt from some Western farmer who is wintering at that point.

Yours faithfully,
J. W. Dafoe.

P.S. If Lowe gave you any worthwhile information re ocean cattle rates you might let me know.

J.W.D.

February 16th, 1924

My dear Dafoe-

I have your letter of the 13th. I had to go to Ottawa to take my wife to the Booth wedding, and at Mr. King's request I met him and a number of his colleagues on two occasions. I have not time at the moment to exhaustively state to you what took place, but I will do so next week.

In the meantime I ought to advise you of two or three points:

First: I told them that they had not any chance in the world of winning an election and that they were on a toboggan slide.

Second: I did not discuss the tariff with them at all, for obvious reasons.

Third: I told them that the Lake Rate business would have to be fixed so that farmers would get a rate of around four cents from Port Arthur to Montreal.

Fourth: I told them that they would have to make a rate of \$10. a head on cattle from Montreal to British ports.

Fifth: That they would have to drop the policy of blocking the St. Lawrence Waterways and get into harness, make the bargain with the American

Government and go ahead with the work at once, deepening the channel to the depth of the new Welland Canal and developing the power at the same time.

I think there will be a tremendous row over this before it is through. I told them that there was not any use of Quebec standing in the way of improvement of the International Waterway and if it went on for any length of time the steamroller would simply run over Quebec as it did once before; further that Montreal was making a fool of itself and acting like an aggregation of children. The first thing that Montreal knows the Americans will quit talking about a deep waterway on the St. Lawrence and cut us off by a canal to the Hudson River. They talk about it now and New York state and City would do it in a minute if they had anybody that understood it, but they have not wakened up to it yet, and of course it could never be done if we got started with out [sic] work.

I told the Government that Montreal ought to be up also hurrying on this work if they knew what they were about, also –

Sixth: I gave Low [sic] a thesis on Immigration. Next week I have to put my views in the form of a memorandum so that they can deal with them satisfactorily and I will send you a copy of the memorandum. I told them that if they handled this policy right, effectively and speedily, they might get the Western support and they would be entitled to bargain for it at this session and might do so successfully. In any event I would like to see these policies adopted because they will do more for the West than anything else.

I have nothing to say about the tariff. I suppose you saw that the Caldwell Woollen Mills at Lanark have closed up, after running since 1867. Caldwells are traditionally Liberals, as you know.

I haven't any doubt you are right as to your general view of the situation in the West and I don't wish in any way to influence your view, which, as I have said, I have no doubt is correct.

More next week.

By the way, I told the Government that there was no use fooling about the cattle rate, that they had to go out if necessary and charter a fleet of ships

and carry the cattle themselves. I think they are in the mood to do all these things, but nobody that I can find seems to have any confidence that they have the business capacity to do it. I hope they have.

March 1st, 1924

My dear Dafoe-

I have just come back from Ottawa. Two weeks ago when I was over I met Mr. King and several of his Ministers in conference and outlined what I thought was a policy that would carry them through. They pretty fully agreed also as to the necessity of action. I took the ground that if they carried these policies through the Progressives must necessarily support the Government. You will see in the Speech from the Throne that these policies are pretty well all outlined and you will also observe that Forke has stated in effect that if the Government delivers the goods they can rely on the Progressives. That is as it should be.

I talked at length with Graham, Low[e] and Ed. McDonald (sic) yesterday; told them that if they delivered the goods this Session the Progressives would be bound to them, but if they merely promised and did not perform, the Progressives would drift away from them and necessarily assume an attitude of antagonism. They all agreed and expressed a determination to carry the policies through. They should carry through a scheme of Banking Reform along with it, somewhat on the lines that I have heretofore suggested. Graham has this in mind and is working on it. Some of his colleagues are trying to get the Prime Minister to leave Robb in Immigration, where he is badly needed and put someone else, preferably Graham, at Finance. Then Graham could grapple with the Bank question and he is of vigorous and alert mind and quite open to conviction, therein differing from his predecessor, Mr. Fielding, who could not be convinced of anything.

I think they are thoroughly in earnest and are going to make a strong effort to make good on the whole policy outlined. They will probably be helped by vicious and continuous attacks on the part of Meighen: that of course will do them more good than harm.

I discussed fully the question of cattle rates with Low[e]. They were quite at sea. They have been making inquiries from shipping men around Montreal,

everyone of whom is tied up to the North Atlantic Conference and getting his living out of it. I told them they had to go to the Baltic Exchange, where the shipping of the world is controlled. I am getting the names of some Brokers by cable from London and I think Mr. Low[e] will probably send a good man right across to consult with such a broker and take immediate steps. I told him the rate had to come down. It was not a matter of discussion, it was a matter of necessity and that Mr. Motherwell's idea of devoting his efforts to keeping the shipping men from raising the rate excited nothing but hilarity. I have cabled for the names of the Brokers and probably will have them on Monday or Tuesday.

I don't know whether Low[e] has the right kind of a man to send to London and I cannot think of anybody myself just now, but no doubt the right man can be found. It is rather too bad that Duncan Marshall has turned party organizer. If Manning Doherty* had not been elected Leader of the local opposition I think he would have been the man to send, but he is tied up. However, no doubt the Lord will provide.

Low[e] gives it as his opinion that this reduction in the cattle rate is the biggest thing that the Government can do for the farmers of Ontario and Quebec. I agreed. I am inclined to think that I can get it done by sticking to it.

You had better destroy this letter as it is of necessarily [sic] too confidential a character to get into strange hands.

April 10, 1924

My dear Sifton,

I wrote Mr. King a month ago telling him to be sure, when the question of treaty making came up, to stress the point that the new procedure carried with it the right of the Dominions to tender direct advice to the King.

I have a letter from him saying that he had done this and enclosing me Hansards containing the very interesting discussions on treaty making which have already taken place.

The London Times immediately after the Imperial Conference undertook to interpret the treaty-making memorandum of the Imperial Conference as not meaning anything in particular, suggesting that advice from the Dominions to the King to be valid w[oul]d require the approval of the British government. This of course is the whole point. I am satisfied the word had been passed among the free masonry of Imperial Diehards to put forward this interpretation. I had run into it out here before I wrote Mr. King. I see that Mr. Meighen suggested that this was the true interpretation in spite of King's clear-cut and positive declaration.

The discussion over Lausanne²⁹ is very interesting. I have no doubt King will stand to his guns; but I have written him thus adding my mite of moral support. It will be interesting to note if Meighen will care to take the position that Canada sh[oul]d guarantee the settlement of the Straits question arrived at in the Treaty. He's more apt to split hairs, arguing that we sh[oul]d ratify the treaty in order to end the state of war while contracting out of its obligations by reservations or otherwise.

I see the Times is very busy. You may have noticed a crack at us in its leading article yesterday, as cabled by MacCormac. The head centre of what is left of the Centralizing movement is right in the Times office. Geoffrey Dawson* the editor - formerly very active in the Round Table movement³⁰ and an editor of the Round Table - is still where he was ten years ago in his thinking on Imperial matters, and may be counted upon to make all the trouble he can for Dominion or other governments that do not advance the policies he favors. Fortunately the Times['] influence is now largely a myth.

²⁹ The Lausanne Treaty in 1923 was designed to end officially the war between Turkey and the Allied and Associated Powers since the Turkish government had refused to accept the earlier Treaty of Sevres. Canada did not participate in the Lausanne Conference and Mackenzie King therefore insisted that while Canada was "legally" committed to the treaty she was not "morally" committed. The distinction was of the kind that only King could understand. See Dawson, *Mackenzie King*, 422-26.

³⁰ The Round Table movement was a loose association of clubs in various parts of the Empire which were begun at the instigation of Lionel Curtis and devoted themselves to the discussion of Imperial problems and also, at least in Canada, to dabbling in politics when Imperial questions were being discussed. See James Eayrs, "The Round Table Movement in Canada," *The Canadian. Historical Review*, XXXVIII, 1, (March 1957), 1-20.

May 3, 1924.

My dear Sifton:-

The meeting of the Imperial Shipping Committee³¹ here was a good deal of a farce; but at that considerable evidence which they didn't want to hear was presented to them. They did not hold their meetings in public, following what Sir Halford MacKinder said was their invariable custom. Perhaps it is not accurate to say that the public were admitted; I do not know that anybody was barred out except reporters, but the committee was always fussing about lest unauthorized reports should find their way into the papers. However, we obtained a full record of everything that was presented to them. MacKinder was plainly huffy when the Free Press presented its statement. He thought that I was speaking for the Board of Trade until I got on my feet and said that we were presenting a memorial on behalf of the Free Press.

I was strongly tempted to go after the Committee with an axe; but I thought that public opinion might think that we were pre-judging the Committee. I have a further editorial comment in to-days' [sic] issue in which the point is made that the Government must not mark time on the plea that the matter is before the Imperial Shipping Committee. MacKinder made it reasonably clear in his public addresses, and quite clear in a private talk which I heard him deliver at Government House that the Shipping Committee exists to discourage the Dominion from doing anything rash which might interfere with the operation of the shipping rings of Great Britain.

The following quotation from a recent letter from Dexter, our Ottawa correspondent, gives an idea of how little can be expected from the Government in this matter; -

"The arrival of the Shipping Committee furnished an excellent text for a sermon on the inefficiency of the present government. It appears that when Low[e] invited them he referred to flour rates only and

³¹ Ocean freight rates were naturally an issue of great importance to the Western farmer. In 1923 a Parliamentary Committee reported, after investigation, that a shipping combine existed causing an artificially high rate structure. Acting on the Committee report the King government in 1924 attempted to break this combine by negotiating an agreement with the English shipping magnate, Sir William Peterson. Peterson's death in the midst of the negotiations relieved the King government of what was, apparently, a badly devised scheme. See H. Blair Neatby, *William Lyon Mackenzie King, 1924-1932*, (Toronto, 1964), 49-50.

they had no idea that they would be asked to hear delegations on cattle rates, marine insurance, rates on other commodities, until they reached Toronto. There was quite an upset, believe me, Sir Halford, it appears, is quite a testy fellow and, at first, refused. After some talk with the Cabinet, however, he agreed to make appointments with delegations, but his secretary informed me that they really couldn't pay much attention to these representations. In the case of cattle rates, he said, the question would have to be examined from both sides and the whole sweep of rates would have to be taken into consideration. Had they known, there was much general information on rates in their files in London which would have been of great value.

"In addition, the government, he said, should have arranged their itinerary so as to take in the deputations against the rates first and then those in defence. As it is they go home via New York and will not have a chance to call at Montreal and hear the shipping companies.

"Furthermore the Dep't. of Trade & Commerce gave the other dep'ts. no warning and the officials of the Dep't. of Agriculture had no inkling of the inquiry with cattle rates until Tuesday morning. Of course, I had been trying to dig up stuff there for several days but that meant nothing to them. Tuesday morning Motherwell asked Dr. Gridale to prepare a case for presentation to the Committee. He had nothing in his department to work on. (If he had been given a chance, we all would have done better). I read the letter he wrote for Motherwell and it was a weak-kneed proposition. He had nothing more, and not as much as I sent you so you will see he had very little indeed. He swore black and blue about it. The hearings are in camera, anyway, and you will be unable to get much publicity out of it in Winnipeg.

"Motherwell gave me a story the other day about an impending investigation into rates. It appears now that the \$10,000 vote he referred to was to pay the cost of the Shipping Committee's tour. It is all so inept. Here they are coming out on money shown in the estimates as (Item 386), Inquiry re ocean freights rates - \$10,000; and Motherwell so ignorant of it that he announces it to be a vote for an investigation by W. T. R. Preston."*

Harry has written you, I understand, about matters of some importance. He is going on to Toronto in a couple of days.

Yours faithfully,
J.W. Dafoe

P.S. I hope to make that review of the editorial pages of the Southam newspapers the coming week and will let you know the result. A preliminary look through them rather tends to discourage the view that there is a commonly directed policy.

Oct. 7th, 1924.

My dear Sir Clifford:-

I received yesterday your letter of October 3rd. You will have noted no doubt the various articles we have had on the Backus³² proposition. I am continuing to carry on the campaign. The Government party while here was pretty well bombarded upon this question; but there is a feeling that not much progress was made. King had gone on before I got your letter so I did not see him personally about the matter. I met him a couple of times while he was here, but only in company under conditions which made anything in the nature of confidential talk impossible. Sunday afternoon a delegation consisting of Premier Bracken, Mayor Farmer, Mr. Glassgo, head of the Hydro-electric, with engineers, etc., had a long session with Stewart They presented him with a carefully drawn-up declaration of the attitude of the Manitoba power users, so that neither he nor Mr. King will have any doubts as to what Manitoba and Winnipeg want. They found Stewart quite unresponsive. He argued that the Government did not want to have a dam of their own, that they did not want to build a dam for the joint purpose of control and power production,

³² In 1924 the Backus Corporation proposed that it be given a contract to build a power dam on the Winnipeg River. The Manitoba government favoured public ownership of the dam, while the Dominion government, apparently, favoured a government subsidized private company. The *Free Press* vigorously supported the views of the Manitoba government. See, for example, "Private or Public Interest?", *Manitoba Free Press*, October 2, 1924.

selling the power to Backus, that the control powers which he had stipulated in the agreement were sufficiently stringent to safeguard the interests of Manitoba.

Mr. T. H. Johnson had a private talk with Stewart in which he warned him that it was not merely a question of conflict of opinion between Winnipeg and Kenora, as he seemed to think; that involved in it was an issue of high political importance upon which the King Government could not afford to take the wrong side. I understand Mr. Norris was primed to go after King at Brandon yesterday, pointing out the political dangers of the course which his government is pursuing. The impression left upon the minds of those who discussed this question with Stewart on Sunday was that he was resolved to complete the agreement, let the consequences be what they may. I attach a report from this morning's paper dealing with the Sunday afternoon conference.

Re the peace protocol³³ of the League of Nations about which you write, you have doubtless seen the leading article which I wrote dealing with this question. In case you have not I herewith enclose it. You will see that my view is practically identical with yours. I should think that the chances of the British Parliament ratifying the protocol in its present form are slight, if the effect of the amendment is as it seems to be; that a question held by the international world court to be purely domestic can be made the subject for consideration by the Council of the League upon the action of some outside country which finds, or pretends to find, a cause of offence in the domestic act of some other country. One of the most unfortunate phases of the development is the effect it is having upon United States public opinion. It has seemed to me from my reading and studying of the American political situation that some progress was being made towards converting the American people to believe that they should belong to the League of Nations; but this action taken by the League at the instance of Japan is likely to undo all the good that has been done. You have no doubt been noting the comments of the American papers. If Great Britain should be favorable to the protocol and the Dominions should decline, there might

³³ The Geneva protocol was one of a series of efforts made in the 1920's to block some of the more obvious holes in the Covenant of the League of Nations and thus to quiet French fears of renewed German aggression. Canada was not anxious to see League obligations increased and opposed the protocol which eventually failed to gain the support necessary for implementation.

be serious consequences, one of which might be that they might be obliged, under the pressure of events, to look for leadership and protection not to Great Britain but to the United States. You doubtless noticed that both Sir Cecil Hurst, of the Foreign Office staff, and Lord Parmoor representing the British Government, insisted in their addresses at Geneva that the protocol, as amended, in no way infringed upon the sovereign rights of the nations, still leaving them free to deal with domestic questions as they chose; but it may be difficult to reconcile this interpretation with the actual text of the protocol.

October 14th, 1924.

My dear Dafoe-

I have your two letters of the 7th and 8th.

First, with regard to immigration. I think your view is quite right and there is no necessity or advantage in attacking the government at the present time. As you say, there is no favorable re-action in the West on that subject and you have gone on record often enough.

Second, with regard to the Backus business, I note what you say and I am afraid that it is very serious. It has all the ear-marks of an extremely stupid job and will be the beginning of the discrediting of the Government. My own opinion is that you ought to see King on his return. Write and ask him for an interview and put the facts before him and tell him the inference that you draw and the inference that anybody who has any sense or experience in these matters will draw. I may further say that it is perfectly well known in Toronto that the lawyer that you speak of was acting with Backus and in connection with the Government, and the intimate friends of the lawyer in question some weeks ago were saying that these people had pulled off a big thing at Ottawa, out of which they were going to make a tremendous lot of money. There is no secret about it. It was common City gossip.

Apart from that, on the subject of public policy, the action of the Government is entirely indefensible, and the Free Press will never stand for anything of the kind no matter who does it.

I think if you see King and tell him what the position is and tell him that this is the way every Government begins its down-fall, he, will probably wake up.

I do not need to mention any names, but the two men who are particularly concerned in putting this through for the Government are about the last men in the world that can be trusted with an important business of this kind.

Re: League of Nations - Your article is entirely correct. In fact it was the only article written in Canada that showed complete under-standing of the situation.

I want to put the matter as a lawyer so that you will have your attention directed to the legal implications of what has been done.

One clause in the covenant states that the League shall not have jurisdiction to interfere with purely domestic matters, but the Protocol which has now been passed states that when anything takes place which is regarded as giving a cause of complaint and which has been referred to the World Court and the World Court has decided that it is of a purely domestic character, this supposedly agrieved [sic] party may still take it up with the Council.

Now the effect of saying that the supposedly agrieved [sic] party may take it up with the Council is to give the Council jurisdiction, and when Great Britain and the Dominions assent to this permission they assent to jurisdiction being given and their mouths are closed definitely and finally.

No newspaper in Canada except perhaps the Free Press has shown an appreciation of this point, but if the Protocol is as set forth there is no question in the world about the legal construction. No lawyer that is worth his salt would give any other opinion.

The newspapers have maintained that the Protocol was harmless and dependent upon the former provision, but the former provision is in effect repealed by the statement that the matter may be taken up notwithstanding the judgment of the World Court.

Nov. 24th, 1924.

My dear Sir Clifford:-

I am enclosing for your information a very useful pamphlet on the Peace Protocol. As this is a matter in which you are interested and which may become a subject of considerable political interest in Canada you will, I assume, be glad to have the official text of the protocol together with the reports and resolutions leading up to it.

I also enclose an editorial which we had in the Free Press on Friday dealing with this question. There is a more or less concerted attempt to make it appear that Article 5 of the protocol does not go beyond Article XI of the covenant of the League. I see by the cable despatches that Sir Eric Drummond has visited London to give an assurance to this effect to the new British government. According to this -view, if a question considered to be domestic by the World Court were nevertheless brought before the Council of the League, the complaining nation bringing it before the Council could not, if the Council refused to take action, proceed against the country against which it made complaint without being regarded as an aggressor and, therefore, open to the penalties provided by the protocol. I notice in the current London Spectator an article giving this interpretation to the last clause of Article 5. It seems to me, however, that if this is the effect of the paragraph it would have been so stated at Geneva. This interpretation would not have been satisfactory to Japan whose representatives made it clear in the discussions before the Assembly that she wanted the right to proceed against a nation whose domestic legislation was objectionable to her without being regarded as an aggressor provided she had first brought the matter before the Council of the League of Nations. You will see that Professor Hudson on page 397 admits that this may be the effect of the Japanese amendment.

Apart from this the peace protocol strikes me as conceivably calculated to discourage the waging of war by aggressively inclined nations. Do you think it would be possible for the British nations to ratify the protocol subject to an interpretative reservation expressly stating it is nothing but a re-affirmation of the general principles embodied in Article XI of the Covenant and is not to be regarded as affording justification for aggressive action by a nation deeming itself aggrieved by the domestic policy of another country?

After you have had time to go through this pamphlet carefully, I should be glad to hear from you about this matter. I don't suppose there is any possibility of the matter being considered seriously at Ottawa before the session of Parliament.

January 19, 1925.

My dear Dafoe-

I think you were a little too favorable in your editorial comments on the speech of Mr. Hoey. While the substance of what you said is all right, I think that any man who starts to talk about redressing political grievances in Canada by suggesting the secession of one part of Canada from the other, ought to get an immediate and effective dressing down.

These men who come over from England or Ireland or Scotland and after being here a few years suggest breaking up the country, which we and our forefathers have made, should get a little straight talk from the native born Canadians.

There is another matter about which I wish to write. I have some information which tends to show that there is a scheme on foot to load the Pacific and Great Eastern Railway, the white elephant that the British Columbia Government has on its hands, on to the Canadian National Railways. It is not in the least likely that Sir Henry Thornton would accept any responsibility for such action, but there were rumours around a short time ago that there was a scheme on to get a British Columbia director appointed, who would report in favor of this action, and that the idea was to load the responsibility on to him and make him the scapegoat.

There are also one or two other jobs of the same kind in British Columbia that seem to be in contemplation. There is enough talk in connection with the proposed action of the Federal Government respecting the Peace River Railway to justify you in taking the matter up and discussing it, and pointing out that any attempt to load the Pacific and Great Eastern on the Canadian National Railways will meet with uncompromising opposition. The National Railway has enough on its hands now without trying to carry this white elephant.

Jan. 22nd, 1925

Dear Sir Clifford:-

I have your letter of January 19th.

When I got back to my office I found a letter on my desk from Mr. Hoey - he had gone south before I returned.

In it he claimed that there was a public misunderstanding of his position. He did not say he had been misrepresented; but rather that he had not succeeded in making his position clear. He claimed not to be an advocate of secession under any circumstances, and said his argument was intended to be purely hypothetical. I understand he is to take some pains to define his position at an early date - probably in parliament in the debate on the address. There is a good deal more secession sentiment throughout the West than I would care to admit. Hoey has great platform powers and it is quite desirable that he should be permitted to declare himself as not really in favor of it if this is his purpose. Clubbed too vigorously he might go the other way.

I took these facts into consideration in writing my article.

It might be worth while to write a judicious article giving a hint to Westerners who have come to the country from outside that the Canadian-born resent this talk of separation and will have nothing to do with it. I shall have a try at this.

With respect to the Peace River Railway, I understand that Oliver* had some idea of advocating the building of a railway by a route which would connect at Fort George with the P.G. and E. [sic, Pacific and Great Eastern], his idea being to unload this white elephant upon the Canadian National. I heard at Ottawa, however, that he was pretty thoroughly discouraged on this point by the discussions which took place at the conference. As perhaps you know, one of the Vancouver papers, the Sun, jumped on him vigorously and said he was not to endanger the prospects of having the Peace River country opened up by trying to sell this derelict railway to the Dominion Government. Subsequent to the conference Oliver gave an interview in which he indicated that the two things, the disposition of the P.G. and E. and the building of the road into the Peace River, were not necessarily related. If anything is done in developing the Peace River it will be by the short railway directly south of the Canadian National main line.

This in itself is a rather large proposition which is likely to run to some thirty million dollars. I have been turning over in my mind what, if anything, I should say about the proposition. I think it could be advocated as a productive expenditure; but it is certainly a considerable amount of money to lay out at this time. It would be possible to ignore this aspect of the question meanwhile and simply put in a disclaimer against any attempt by the B.C. government to unload the P.G. and E. upon the country.

You might let me have your views as to the general proposition of developing the Peace River country. British Columbia, it is evident, is very keen upon this, as well as Northern Alberta. They talk of twenty or thirty million acres available for settlement in that area.

January 28th, 1925.

My dear Dafoe-

I have yours of the 22nd.

I have just come back from Ottawa. I met Charlie Dunning there and travelled over with him to Toronto yesterday. We had a pretty exhaustive conversation. As you know I have a very high admiration for him. He told me some things that were a complete surprise to me. He said there was an organization strong in Saskatchewan and only slightly prevalent in Alberta and Manitoba, called the "United Farmers" which is not to be confused with Wood's organization, - the United Farmers of Alberta. This, he tells me, is an out and out radical dead-beat organization, appealing directly to the impecunious and those who are so loaded with debt that they do not ever expect to get out of debt. He says they are a secret organization, oath bound with grips and pass-words and such like, and he says there are six *hundred* lodges in Saskatchewan. His view is that they are rapidly eating up the Grain Growers' organization in Saskatchewan. Their plat-form is practical repudiation of debt of all kinds. He says they are spreading like the measles. He is not afraid that they can beat him, but he looks with alarm on the organization of the Tory party in Saskatchewan, because it may absorb a certain number of the saner and more level-headed farmers and endanger his

chances in three-cornered contests. He did not complain to me, but I think he rather feels that the Free Press is giving too unlimited support to the Progressives and tending to create a radical off-shoot in the West, which may get under the control of the extreme radicals.

My own notion is that the Progressive Party may possibly live usefully through the next election, but it has shot its bolt as far as usefulness is concerned and every purpose would be served if they could take the place of a Western, and perhaps more radical wing of the Liberal party. Of course some of them will never be consistent members of any political organization. They are of the irreconcilable agitator type. For instance King made what, I thought, and what Dunning told me he thought, was a very sensible statement at the Toronto meeting lately, namely that he was not going to make any changes in the tariff in the immediate future. The plain fact is that speaking in general terms the tariff has been as much reduced as it is possible for any Government to carry out. I think the West has got about as much as they reasonably expect in that line, and there is no sense whatever in a persistent and incessant howl for what has been found by Government for thirty years to be impracticable that is to say, we cannot have a tariff framed exclusively with regard to the ideas and desires of Western Canada. That was the stand I took when I was in office and I would take it again now if I were in office. They can get a certain amount and I think they have pretty well got it, and there are other things which are from this out[look?] much more important than a further reduction to the tariff.

Just a day or two ago I saw that somebody representing the Grain Growers had been making a very wild speech attacking King for his statement in Toronto. There is no use in giving any support to those extremists.

Now with regard to Hoey, as I said, I think you did a little too much for him in the article, but I quite understand your point of view and perhaps you were right. Also I think it is desirable to give him a chance to square himself if he can, but there is one thing that we must keep in mind and that is that under no circumstances what-ever can the Free Press have anything whatever to do with people who advocate secession or disruption of confederation. We will stand for a united Canada under any and all circumstances and use the sledge hammer if we have to.

My own belief is that there are not five percent of the native born Canadians that will ever take any stock in these disruptive theories. They generally come from people who are late-comers to Canada and who would probably be agitators wherever they were.

I do not profess to be acquainted with the present public opinion of the Western Provinces, but I am very strongly inclined to think that the secession sentiment will be largely confined to the dead-beats and the impecunious fringe of the population who are the last people who should be allowed to dictate public policy.

Under all the circumstances I think a couple of leading articles from you, stating this in the dignified and vigorous way in which you can state it, would have a very good effect indeed. They might be followed up by another article, pointing out that not only can there be no serious talk of disrupting confederation, but likewise there can be no serious talk of Canada separating itself from the allegiance to the British Crown, and that our discussion of the Status of Canada is the discussion of a status under the Crown and must not be under-stood in any other sense. Of course you have elaborated that idea a good many times before, but in view of the tomfoolery that the London papers are talking, it would be well I think to just crystallize it again for the benefit of all that it may concern. You may have to take chances on a little loss of support of the extreme radicals, just as you had to take chances on a little loss of support from the extreme loyalists, but if you have to do it why it might just as well be done because we do not propose, to follow them in their erratic courses and that might as well be known now as later.

My impression is that the clouds will largely roll away during the next twelve months and I think that we are on the eve of an expansion in business that will be substantial and prolonged. All the signs seems to point that way. The only thing that seems to be hopeless is the Government's Immigration policy. I find that Dunning takes the same view. He says it seems to be all at loose ends and not getting anywhere.

With regard to Peace River, the cost of the Railway connection down to the Canadian National Railway seems to be enormous. Nevertheless, I think it could be made a good business proposition if it were handled right, and

my notion of the right way to handle it, the way I would do it if I were doing it myself, is that I would begin the construction of the railway immediately, announce that it would be put through and finished in two years, and then I would start an extensive campaign for settlers in the United States. I think four or five hundred thousand people could be put there by the time the Railroad was finished, and that would make enough business to more than pay the interest on the cost of the Railway.

Feb. 3rd, 1925.

Dear Sir Clifford:-

I enclose you the leading article in to-day's paper.³⁴ I shall play variations on this theme at intervals during the next two weeks.

I was glad to get your views about the Peace River problem. From all I can gather there is a possibility there of something spectacular being done in the way of productive outlay of public money. I talked with Sir Henry Thornton about this yesterday. He went through the Valley some months ago and is quite convinced that there is great opportunity there for railway development and colonization work. The arable area is about two hundred miles one way and four hundred the other, and it lends itself admirably to work of a development nature.

Sir Henry said that as the result of the recent conference at Ottawa there is to be a joint inquiry by engineers of the Canadian National and the Canadian Pacific into the means and methods by which this country can be best opened up. The general instruction to these engineers from the Conference was to plan a railway outlet which would give both railway systems access on equal terms to the valley. Sir Henry says that in fact this

³⁴ R. A. Hoey, a Manitoba Progressive M.P., suggested at a meeting of the United Farmers of Manitoba in January 1925, that if the inequalities of Confederation could not be removed, then perhaps the only alternative for the West would be secession. On January 14 the Free Press commented on the speech in a moderately approving way. But at Sifton's prompting Dafoe wrote an editorial entitled "The Permanence of Confederation" (February 3, 1925) in which he stated that there was only one limitation on political discussion in Canada and that was that Confederation had to be accepted as permanent.

cannot be done. The Valley is, by its location, in the Canadian National field and is bound to become tributary to its system. The C.P.R., can if it wishes retain the Dunvegan road; but this will never be able to compete with the Canadian National branch line which he foresees will be built from Obed on the main line some two hundred miles or thereabouts west of Edmonton, north to Grande Prairie. He says there are no special engineering difficulties in the construction of this road. When Grande Prairie is reached they can utilize the Dunvegan Road and supplement it with branches radiating like a fan from Grande Prairie. He thinks the possibilities are very great. It is, in his judgment, the one first-class opening in Canada to-day for the securing of prompt results through the outlay of public money. Preliminary steps towards the building of the proposed outlet will be taken this year.

I questioned Thornton about John Oliver's alternative proposition, and he indicated to me that Oliver, despite his disclaimer at Ottawa, is still hoping that he may be able to induce the Government and the Canadian National to fall in with his plans which are to build a road through the mountains to the Peace River Valley to Fort George, linking up there with the P.G. & E., after it is completed to that point. Thornton says that since both Alberta and British Columbia have "lame duck" railways on their hands, they would be very pleased to unload them both on the Canadian National and they probably could succeed in doing this if they could force the building of the Peace River Valley-Fort George road. Thornton indicated that he was dead against it, as being wholly uneconomic under the circumstances. I see that Oliver since returning to British Columbia has been again suggesting that the right route is by Fort George.

It would, I think, be good business for the Free Press to have an article sympathetic to the proposition of opening up the Peace River Valley by building the shortest and quickest line to the Canadian National system, and incidentally taking a vigorous punch at Oliver's proposition to unload the P.G. & E. upon the National System. It will not do the Free Press any harm to be large minded about the development, the primary benefit of which will go to Edmonton and Vancouver.

Sir Henry also talked to me for some time about Mr. Dunning. He had been hearing from his friends in England of the impression which Dunning had made during his visit there last summer, and has also been impressed by his

personal contacts with him. We agreed that, taking into account his youth, his energy, his ambition and capacity for public life, Dunning is probably the most promising of all the younger public men in Canada. There is a great opportunity for Dunning here in Western Canada within the next three or four years if he has the necessary patience, tact and diplomatic skill. His weakness is a disposition to be impatient and peremptory.

Our Mr. Woodward has just got home after spending a month in the West in attendance at the successive farm conventions, with some political inquiries on the side. After I have had a talk with him I may write you about the Western Political situation. I do not think there is anything much to worry about. I shall begin to worry when there is a prospect of Meighen electing fifteen or twenty members. Of this there is no present sign, unless the Liberals and Progressives act like children.

February 16th, 1925.

My dear Dafoe:

Replying to yours of the 12th, I have manuscripts of my proposed addresses, with which I can furnish you, so that you will not need to send a reporter.

Herewith I enclose you the text of the Judgment³⁵ of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. I have read it very carefully, I do not think that there is anything whatever to be disturbed about. The judgment of the Privy Council is undoubtedly right and sound in law. As a matter of fact when this Bill was going through the House, I got up out of my seat and went over and sat beside Sir Wilfrid and told him that the Act was unconstitutional and that if it ever got before the Court it would be so declared. I consider the judgment of the Privy Council absolutely and entirely right and judge

³⁵ In 1925 in the case of the Toronto Electric Commissioners v. Snider the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council declared that, in effect, the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act was *ultra vires* of the powers of the federal government. There is some discussion of the national implications of this case in Maurice Ollivier, *Problems of Canadian Sovereignty*, (Toronto, 1945), *passim*.

Hodgins, who dissented from the other judgment in the Appellate Court of Ontario, was also undoubtedly right. This principle of invoking imaginary national emergencies to violate the constitution is a most indefensible principle. There is such a thing as a national emergency in time of war or some-thing of that kind, but the idea of saying that any such legislation as this is based on emergency is sheer nonsense. The Dominion Parliament may as well legislate about the Winnipeg milk supply and say that it was a national emergency. There isn't a bit of trouble about our constitution. All it requires is it to be observed. In this case, not only is the law clear that dealing with strikes and labor disputes is within the jurisdiction of the Province, but undoubtedly it is wise that it should be so, and I have no sympathy with any idea of trying to bring about a change in that respect. We want some changes in our constitution, but that is not one of them. The fact is that our Provinces are distinct entities in which the Provincial Government and the Provincial Legislature is a much better judge of labor conditions and how they should be adjusted and disposed of than the Dominion authorities can possibly be.

I suppose you know that the labor crowd are very desirous of getting the jurisdiction over all these subjects vested in the Dominion authorities. They think they have a chance to stampede legislation out of the Dominion Parliament, which they could not possibly get through in the Provincial legislatures. The Legislatures are too much dominated by the farmers element to stand very much nonsense. They are particularly desirous of getting the eight-hour law under the jurisdiction of the Dominion Parliament, feeling certain that they could manoeuvre Parliament into passing a law if it had authority to do so. I am very thankful that it has not, and certainly the Dominion Parliament is the worst possible judge of labor conditions in the different Provinces.

No, I don't think you need be a bit disturbed about the central parliament not having enough authority to enable Canada to function as a Nation. As a matter of fact if any aggression on Provincial rights starts, we will just have another agitation such as we had years ago. I may tell you that I advised King very strongly against attempting any constitutional changes without bringing in the Provinces. He would lay himself open to a fatal attack and would in all probability fail.

I shall be glad to talk the matter over with you more fully when I am in Winnipeg.

March 10th, 1925.

My dear Dafoe-

The Mail today contains a despatch from John MacCormac, saying that the British Government is very much concerned as to whether the Dominions and Canada in particular will join in a Five Power Pact, guaranteeing European securities, the five powers including both Germany and France.

No doubt you have been giving this matter full consideration, but I think it is about time that we should take a flat-footed stand and say that Canada will not guarantee anything in Europe of any kind whatever and will enter into no obligations which might by any possibility involve her in European war; that if she is ever to be involved in any European war it will be by the decision of her Parliament taken in view of all the then [known] circumstances of the case, unfettered by any previous commitments direct or indirect. This is a pretty bald way of putting it, but that is the way I think it ought to be put.

You will remember that I never was very keen on the League of Nations. Twenty-five years of more or less constant intercourse with people over there have given me a pretty good idea of their point of view. Their whole object is to get the military and man power of the Dominions behind them in their dealings with foreign Nations, and I do not think any of the official class care two straws how many thousands of our men we lose, or how many billions of debt we have piled on us. I don't particularly object to Canada paying a couple of hundred thousand dollars as a matter of sentiment and moral support to the League of Nations. It is doing some good and probably may do more, but I am suspicious of the bunch of second rate professors that are congregating around Geneva; busy-bodies who think in small dimensions, but long-winded sentences. The more I consider it, the more I conclude that Canada cannot afford to sign or endorse any protocol whatever that they issue. If the Covenant of the League is not good enough as it stands, I do not think it will be improved by any more tinkering.

Meantime I think that so far as the suggestion of joining in any five power Pact or any Treaty of Guarantee is concerned, that there should be a definite and flat-footed refusal.

I have just written to King to ask him how the Government stands on the question of putting through the Peterson³⁶ contract. If the Government is going to stand firm, as I hope it will, I think you ought to start a full-dress campaign and hammer these fellows who are loading the press with propaganda. The whole capitalist clique from the London press is in full orgy, and of course the whole capitalist clique at Montreal is in full cry.

Forke and the Progressives are playing a very poor part and the Council of Agriculture as usual has made a fool of itself. It is up to the Free Press to stand straight and go at the thing with a sledge hammer, front page and editorial page, providing the Government is going to stand firm, but we do not want to be left in the lurch in the middle of the fight. You, however, are sufficiently deft with your pen to save yourself as you go along.

My letter to Mr. King will go tonight and I should have an answer in two or three days. As soon as I get it I shall write you again. I suppose it would be well to go gently until you hear from me.

March 11 th, 1925.

Dear Sir Clifford:-

I suppose Mr. MacLean furnished you with copies of the Hansard containing reports of the speeches on his Constitutional resolution. I thought the debate upon the whole was very creditable and I particularly admired Billy's spunk in standing to his guns although he stood quite alone among the Tory brethren. I see that in the debate yester-day in the House upon the question of Senate Reform he also separated himself from the other Tory members.

I confess myself, however, somewhat disturbed by the line taken by Mr. Lapointe and still more, possibly, by Mr. Vien, who is an influential member of the French Canadian Liberal group. They take the position, Vien openly and Lapointe by inference, that our constitution cannot be changed except with the consent of every one of the provinces. If we get a constitutional convention which holds that the Imperial parliament should not modify our

³⁶ See footnote 31, p. 187.

constitution without the approval of the provinces, or that we should have the right to amend the constitution ourselves subject to the approval of all the provinces, we shall be tied up for all time to an unchanging and unchangeable constitution with the certainty that sooner or later there will be very serious trouble.

What I have always thought would be the most desirable tactics to bring about a solution of this difficulty would be something like this: The Dominion Government should say that they are prepared to agree to a method of changing the Canadian constitution which will in the first place safeguard the rights of minorities absolutely and will then provide that no change can be effective unless it commands the support of some reasonable percentage of the provinces. Failing a willingness on the part of the provinces to agree to an arrangement of this kind the Dominion ought not to renounce the right to go to the Imperial parliament for modifications of the constitution. I am not especially well posted on the constitutional aspect of this question but I believe it is on record that a minor change in the constitution was once made by the Imperial parliament on the strength of a simple request by the government of Alexander Mackenzie. That, it seems to me is too valuable a precedent to lose; it should be retained simply as a weapon to induce reasonableness on the part of the provinces.

The Australian provision for changing the constitution seems to me to be about right. It provides, as you know, that a constitutional amendment shall be validated by a majority vote of the total electorate and also by a majority in a majority of the states. There is a provision that if the special rights of a state are affected that state must vote in the affirmative. This provision could be adapted, it seems to me, to meet the requirements of Quebec.

Perhaps you might turn this over in your mind and let me have your views at your convenience.

You may have noticed that we gave the Progressive members a pretty broad hint not to get in the same boat with the Tories and the steamship combine in this matter of the Preston arrangement. You noted, no doubt, the decision of the Canadian Council of Agriculture at Toronto and also perhaps the further fact that the Grain Growers' Guide of this city declared against the agreement. Both these decisions were due to the influence of two

doctrinaire, radical, uncompromising Englishmen, one the actual though not the nominal editor of the Grain Growers' Guide; the other the special adviser on economic questions of the Council of Agriculture. I note by to-day's despatch that the Progressive members at Ottawa propose to assist the passage of the agreement to committee, professing a readiness to be governed by the results of the investigation to be held [by] the committee. This is fairly satisfactory. I did not believe that the Progressive members would be such idiots as to join up with the Tories on this matter. One reason for my belief was that I had a letter from Crerar about ten days ago in which he said that the C.P.R. had the strongest lobby in years working in Ottawa against the Preston arrangement, and that that fact in itself had been about sufficient to convince him that it was his duty to support the government.

I hear privately that Ned McDonald [sic] is making trouble for the Government over this agreement. Ned usually sneezes when any C.P.R. stuff is being handed around.

Yours faithfully,
J. W. Dafoe.

[Handwritten P.S.; Sifton Papers]

P.S. I have not been writing to you because I did not know whether you cared to be bothered with these little problems of editorial policy. I greatly value your judgment on these points that arise: your experience in the world of affairs is a very good complement to my experience in the world of journalism which is not quite the same thing. But I don't want to worry you. But Jack tells me he thinks you w[oul]d not object to my continuing to put up some of my problems to you.

J.W.D.

March 14th, 1925.

My dear Dafoe-

I have yours of the 11th.

I shall write you at length about the amendment to the consti-tution in a few days. I am giving it some attention.

The debate on the MacLean resolution was very satisfactory, excepting Lapointe seemed to go out of his way to try to find a method of differing from Vien, imagining a difference where none existed. I think that the whole thing, however, is in a very satisfactory position, and in the next two weeks I am going to draft an Act to amend the British North America Act and send it to King. He has promised to take it into serious consideration.

Re Shipping Subsidy: I have already written you my views about the action of the Council of Agriculture and the Progressives generally. I think you should administer a fatherly spanking to this crowd and tell them that if they are going to kick over the traces every time anybody tries to help them, their usefulness will very speedily be gone, and that fact will be recognized by their constituents. What they have to do is to get in and fight. Forke's attitude is entirely unsatisfactory, although I think that the lobby which is being put up by the C.P.R. and the Shipping interests is probably convincing them of the error of their way.

This is going to be a big fight and the Free Press should jump right in, hammer and tongs. It means tens of millions to the people of Canada and you have a chance to lead the fight. The papers down here are no good. They are all tied up with advertising interests and are afraid to open their mouths, except the Toronto Star which is speaking up pretty well.

I enclose you a copy of a letter which I have just received from Mr. King. It speaks for itself.

March 26th, 1925.

My dear Sifton:-

I had a long talk with Crerar yesterday. He has spent a month at Ottawa looking on and having numerous conversations with his friends in all parties. His view, briefly summarized, may be of interest to you.

He thinks the Conservative party is in the process of disintegration. Everything indicates, he says, that they realize that Mr. Meighen's leadership is hopeless and Meighen seems to be conscious of this himself.

This may, however, he thinks, have unforeseen results. The situation has possibilities of greater danger to the Government than would result from a thorough organization of the Conservative party. In the Maritime provinces a Maritime rights movement³⁷ may take the field, nominally replacing the Conservatives, but in reality directed by the Conservative tacticians. Such a movement would[,] he is told by Maritime Liberals, be very dangerous to the Government. He tells me that Kirk Cameron, whom perhaps you know, and who has a pretty good first-hand knowledge of Maritime conditions, tells him that a combination of this sort might just about exterminate the Liberal strength for the time being in the provinces by the sea. He thinks that perhaps the Government will be hard put to it to elect ten members. The Liberals are afraid they are going to lose the provincial election in New Brunswick and are also nervous about the Nova Scotia government.

In Quebec, Crerar says, there is to be an organized attempt to run independent Liberals pledged to support tariff increases; and the Tories are being asked in the Cape field to leave it to them. Marler is in this movement, if he is not the head of it. The support of the *Star* and *Gazette* is assured. There will be no lack of money and they could probably elect a small group, perhaps ten or twelve strong, which would be ready after the election to join an anti-King coalition providing Meighen were eliminated.

Crerar says the Liberals are not as hopeful about Ontario as they were two months ago. The rebellious "wets" have been placated by Ferguson's beer legislation; and the Tory temperance people who were angry about this legislation, are practically all farmers and are not likely to vote Liberal. In fact their resentment may give a new lease of life to the Progressives in some of the country constituencies. He says that some of the Progressive members are quite bucked up by promises of support from Tory temperance farmers.

He thinks that there is a probability that the situation in the next House will

³⁷ Discontent in the Maritimes in the 1920's was less dramatic but no less serious than on the prairies. The Maritime Rights movement was an expression of this discontent. In the 1925 election a number of Maritime members were returned as nominal Conservatives, but their chief objective was to press for redress of Maritime grievances over such matters as tariff and freight rates. In 1926 the King government appointed a Royal Commission (the Duncan Commission) to examine the problem and eventually most of the Commission's recommendations were implemented with the result that the Maritimes returned to the Liberal fold. See Graham, Arthur *Meighen*, 258-59, 304-06 and Neatby, *Mackenzie King*, 220-24.

be more confused than in the present House, with possibilities of an anti-King coalition made up of Maritime righters, Liberal protectionists from Quebec and the Tory remnant with Meighen dropped out.

He says King has some realization of the situation and looks to the West to repair his losses; he may make the mistake of thinking that he can carry the West on his own strength with his own candidates against the Progressives and the Conservatives, most of the latter no doubt masquerading as Independents. He thinks King will not get very far by these methods, with which view I agree.

If King is to be kept in power by the West it will only be by a Liberal-Progressive fusion of some sort, which could be, I think, brought about by judicious handling of the situation though not without difficulty. I am satisfied Crerar is willing to help in this direction. Crerar is, however, not nearly as strong personally in the West as he was, having been seriously damaged by the Home Bank affair, very unjustly, I think; but the fact remains. A combination of Crerar, Dunning and Brownlee would be the best the West could do; and I don't think it impossible to achieve this, though it will call for some deft handling. I think King is badly advised on Western conditions by his colleagues and by the Liberal party officials in the West with whom he consults. I know Dunning talks to him pretty plainly at times; but King is perhaps developing the weakness of all prime ministers - that of only wanting to hear what fits in with his preconceptions.

Crerar had very little to say about the Petersen contract, excepting to say that it had further alienated Montreal business support of the Government and that it had correspondingly strengthened King with the farmers. I had hoped he would talk to me about his interview with Beatty*; but he made only the briefest reference to it. I know, however, from another source, that Beatty told him a long and melancholy tale about the railway situation as he saw it. He represented the Government as camping on the trail of the C.P.R., and complained about the Petersen contract as just another evidence of its determination to destroy its earning power. Crerar tells me that James Dougall who is an official of the C.P.R. charged with looking after agricultural interests, told him that the C.P.R. paid its regular dividend last year at the expense of maintenance.

I hear privately that when Dunning goes to Ottawa, judge James Brown will step down from the Bench to become premier of the province.

Brown as a young man, gave, as you know, every indication of being a comer in politics; but whether he can take up the game again after sixteen years' seclusion on the Bench is, I should think, somewhat doubtful.

March 30, 1925.

Dear Dafoe:-

I have your letter of the 26th, which I have read with considerable interest. It gives me a lot of information which I did not possess. It is very difficult living in Toronto to get any information of a reliable character about the political situation.

There are signs that some people are very much alarmed as a result of having got the idea that I was going back into active politics. It is a bit amusing. However, they need not lose any sleep over it as I have no such intention at present.

Information came to me very lately that the action of the Council of Agriculture in passing a resolution against the Government steamship policy was in reality worked by the C.P.R. There is no question about this being the fact. My information is absolutely reliable. I think this is about the most scandalous thing I have ever known in Canadian politics. Of course you cannot attack them on the ground of their action being influenced by the C.P.R., because of course that is impossible to prove, but you would get them out into the open and give them a proper good drubbing for having betrayed the interest which they have been so sanctimoniously professing to champion for years past and the first time they have had an opportunity of doing anything they betrayed the whole country.

Everybody connected with the C.P.R. is openly on the warpath. They have apparently never been so much excited since the Grand Trunk Pacific Charter was passed.

I think you ought to take a fresh hold and fight the case all along the line just as hard as you know how. So far as the Free Press is concerned there can be no question where we must stand on a question of this kind and we should strike just as hard and just as often as possible.

I may be over at Ottawa shortly. If I am, I shall make it a point to see King and discuss matters along the line of the last paragraph in the second page in your letter.

April 3rd, 1925.

Dear Sir Clifford:

I note in your last letter to me that you may have an opportunity shortly to talk over the political situation with Mr. King. I am, therefore, going to put down some observations on political conditions in the West which you might turn over in your mind.

My idea of the political objective to be aimed at is to keep the Conservatives out for the next few years at any rate. If by any chance Mr. Meighen were to get into office with a substantial majority behind him he would probably smash this country trying to make it conform with his theories. Fortunately this is not very probable. Moreover, I don't think the Tories really expect to see Meighen return to power as the result of the next election. I heard the other day something of the hopes and plans of Bob Rogers' group. The feud between Rogers and Meighen is still on, though I believe their relations are formally more friendly than before. Rogers and his friends expect the next House to be a mixture of parties and groups and they hope that this will make possible the elimination of Meighen and the formation of some kind of an anti-Liberal coalition which will either take over power or be able to force another election in which they hope to be successful. The project is not altogether fanciful. Things might develop that way.

I should think it a safe prediction that there will be fewer straight supporters of Mr. King in the next parliament from the constituencies east of the lakes. The situation in the Maritime provinces is obviously bad and will probably get worse. No gains are possible in Quebec, and there may be losses in high tariff Liberals who might go into a combination such as that suggested above; and I am very skeptical about these reports of a great increase in Liberal strength in Ontario. It seems clear to me that if the Liberal

Government is to remain in power a very large measure of Western support will be necessary. I should hope that Mr. King and the party managers realize this. Are they, I wonder, coolly studying the situation, putting aside their wishes and hopes, and trying to see things as they really are? My experience of politicians is that they are peculiarly subject to pipe-dreams. I recall someone coming West from Ottawa just before the 1911 elections with the story that the government had checked up all its sources of information and was satisfied that it would lose no seats in Quebec; then consider poor Calder, who once had a reputation as a political expert with his estimate of an irreducible minimum of one hundred odd seats for Meighen at the last election.

One thing certain here in the West is that in very few constituencies, perhaps none, will there be a clear fight between Liberals and Conservatives. If the next election were to be a fight in the Western constituencies between King and Meighen, there would be no occasion for alarm. King would carry three-quarters of the seats; but there will be three candidates in every seat and in some four. As I see it, in the average constituency the chance of the Liberal being elected falls with every candidate who takes the field.

In every rural constituency there will be a third candidate, a Progressive or a Gingerite.³⁸ The division of the Progressive movement into right and left wings is progressive and will ultimately force a split; but except where the feud goes to the length of putting two candidates into the field, the vote will come together on election day. The Progressive vote, of course, will not be so large as in 1921 when it swept everything before it. But it will be large enough to bring to naught Liberal expectations of securing a large measure of support for the Government. (I write of things as they are; conditions might change if the Progressives go wrong on the question of ocean freight rates). My judgment - and it is at least disinterested and not altogether

³⁸The Ginger Group was composed of a handful of Progressive members, chiefly from the West but including Miss Agnes Macphail of Ontario, who were reluctant to see their party absorbed into the Liberal party. Instead they insisted on remaining independent and co-operating with other independents such as I. S. Woodsworth. Most of these radicals aided in the foundation of the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation party in the 1930's. See Morton, *Progressive Party*, 221.

uninformed - is that in the average rural seat, in a three-cornered fight, the chances favor the Progressive, and where this candidate cannot be elected the chances favor the Conservative. It is true that at the moment the Conservatives seem pretty dead; but there is some Conservative organization work going on in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and if the opportunity looked good, through the development of a fierce fight between the Liberals and Progressives, they might come back pretty strong, especially in those constituencies where they used to be the dominant political force. If Meighen picks up twenty seats in the prairie provinces the whole political future of Canada might be changed. He might do this quite easily under the conditions foreshadowed; he might get half of them right here in Manitoba. Take, for instance, the case of Brandon. Forke will run there; the Liberals are trying to get Norris to run; either Forke or Norris could be elected against the Conservatives; but if they run against one another, the Conservative candidate, if he is any good, will win easily. Would this not be your judgment too? This is equally true of Souris, Lisgar, Macdonald, Portage, Neepawa and Marquette. There [are] at least half a dozen constituencies in Saskatchewan where the same thing would happen.

There are no doubt a number of constituencies in Saskatchewan and Alberta where a Liberal will win in a three-cornered fight; I doubt whether there is a single rural seat in Manitoba, of which this could be said. I am inclined to say that if an election were held right now the Progressives and Gingerites between them would carry at least half the country seats with the Conservatives doing much better than the Liberals in the remainder. I have no doubt that this forecast would be laughed to scorn by various official advisers to the Government - by, for instance, Mr. Fisher, the organizer in Alberta, whom you no doubt recall as an active supporter of yours in the Elkhorn district. Fisher is tremendously energetic and his judgment is in inverse ratio to his energy. If Mr. King is allowing himself to be lulled by these stories of Progressive disintegration and the certainty of Liberal triumph he is preparing a disaster for himself.

The Progressive strength is certainly not going to disappear, certainly not before the next election; but there is a possibility that it can be transformed into an ally of the Liberals and ultimately into an element of the Liberal party. There is here a political problem of the first order. I don't see anybody studying it except perhaps Mr. Dunning.

One factor of great potential importance is that, with considerable exceptions, the Progressives, as distinct from the Gingerites, are in reality Liberals; and if some magician could only make the necessary shift for them they would be quite content to serve as a sort of Western wing; but the stream divides them and no one is able to throw a bridge over it.

It is easier to state the problem than to offer a solution. This I shall not try to do; but I am going to risk one or two observations. First, it will be difficult, probably impossible, to bring about a fusion this side of an election. If by formal treaty the Progressives were accepted by King as the Western wing of his party there would be loud outcries of "We are betrayed" and new candidates would take the field. Such an arrangement, though theoretically not only possible but desirable, cannot be worked for a number of reasons. One of the chief ones is that the Liberal organization throughout the West is mostly die-hard in sentiment and would not stand for it. They are dreaming of Progressive disintegration, the election of true blue grits and are smacking their lips over the prospect of certain revenges on Liberals whom they regard as renegades. Mr. King has spoken here in the West, as elsewhere, of the necessity of sinking differences and getting together. Unfortunately there is no machinery which can make his views operative. They remain merely pious aspirations. Mr. King made a speech of this character at Regina. The comment of one of the Saskatchewan Liberal papers, either the Regina Post or the Saskatoon Star, (perhaps the article appeared in both) was that Mr. King did not mean at all that the present Progressive members were to be taken into the Liberal party; he meant that the Progressive and Liberal electorate was to merge; the present Progressive members were to be kicked out of public life and Liberals were to replace them at Ottawa. This illustrates the mentality which will make a bitter fight between Progressives and Liberals inevitable. As the Progressive members do not intend to lie down, this attitude puts them up against the political necessity, as they see it, of making issues between them and the Government. They are bound to have something to quarrel about, since it will be their desire to appear before the electors as in opposition to the Government thereby appealing to that largely diffused "agin the Government" sentiment which is to be found in Western Canada. The result must be a bitter fight, which is bound to result first in gaining Meighen anywhere from twelve to twenty members that he could not elect in a straight fight

with the Liberals. It will also result in sending to Ottawa a considerable group of Progressive members, quite numerous enough perhaps to have the fate of the Government in their hands, who will be in no mood to co-operate with the government unless it is very clearly to their interest to do so.

The adoption of the alternative vote would help enormously in paving the way for future co-operation between the Progressives and the Liberals; but I have no expectation that the government will submit any such measure to parliament. If they should I think it quite possible that it would go through. I am told that the Conservative senators would hesitate about throwing it out. But it is more probable that Mr. King may have the experience of Mr. Drury in Ontario and of Mr. Lloyd George in England, of reflecting after the event upon his mistake in not providing for this electoral reform when he had the power. The transferable vote would keep Western Tories out of Parliament, not only in rural but in city seats. With it not half a dozen Tories would be elected in the three prairie provinces. More Liberals would be elected than under existing conditions, but they would still be in a decided minority compared with the Progressives. But the latter would be in the main well disposed towards the Liberals, because for one thing they would owe their election in many cases to the support of the Liberals on their second choice. If under these conditions there were forty Progressives in the next House and their support were necessary to keep the Tories out, it would be comparatively easy, I think, to bring about a fusion or merger which might establish Liberalism on a fairly substantial foundation.

April 24th, 1925.

My dear Dafoe-

I have yours of the 22nd.

I am glad to know that you are not in any immediate trouble with your health. The offer to send you away will hold good when the winter comes round, and I am very clearly of the opinion that you ought to take advantage of it. I have known two or three people who have been troubled as you are, who have been completely cured by a couple of months in Texas in the winter time.

There is a matter of extreme importance about which I have been going to write to you for some days. There appears to be a concerted effort being made to unload the Canadian Pacific on to the people of Canada. I do not think the Canadian Pacific has ever been as active in propaganda as it is now. Their intrigues and efforts to influence official opinion are in evidence everywhere. I think you know what my views are. I am determinedly opposed to this country being placed in the hands of a railway monopoly. If I had to have a monopoly I would rather have a Company running it than the Government. You can get some redress from a Company, but you can get none from a Government. Once the thing was got into definite shape we should have a huge monopoly in which the officials would organize themselves into unions and simply dictate the policy of the country.

I cannot conceive of a more absolute piece of lunacy than such a policy would constitute.

They have even got so far as to inveigle Sir Henry Thornton into saying something which has been twisted unfairly I think into an endorsement of the idea of amalgamation.

Now I want the Free Press to declare war on the scheme and fight it out. You cannot start too soon. I do not know how far the virus has penetrated, but the surface indications are very bad. The fact is that we have got a lot of half-baked, half educated busybodies in public life who simply cannot keep still and are continually propounding some Smart-Alex proposition, which they think will bring [sic] prosperity to the country. The fact is that we have at the present time the best railway service in the world without any exception whatever, and it is rapidly getting itself into a position when it will not only be self-supporting but will pay interest on a fair reasonable capitalization; thereafter within reasonable time it will probably pay back all the money that has been sunk in it. This is my deliberate opinion and I claim to know something about the subject, as I have studied the history of every trans-continental railway which crosses the American Continent. Our policy should be that these two railways must be kept separate at any cost whatever; that the country will have to pay the deficit in the meantime until the Canadian National catches up and that the schemers who are trying to bring about an amalgamation will have to have notice served on them publicly that no such proposition will be allowed to go through.

I need not suggest to you the arguments to be used, although from time to time within the next week or two as they occur to me I will write you a few notes suggesting lines of argument. Meantime you ought to get out an initial article in which you declare war on the proposition in the most uncompromising way.

I cannot say that I have got to the bottom of it or know exactly what the motives are that are behind the movement. It is perfectly clear that Beatty is frightened to death and has lost his nerve. He had a period during which he appeared to have a bad dose of swelled head. He is now realizing that he is unable to cope with the situation and apparently is in a state of fright.

April 29th, 1925.

My dear Sifton:-

Your letter re the question of the railway merger came to hand quite opportunely. I had on my desk, when it arrived, an article dealing with the question, written by a member of the staff, pretty much along the lines of your letter; and also a digest of the press comment on the question which has come to hand during the last few days. In addition to this material I have been reading the discussions in Parliament by McLean, Jacobs* and others.

The impression that I got from reading all this matter is that the Canadian Pacific is not at the present time supporting a movement for a merger by which that system will pass under the control of the Canadian people as a part of the National Railway system. Beyond doubt, the Canadian Pacific officials are in a "blue funk" over the increasingly dangerous competition which they are meeting from the Canadian National Railways. I have not had a conversation during the last three years with any highly placed Canadian Pacific official in which he has not sooner or later brought up the question of Canadian National competition and made complaint that the railway is being subjected to competition under conditions which will ultimately destroy its property. Personally they are all very bitter about it, feeling

no doubt that their futures are somewhat in jeopardy. But I have never noted on their part a willingness to admit that the solution will be the absorption of the Canadian Pacific by the Canadian National. They hope that one of two things will happen: either a merger the other way about under some such plan as that proposed by the late Lord Shaughnessy, or the turning over of the Canadian National Railway to a private corporation, in which no doubt it is their hope to have an interest, directly or indirectly.

As I have been interpreting the events of the last month, the Canadian Pacific and its friends in the press and elsewhere have seized upon this suggestion, put forth originally by W. F. McLean [sic], to make another attempt to secure consideration for the Shaughnessy plan or something very like it. The speech by Sam Jacobs in the Commons was, to me, very suggestive and I should say that the editorial in the *Border Cities Star*, which you sent me and to which my attention had already been drawn, is an obvious bit of placed propaganda. I note too that J. L. Payne has been making a speech in London, Ont., in favor of turning the Canadian National over to the Canadian Pacific Railway. I am inclined to think that Payne is on the Canadian Pacific pay-list. His activities on behalf of the railway could not easily be explained by any other theory.

I rather expect that there will now be a great deal of discussion upon this question of the possibility of a merger of the two roads. Public ownership people like McLean will seize the opportunity to advocate their hobby, while the Canadian Pacific Railway will muster all the strength they have in Parliament, in business circles and in the press, in an attempt to convert the public to the idea that the turning over of the Canadian National to the Canadian Pacific Railway is the only road by which the country can escape bankruptcy.

This drive by the Canadian Pacific Railway will, I should think, fail. I cannot believe that public opinion in Canada, particularly in Ontario and in the West, would tolerate for a moment the suggestion of a railway monopoly by a private corporation. We shall, therefore, see considerable discussion and agitation, with nothing resulting, for the next year or two, perhaps for the next five years. But once the Canadian Pacific Railway is convinced, by the failure of its efforts, that it cannot put over a merger in which it will be the

benefited party, it will swing all its influence behind the proposition that the Government should take the Canadian Pacific over. When that time comes the movement will be a very formidable one, since the public ownership advocates will be backed by all the influences which the Canadian Pacific Railway can bring to its support.

This seems to me from all that I can gather to be a pretty accurate diagnosis of the situation as it stands. It makes our position for the time being quite simple. We shall oppose the merger and declare in favor of keeping the two systems separate. But I foresee the possibility that the issue, in a few years' time, if the Canadian Pacific Railway throw their whole weight behind a pro-Government merger, may be one which it will be difficult to combat successfully.

I may be in a position by to-morrow to write a preliminary article. I shall be very glad to get, as you offer, suggestions from you as to arguments to adduce against the suggestion of a merger.

June 30th, 1925

My dear Sir Clifford:-

I enclose you memos. of a couple of interesting conversations I had about the government's freight rate legislation. I may say that indirectly some attempts were made to suggest to the Free Press that it might be wise for it to accept the government's legislation as a suitable compromise; but we could not see it that way. We were not prepared to take a position which would have been equivalent to an admission that we had been for the past year advocating something which the West had no right to receive. We were not concerned in the political performances of any of the parties; if the Progressives had not sense enough to know when fate dealt them some high cards it was no concern of ours. But I was concerned that the Free Press should not appear to be parties to a settlement which belied all that we had been claiming for the West, and we, therefore, put up a vigorous fight against the legislation. I do not think from what I hear, that we have done ourselves any damage in the country by doing this. I do not know just what the political consequences of this performance will be; but it has certainly

not strengthened either the Conservatives or the Government in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

I had a long talk with Charlie Dunning the other day. He is one of the few public men who take a realistic view of the situation. Most political leaders, I find, see only what they want to see and hear only what they want to hear. But Dunning is not like that. I found his view of the Western situation almost identical with my own. He realizes, as I do, that it is highly desirable that the Liberal and Progressive sentiment in the West should come together in order that Western influence may be properly exerted in the next Parliament. He recognizes as I do that it is impossible to bring these influences together behind candidates who offer themselves as supporters of the King Government. This is what King and his Western advisers refuse to see. They know that the bloom is off the Progressive movement to some extent, and they kid themselves by believing that if straight Liberal candidates are nominated in all the rural seats in Western Canada they can be elected. Dunning has no illusions on this point. He admits that one sure result of such policy would be the election of a considerable number of Conservatives in Western Canada as the result of three-cornered fights. He says that upon a minimum calculation the Conservatives could elect six members from Saskatchewan. Here in Manitoba they could, I think, get, in three-cornered fights, eight out of the sixteen seats. Give them a few seats in Alberta and it will work out to something like twenty seats for Meighen in the three prairie provinces. An additional twenty seats for Mr. Meighen in a district where he has no license [sic] to elect more than one or two might easily mean the ejection of King from the premiership and Meighen's ascension of office. As matters are there are bound to be three-cornered fights all over the West. I don't think there is a rural seat in Western Canada where a Progressive candidate will not be in the field, and in the great majority of constituencies they will poll more votes than the Liberal candidates.

Dunning did not seem to have any clear ideas as to what could be done about it. He seemed to think that perhaps a fusion could take place out of which would come some kind of a Western party calling itself Liberal but at the same time not too closely connected with the Dominion Government. He did not say how this was to be brought about beyond suggesting that a start might be made here in the provincial field in Manitoba by a fusion

between the provincial Progressives and the provincial Liberals, to be followed by a general election. He has talked this over with Bracken, Norris and some of the leaders of the die-hard Liberals here, and, according to his statement to me, found them somewhat sympathetically disposed to the idea. The particular purpose of his interview with me was to ask me to take this matter in hand and push it through. He seemed to think I could do this. I intimated to him, however, that I did not think the Free Press would care to take so directly active a part in politics as this would involve future liabilities and responsibilities which we might not care to carry. I see no reason in the world why the provincial Progressives and the provincial Liberals should not merge, with Norris and Jacob entering the government if they are willing to do so; but equally I do not see why this should involve a general election in Manitoba before the expiration of the present legislative term. It has still two years to run and I think the electorate would object to an appeal in an attempt to get a snap verdict. Nor do I see how this action here would clear up the Dominion situation, particularly if a Dominion election is imminent. It might complicate in place of simplifying matters. I suppose that Mr. King, in initiating his freight rate legislation and in throwing overboard the bill providing for the alternative vote, had given some thought to the possible consequences to himself and his party in Western Canada and that he is prepared to accept the consequences; but I confess I don't see what he is driving at or where he hopes to come out. Dunning told me positively that under existing conditions he would not dream of going to Ottawa. He said that he had been thrice offered a Dominion portfolio and that he expected pressure would again be brought to bear upon him. He said the Nova Scotia election would throw King in a panic and that he would turn to him in the expectation that somehow if he could get him into the Government he could ensure the election of the Western Liberal contingents at the next Dominion election.

You noted no doubt the report of the Senate proposing a working arrangement by which the two railways should be merged. I enclose you the text of the report in case you have not seen it. The movers of this action by the Senate were Senator David of Montreal, and Senator Beique, the latter being a C.P.R. director; and following the report, as you probably observed, C.P.R. stock made a gain of two to four points. This indicates to me pretty clearly the origin of the movement and the purpose it is hoped to further.

The C.P.R., I imagine, have given up hope of swallowing the Canadian National or of having it sold out to private owners having a community of interests with the Canadian Pacific Railway; and they propose by this means to get an indirect control of the Canadian National, thus checking the competition which has been so disastrous to them. The governing body of fifteen proposed in the resolution would be pro-C.P.R. by at least two-thirds of its membership, and the combined system would be administered to strengthen that part of the joint system which belongs to the C.P.R., looking perhaps to a future rupture in which the Government system would be left in a hopeless position. This at least is how it strikes me at first blush; though perhaps I am too suspicious. W. F. MacLean writes me that the Government was really behind this movement and that the adoption of the suggested scheme is going to be one of its cries in the coming election. I doubt this very much.

I should be glad to hear from you about this matter as it is one of the questions which I intend to discuss with Macklin, Jack and MacRae before I leave, with a view to deciding upon a policy.

Mr. MacRae returns on Thursday and I am turning over all the routine work of the editorial department to him. I am going into the hospital on that date for a slight operation and some treatment which I have been advised by my doctors to take in order that I may get the full benefit of the sea voyage³⁹; and I doubt whether I shall be able to do much more than discuss general questions of policy before I leave on the 24th.

Nov. 20th, 1925

Dear Sir Clifford:-

I have been very busy in the office since my return, trying to catch up with work that needs attention and seeing crowds of friends who are coming into see me; and so I have not been able to do much scouting around with a

³⁹ Dafoe was preparing for a trip to Australia where he participated in the meetings of the Imperial Press Conference. This meant that he was absent during much of the election campaign of 1925. His impressions of Australia, after publication in the *Free Press*, were published in a pamphlet, *Under Southern Skies*, (Winnipeg, 1925).

view to posting myself on the political situation. I have, however, talked with some persons who are more or less in touch with the situation.

Senator Haydon passed through the city on Monday night on his way to Regina. Following his arrival Dunning telephoned me asking me to go up. I, of course, in conformity with the arrangement which we reached, declined to go. I hear that with the exception of a telegram which Dunning received from King shortly after the election, he had had no communication with the Prime Minister until Senator Haydon's arrival; and that he was beginning rather to regret that he had made commitments to go to Ottawa upon his summons.

I am inclined to think Mr. King's stock is very low in Western Canada. He may still have a following among what are popularly called the Laurier-Liberals, but apart from that I believe there is a general feeling that he is not the right man for the present emergency. When, however, I asked them what is the alternative they confessed themselves stumped. From what I hear I think the Progressives, from Mr. Forke down, are pretty hostile to King, also to Motherwell who appears to have gone out of his way during the last campaign to abuse them. I enclose you a significant editorial from the current issue of the Grain Growers Guide, which, however, is not to be taken too seriously as an organ of Progressive opinion.

I had a visit yesterday from Mr. Bertrand, a French Canadian business man of this city. Burrows* knows Mr. Bertrand very well and thinks highly of him. He is a close friend of Bourassa's* and has been in communication with him since the election. He tells me that Bourassa is all for some kind of a combination which will keep Meighen out and is prepared to co-operate. Here again I find on the part of Bertrand and, I presume, on the part of Bourassa also, a belief that it is pretty difficult to carry through any such combination under Mr. King. I asked Bertrand what his suggestion was and he plumped at once for Dunning. He said Bourassa's idea was that if a lead in policy came from the West and the policy was in itself not unreasonable, that the East would accept it. Bertrand, however, admitted that the West could not take the initiative in replacing King with Dunning. If the East, the French-Canadians particularly, should indicate a willingness to accept a Western leader and issue an invitation in effect something, I said, might be done. I made it clear to Bertrand that, in my judgment, an attempt to swap

horses at this moment would probably be fatal. Bertrand has been in sympathy with the Progressives. He had an appointment with Mr. Forke for the end of this week and then goes East to see Bourassa. On his way he will spend a day at Fort William with his brother-in-law, Dr. Manion,* M.P. He seemed to think that Manion might conceivably be somewhat sympathetic to a movement to give Canada a stable government along moderate lines if King were eliminated. I think myself he is probably wrong about his. When Manion turned Conservative I think he burned his bridges. I should be very much surprised to see him resume connection with even a reorganized Liberal party.

Mr. Bertrand also told me that he was in touch with Mr. Beaubien, the Progressive M.P. for Provencher, whose name has been mentioned as a possible supporter of Meighen's. He said Beaubien admitted that he had been sounded out as to the possibilities of his seeing things in a new light. Bertrand seemed to think, however, that Beaubien would stick.

Nov. 21, 1925

My dear Sifton,

Hayden [sic] came in to see me this morning. I asked him for no confidences and he told me that he had at King's instructions put the whole matter of getting the westerners together and negotiating some sort of arrangement in Dunning's hands. He s[ai]d D[unning]. had taken on the job, so we may perhaps look for something to be done. Hayden asked if he sh[oul]d call on Forke & D [unning] said "no".

From what I hear the Progressives are pretty sore on the gov[ernmen]t - King & Motherwell especially, with also some feeling against Dunning in Saskatchewan. I enclose a page from the Yorkton Enterprise, one of the leading Progressive organs: its tone is not friendly. I have a letter from Forke today. In it he says:

"The premier must understand that if he expects Progressive support the Progressives will have to have some say as to what legislation will come before the house. Last session's tactics will avail him nothing under

present circumstances. Motherwell and McMurray h[a]v[e] always seemed anxious to widen the breach between Progressives & Liberals for what reason I know not. Personally I am more anxious for results than any other advantage that may be gained."

I judge the Progressives w[oul]d prefer to stand aloof and crack the whip. If they maintain that position the gov[ernmen]t cannot go on. But I doubt whether they will maintain it if Dunning is both fair & frank in his approach to them.

It seems to be a fact that Dunning wants Brownlee from Alberta; but in view of the mix up there he may not be available.

One of the leading Maritime Righters H. S. Congdon of Halifax was in to see me this morning. He told me of their woes & how mean & unsympathetic the Ontario attitude was, as had been evidenced even at the B[oar]d of Trade's convention held here this week. I asked him if he thought the Maritimes had done themselves any good by sending a bunch of hard-boiled Tories to Ottawa to take order[s] from Ontario. He s[ai]d he admitted this action was illogical; but contended that the members were not elected as Tories first but as Maritime Righters - they all knew this he s[ai]d. Perhaps if the gov[ernmen]t programme had something in it of real worth to the Maritimes these members might hesitate ab[ou]t joining Meighen in a want of confidence motion.

The more the situation is studied the more its strategic possibilities are revealed - given a master tactician. But where is he? Not I fear in the P.M.'s chair.

November 24th, 1925

My Dear Dafoe,-

I have your two letters of the 20th and 21st. They are the only definite information that I have received about the situation.

It looks as though Mr. Hayden [sic] was trying to carry out on his own account the plan which was suggested to him; but in trying to pick others['] brains he is apparently taking the shell and leaving the kernel. You will know what I mean.

Several men, including Mr. Massey,* have been to see me about the matter. I told Massey exactly what has happened, and that I was feeling rather hopeless.

There is no sign that the principal party has any apprehension of the policy suggested to me, but I think he regards the situation as one of cunning maneuvering, which of course may temporarily succeed, but has no future.

November 26th, 1925.

My dear Sifton:-

I enclose you a clipping from the Ottawa Journal which is getting to be about the most hysterical newspaper in Canada.

Dexter writes me that the stories about the so-called Toronto conferences originated with Robitaille, the Ottawa correspondent of La Patrie. Dexter thinks Cardin* is responsible for the "leak" but I doubt this. The reports in that case would have had some resemblance to the facts. They look like wild guesses to me.

People keep dropping in on me to volunteer their views, all of them down on poor King. I had been told that the official Liberals, the organization men - diehards to a man - were now against him too, loading the burden of their own follies upon him. I met one of them to-day and he certainly talked that way. He said that he canvassed a district in South Winnipeg and found everywhere that electors were down on King on general principles.

I had a letter to-day from one of the defeated Liberal candidates in Alberta whom I knew when he was a law student here. He says the only possible way to avert disaster is for the Western Liberals and Progressives to unite in a western party with their own leaders and policies. There are many signs that this idea is spreading; but it may not take effect until after the funeral.

Forke is coming to town on Wednesday, I hear. He may come in to see me. From what I hear, he hasn't the right slant on things - is more intent on making King eat humble pie than in considering how he can escape the pit which yawns for him as well as for King.

The West is against Meighen and his works; but if the Liberals and Progressives drift aimlessly into another campaign, fighting one another meanwhile, he will get half the seats in the three prairie provinces. Meanwhile I observe that there are recriminations in the Tory camp. No one seems very happy over the situation.

November 28, 1925.

My dear Dafoe:-

I have your letter of the 26th. The Ottawa journal's article will do more to scare the Opposition than anything else that could have transpired. I have no idea who is responsible for the leak, but of course it is no one that knows the facts or statements in the editorial would be correct instead of wide of the mark.

There have been some important developments at Ottawa within *the* last few days. It is not impossible that Mr. K[ing] may see his way to adopt the policy which is worthy of support and give sufficient guarantees that it will be carried out, therefore it is in the highest degree desirable that the Progressives should not in the meantime be allowed to drift away from the idea of supporting the Government. I think it would be well for you to see Forke and have a talk with him.

I cannot say much in a letter but you will understand from what I say that I think there is some hope of things going on satisfactorily and the main point will be for the Government to give [sic get?] a majority on the first vote.

November 28, 1925.

My dear Dafoe:-

You will remember that we discussed the question of Statutory guarantee of freight rates on the lines of the Crow's Nest Pass Act. We also discussed the question of the Transcontinental all-rail rate which was abrogated

apparently at the demand of the C.P.R. a short time after it was put in force.

I want you to get Symington at once to draw a short Act of Parliament which covers these two things. There is perhaps nobody in Canada except Lafleur who can draw these clauses except Symington. We want them as short as possible yet perfectly water-tight and effective. All I need to say is that there is a possible chance of them being adopted and you will see the need of prompt attention.

December 5th, 1925.

Dear Sifton: -

I enclose you three drafts of an amendment to the Railway act with an accompanying explanatory letter by Mr. Symington. I think the rate quoted is calculated on the mileage to Montreal; based on the mileage to Quebec, as it should be, it would be a little less, about 12 or 13 cents to Halifax. This would do the business I think. You would hear loud cheers from the West, Quebec city and district and the Mari-time provinces. The enclosed clippings show that the latter are waking up to the possibilities, One excellent feature is that Meighen has got to fight it. Is he not committed by a thousand declarations to the view that the Railway Commission must fix all rates and that parliament must not interfere? Now the Railway Commission has blessed these prohibitive rates to Quebec. The moment Meighen opposes the bill he gets into the most serious trouble in the Maritimes; the Conservative members from there will hardly dare to follow. I think there is room for a great stroke; but the government must execute it boldly, defiantly putting their justification upon high national grounds.

Had a long and frank conversation Thursday with Robt. Forke.

He is not keeping himself in constant touch with the Progressive members, though he has met the members from Manitoba.

The Saskatchewan Progressives met this week. He did not attend but he wrote them a letter urging them not to make any public statements that would limit their future liberty of action and in particular not to decide upon any course of action based upon a desire for revenge.

Asked as to whether there was a feeling of resentment against Dunning he said there was but he thought it might be overcome.

The newspaper report enclosed suggests considerable hostility.

There was much stronger feeling against King who was regarded as having been inveterately hostile to the Progressives while openly professing friendliness. (King, of course, would deny this.) I have seen a letter from him to Burrows lamenting the "tragic circumstances" that three cornered fights were forced by the local organization against his wishes.

Forke said he had no doubt King's idea was to meet parliament with no definite programme but expecting to be saved by support from the Progressives and independents - a mere extension of his tactics in the last parliament. This course, he said, would certainly be fatal.

He was in entire agreement with our view - that the government could only hope to survive if before parliament met an open arrangement had been made for a coalition of Liberals and Progressives, thus effecting a new combination, with a clearly defined programme.

I asked him whether the Progressives as a body would go into such an arrangement. He said that in theory the Alberta Progressives would not; but in fact they would. He did not think there would be trouble for them if some arrangement were made. He was more doubtful about one or two from Saskatchewan - especially Campbell of Mackenzie.

I said that it would involve Progressives going into the government. He agreed; also that the Progressives must in that case choose their own representatives. [He] Said he had no desire to go into the government; [he] could help the combination more by staying outside and approving of it. I here asked him straight if he thought the Progressives, failing him would pick Crerar. He said, "No," that Crerar had undoubtedly made enemies among the Progressives. He regretted this as he realized Crerar was the best equipped of them all for public office.

He quite accepts Dunning as the logical man to go in with a view to the early accession to the leadership. He has plainly no confidence in King as a politician and little regard for him as a man. He intimated, during the

conversation, that he had been waiting for some Liberal to see him but had not been waited upon. He thought it possible Dunning might approach him. Meanwhile he was saying nothing and sitting tight. He rather expected, however, that King would upset the cart.

I talked policy with him a bit and found him reasonable in mood but without any very clear ideas. [He] Said he realized that they could not hope for tariff reductions but there ought to be increases. I asked him if he did not think tariff increases in some direction - I mentioned only garden stuff - if balanced with reductions elsewhere might be possible. He didn't say "no" but his position was non-committal.

There are, of course, other currents of feeling among the Progressives. To illustrate I enclose a quotation from the Western Producer of Saskatchewan, which is a sort of Gingerite Tribune. Undoubtedly efforts will be made to jolly the Progressives into vindicating their "independence" by voting the government out. All the more reason this why King should not let things drift, relying blindly upon the hope that they will support him in preference to Meighen.

The Grain Growers Guide urges the Progressives to get together themselves and then to co-operate with the government. "If they are able to present a united front upon a common policy they will be in a position to have a voice in the policy of the administration. They can easily co-operate with the government without doing violence to their convictions since the Progressive policies are largely the pre-election pledges but post-election violations of the Liberals."

Very shortly after Forke went out, who should come in but Woodsworth accompanied by Irvine* who was Labor M.P. for Calgary East in the last House. We had an interesting conversation. Irvine was in favor of having King fired out on general principles. He said he was no good, that the Liberals would never get anywhere under him; but that if they got a new leader and went into opposition they might come back in a few years. He didn't think Meighen would last. He is very sore on King, charges him with direct responsibility for Davidson's candidature which beat him. Two years ago, he said, he was mainly responsible for Davidson's election to the Legislature as an independent with labor support against a machine party candidate, but in the Dominion election he joined up with the people; they had then united to fight for no other reason than to beat him. He said King

had insisted upon Davidson running though it was clear to everybody that this meant the election of the Tory.

Woodsworth was not in the same mood but he too was questioning whether it would not be a good thing to let the Tories in. The Liberals, he said, would then drop King, get a better leader and become a real factor. I argued this point out with them, saying that if Meighen came in now and dissolved on the sole issue of stability in government he would get such a majority that the Liberal and Progressive forces would be powerless for ten or fifteen years. Woodsworth agreed that this was not to be desired, but Irvine was quite insistent that it could not happen. I should say, judging from the conversation, that in the event of a Liberal-Progressive combination Woodsworth could be relied upon for one session at least.

The situation, therefore, is not too bad provided King does not pursue a policy of drift.

If disaster is to be avoided some things must be done before Parliament meets.

King must have a definite understanding with the Progressives, or as many of them as will come in. This must cover both the personnel of the government and the policy upon which the combination is to be formed. If Dunning is going in he must be set to work with large powers to make terms with the Progressives, with guarantees against King and the French ministers throwing him later when the time comes to implement his engagements. The danger is, of course, that neither the Progressives [n]or Dunning may care to take a chance upon assurances from these quarters as to policy and their future treatment. They may have a doubt as to going tiger-hunting with King and his inner advisers whoever they may be. But the only option for the Progressives is between taking a chance and pulling down the building upon themselves. Therefore I think they will take a chance on Dunning if he will take the risk of going in.

The Tribune has been very angry over Meighen's Hamilton speech⁴⁰ and has been sticking its spear into him quite savagely.

⁴⁰ On November 16, 1925 Arthur Meighen, in an attempt to erase the impression left by his "Ready, Aye, Ready", speech of 1922 announced in a speech in Hamilton that, in his view, in any future war an election should be held before Canadian troops were sent overseas. See Graham, Arthur Meighen, 355 ff. and Arthur Meighen, *Unrevised and Unrepented*, (Toronto, 1949), 193 ff.

Dec. 18th, 1925.

Dear Sir Clifford:-

In my letter to you yesterday I think I left out the newspaper clipping summarizing the views of Mr. M. N. Campbell. I herewith enclose it.

I had a long talk yesterday with Mr. Crerar who within the last week has had conversations with both Mr. Dunning and Mr. Stewart. He says that he thinks that Mr. Dunning is somewhat regretful that he has pretty much committed himself to entering the Dominion Government without making definite terms. Apparently he promised King to go in and a situation has developed which scarcely leaves him an option, and he is now beginning to feel that he would be in a much stronger position if his going into the Government were conditional upon being put in a position to make engagements which would ensure a solid Western party behind him. I don't, however, see that there is any difficulty in his recovering full freedom of action. It is obvious that the formal proposition to enter the government will not come to him unless the test vote in the House shows a majority for the Government. There will be no such favorable vote unless the Progressives at their meeting on January 5 decide to support the Government. In that event they will probably themselves be prepared to make a deal with the Government for further support in return for a definite programme, and Dunning by making his acceptance of a Cabinet position dependent upon the meeting of these demands, provided they are reasonable, could at one and the same time secure that position of power in the Government which will be necessary and make himself the leader in fact of both the Western Liberals and Progressives.

Crerar was not much impressed by Stewart's line of talk. Stewart showed himself opposed to the idea of a coalition with the Progressives. His plan is an extension of the tactics that have already been so disastrous; that is to say, his idea is to make a bid for the Progressive support by submitting a programme which they are supposed to favor, and then to trust to Providence to keep them in line. I suppose Stewart has a feeling, probably well founded, that in the event of a coalition taking place he would have to step out of the Government. There is a nice comfortable seat in the Senate awaiting him under those conditions, but I suppose he does not like the idea of having to retire from the Ministry and is disposed to take a chance on letting things develop without guidance.

However, it still seems to me that both the Government and the Progressives will be destroyed if they do not come together openly on some programme which can be defended to the people.

Crerar said that Dunning, while saying nothing specific on the question, left the impression upon his mind that he would like to see a change in the Western personnel of the Government. Crerar told him frankly that all three ought to go, Stewart, Motherwell and J. H. King.* Dunning said that there would be no trouble about Motherwell, but he did not seem so sure about the other two. He put the question straight to Crerar whether he could come in with the Government if satisfactory terms were offered to him. Crerar said that he would if the conditions were right, though this would involve inevitably his retirement from the Presidency of the United Grain Growers. The matter remained there. Crerar does not interpret Dunning's remark as an overture to him to get ready to go into Dominion politics, but simply as an inquiry as to his attitude in the event of certain developments.

Woodward may bring later information, in which case I shall write you after I have had a conversation with him.

I have been told within the past week by a man who had a talk with Bob Rogers, that Rogers said that he doubted whether any developments would be possible in Parliament which would involve an immediate dissolution. Most of the members, he said, were of the fixed belief that they had been elected for four years instead of only four weeks.

December 24, 1925.

My dear Dafoe,-

I have been receiving your various letters, and have read them with great interest. They are the only authentic information that I have received about the political situation.

There is nothing here to indicate that Mr. King is doing anything only waiting. The indications are that if he gets a vote of confidence

he will try to get on with about the same kind of a Government that he has had, and in that event his early destruction is positively certain. I trust he has something better in mind, but there is no indication of it. On the other hand there is no indication that the Conservatives expect to defeat him in the near future. I doubt if they could get their men to vote for anything that will lead to a dissolution.

It is a curious and discreditable state of affairs, and will probably result in some kind of a cataclysm which will clear the air; only this may not take place for some time.

I think your conduct of the editorial [page] of the Free Press is perfect. Your editorials are timely and are attracting a great deal of attention.

Dec. 24/25

My dear Sifton,

I wish you and yours all manner of happiness and good fortune for the holiday season and New Year.

Our association is now stretching into the years: it will soon be a quarter of a century. I sh[oul]d like to say how honored I have been by it and how deeply I appreciate your friendship and confidence.

I don't know what is going on behind the political screen. Charlie Stewart [was] here a week ago [and] s[ai]d he was sure nothing w[oul]d happen that w[oul]d upset the gov[ernmen]t but he did not have any clear idea of how they were going to be saved. Motherwell interviewed in the Free Press this morning says the same thing - cannot imagine Progressives and Independents voting against the gov[ernmen]t. They are babes in the wood trusting to Providence. They will be lucky if the robins do not cover them with beautiful flowers one of these days.

Our Canadian National articles appear to have set the heather on fire a bit. I have a letter from Geo. Graham revealing considerable perturbation.

I hope politics will keep quiet a bit in January for I shouldn't like to have to go east that month as I might feel it necessary to do if there sh[oul]d be a blow-up.

January 23rd, 1926.

My dear Dafoe:

I have just had an interview with Sir Henry Thornton. I took Winfield with me in case anything should arise in the discussion where he might be of assistance to me.

I put the case to Sir Henry very definitely. I said first that I understood it had been shown that the Railways could haul wheat under present conditions of wages and expense at the Crow's Nest rate, namely, 21c per 100 lbs. from Brandon to Fort William. Sir Henry said that he was not able to subscribe unreservedly to that statement. I said that of course was a matter for investigation, if it needed investigation.

I went on then to explain very briefly what the reasons for building the Transcontinental were and why it had been so extravagantly constructed, pointing out that the main reason for the standard of construction was to enable wheat to be carried cheaply. I referred to your articles demanding that a proportionate rate to the Crow's Nest Pass rate should be put into effect from Port Arthur or an equivalent point to Quebec and St. John. He interrupted me to quote the opinion of a member of the Montreal Board of Trade that a determining factor in the routing of grain was not the wheat rate but the shipping facilities. I said I did not accept that statement; that I had one way and another been familiar with the discussion of these matters by the Montreal shipping men for nearly forty years and I had never known one to tell the truth. Winfield interposed at this point and pretty well spiked the gun by pointing out that he knew to his personal knowledge that the grain going through American ports was deteriorated and the certificates did not carry the same conclusive determination of value as a certificate on grain that had gone through Canadian ports; that in consequence grain was sold under certificates from American ports for 3c and upwards per bushel less than on the grain which carried a Canadian certificate.

I intimated to Thornton that I was in the fight to stay. That I was not interested in any commercial scheme of my own with the object of making profits, and that I had considerable leisure to devote to what I considered the most important thing that can be done for the benefit of Canada at the present time.

I pointed out to him that if he succeeded in carrying the "carry-over" wheat to Canadian ports that he would be doing more for the unity of Canada than anything that had been done since the Canadian Pacific was built. He assented and generally assured me that he was in sympathy with my views. Winfield bluntly told him that the man who was making the argument was D. O. Wood, an official of the Canadian National at Montreal, and that his statements were to be looked upon with suspicion.

I am very much encouraged by the interview for two reasons. I incidentally mentioned to Thornton that he probably noticed that I had made an attack in the election campaign on the Montreal interests who were trying to loot and destroy the Canadian National system. It is a bit noticeable that the other day he took his courage in both his hands in a speech he made, I think it was in Montreal, and he practically defied them. I have no doubt that his speech was more or less founded on mine which he had evidently read carefully, from what he stated in our interview. This is all that is to be said about the interview.

My judgment is that you should go to this fight with renewed energy and make it impossible for the Government and the Progressives combined to do anything only insist on this policy being carried out. It might be that the margin of profit at the Crow's Nest rate is too small and that the rate Eastward from Port Arthur would have to be a shade higher. But I am not convinced of that yet.

Now I want you to do what I asked you once before to do. Get Symington and let us get definite information as to whether in fact it has been proved that the Railways can carry wheat at the Crow's Nest rate at a profit. I understand of course that the question is very complicated. It is undoubtedly a fact that when the crop is large the Railways make more than when the crop is small. They explain that by saying that they have to maintain pretty much the same equipment with a small crop as a large crop. Nevertheless if they make more money with a large crop than a small crop, it proves conclusively that the actual cost of hauling, leaving out fixed charges, certainly must be less than the earnings and the operation of each train of wheat must show profit.

I want you to go into this with Symington and let me have something as definite as you can. A point which just occurred to me and bearing on the general situation is this: -

The Railway Companies now are under the great disadvantage of having to concentrate their force, their locomotives, their cars in the North West to carry out the Wheat during a short season only. When navigation closes they are somewhat in the position of a newspaper staff. When the paper gets out, activities suddenly cease and there is nothing immediately to be done. Such a condition of affairs on the Railway involves keeping men on who are not earning anything and involves transferring cars and locomotives at a loss, and generally bring-ing about a readjustment of their transportation alignment, which cannot be done without incurring considerable expenditure. If they had say - thirty, thirty-five or forty million bushels of wheat to carry to St. John, the force would simply be transferred to the long haul East-ward. There would be no dislocation and so far from being a cause for additional expense, it would help to keep the staff going for the whole year. It would obviate the necessity for inconvenient and distressing dismissals, and generally it would assist in keeping up the tone and efficiency of the whole system.

This is all I have to say, except that I would like you to write an editorial putting the matter up to Sir Henry Thornton in a dignified and judicious way, as you are capable of doing. You might comment on his speech in which he refers to the various solutions of the Rail-way problem, which are propounded by various people of looking in one way or another to the destruction of the Canadian National Railway system, and say to him that if he could bring about the routing of the Canadian wheat (carry-over wheat) to Quebec and St. John, and its shipment through Canadian ports under Canadian certificates of inspection, he will be in a position that he will not need to answer any of his critics. His position will be forever and entirely secure in the estimation of the people of Canada.

I recognize the fact that a man may be easily deceived in inter-viewing another, but I am very much inclined to think that Thornton has got to a point where he would gladly engage in a fight with bare knuckles against the people who are trying to disintegrate the National system.

Let me know the result of your conference with Symington as soon as possible.

February 12th, 1926.

My dear Dafoe:

In the Free Press which arrived here yesterday, there is a leading editorial in which you discussed the Australian Treaty.⁴¹ I read it over carefully last night. Of course you are careful not to defend the Treaty as it stands, and you have left yourself free and entirely uncommitted. But I think I ought to write to you in regard to my views on the subject.

I have not been able to collect the statistics on the subject because that is more or less difficult for me not having the necessary blue books at hand. I am inclined to think that the government made a serious blunder in negotiating this Treaty. It appears to have been done largely for the benefit of the paper mills and the automobile manufacturers. Now both the paper mills and the automobile manufacturers are extremely prosperous. They are doing extremely well and making money in large quantities. There is no unemployment in these industries. The government appears to have made this Treaty with Australia to benefit these highly prosperous industries at the cost of interfering seriously with the home market in butter, cheese and mutton.

If you will take the trouble to read a speech by J. E. Armstrong of Lambton in the House of Commons yesterday, you will see that he makes certain and specific damaging statements, I know Armstrong rather well who was in the House when I was there. He is sort of a "single-track" chap, very much inflated with his own importance. Nevertheless, he has a certain amount of ability, and the probability is that he is perfectly familiar with the facts, and it is highly probable that his statements are correct.

Feb. 16th, 1926.

My dear Sir Clifford: -

I have your letter re the Australian treaty. As you observe, we were careful to keep the question an open one. It may be that the

⁴¹ The treaty referred to here was a reciprocal trade agreement negotiated with Australia in 1925, which, because it raised the tariff on some items as well as lowering it on others, placed the King government in an extremely awkward position with its low tariff supporters - including the *Manitoba Free Press*. See Neatby, *Mackenzie King*, 57-58.

Government, from political necessity, will have to denounce the treaty, and I see that Mr. Motherwell, in a statement he has issued, hints that this course may be followed if after a trial of six months or a year it is found to be adversely affecting the dairy interests.

In the discussion in Parliament, Mr. Sutherland, who moved the amendment, suggested that the treaty must go, but I don't think Mr. Meighen will take any such attitude. The friends of the treaty, - the people who jollied the Government into making it - are his friends; and I have no doubt that they have been assured that the Conservative position means no harm to the treaty, but that the party is just engaged in the useful occupation of picking up a few more farmer votes. The interests behind the treaty are extensive and are likely to grow. They will include pulp and paper companies, the motor companies, and British Columbia shipping interests generally. The Coast papers, I notice, show a disposition to defend the treaty on the ground that it has encouraged trade with Australia and has helped exports in salmon and timber as well as in paper.

It is clear to me, however, that if the dairy farmers should get the idea that it injures them the Government will have no option but to find some excuse for withdrawing from the treaty. They are too powerful for a Government, circumstanced as the present Government is, to resist. That they are predisposed to regard the treaty with hostility I know. Miss Hind, who has been in touch with Western dairy men a good deal during the last month, is very critical about the treaty. She is afraid it will discourage winter dairying which is just beginning to develop into a substantial industry. She says that Mr. Pallason, a Dane who has a string of creameries in Alberta, told her that it would have this effect. He estimated that Australian competition would mean a reduction of about two cents a pound in the price of winter butter.

I infer that you get Hansard. If so you doubtless read Sutherland's onslaught on the treaty which was more thoroughly documented than that of Armstrong, and also the replies of Robb and Motherwell, the latter including a statement by Ruddick, the dairy commissioner. The position of the Government and the dairy officials appears to be that butter being on an export basis, Australian butter coming to Canada instead of going to Great Britain will create additional openings in Great Britain for Canadian butter and that the general result will be beneficial to Canada.

This might be true for the greater part of the year, yet not true for the winter months.

Mr. Meighen's idea, which he set forth fully in a campaign speech which I have, is that Canada can put up the duties on agricultural produce and then give Australia a preference still leaving the lower duty protective in character, in return for which the Australians will continue the advantages which the treaty gives us. This is an idle dream. The Treaty is more unpopular in Australia than here. It was discussed in the Commonwealth parliament when I was in Australia last September and it was evident that there was a strong feeling that Canada had put something over on them. W. M. Hughes told members of our party that English interests had asked him to fight the treaty, and that he could have beaten it if they had come to him in time. I see in to-day's cables that the discussion at Ottawa has started a similar discussion in the Australian parliament. I imagine that if one country does not denounce the treaty the other will.

We do not plan to discuss the treaty on its merits at present; but we may make it the text for some observations on the futility of the Imperial preferential theory. All the British nations are keen to sell to the other nations; but when it comes to buying from them, why, that's a different story.

I have authentic information that the new Dominion ministers are to be Dunning, Euler and Massey, with Malcolm without portfolio. It seems to me that the Government's position is much stronger than it was, for which a certain measure of thanks is due to Mr. Meighen and his board of strategy. King wanted to take in Crerar as representing Manitoba; but the Saskatchewan and Alberta Progressives were hostile to the idea and he dropped it.

February 18th, 1926.

My dear Dafoe:

I have yours of the 16th instant regarding the Australian Treaty, which is quite comprehensive and satisfactory. There appears to be no doubt that the Treaty was a mistake.

Three very prominent Liberals from Toronto, of what I would call the Unionist wing, went to Ottawa the other day and saw Mr. King. They put the case before him very strongly on much the same lines as you and I did when we met him here.

The question of the woollen duties, upon investigation, looms up as very important. One of them told Mr. King that unless the woollen and Glass duties could be adjusted, he might as well wipe Ontario off the map as far as the Liberal party was concerned.

I am seeing Mr. Rowell at Ten o'clock on Saturday morning. King wants me to take a deputation over and put the case to him in the presence of Lapointe and Cardin, and possibly Dandurand.* I think I shall do this. If I do, it will be essential for you to be there.

I was amazed to learn from the deputation that Mr. King said that they had already put the Crows Nest rate on grain into effect to Quebec and St. John. I think this must be the result of the interview I had with Sir Henry Thornton. Curiously enough, they have made no public announcement of it, but from our standpoint, that is all the better as it can all be announced at once. Everybody would like to see Massey remain in the government, but there is great difficulty in getting him a Seat. If it is decided that I shall go to Ottawa, I shall telegraph you in advance so that you can be there. Your presence undoubtedly is essential in discussing the matter with the Progressives. I do not think there is a bit of difficulty about the situation if Mr. King has the necessary courage, and if he can find some kind of a Seat in the Senate or House for an Ontario Minister who will be satisfactory.

Feb. 19th, 1926.

Dear Sir Clifford:-

I should be glad to hear any views or news you have about the developing political situation. I keep fairly well in touch through various channels, but you have exceptional sources of information and I should be glad to have you post me on any developments that you may hear.

Apparently the job which was taken in hand a month or so ago to save the Government from immediate and disastrous overthrow has

been pretty well accomplished. So far as is possible under the circumstances the Government is to-day in a relatively good position. If it should be destroyed in the next few weeks it will be the victim of its own incapacity and stupidity, and not as the result of the combination of outside forces which could not be controlled.

From what I hear the Progressives, with virtually no exceptions, are becoming more and more converted to the idea that their political future depends upon their finding means to co-operate with the Liberals with a view to preventing an immediate election. I understand that emissaries of the Conservative managers, of whom Manning Doherty is the chief, are still laboring with the insurgent wing trying to make them believe that if they will assist in putting Mr. Meighen in power, a change of government would not involve either an election or the putting into effect of the Conservatives' campaign policies; but the tenor of the debate at Ottawa must have pretty thoroughly converted them to the view that this course would not be possible, -even though it were favorable, by Mr. Meighen, which I for one decline to believe.

I may say that I have been able to understand and to some extent sympathize with the insurgent Progressives. Like them I have only been able to bring myself to give the Government a hand by contemplating the probabilities of the Conservatives coming into power. I don't want to see them in Ottawa with a majority of fifty or sixty behind them because I am pretty sure that the result would be that the country would be handed over to the corporations. I doubt, in this event, whether Mr. Meighen would make any resistance; if he did he would be dealt with. It is the contemplation of the possibilities of Conservative ascendancy that has bestirred me to activity on behalf of the Government; and from my conversations with you I judge that you are in pretty much the same boat. I quite realize that the time may come, perhaps may not be very distant, when we may regret that we intervened and helped to save the Government from its fate.

I hear that Mr. King, in view of the obstruction practice [sic] by the Conservatives, is not going to reconstruct the Government by a single operation, but that the changes will be made one by one. After Mr. King takes his seat a new minister will be sworn in and a by-election called; and this procedure will continue. From what I hear the first step to be taken will probably be the swearing in of Mr. Dunning. He will contest either Maple Creek or Regina. A cabinet position has been offered to Mr. Euler.

I understand that he is willing to take it but he wants the portfolio of railways, which Mr. Dunning also wants. I have not heard that the matter has been adjusted; but I am told that Mr. Euler may be induced to take trade and commerce. Mr. Malcolm is going in as minister without portfolio. Mr. Massey is to be taken in later if and when a seat can be found for him. I think he is looking towards Alberta. Motherwell and Stewart stay for the time being. Mr. King wanted to make a proposition to Mr. Crerar to come in as the Minister from Manitoba; but the proposition was so unacceptable to the Saskatchewan and Alberta Progressives that the idea was dropped for the time being. I am told that the Progressives, or perhaps only some of them, gave consideration to the possibility of making recommendations to Mr. King as to a Liberal Cabinet Minister from Manitoba who would be acceptable. I understand that either Mr. Hudson or Mr. Symington would be agreeable to them; but I don't know that they have made representations to this effect to Mr. King. In any event nothing will come of this as neither of the parties would entertain the proposition. Crerar would, I think, go into the Government if an offer were made him.

I hear that Mr. Euler and Mr. Malcolm, as prospective cabinet ministers, are interesting themselves to a considerable degree in the Ontario situation; and that they both think that if another election is forced within a few months the Liberals can do much better in Ontario if in the interval it becomes apparent that the tariff has been stabilized. They report that many of the Ontario manufacturers are beginning to prosper in their business and are correspondingly less enthusiastic in their support of tariff increases. I hear that they are advising the Government to make Hugh Gronin [Hume Cronyn?] head of the tariff board.

As showing how one could get out of touch with things through being absent, I did not know until the case came before the Railway Commission this week that the railways had never put in a new tariff for flour and wheat in Western Canada, following the legislation passed at the last session, though instructed to do so at the time by the Railway Commission. You are familiar with the circumstances of the arrangement that was then made because I recall that I sent you memoranda covering conversations on this point with Symington and others. The understanding was specific that if the abolition of the westbound rates were accepted the discrimination against

northern points in Saskatchewan would be removed. It was on this basis that Symington used his influence to secure an acceptance of the settlement. It now appears that the railways have defied the statute and ignored the Railway Commission. The facts are outlined in a Despatch from Dexter appearing in the Free Press this morning. I shall have something to say about this on Monday.

8th April, 1926.

My dear Dafoe:

W. L. Griffith writes me that there has been a Debate in the House of Commons on Canadian status.

I have not seen it as I have not been reading "The Times" but I shall start tomorrow and get it. The other papers do not seem to print anything about Canada at all.

What I have in my mind now is this. The British Constitution, as you know, has developed by custom and precedents which, as recognised from time to time, assumed the force and form of law.

In Canada we start with the written constitution. The day after it went into effect, of course, it began to be modified by interpretation, custom and precedents until, within the last few years, it has been recognized by British Statesmen and British Governments that Canada had, with very slight exceptions, equal power to deal with her own affairs to that enjoyed by Great Britain.

The late decision of the Privy Council⁴², nulifying [sic] or seeking to nulify [sic] the solemn act of the Dominion Parliament abolishing appeals in criminal cases, makes a plain statement that whereas the constitution of Great Britain can develop by precedents, custom and practice, it is denied that such development can take place in Canada and this decision, if agreed to, nulifies [sic] the whole of the developments and growth of the last sixty years.

⁴² The case referred to here is *Rex v. Nadan*, 1926, in which the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council ruled as unconstitutional a Canadian attempt to abolish appeals to the judicial Committee in criminal cases. See Ollivier, *Problems*, 155 ff.

There is only one answer that can be given to that. It must be challenged and challenged definitely. I do not think that anything can be done except to introduce a Resolution into the Canadian Parliament dealing definitely with the subject. I am going to draw a Resolution this afternoon which I think might fill the bill.

As I have told you in this letter, I am very emphatically of the opinion that the Canadian Parliament should not be allowed to retire this session without a definite expression of opinion which will bring the matter up and settle it once and for all.

April 23, 1926.

Dear Dafoe:

I am going to wire you in the morning to go easy on the tariff. Of course the budget suits the west but it is nevertheless a piece of lunacy.

We shall now have ten years more war on the tariff and get nowhere.

King has defied our (my) advice in every essential particular. The chance for a United and Victorious Liberal party is gone. You have been right about him. Latterly I have distrusted him completely. Have never had any real confidence in his sense since that day at my house.

Lincoln said the union could not be half slave and half free. Canada cannot stand with the East and the West at each others throats.

I enclose a clipping which gives succinctly Hertzog's and Smuts' views on the constitutional status.

They don't seem to have heard of the Privy Council's late decision or if they have, to understand it. Highflown sentiments about constitutional equality which the courts will kick over on the application of any individual are rather childish.

We have to fight this straight away and to a finish.

13th July 1926

My dear Dafoe:

The more I think about the situation, the more I feel convinced that the only way to get any definite results out of this election is to get the Progressive party - which will undoubtedly control the situation after the election - to pledge themselves definitely in regard to certain things. If it is not definitely pledged, each man will have his own ideas and there will be nothing to force any decisive action.

My notion is therefore that you should induce the Progressives, and if possible, the Western Liberals, to pledge themselves to a platform which, amongst other things, would contain substantially the following:

"That the late decision of the judicial Committee of the Privy Council by which the said Court declared it had authority to recognize appeals in criminal cases in direct defiance of an Act of the Parliament of Canada, is an infringement of the constitutional rights of Canada and should be repudiated by the Canadian Parliament."

"That the Dominion of Canada should of right be and is *of* equal status with Great Britain in the management of its own affairs, and the Parliament *of* Canada and the Legislatures of the Provinces should, under the British Crown, possess the same rights in regard to the management of the affairs of Canada, domestic and foreign, as the Parliament of Great Britain possesses in regard to the affairs of Great Britain."

"That the action of the Governor-General of Canada in denying to the Prime Minister of Canada the same rights as His Majesty the King accords to the Prime Minister of Great Britain, is a violation *of* the constitutional rights of Canada, and an attempt to relegate Canada to the position of a Crown Colony, to which we declare as a party that we will not submit."

"The true position in regard to the matter as above recited should be set forth by a declaration by the House of Commons of Canada, to which the assent of the British Parliament should be requested, and if necessary by an amendment of the British North American Act.

"It is essential to the welfare of Western Canada that the long-standing dispute regarding railway rates should be definitely settled. We declare ourselves in favour of the restoration of what is known as the Crow's Nest rate from a point in the West to Eastern shipping points, and the putting into effect of the same mileage rate upon the Canadian National Railway to Quebec and St. John.

"We declare that we will not support any government which may be formed unless it shall definitely pledge itself to carry through the programme above recited, and as soon as possible after its formation, take the necessary steps to implement is pledge."

I cannot see any serious difficulty in the Progressives and Western Liberals committing themselves to this policy, although the Liberals may possibly not definitely subscribe to it. If, however, the Progressives issue a platform and definitely bind themselves to support any government who carries these measures into effect, I think we will, as the result of the election, find that we have accomplished something. As a matter of fact, I do not see how Dunning can object to these declarations. Of course, I presume there would be the usual shilly-shallying, and an attempt made to side-step; but you have it in your power to bring out the desired result if you take it up at once. - Make them do it.

All the signs point, since you left here, to Meighen having increasing difficulty in forming his Cabinet. Undoubtedly, the delay is weakening his party very much. On the other hand, there does not seem to be as yet anything intelligent in the way of an organization or an attempt to make an organization in the Province of Ontario on the part of the Liberals.

14th July 1926.

My dear Dafoe:

After mature consideration I have decided not to give the interview with respect to the issue of Governor General warrants. I do not think that the introduction of the personal element into these things is wise. Nevertheless,

the action of the government ought to be challenged, and I think it should be done editorially.

I enclose you [a] copy of the Statute which relates to the Governor General warrants. You will see that the provision is one which is intended to apply to an emergency. By no possible rule of construction can it be held that the House of Commons can be dissolved while it is considering the Supply Bill, and that the public business can be carried on by the issue of Governor General warrants. This is a denial of the fundamental and inherent rights of the people's representatives to control the expenditure of public money. It does not help the matter in the least that it may have been done before. The violation of the law by one person does not excuse the violation by another. I doubt, however, that there is any precedent for this particular case. Remember that the House of Commons was in session considering the Supply Bill. The Governor General summarily dissolved the House. There has been no Supply Bill passed. He now proceeds to govern the country and expend public money for the purposes thereof by the issue of his own warrants. I think such an act is a misdemeanor. It approaches high treason, and if it is done, both Meighen and the Governor General ought to be impeached.

I think you should take this stand flatly and without qualification, and do it at once.

Sept. 27. 1926

My dear Sir Clifford,

Welcome back to Canada.⁴³ We've had a bit of a scrap while you were away & I'd like to write you something about it - it had some very interesting aspects - but I haven't [sic] time at the moment, I am writing this letter about a particular matter upon wh[ich] I sh[oul]d welcome your opinion.

This is the matter of the Imperial Conference. For a number of reasons which I need not enlarge upon, I do not think it is desirable

⁴³ Sir Clifford Sifton's absence in England explains the lack of letters between Dafoe and Sifton on the constitutional question in the summer of 1926. On Dafoe's views in the controversy see Cook, *Dafoe*, 146-70.

or practicable that I should be in attendance. We have indirectly done King a great service because our fight in the West was more against Meighen and his policies than for King; and it is I think highly necessary that we sh[oul]d do nothing now to strengthen any impres-sion that may have been created by our fight that the Free Press has b[ee]n turned into a government organ. For me to travel to London in King's entourage & there be thrown into close contact with him & his associates - as I sh[oul]d inevitably be thrown - w[oul]d have precisely that effect. This is I major reason why I must not go: but there are other personal ones - among them a marked physical disinclination to make the trip.

But the importance of the Conference remains. Shall we content ourselves with the stock Canadian Press report? Shall we take a special service from the Toronto Star? They are planning to send Wayling over & have asked us to go in with them. This was some months ago but I understand they still intend to send him. If they were taking a special service from their resident correspondent in London, Sommerville, I sh[oul]d be inclined to think it w[oul]d be alright [sic], but a service from Wayling will be highly colored pro-King stuff wh[ich] we do not want.

I have been rather inclined to send McRae [sic]. A trip to England will be good for him - and for us - in many ways: & he can give us a brief but adequate special service covering the conference. We have been canvassing the matter here but havnt [sic] come to any conclusion. Jack is rather critical of the proposition. He thinks the main reason why I sh[oul]d not go as noted above applies, though not to the same extent, to McRae's [sic] presence in London. Further I judge that Jack thinks that I am slightly "bughouse" on this question of status: that if McRae [sic] goes to London he will get similarly infected, and that two cranks on this subject on the editorial staff at the same time will overload it.

As this is a question in wh[ich] you are very specially interested I sh[oul]d like your views as to the wisdom of having the assistant editor-in-chief of the Free Press in London at the time of the Imperial Conference for the purpose of sending us a special service and at the same time informing himself upon all aspects of conference activities, as part of his training for his job.

McRae [sic] c[oul]d sail from Montreal on Oct. 15 wh[ich] w[oul]d bring him to London two or three days after the opening of the Conference. There is therefore very little time to make preparations and I sh[oul]d like to hear from you at the earliest convenient moment.

Oct. 26, 1926.

Dear Sir Clifford:-

I intended to write you upon my return from Ottawa; but I ran into a lot of work and have been too busy to attend properly to my correspondence.

I attach a clipping from the Western Producer of Saskatoon, which, I think, pretty well sums up the political situation in Saskatchewan. This was the matter about which I intended particularly to write you. Dunning spoke to me about this at Ottawa. He said that he did not understand what was going on in Saskatchewan, but that obviously there was some sort of combination being formed against him. He said that his personal relations with Gardiner* were quite satisfactory; that he had had all the support he could expect from the Leader and its allied newspapers, which are controlled by influences close to Gardiner; and that he had not run across any signs of hostility in the official organization. Nevertheless, his friends in Saskatchewan kept advising him that a propaganda was being carried on against him throughout the Province. Everything that I hear suggests that Gardiner is really carrying on a knifing campaign against Dunning, both at Ottawa and in Regina. I don't think the statement in the Western Producer that Dunning led the opposition to Gardiner's selection as premier is correct. Everybody knew that Dunning favored Hamilton; but he took no part in the proceedings which led up to the selection of his successor. Gardiner, apparently, however, has developed a jealous and hostile attitude towards Dunning and there is some reason to believe that he is encouraged in this attitude by King, who is apparently also jealous of his new lieutenant.

Dunning was rather careful in what he said to me; but he did say that in Saskatchewan the organization, in place of being the agent of the party, was

its master; and that it was the organization which had made Gardiner premier instead of Hamilton. He said he did not know whether Gardiner had induced the organization to do this, or whether the organization had decided to have its own man on the job and had picked Gardiner. He said he thought it a little peculiar that Gardiner after acceding to the premiership had retained direct control of the organization, which was something that no previous premier of Saskatchewan had done. Gardiner, so I heard at Ottawa, has an understanding with King that he is to enter the Dominion Government at will, Motherwell making way for him. My advice to Dunning was that he should welcome the transfer of Mr. Gardiner to Ottawa. He will not be able, as a Dominion minister, to control the provincial machinery which is powerful because it is based upon the expenditure of provincial moneys; and his standing in the House, in contrast with Dunning's, will depend upon his ability, which, though considerable, is much less, I think, than that of Mr. Dunning.

I have no doubt that in some obscure way the struggle between the Bell and Millicke [sic]⁴⁴ factions for the control of the Liberal string of newspapers in Saskatchewan has had a good deal to do with the carrying on of this feud. I have no doubt in my own mind that it was Gardiner who induced the Mellickes to break with Bell and put him out of the control of these newspapers. Bell is moving heaven and earth to get control of a majority of the stock, and I am inclined to think that Gardiner is having some trouble in inducing the Mellickes to resist the handsome offers which are being made to them for their stock by parties who are suspected of being friendly to Bell. Dunning is supposed to be backing Bell in this movement. So far as I know, this is not the case; but Gardiner undoubtedly suspects him of using his influence in behalf of Bell.

As the article in the *Western Producer* shows, the facts are becoming known; and the results are bound to be highly injurious to the Liberal party in Saskatchewan. Of course, the Conservatives can do nothing with the Liberals there; but I think it highly probable that a merger of wheat pool and Farmer influences will take the field before the next provincial election; and they may make it very hot for Mr. Gardiner, or his successor, if in the interval he has gone to Ottawa.

⁴⁴ Two financial groups which were apparently attempting to gain control over newspapers in Saskatchewan.

Upon my return to Winnipeg I found a letter from Dr. Skelton, acknowledging a letter from me asking him to do what he could for MacRae. In his letter, dated Ottawa, October 8, he says: "Under the conditions of the past three weeks, it has been out of the question for the ministers to make any adequate preparation for the Conference. It was considered that it was out of the question to seek a further postponement and they will have to do the best they can to digest the agenda on the way over, weather permitting. I am rather doubtful, in view of the heterogeneous character of the representation, whether anything very definite one way or another will be done; but there will be some interesting proposals put forward and I would have liked very much if you had been at hand to discuss them while they were in the shaping. I shall be very glad indeed to meet MacRae. I note he will be a week late, but doubtless the Empire will not have collapsed in that first week."

Nov. 1, 1926

Dear Sir Clifford:-

Simultaneously with the receipt of your letter of October 28 I received a cipher telegram from Mr. MacRae to this effect:-

"South Africa's move for bold declaration for equality not likely to get through. Thought too drastic. King's plan is to get three or four specific matters cleared up: position governor-general, shipping, control of nationals, direct communication between governments. Locarno pact not likely to be ratified."

This is pretty much what I expected. King can be counted upon not to give anything away, as you put it; but I have had no expectation that he would declare himself openly in sympathy with the South African position, with which he is probably privately in agreement. His reasons for his cautious course are no doubt political, and I have no doubt Lapointe is in agreement with him for the reasons which we talked over when I saw you in Toronto. The Canadian delegation can be relied upon, I think, to make some advance upon the present position along the lines suggested in MacRae's despatch, plus, I hope, some definite declaration against the subordination of Canada to the Colonial Validity act, and a practical re-affirmation of Canada's

diplomatic independence by a refusal to ratify the Locarno Pact⁴⁵; but this is probably as far as either Mr. King or Mr. Lapointe cares to go at this time. In this they may be politically discreet, though my own judgment is that if they were to clear up the situation once for all the consequence to them in a political way would be wholly beneficial.

The Pacific Cable settlement is apparently quite satisfactory. I have a telegram from Murphy, in which he declares his satisfaction with it. If Waying's despatch is accurate, the Canadians had to do a bit of fighting to get this settlement. On questions of this character I think they can be relied upon absolutely; but there is an undoubted disinclination to declare for sovereign powers for the Canadian parliament in relation to all Canadian affairs.

Professor Wrong's suspicion, as set forth in the postscript to your letter, is undoubtedly well based. The British Foreign Office has been the lion in the path ever since 1919 and any trouble we have got into at Washington, or may get into, is, I should be inclined to think, due to instigation from that quarter. I enclose you a clipping from the Minneapolis journal, which is very interesting in this connection. This is undoubtedly an inspired despatch. Steele is the London correspondent of the Chicago Tribune. As to MacRae's despatches, I am not disappointed in them thus far. I told him we did not want daily despatches dealing with routine matters. For these we can safely rely upon the Canadian Press. As each despatch costs us from \$25 to \$50 we do not want to be duplicating anything which the Canadian Press handles. My instructions were to send us about two cables a week, keeping us posted on developments in connection with the constitutional issues. His second despatch, which was published on Saturday, copy of which is attached, was fairly enlightening and the private cable today shows that he is establishing connections which will enable him to keep us informed as to what is going on. From my own experience three years ago I know that this discussion which is now started with the creation of a special

⁴⁵ The Locarno agreements, signed in 1925, were designed to guarantee the permanence of Germany's western boundaries and, having thus quieted France's fears, to pave the way for German entry into the League of Nations. Quite typically its interest from the Canadian standpoint was that it recognized the autonomous status of the Dominions by specifically excluding them from its responsibilities unless they signed independently.

committee, will drag along for ten days or two weeks when matters will suddenly come to a head, probably by an attempt by the British government to secure the adoption of some formula. I am cabling MacRae instructions to see that the South African position is fully stated in his cables and advising him to use the cable as freely as his judgment suggests, if there are constitutional developments of any kind. I think it probable that we shall get a quite satisfactory service from him.

4th November 1926.

My dear Dafoe:

I was very much interested in receiving your letter of the 26th setting out the position of affairs in relation to the internal organization of the Liberal party in Saskatchewan. This, of course, is information that I have no means of getting except through you as I practically never meet anybody from that district in such a way as to hear what is going on.

I notice that since your letter was written Mr. Bell and some associates have acquired an interest in the Calgary Albertan, which would appear to indicate that he is transferring his activities to another sphere.

I am sending you a wire with regard to the Imperial Conference. In some ways King is not doing badly, but he and Lapointe are likely to underrate the capacity of the men they are dealing with, and there is considerable possibility that they will come away feeling they have achieved something, while, as a matter of fact, they will find in two or three years that they have not. However, we can do nothing except stiffen them up as much as possible, and that is the object of my wire to you today.

Nov. 20, 1926

Dear Sir Clifford:-

I am enclosing you a letter from Mr. MacRae, which you will find interesting; also a copy of the draft declaration on equality which was submitted to the Imperial Conference by General Hertzog.

I suppose the text of the alternative declaration which was drawn up by the Conference will be available Monday, and I am waiting its publication with some interest. Apparently, judging by the information contained in Mr. MacRae's cable which I sent on to you, it will be reasonably satisfactory.

It is evident from the known circumstances and also from the tenor of Mr. MacRae's letter that Mr. King, if he could have had his way, would have permitted the matter to drift. We shall owe the declaration, which will probably to a very large extent meet our views, chiefly to South Africa and probably Ireland. It is also possible that the representatives of the British Government played a considerable part. There is this to be said for them, that they are always prepared to abandon a position when they think the time has come when they can no longer safely hold it. I should not be surprised to find that perhaps Sir Cecil Hurst of the Foreign Office took the initiative in dealing with the situation. This was the case three years ago in connection with the treaty-making declaration. It was he who came before the Committee of Prime Ministers and said that a declaration of this character had been made inevitable by the developments of the preceding two or three years.

This growth in liberality on the part of Sir Cecil is very interesting to me as he is the gentleman with whom your brother Arthur⁴⁶ fought a homeric struggle at Paris in 1919, over the question of Canada's right to be represented in the Labor Convention as a nation and not as a colony. You no doubt recall the correspondence between Arthur and Sir Cecil, copy of which was sent to you at the time.

You might return MacRae's letter⁴⁷ to me after reading it. I shall put these letters among my Conference papers and sometime they may be of value. The Hertzog resolution is a copy and need not be returned.

Yours faithfully,
J. W. Dafoe

⁴⁶ Arthur Sifton, Sir Clifford's brother, had been a member of the Canadian delegation to the Peace Conference in 1919 and had played a leading part in winning for Canada the right to independent membership in the International Labour Organization.

⁴⁷ For MacRae's letters see Ramsay Cook, "A Canadian Account of the Imperial Conference of 1926," *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies*, III, 1, (March, 1965), 50-63.

P.S. - Of course in my comments I shall not try to pluck any laurels from W.L.M.K[ing]'s brow. I have just seen a cable from British United Press in wh[ich] it is explained that K[ing]. by his masterly statesmanship did the whole thing. Perhaps this will go down in history, wh[ich] as Henry Ford once observed is mostly "bunk."

November 23, 1926.

My dear Dafoe:-

I received your various letters and telegrams and read them with great interest. I shall send back MacRae's statement to you. I found it very interesting.

I did not telegraph you in regard to the Imperial Conference deliverance⁴⁸ because it did not occur to me that there was any possibility that you should say anything that I would not agree with. Still, I think I should write you and say that the general impression that the reading of the document has created in my mind is that the declaration of the equality of status is perfectly satisfactory. The appointment of the Committee to make an expert examination of the statutes is of course necessary. Time and care are requisite to find out just what amendments are necessary.

The statement with regard to shipping I regard as entirely unsatisfactory, and evidence that the British crowd has put it over the Colonials completely and that they are determined to maintain the supremacy of the Merchant Shipping Act.

The provisions regarding the signing of Treaties are very full and very satisfactory.

The provision regarding the status for the Governor General is also perfectly satisfactory.

⁴⁸ The heart of the Balfour Declaration as it was accepted by the Imperial Conference of 1926 read, "They are autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status in no way subordinate to one another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." See Keith, *Speeches and Documents*, 161-70.

The statement with respect to foreign policy I regard as vague, unsatisfactory and in some respects unintelligible, but they [sic] clearly show that the Foreign office has got the best of the Dominion delegates and we are still involved in an intricate maze. The whole thing could have been stated intelligently and properly in half a dozen lines. It was quite evident that Balfour,* who is a Past Master at this business and a master of dialectical subtleties, has got his own way in regard to this particular matter.

I also think that the statement regarding the Locarno Treaty comes dangerously close to committing the Dominions to participation at any cost. This must be resisted.

On the whole, there has been a very distinct advance and we have much to be thankful for, though, as I expected, we have no particular reason to thank King, whose qualities become less and less admirable as they are more closely exposed.

Nov. 29, 1926

Dear Sir Clifford:-

I was glad to get your letter and to find that your views on the constitutional declaration were in fairly close correspondence with my own.

The declaration suits me very well. I don't worry much about the qualifications that are to be found here and there throughout the report; there are quite a few of them and they are all deftly worded, particularly the remark that "principles of equality and similarity appropriate to the status do not universally extend to the function."

Then there is the reservation that the government of each Dominion can advise the Crown in all matters relating to its own affairs "apart from the provisions embodied in the constitution or in specific statutes, expressly providing for reservations." The exception is technically somewhat extensive.

The memorandum about the conduct of foreign policy is disjointed and far from intelligible. It looks like the mangled remnant of what in its original form

was probably an excellent specimen of a Balfourian rigmarole.

Then there are the references of "points in connection with the operation of Dominion legislation which require clarification;" to a special joint committee to be appointed. The terms of the document, I think, support your view that Great Britain will try to get from this committee a recommendation that the British Parliament continue to make shipping laws for the Empire; and they may also try to have the Colonial Validity act continued with respect to certain matters.

As I said, none of these things worry [sic] me very much because the definition of equality is so precise and satisfactory that in the hands of any Dominion government it is a lever with which they can force any door. In any future controversy between the Canadian and the British governments as to the rights of the former, the British government would not have a leg to stand on if it relied upon these anomalies - frankly admitted to be anomalies - to limit the status of equality which is so completely recognized in the declaration.

I think the further extension of our national powers becomes, in fact, a domestic political question. It will, I should say, be necessary for those who want Canada to take advantage of the opening given her to do a little missionary work to keep the government up to the mark. The inclination of Mr. King, I think will be to bask in the glory of the 1926 achievement and do nothing for, let us say, the life of this parliament. It is quite evident that if King had had his way at London nothing would have come out of the conference except perhaps the modernization of the Governor-General's office, with one or two other minor adjustments. We undoubtedly owe the declaration to General Hertzog, and the Free Press has said so, in effect, in an editorial which, no doubt, you have noted.

Of course, the developments at London are quite a feather in our cap. A friend of mine overheard a conversation the other day between two well known Conservative lawyers here who have been in the habit, as I know, of abusing the Free Press for its supposed designs against the British Empire; one of them said to the other, "Well, it looks as though the old Free Press was about right after all." To which remark the other lawyer gave his assent. The Tribune editorials have been rather amusing, mostly to the effect that there never was any occasion for the Free Press clamor, because, as this

Conference makes clear, there never was any controversy about any of the points in question. This is really rather good.

The best text of the declaration that I have found appeared in the Montreal Gazette. Essential parts of the declaration are missing in the New York Times special cable, and also, I think, in the Toronto Star's version, though I am not quite certain as to this.

I do not know what MacRae's movements are but I imagine he will not sail from England until about the 10th of December. Would you like him to stop at Toronto on his way West and make a personal report to you? If you would I think I can get a cable to him before he leaves the other side.

15th December, 1926.

My dear Dafoe:

I have just received your letter of the 29th November which I shall read with great interest. Also the memorandum from MacRae which I shall take home and peruse at my leisure.

I shall be glad to have MacRae call on me on his return. He will no doubt have something of interest to tell me.

I was reading an editorial in the Free Press last night 'on the question of Constitutional Amendments.

If you will pardon my saying so, I think while your conclusion is sound, you minimize the position of the Provinces in regard to Constitutional Amendments. In framing any "modus operandi" for making Constitutional Amendments, the position of the Provinces will have to be seriously and carefully considered and it is not by any means free from difficulty.

My view regarding the Ontario Election was exactly the same as yours. I expected Ferguson to be returned, but I had no idea that the majority would be as large as it is, especially in view of the fact that there is no doubt whatever that the people of Ontario generally have no confidence in

Ferguson personally. My opinion is that the question of Prohibition is settled in Ontario for the next thirty years.

Coming back to your letter on the Constitutional question. There is no doubt at all that the substantial results are largely due to General Hertzog.

Do you remember sending me MacRae's address and saying that I might possibly think well to send a telegram. I sent the telegram and curiously enough the Star office here in Toronto has news to the effect that a telegram came at a certain juncture when everything had been hanging back until it came, so far as Canada was concerned, but that thereafter it moved with precision and rapidity. Your diagnosis of the situation was therefore very accurate.

Enclosed I send you an editorial from an American paper which summarizes the reduction in expenditures which the American Government has made in late years. It is very illuminating and may furnish you some suggestions.

Dec. 16, 1926

Dear Sir Clifford:-

I enclose you a part of a recent letter to me from our Ottawa correspondent, Mr. Dexter, which I think you will find interesting. The facts therein set forth correspond very closely with my own information.

I had a conversation a week ago with the manager of the Regina Leader, and in it he said things which confirmed the earlier information I had about which I wrote you: that there is a King-Gardiner-Motherwell combination designed to put Dunning in his place, as they would doubtless express it.

I should not be in the least surprised if King and Gardiner, between them, should succeed in consolidating the Western Progressives into virtually an opposition party within the next five years, in which case much of the work which we have done here in the last year would be destroyed. It is pretty apparent to me that on many grounds we shall have to take a very stiff independent line in the Free Press if the interests of the West are not to be

systematically ignored for the furtherance of what are mistakenly regarded at Ottawa as general party interests.

The remark credited to Mr. King by Mr. MacRae in one of his recent letters, that he expected five years of peace, is apt, I should think, to be belied by the events of the next two or three years.

I have checked over very carefully the constitutional declaration by the Imperial Conference and must say I am very well satisfied with it. I find no jokers in the declaratory sections of the document, which are the important part of it; though it is quite evident from the other sections that there is an expectation or desire on the part of the British Government that the Dominions will not be too active in taking over on their own behalf functions which at present adhere to the London authorities.

The declaration is going to have some interesting- bearings upon domestic politics. For one thing, it is bound to force consideration of the question of how we are to amend our constitution. I should not be surprised to see the Liberal government, at the instance of Mr. Lapointe and our Quebec friends, try to tie this country up to procedure which would make it impossible for anything whatever ever to be done in amending the constitution; nor am I sure that the Conservatives could be counted upon to resist it. There may be developments of a disturbing character along this line during the present session of Parliament.

Dec. 18, 1926

My dear Sir Clifford:-

I have your letter of December 16. You will notice a further article in the Free Press this morning on the question of how to amend the constitution." I think perhaps I should write you briefly what is in my mind, because the earlier article and to-day's article may give you a wrong idea of what I am trying to do.

⁴⁹ For a fuller statement of Dafoe's views on constitutional amendment see his article "Revising the Constitution," *Queen's Quarterly*, XXXVII, (Winter 1930), 1-17.

This question of amending the constitution is apt to become extremely acute. Apparently the Imperial Parliament is to be retained, for the time being at any rate, as the medium through which changes in our constitution will be made. If it is laid down by the Dominion Parliament as an essential condition precedent to the application by the Dominion for an amendment to the constitution that the consent of all the provinces must be obtained, this country will be put in a constitutional straitjacket from which release will be found, sooner or later, perhaps in twenty-five or thirty years, by a blow-up of confederation. There is, I think, extreme danger that the present government, under the influence of our French Canadian friends, will do something like this: by a self-denying ordinance Parliament will declare that it cannot ask for an amendment to the British North American Act without first securing the consent of the provinces.

I am thoroughly in agreement with the view that when we work out a proper system of amending our own constitution a sufficient degree of power should be given to the provinces to prevent wanton inroads by the Dominion in their jurisdictional fields. The problem is how to bring about a readjustment of relations which will enable us to amend our own constitution and at the same time protect the provinces and especially the minority rights guaranteed by the British North America Act. The difficulty, of course, is Quebec, which is so jealous and alarmed that it will be quite prepared to take the ground that the constitution must be put in a position where it practically cannot be amended. I think that is its present mood. This was expressed pretty plainly in Parliament in 1925 by Mr. Lapointe, and still more emphatically by Mr. Vien a leading member from Quebec who is now deputy chief commissioner of the Board of Railway Commissioners.

We have got to have some form of pressure to make Quebec and other provinces realize that as things are they have no power of veto; and then it will be possible to suggest to them that in place of the protection which they now think they have, but which is really a fiction, they should agree to a procedure for amending the constitution which will give them adequate guarantees. To get them in this mood it is, I think, essential to demonstrate to them that their protection at present is ineffective.

I do not think there is any question about the soundness of the facts which I set forth briefly in this morning's article. I have been reading the

Confederation debates with some care and have been checking up the record of the previous amendments to the constitution. The provinces do not come into the picture anywhere. You will see in the Confederation debates that the protection of the minorities was entrusted to the Senate. It was by reason of the argument that it must be constituted as it is in order that the provinces and the minorities might be protected that the Senate, as it exists, was justified. When members of the opposition, like Christopher Dunkin, pointed out in an acute analysis of the proposed bill that the Senate thus constituted could not protect the provinces or the minorities, the French-Canadian leaders fell back on a second line of defence by claiming that the representation of the minorities in the Federal Commons and in the Federal government would afford additional and sufficient protection. There is not a word about the provinces having veto powers or having to be consulted.

Immediately after Confederation the Liberal party in the House of Commons took the position that the provinces must be consulted before amendments to the constitution were sought. The question was raised in the House of Commons in 1869 by Mr. Holton and in 1871 by Mr. Mills. In both cases the Commons repudiated the theory. In all the amendments to the constitution, with the sole exception of the bill re-fixing the subsidies in 1907, the provinces were not consulted; though many of the amendments affected their rights, as for instance, the amendment of 1915 which modified the provisions of the original act dealing with the representation of the provinces by providing that the representation of a province in the House of Commons must never fall below the senatorial representation.

I belong to a study group here in Winnipeg which has been working for the last two months on the question of the proper machinery to amend the constitution. The group has now formulated a definite expression of opinion which is to be circulated among other groups, of which there are about forty in Canada, for their consideration. If you are interested I can send you, though not to-day as I have not got it under my hand, a copy of their finding. It is[,] in brief[,] that the Dominion Parliament can amend the constitution but the consent of the provinces must be obtained under conditions which provide that provincial rights under clause 92 can only be dealt with when a majority of the provinces agree, while there are further provisions absolutely safeguarding the language, educational and religious rights of the minorities, I think a solution along the line suggested ought to be satisfactory to everybody.

The political problem is how to induce the holders of extreme opinions as to the powers of the provinces to accept some such scheme as that outlined. It seems to me the best way is to point out that by accepting some such machinery they will have real protection, which is lacking now. To get them in this frame of mind it is advisable, it seems to me, to demonstrate to them that they have not now the blocking powers which they think they have. That is what I am trying to do in the articles which have appeared and which will appear. I had intended to extend the article which appears in this morning's paper to include something of a constructive nature; but I felt it would make the article too long. But I am returning to the subject within the next week, when I shall make it clear that while the provinces have no particular protection now excepting through their strength in the Commons and in the Senate, there is no objection to their being vested with a power which will enable them to safeguard their interests.

21st December, 1926

My dear Dafoe:

I wrote you last night on certain matters with regard to your letters of the 16th and 18th.

I gather from your letter of the 16th that you are in a somewhat belligerent mood and no doubt there are some reasons for it.

The feud between the three parties that you mention in your letter and the present Minister is, of course, a matter of internal economy for themselves to consider.

The memorandum from your agent at Ottawa is very enlightening. Also we have had some information from him here which is of value. He appears to be an extremely useful man, and he has the best faculty of getting at the inside of things of any newspaper correspondent that has been in Ottawa in my recollection. I shall tell Harry to keep in close touch with him.

If it be true that Gardiner has declared a vendetta against the others followers, it does not speak well for his political sagacity. I have never known of a case where a man has undertaken to knife members of his own party where it did not prove a boomerang.

In the case of these two men of course fighting is the sheerest folly because they have a bunch of enemies standing ready to take advantage of any division. However, it is their business and let them settle it themselves.

I think if it is true that Mr. King insisted that Mr. Forke should not attend the Progressive-Liberal caucus, Mr. King made a very serious mistake, the consequence of which may be troublesome for him in perhaps the near future.

Constitutional Question

I agree with you that the declaration by the Imperial Conference is pretty satisfactory. The jokers are not in the declaratory part of the declaration, as you very well remark in your letter of the 16th.

Coming to your letter of the 18th on the subject of amendments of the constitution. You say on the first page "Apparently the Imperial Parliament is to be retained for the time being at any rate as the medium through which changes in our constitution will be made."

There may be some justification for your conclusion, although I do not think that any of the Canadian representatives and officials had thought it out. As a matter of fact, however, I am clear that we should fight that position from the start.

The position is that the Conference has declared Great Britain and the self-governing Dominions to be of equal status and authority in regard to their domestic and external affairs. It is of course understood that the declaration of the Conference has no legislative effect. The next logical step therefore is for the Imperial Parliament to give effect to this declaration by an act amending the British North America Act, and by that Act divesting itself expressly of any authority over the domestic or external affairs of Canada. Any other course is sheer nonsense.

There may be some additional legislation that will be required and probably will be. King should at once form a committee of half a dozen men of whom

two or three should be first-class constitutional lawyers in the narrow and technical sense of the term, so as to see if anything, and if so, what is required in addition to what I have stated. They could then draw up instructions for the Canadian representative on the committee which the Imperial Conference decided should be formed to settle the details. This course seems to be inevitable. Anything else must result in confusion.

Amending the Constitution

I have read what you say about this with great interest.

I wish you would at once send me the memorandum which you say has been prepared. It seems to be on the right line. My experience however is that all documents of this kind, drawn up by men who have not had long and close experience in legislation, are apt to contain a good deal of language that is useless and confusing.

I am going down to Virginia immediately after New Year's to hunt, but my principal purpose in going is to get away from the climate in Toronto in winter which does not particularly agree with me. When I get down there I am going to draw up what I think will cover the case and I would like to have your club [']s memorandum as a basis.

I have reason to believe that Lapointe has thought the matter out and is quite sound on the whole question, whereas I am given to understand that Taschereau,* Premier of Quebec, with a certain number of the Quebec members, are not sound, largely, as of course you will understand, because they have not thought the matter out and do not really understand it.

I do not take an extreme view with regard to the rights of the Provinces, but I think it goes without saying that, when put in charge of our own affairs, it is quite out of the question that the Dominion Parliament should be able to amend the constitution in such a way as to affect the jurisdiction of the Provincial Legislatures without their consent. As to whether the consent should be unanimous, which I would not advocate because that would nullify the provision, by a two-thirds majority, or by a simple majority, or by a popular vote, is a matter for consideration.

I doubt if there will be any difficulty at all in dealing with Quebec if it is approached in the right way.

When Canada is put in entire control of her own affairs, by the instrument which gives her that control, a statement should be made setting forth the constitutional guarantees which at present exist with a declaration that these guarantees are assented to by every Province and that they are the basis and condition of Confederation. These guarantees would be as definite and complete, and as incapable of being upset as it is possible for anything in human affairs to be. The difficulty is in getting the men, who are at the head of affairs, to approach it systematically, deliberately, and with common sense and honesty.

You know that it was only by pressure at the last minute on our men that anything was really achieved at the Conference. There is no doubt that our representatives intended to sit down and do nothing. While it might be hopeless to expect that this further matter will be dealt with in a systematic and businesslike way, you, of course can advocate a course with a clear conscience and undoubtedly it will have its effect.

I took MacRae up to see Professor Wrong and he was very much interested. I think I shall send Professor Wrong a copy of part of this letter which refers to constitutional matters because he is an ally who brings a force to bear which is a little different and comes from a different angle from the other forces that come into play.

I shall give instructions to have all your letters to me forwarded so that there will be no delay in my reception of them.

After say, the 10th of January, my telegraphic address will be Middleburg, Virginia. I shall take my code-book down with me so that you can communicate in cipher if it becomes necessary, although I do not imagine that anything pressing will arise.

Of course the Debate which takes place on the report of the Imperial Conference in our House of Commons will be very illuminating and in the meantime your editorials will have a chance to exert a very widespread influence, because I happen to know that every Minister and every Progressive member conscientiously reads them, or if not, the exceptions are very few.

Dec. 28, 1926

My dear Sifton:-

I am in receipt of your long and interesting letter which I shall keep by me to consult in my further discussions of the constitutional question.

I shall within the next month write four or five articles with a view to setting forth the reasons why we should now see to setting up machinery whereby our constitution can be amended, to be followed by the assumption by the Canadian Parliament and provincial Legislatures of this power which is now exercised by the British parliament. I will write the articles with the view of getting the argument therein contained over to the French-Canadians. That we have their ear is shown by their reaction to the two or three earlier articles. *La Patrie*, which is the Conservative organ for the province, took immediate notice of them; and so did the *Action Catholique*, the clerical organ. Their comments were rather violent, with personal references to yourself and to me with predictions that we were planning to rob them of their rights. The important thing about these articles was not the attitude they revealed so much as the revelation which they made that Quebec is beginning to realize that her position is by no means as strong as she has thought. Once Quebec gets in that mood, it will be possible to make an arrangement which will be satisfactory to all bodies concerned, excepting perhaps the ultra-Protestants of Ontario, who, of course, are not open to reason with respect to these matters.

I haven't got the report of our group on this subject yet. The secretary, who is a lawyer, was to re-draft the document, putting it in final shape, and it was then to be mimeographed and copies sent out in various directions. I have not got my copy yet so I presume he has let the matter stand until after the holiday season. The finding is not drafted in legal form throughout. It is rather a statement, the object being to indicate what is required. The group I belong to, which numbers about eighteen members is made up, with respect to half its membership, of lawyers, some of them very good ones like H. J. Symington. One of them is J. T. Thorson,* the new Liberal member for South Centre Winnipeg. There was virtual agreement among them that Canada must have power to amend her constitution and that safeguards should be embedded in the constitution which would be satisfactory to any reasonable member of a minority.

Mr. Thorson may prove very useful at Ottawa in getting action on this question. He is a thorough-going Canadian nationalist; and very sympathetic to the French-Canadian attitude. He spent three years at Oxford as a Rhodes scholar and was afterwards overseas with the troops; and while over there he got a good knowledge of French. He is a busy, active fellow; and will, I have no doubt, circulate among the French-Canadians and give them his views. He will not be a bit abashed should they disagree violently with him. He thrives on controversy; and won his election by reason of his debating talents.

I am thinking of going to Ottawa about the end of February and staying about three weeks. I am planning to bring my constitutional studies up to date with a view to their publication; and I need free access to documents not readily available to me here. My plan is to work at this and at the same time to move about a bit; and perhaps say a word or two in season.

This pulpwood question here is worrying me a bit. Burrows is not for marking time for a term of years and not giving the Manitoba Paper Co. anything more. I have had a couple of talks with him and am going in to see him again this afternoon. I don't think we can go this far. We are pretty well committed to the view that they are entitled to enough pulpwood to run a two hundred and fifty ton mill, provided that under guise of getting this wood they do not hog the whole resources of the province at nominal figures.

Jan. 18, 1927.

My dear Sifton:-

I attach the memorandum re the amendment of the constitution which I made reference to in an earlier letter. This memorandum, however, is not in its final form. Another meeting of the group has been called to give it further consideration. The reason is that the draft as made by the secretary as summing up the discussion does not, in the judgment of some members of the group, represent the conclusions reached. The objectors, of whom I am one, hold that provisions (b) and (c) do not provide sufficient safeguard to the minority. Under provision (b) the right of the minority in any province where there is a Protestant majority could be wiped out by agreement

between the province and the Dominion, which it might be possible to obtain. Under provision (c) the federal use of the French language could be repealed by a simple act of the Dominion Parliament. We are going to try to get the consent of the group to increasing these safeguards. For my own part I should be prepared to see these privileges made practically irrepealable. This concession is, I think, necessary to secure a friendly agreement by which the constitution can be amended. The way to make these minority rights ironclad is probably to make, in these particular cases, the consent of all the provinces essential. I should be willing to see this done in the matter of language and educational privileges for the minority; but it would not be reasonable to put modifications of the constitution having to do with clauses 91 and 92 in the same category. Here a majority of the people and a majority of the provinces ought to be free to readjust Dominion and provincial powers at will. Also, where no provincial interest is affected, it should be possible to change the constitution by a mere act of the Canadian parliament. In this category I would put the matter of the modification or abolition of the Senate. The claim that it represents the provinces and is a defender of provincial rights is pretty much a myth. When the provinces are given real rights of veto and control where their privileges are concerned they will not have even a theoretical interest in the Senate and need not be consulted if it is the wish of the people of Canada to modify its functions or to change the system by which its membership is determined. Provision (d) is a safe-guard against the Senate blocking all attempts at the amendment of the constitution; and is designed particularly to apply to the case of its own amendment.

The memorandum is put in legal form but it is not intended to be more than a suggestion as to the course to be taken to effect an amendment of the constitution.

This memorandum, when complete, is going to all the other groups of the Canadian League, a number of which are made up of French-Canadians.

This question is getting quite warm. I hear from Professor Chester Martin,* who was in Ottawa in December, and also from Dr. Skelton that the French-Canadians who have hitherto been dodging this question, are somewhat disturbed over the definite declaration that the British Parliament is no

longer supreme over the Canadian parliament. You have seen, no doubt, what Premier Taschereau said in the Quebec Legislature. The important thing is that the question has now to be faced; and it is fortunate that the matter is in the very competent hands of Mr. Lapointe and that an election is five years away.

I trust you are having a good time down in Virginia. I am sending this letter to the Toronto office, knowing that they will forward it to you without delay. I don't want to break in on your holiday in the least, but I should be glad to hear from you on the question of the international waterways, if you care to take time to set this down. It might become a big question over-night in Canada. Ontario appears to be a unit in favor of building the canal and it would be the easiest thing in the world to sell the project to the people of Western Canada. A refusal by Quebec to permit the Government to consider the proposition might have political consequences.

Yours faithfully,
J. W. Dafoe.

With a view solely of creating machinery to enable the Canadian Parliament to amend the Canadian Constitution, we suggest that an Act of the British Parliament should be passed as follows:

Parliament may by law amend any of the provisions of the B.N.A. Acts provided:

- (a) That no repeal or alternation of any of the provisions of Sec. 91 & 92 or of the basis of representation in the House of Commons or of the Senate shall be valid unless approved by the legislatures of a majority of the Provinces or by a referendum supported by a majority of the total vote and by a majority of the voters in a majority of the Provinces
- (b) That no repeal or alteration of any of the provisions of Sec. 93 shall be applicable to any Province until assented to by the legislature of the Province.
- (c) That no repeal or alteration of any of the provisions of Sec. 133 referring to the Province of Quebec be valid unless assented to by the legislature of the Province of Quebec.
- (d) That if any proposed act amending the B.N.A. Acts or its amendments be rejected by the Senate after having passed the House of Commons in two successive sessions the Governor

General may submit the proposed law by referendum to the voters competent to vote in the Dominion elections, and if passed by a majority of voters it shall be deemed to have been passed by Parliament.

April 13, 1927

My dear Sifton: -

I have just got back from a brief visit to the east, chiefly on private business. I saw Harry, Winfield and Victor - a good deal of the first as he was on the train with me from Toronto to Ottawa and was there continuously while I was in the capital, on Georgian Bay Canal business.⁵⁰ The boys have written you about this, of course, so I shall not say anything in much detail except that I heard everywhere in Ottawa of the fine impression which both Harry and Winfield made in appearing before the Railway Committee. Harry made a decided hit with his opening address; and the knowledge, readiness and good humor shown by Winfield in the examination to which he was subjected constituted a personal achievement of note, even though it did not convert the committee which was set from the beginning upon killing the bill. I did not hear the boys as I did not think it advisable to show myself in the committee room; but there is no doubt about the hit they made; I heard about it everywhere.

The combination against the bill was very strong; and it was at least ninety per cent power trust, though much of it masqueraded as regard for public ownership. There was also the evident desire of Toronto and Western Ontario to kill the project of a canal to the north. So far as the bill had friends they were to be found along the Ottawa Valley and here in the West. Most of the Manitoba and Saskatchewan members were friendly. The Alberta farmers were hostile on alleged public ownership grounds. Probably some of them were sincere in this. They were shepherded into the other camp by the Ottawa Citizen, which is ostensibly radical and is thereby all the better

⁵⁰ For an account of the Sifton interest in the Georgian Bay Canal scheme see J. W. Dafoe, *Clifford Sifton in Relation to His Times*, (Toronto, 1931), 515 ff.

equipped to do a neat chore once in a while for the "big interests" with which, of course, the Southams are in contact at many points.

It was, I think, fortunate that the bill got to committee. This made it possible for Harry and Winfield to vindicate the bona fides of the Siftons and to make it fairly clear to the public, and also to some of the members, that the practical alternative to the Georgian Bay canal was exploitation of the Ottawa River power by the power trust. Harry's statement on this point was clear and convincing; we shall hear echoes of it later. The bill got to committee by virtue of a government whip - not out of friendship for the boys but to serve the government's own ends - which are at the moment obscure but will, I imagine, be revealed in time as serviceable to the power trust, notwithstanding much brave talk at present of an intention to let the National Hydro lease lapse on May 1st, Dunning wanted the bill before committee for some reasons that are apparent and others that will be revealed. He wanted to show up the Meighen renewal of the Carrillon [sic] lease; and he also wanted to kill the canal scheme by having his own officials knock it on the head by unfriendly evidence which predisposed the committee to reject the charter when the question was put to them immediately following this hostile evidence. It was a rather striking manifestation of Dunning's double-crossing tactics. From what I heard when I reached Ottawa I knew the bill had no chance to get through; but I hoped that following the statements by Harry and Winfield, the government would declare a policy for the Ottawa River that would make it impossible for the river to be turned over later to the power trust; this declaration might very well have included a statement, de-fending the canal promoters against the atrocious libels directed against them. On these terms the rejection of the charter would have been accepted, I should say, with good grace by the boys; but the killing of the bill by the crude strong-arm methods which were employed has - I imagine, though I have heard nothing from them - left them with the feeling that they were butchered as part of some plan which Dunning has in his mind. Not that, in whatever is done in the future, Dunning will have the say - he may think he will but there will be other influences that will operate when the time comes. The Quebec elections come off, it is believed, in May: Taschereau will fight like a tiger for the renewal of the Carillon lease or for the promise of its renewal and I think he will have his way, to the extent that he will be able to give assurances that

will be exchangeable for the necessary campaign fund.

We are, in Canada, on the eve of a concentration of money power which will make the old C.P.R. - banking-manufacturing combination, which ran the country for so many years, a mere affair of the kindergarten. In the last fifteen years over two billion dollars have been invested in Canada in mining developments, pulp and paper enterprises and water power exploitation. All these interests are intertwined and they are - with some exceptions, of course, mostly mines - being brought into a single organization. It will be in politics up to its neck, for there are still concessions to grab and public rights to alienate. The alliance between the Tory premier of Ontario and the Liberal premier of Quebec, the team-play between the public-owned hydro in Ontario and the Montreal power monopoly, as shown in the drive against the Georgian Bay canal, are indications of how it proposes to bend parties, governments, newspapers to its own purposes. They are, of course, at work in this province. We are likely to see all the waterpower and pulpwood resources of the province neatly bagged and tucked away, against the time when they will be valuable, before the natural resources are handed over, a mere shell, to the Province. I don't believe there are half a dozen newspapers in Canada that can be counted upon to defend the public interest against this octopus - and among them will have to be included that crazy but honest sheet, the Toronto Telegram. I miss my guess if we don't in the near future, add to our list of dangerous enemies if we keep to our policy of putting the public interests first.

I suppose you see the Free Press. We said nothing about the Georgian Bay canal and published nothing about the discussion except the Canadian Press reports, with the exception that we had our own special reports of the statements to the committee made by Harry and Winfield. I was determined that their side of the case should be given a fair presentation. I find, since my return, that these special reports in the Free Press have been very generally read, at least by our friends. I have said nothing editorially; but if, after rejecting the Georgian Bay canal project which protected the public interest at every point, the Government proceeds to turn the Ottawa river over to the exploiters, I imagine we shall have something to say.

The political situation at Ottawa is in a semi-paralyzed state. The Conservatives are just going through the motions of functioning as an opposition, pending their convention. The Government is a warring family with King very much on top as boss and chief cook; it is pretty safe for this and perhaps another term if it doesn't blow up from within - a possibility. The Western members U[nited]. F[armers]. [of] A[lberta]., Progressives, Liberal-Progressives and straight Liberals - are all more or less disgruntled, as was made very clear to me during my brief stay in Ottawa. If the Government is herded into the big interests following - and there are a good many cowboys at present on this job, including, I am beginning to think, that erstwhile peerless Western leader, C. A. Dunning - a first-class political explosion, even in the life of this parliament, is not impossible.

I could write you more about politics, Dominion and Provincial, but you will be tired reading this long screed by now. I was glad to hear of your successful recovery from your operation and trust you are finding your stay in Florida agreeable. Macklin is at the moment at the Coast. We expected him home this week; but Jack got a telegram from him to-day saying that he found it necessary to take a longer rest, so we do not expect him home until the end of the month. He had a very hard winter, what with steady attention to business and serious illness in his family; and certainly looked pretty well tuckered out when he left for the Coast. Barring a little trouble with one of my eyes, I am very well - feel better indeed than I have for years. It is just as well that I do, for I have a busy season ahead of me. I am taking part in a summer school under the auspices of the University of Chicago in late June and early July - look forward to having a good time. I am to deliver three public addresses and take part in round table discussions. There will be other speakers, from South Africa, Australia, the Free State and Great Britain. All the discussions are to be about the British Commonwealth. The chief speaker is to be Sir Cecil Hurst, of the British Foreign Office, the man Arthur had the famous scrap with at Paris. Skelton tells me that at the recent Confer-ence he reverted to the high Tory position after his temporary lapse into Liberalism at the 1923 Conference. I may have a run in with him. It will be necessary for me to be well prepared, which means hard work. Skelton has promised to coach me a bit as to the line Hurst is likely to take. I talked to the Canadian Club last week in Toronto;

had a good audience; and gave them my views, stark and unqualified; had a good hearing. An old Tory friend of mine in the audience said he awaited the customary "loyal" flub-a-dub in the peroration with which it is usual for speakers before Toronto audiences to square them-selves after they have expressed heterodox views; and could hardly believe his ears when it wasn't forthcoming. Victor was in the audience. The Globe was much annoyed and gave me a half-column roast. What a mossback it is!

July 25, 1927

My dear Sifton:-

While, of course, we are all delighted to have Victor join our party, I am sorry that you have retired from the Board; and can only hope that it does not foreshadow any lessening of interest by you in the details of the operation of the Free Press; and particularly in the formation and presentation of editorial policy. I hope that you will still be available for consultation; and that you will very frequently take your pen in hand to give me your views about the policies we should follow. I cannot imagine that the next seven or eight years, which ought to see me through with this job, will present any such difficulties as those with which we have had to deal in the last ten years; there will be no such shoals, tortuous channels and hidden reefs as those through which we have had to steer the ship since the war. But I shall be glad to have your constant collaboration even in these calmer waters. Our organization here is now so good that many things which used to make heavy demands on me give me only nominal concern - I know they are in thoroughly competent hands: more competent perhaps than mine, because the values which make newspapers saleable are constantly changing and readjusting themselves to new conditions, and after sixty one is not as quick in the uptake as he might be. But I do look forward to a few years in which, with more leisure to plan and write, I shall be able to fix new standards for the editorial page and generally for those departments in which we seek to do that essential service to the Community, which consists in giving them the information without which they cannot play their part as citizens. (The growth of the reading habit by the public and its habit of looking to the newspaper

for a daily supply has, of course, greatly widened the scope of the newspaper.) In addition to discharging its original functions, it is now a daily entertainer. But the original newspaper is still there and can be easily located under the comic cuts, the trashy fiction, and the advice to the lovelorn. I accept all these features as necessary; but I hold as firmly as ever that it has got to be a newspaper and an organ of public opinion too - that, in fact, if it isn't a good newspaper in addition to all these added functions it will find its foundations, not of rock but of sand. The vital element in a newspaper's life is prestige; and it can only be got from the legitimate news columns and from the editorial page. I think the most telling illustration of this is from our own experience, Nothing, in my opinion, has done so much to give this paper prestige at home, throughout Canada and outside of Canada as the apparently unconscious way in which we persisted in our advocacy of full nationhood for Canada in spite of all the influences, social, business, financial and political which were brought to bear to pull us off. You and I did this in conjunction; I always knew that you were there behind me, even if you gave no sign. I don't know any other man in Canada, who, if he had been chief proprietor of the Free Press, would have let me pursue my apparently reckless career unchecked. Even when the issue was in doubt our fighting attitude on the question was an asset, even if a few hundred Tories may have boycotted the paper - I doubt if the number really exceeded a score. When I was on the other side of the world two years ago I found I didn't have to explain to the newspaper men or public men what the Free Press was; they knew about us. I don't think this was due to the excellence of our comic strips. And, of course, since the surrender of the Tory position at London last October we have come into our own. My taking part in the symposium at Chicago⁵¹ - which I don't think did any harm either to me or the Free Press - was, of course, the result of the knowledge of the University authorities that the Free Press was the most Canadian of Canadian papers.

All this is somewhat long-winded and you've heard it all before. But I felt that I should restate it because it reveals the cardinal quality of the Free Press editorial policy - having firm views on big questions and fighting for them; a policy which even on low material grounds

⁵¹ The lectures Dafoe delivered at Chicago in 1927 were published under the title "The Problems of Canada," in Cecil J. B. Hurst *et al*, *Great Britain and the Dominions*, (Chicago, 1928), 131-260.

pays-; and in registering my sense of gratitude for your co-operation in the past to suggest that if your retirement gives you more leisure in some ways, you might perhaps find time to associate yourself still more closely in the work of editorial collaboration with a view to establishing those standards of quality referred to above - something for the next generation to try to live up to. For example, a signed article by you, would be an extraordinarily good feature for the editorial page.

August 10th, 1927

My dear Dafoe,

I was very much gratified to receive your letter of the 25th of July. Circumstances of one kind and another have prevented me from replying sooner, and now all I wish to say is that after about twenty five years of close association it is a matter of great satisfaction to me to receive such a letter from you.

So far as my retirement from the Board is concerned it will make no difference whatever in the time and attention which I devote to watching the progress, policy and benefit of the Free Press. In fact, I shall give it more attention than heretofore, and I am glad to know that you are always ready to welcome my suggestions. I entirely agree with your view that what constitutes a successful paper is its character and prestige, which must be maintained under all circumstances.

You will remember that when you wrote me some time ago and said that the possible combination of power and banking interests would in the near future make powerful and dangerous enemies for the Free Press, if it continued unflinchingly to advocate the public interests in all cases, I replied to you that this was not a matter for discussion and that the course heretofore pursued would be followed without any deviation, or any consideration of the fact that enemies might be made in so doing. This remains my view, and as you are probably aware it is not likely to be altered.

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BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX

A

Sir James Aikins - A Winnipeg lawyer and Conservative politician. In 1915 he resigned his seat in the federal parliament to assume the leadership of the Manitoba provincial Conservative party. The party's defeat in the election was followed by his appointment as Lieutenant-Governor of the province a post which he held until 1926.

Joseph Atkinson - Publisher of the Toronto Star and strong journalistically of the Liberal party. He was perhaps Canada's most successful exponent of "popular" or "sensational" journalism.

Sir Allen Aylesworth - A distinguished Toronto jurist who served on the Alaska Boundary Tribunal in 1903, entered the House of Commons in 1905, serving in the Laurier cabinet until the defeat of the party in 1911. He went to the Senate in 1923.

B

A. J. Balfour - Leading British Conservative politician who, as President of the Privy Council in 1926, was the chief author of the Balfour Declaration defining the relations of the various members of the British Commonwealth.

C. C. Ballantyne - A prominent Montreal businessman who served as Minister of Marine and Fisheries in the Unionist administration, 1917-21. In 1932 he was appointed to the Senate.

Sir Edward Beattie - President of the Canadian Pacific Railway, 1918-43, and Chairman of the Board of Directors, 1924-43.

Sir Adam Beck - Chairman of the Ontario Hydro Electric Power Commission, 1906-25. He combined this position with a parliamentary career, sitting in the Ontario legislature from 1905 to 1914 and again from 1923 to 1925.

R. B. Bennett - Prime Minister of Canada, 1930-35, and leader of the Conservative party, 1927-38. He entered politics in 1898 as a member of the legislature in the North West Territories; elected to the Alberta legislature in 1909, and to the federal House of Commons in 1911. He

retired to England after resigning the party leadership and in 1941 was created Viscount Bennett of Mickleham, Calgary and Hopewell.

Joseph Bernier - A prominent Franco-Manitoba Conservative. He was the first representative of his ethnic group to sit in a Manitoba cabinet after the School crisis of 1890. He was appointed to the Roblin government in 1912, and remained active in Conservative politics in Manitoba in the 1920's.

Sir Robert Borden - Prime Minister of Canada, 1911-20 and leader of the Conservative party, 1901-1920. Borden was a maritimer by origin. Though a severe critic of Borden's before 1917, Dafoe later became an admirer and close friend of the Conservative leader. Borden died in 1937.

Henri Bourassa - Founder and editor of the Montreal nationalist daily, *Le Devoir*, he was perhaps the greatest journalist in the history of French Canada. He was also a politician of great influence and a skilful parliamentarian. He sat in the federal House of Commons 1896-1907 and again from 1925-1935 and in the Quebec legislature from 1908-1912. His national reputation was built on his opposition to Canadian involvement in the Boer War, his rejection of conscription in 1917, and his vigorous defence of the French language minorities outside Quebec. He died in 1952.

John Bracken - Left his position as principal of the Manitoba Agricultural College in 1922 to assume the premiership of the newly elected farmers' government. He remained premier, working out a series of coalitions with nearly every other party. In 1943 he was chosen leader of the Progressive Conservative party, a position he held until 1948.

Edward Brown - A leading Manitoba Liberal politician who served as Provincial Treasurer in the Norris Government, 1915-1922.

W. A. Buchanan - Alberta politician, journalist and publisher of the Lethbridge *Herald*. He sat as a Liberal member of the House of Commons from 1911 to 1917 when he was elected as a Unionist. In 1925 he was named to the Senate. He was a close friend of Dafoe's.

Jacques Bureau - Solicitor-General in the Laurier administration, 1907-11, Minister of Customs in the King government, 1921-25, and a Senator from 1925-33. Bureau was relieved of his position as Minister of Customs after serious charges of maladministration were brought against his department in 1920. It was this "customs scandal" that prompted King to ask for a dissolution in 1926. Byng's refusal set the stage for the so-called constitutional crisis.

Martin Burrell - Conservative member of parliament from 1908 to 1920, he served as Minister of Agriculture, 1911-17, and Secretary of State and Minister of Mines, 1917-20 when he was appointed Parliamentary Librarian.

T. A. Burrows - Manitoba businessman and politician who sat as a Liberal in the Manitoba Legislature, 1898-1903 and in the federal House of Commons, 1904-08. In 1927 he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, a post he held until his death two years later.

Lord Byng - Governor-General of Canada, 1921-26. Prior to coming to Canada Byng had had a military career; a career which included commanding the Canadian Corps in the famous battle of Vimy in 1917. His term of office in Canada was marked by the controversy over the royal power of dissolution, which was a leading issue in the election of 1926.

C

James A. Calder - A Saskatchewan Liberal who, in 1917, joined the Union government as Minister of Immigration and Colonization. He was appointed to the Senate in 1921.

J. D. Cameron - Winnipeg lawyer, politician and judge. Served in the Manitoba Legislature 1892-98 during which time he was a close associate of Clifford Sifton. In 1908 he was appointed to the bench.

Isaac Campbell - Prominent Winnipeg lawyer *who* sat in the Manitoba legislature, 1888-91 and was later very active in the legal and political life of Manitoba.

Lucien Cannon - An important Quebec Liberal who was first elected to the House of Commons in 1913. In 1925 he was appointed Solicitor-General in the Mackenzie King government.

P. J. A. Cardin - Prominent Quebec Liberal *who* served as Minister of Marine and Fisheries in the King government, 1924-26 and 1926-30. From 1935 to 1942 he was Minister of Transport but resigned over the question of conscription.

Loring Christie - Civil servant and diplomat who served as legal advisor in the Department of External Affairs, 1913-23 when he resigned from the

Department. He returned to the Department in 1935 and ended his life as Canadian Minister to Washington, 1939-41.

Winston Churchill - During the 1920's he was a leading Conservative politician holding the posts of Secretary of State for War and Air, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Michael Clark - Medical doctor, farmer and politician from Red Deer, Alberta. He sat in the federal House of Commons as a Liberal, 1908-17, and as a Unionist and independent 1917-21.

T. A. Crerar - President of the Grain Growers Grain Company and its successor, The United Grain Growers' Company from 1907 to 1929. In 1917 he entered the Union Government as Minister of Agriculture a post he filled until 1919. In 1919 he became leader of the National Progressive party, but resigned from this position in 1922 for business and personal reasons. In 1929 he became Minister of Railways in the King Government. He held Cabinet office again from 1935 to 1945 when he was called to the Senate.

Sir Arthur Currie - Canadian military leader, Commander of the first Canadian division, 1916, and Commander of the Canadian Corps, 1917-19. On his retirement from the army in 1920 he became Chancellor of McGill University.

Lionel Curtis - A British intellectual with the crusading zeal of a missionary and the charm of a successful diplomat. After serving with Lord Milner in South Africa after the Boer War, he set about planning the reorganization of the British Empire through the Round Table Movement. Having failed to win approval for his Imperial plans he turned in later life to devising schemes for world government.

D

Raoul Dandurand - A Quebec Liberal who was called to the Senate in 1898. He served as Minister without Portfolio in the successive King governments of 1921, 1926 and 1935. He served as Canadian delegate to the League of Nations in the 1920's.

Geoffrey Dawson - British journalist who served as editor of the London *Observer* and later as editor of the *Times*.

Duke of Devonshire (9th) - Governor-General of Canada, 1916-21; Colonial Secretary, 1922-24.

A. G. Dexter - A *Free Press* journalist who served as reporter, Ottawa correspondent, London correspondent and finally editor of the newspaper. A superb reporter who was one of Dafoe's most important assistants at the *Free Press*.

C. J. Doherty - Conservative member of parliament, 1908-21; Minister of Justice in the Borden and Meighen administrations, 1911-21.

Manning Doherty - Minister of Agriculture in the United Farmers of Ontario government, 1919-22, he later acted as an organizer for Arthur Meighen's Conservatives.

Sir Henry Drayton - Chairman of the Board of Railway Commissioners, 1912-19; Conservative member of parliament, 1919-25, he served as Minister of Finance, 1919-21.

E. C. Drury - A leading member of the United Farmers of Ontario who, when the U.F.O. unexpectedly elected the largest number of members to the Ontario legislature in 1919, assumed the premiership, 1919-23.

Charles Dunning - First elected as a member of the Saskatchewan legislature in 1912, he served as Minister of Agriculture and then, in 1922, became Premier. In 1926 he entered the King government as Minister of Railways and Canals and in 1929 he was transferred to the Ministry of Finance, a position he held again from 1935 to 1939.

E

W. D. Euler - Liberal M.P. for Waterloo, Ontario from 1917-40. He joined the King cabinet as Minister of Customs and Excise in 1926 and held various other minor Cabinet posts until his appointment to the Senate in 1940.

J. S. Ewart - Lawyer, writer and controversialist, he practised law in Winnipeg 1882-1904 after which he moved to Ottawa where he became a leading counsel in constitutional cases. Equally important were his writings in the field of law and history, most of which were devoted to promoting the cause of Canadian independence. His most important writings were collected in the *Kingdom Papers* and the *Independence Papers*.

F

S. J. Farmer - A leading labour politician in Winnipeg who was elected mayor of the city in 1923.

Howard Ferguson - Conservative member of the Ontario legislature 1905-30, Premier of Ontario, 1923-30, and Canadian High Commissioner to Great Britain, 1930-35.

W. S. Fielding - Vacated the premiership of Nova Scotia to assume the post of Minister of Finance in the Laurier government in 1896. He remained in this position until the defeat of the government in 1911. Though a supporter of conscription Fielding refused to join the Union government. In 1919 he was a candidate for the Liberal party leadership. In 1921 he was again appointed to the position of Minister of Finance and held this office until 1925.

Sir Charles Fitzpatrick - A leading English language Liberal politician in Quebec he sat in the federal parliament from 1896 to 1906 holding the office of Minister of Justice, 1902-06. He was appointed Chief Justice of Canada in 1906 and held this post until 1919 when he became Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec.

Sir Joseph Flavelle - Toronto businessman with interests in meat packing, the retail trade, banking and railroads. While never directly involved in politics he was a frequently consulted friend of the Conservative party. From 1914-20 he served as Chairman of the Imperial Munitions Board.

Robert Forke - Progressive M.P. from Manitoba, he succeeded Crerar as House Leader of the Progressives in 1922. In, 1926 he entered the King government as Minister of Immigration and Colonization. He retained this portfolio until 1929 when he went to the Senate.

Sir George Foster - First elected as a Conservative member of the House of Commons from New Brunswick in 1882, he held ministerial posts in the governments of Macdonald, Abbott, Thompson, Bowell, and Tupper. In 1904 he was elected in an Ontario riding which he held until his appointment to the Senate in 1921. During the Borden and Meighen administrations he held the Trade and Commerce portfolio.

Frank Fowler - A Winnipeg lawyer, extremely active in public affairs, though he never entered directly into politics. He was a very close associate of Dafoe and Sifton.

Viscount French - Well-known British army officer, best known to Canadians as the Commander of the British Expeditionary Force during the early part of World War I.

G

James G. Gardiner - Liberal premier of Saskatchewan succeeding Charles Dunning, 1926-29; he was again premier 1934-35. In 1935 he joined the King government as minister of Agriculture, a position he held continuously for the subsequent twenty-two years.

Robert Gardiner - Elected to the federal parliament as a United Farmers of Alberta candidate in 1921, he was re-elected in each of the following three elections. He was a leading member of the "Ginger Group" and a founder of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation.

E. J. Garland - Federal M.P. from Alberta sitting from 1921 to 1935. He was a "Ginger Group" member and later participated in the organization of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation.

David Lloyd George - Leading British Liberal politician who served in each Liberal government after 1905. In 1916 he replaced Asquith as Prime Minister, and held that post until 1922.

Sir Lomer Gouin - Premier of Quebec 1905-20 and Federal Minister of Justice, 1921-24.

George P. Graham - Ontario journalist and Liberal politician. He was Minister of Railways and Canals in the Laurier administration, 1907-11, and served as Minister of Militia and Defence, 1921-23, and Minister of Railways and Canals, 1923-26 in the King government. In 1926 he was called to the Senate.

Herbert Greenfield - A founder of the United Farmers of Alberta and Premier of the province, 1921-25.

Hamar Greenwood - A Canadian-born lawyer and politician, he sat in the British House of Commons, 1906-22 as a Liberal, and 1924-29 as a Conservative. He held a number of minor Cabinet posts.

Hugh Guthrie - Liberal member of parliament from Ontario, 1900-17. He joined the Union government as Solicitor-General in 1917 and was

transferred to the position of Minister of Militia and Defence in 1920. He served as Minister of Justice in the Bennett government 1930-35.

H

John T. Haig - Winnipeg Conservative politician first elected to the Manitoba legislature in 1914. He became leader of his party in the Manitoba Legislature after the election of 1922.

Duncan Hall - An Australian who wrote voluminously on the history and evolution of the British Commonwealth.

Andrew Haydon - Prominent Liberal party organizer and lawyer. He was appointed to the Senate in 1924.

A. A. Heaps - Winnipeg Labour politician. Member of the House of Commons 1925-30 as a member of the Independent Labour Party.

R. C. Henders - A Protestant Minister who became President of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association.

Cora Hind - Agricultural editor of the *Manitoba Free Press*. She was particularly well-known for her annual crop reports. Her career at the Free Press lasted from 1906-42.

R. A. Hoey - Manitoba farmer politician. He was elected as a Progressive in 1921. He was a graduate in theology, but his chief activity before entering politics had been Field Secretary of the United Farmers of Manitoba.

Sir Herbert Holt - Montreal businessman and financier whose activities touched numerous phases of Canadian economic development from the 1890's to the 1940's. His most prominent position was that of Chairman of the Board of the Royal Bank of Canada.

A. B. Hudson - Winnipeg lawyer and politician. He sat as a Liberal in the Manitoba legislature, 1914-17 holding the positions of Attorney-General and Minister of Telegraphs and Telephones in the Norris government. He sat as a Liberal in the federal House, 1921-25.

W. M. Hughes - Premier of Australia, 1915-23.

William Irvine - Protestant minister turned Labour politician. He was elected as an Independent Labour Party member from Alberta in 1921. In 1926 was elected as a member of the U.F.A.

J

Sam Jacobs - Liberal member of the House of Commons from Montreal, 1917-38.

T. H. Johnson - Manitoba Liberal politician first elected to the legislature in 1907. He served first as Minister of Public Works and later as Attorney-General in the Norris regime, 1915-22.

K

A. B. Keith - British scholar and constitutional historian who is chiefly known for his many works on the constitutional development of the British Commonwealth.

Philip Kerr - A leading member of the Round Table Movement who inherited the title of Lord Lothian. He became an influential member of the diplomatic corp and ended his career as British Ambassador to Washington at the beginning of the Second World War.

J. H. King - Liberal politician who served as Minister of Public works in 1922 and later as Minister of Pensions and National Health.

Tom King - Newspaperman with the *Free Press* who served, among other posts, as Washington correspondent.

W. L. M. King - After a brief career in the federal Department of Labour he entered the Laurier government as Minister of Labour in 1909. Defeated in the elections of 1911 and 1917 he worked first in the Liberal party organization and then went to the United States as a consultant on labour matters with the Rockefeller Foundation. In 1919 he was elected leader of the Liberal party and served as Prime Minister, 1921-26, 1926-30, 1935-48.

L

Norman Lambert - Ontario lawyer and Liberal organizer. Called to the Senate in 1938.

George Langley - Saskatchewan Liberal who sat in the provincial legislature, 1905-21, holding the post of Minister of Municipal Affairs from 1913 until his defeat in the election of 1921.

Ernest Lapointe - Liberal member of parliament for Quebec East, 1904-41. He became King's chief lieutenant from Quebec, serving as Minister of Marine and Fisheries, 1921-24 and Minister of Justice 1924-26, 1926-30, and 1935-41.

David Lawrence - A well-known newspaperman in the United States in the twenties. He worked for the New York Times.

Rodolphe Lemieux - Postmaster General of Canada, 1906-11, he sat as a Liberal member of parliament from Quebec from 1896 to 1930 when he was appointed to the Senate.

T. H. Lowe - Ontario Liberal, Minister without Portfolio, 1921-23 and Minister of Trade and Commerce, 1923-25.

W. F. Luxton - Founder and first editor of the *Manitoba Free Press* which he owned and operated from 1872 to 1893. Dafoe worked for him briefly in 1886.

M

E. M. Macdonald - Nova Scotia Liberal who sat in the House of Commons 1904-17 and 1921-26. He served as Minister of National Defence, 1923-25.

D. D. Mackenzie - Liberal member of the House of Commons, 1904-23. He served as interim leader of the party between the death of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the election of Mackenzie King. From 1921 to 1923 he was Solicitor-General.

Sir William Mackenzie - Railroad promoter who, in partnership with Sir Donald Mann, built the Canadian Northern Railway.

E. H. Macklin - President of the *Free Press* and business manager of the paper. He came to the *Free Press* from the *Toronto Globe* in 1901.

W. F. Maclean - Toronto journalist and politician. Proprietor and editor of the *Toronto World* and Conservative member of Parliament, 1892-1926. He was well-known for his independence from party discipline.

Agnes Macphail - The first woman to be elected to the Canadian parliament, she sat for Ontario first as a Progressive and later as a member of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. In 1943 she became the first woman to be elected to the Ontario Legislature.

Sir Andrew Macphail - Western agriculturalist who was elected secretary of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association in 1922 and president of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool.

D. B. MacRae - Assistant editor of the *Manitoba Free Press*, and later editor of the *Regina Leader-Post*.

J. A. Maharg - An active Saskatchewan farmer-politician who moved directly from his position as president of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company to the post of Minister of Agriculture in the Saskatchewan Liberal government in 1921.

James Malcolm - Ontario Liberal politician who sat in the House of Commons, 1921-35. From 1926 to 1930 he served as Minister of Trade and Commerce in the King government.

R. J. Manion - Conservative member of parliament from Ontario, he served in both Arthur Meighen's cabinets and was Minister of Railways and Canals, 1930-35. He succeeded Bennett as leader of the party in 1938, but retired after his defeat in the 1940 election.

Herbert Marler - Quebec Liberal who sat in the House of Commons, 1921-25 and appointed Minister without Portfolio in 1925 only to be defeated in the general election of that year. He later served in the Canadian diplomatic service.

Chester Martin - Canadian historian who taught at the University of Manitoba, 1909-29, and then occupied the position of Chairman of the Department at Toronto from 1929-1952. He was the author of several books on the history of the Canadian west and of the British Commonwealth.

William Martin - Liberal premier of Saskatchewan, 1916-22 when he was appointed to the Bench.

Vincent Massey - Canadian businessman, politician and diplomat. He served briefly in the King government in 1925 but suffered defeat in the election of that year. He then entered the diplomatic service holding posts in London and Washington. His last public office was that of Governor-General, 1952-59.

A. R. McMaster - An English-speaking Quebec Liberal elected in 1917 and 1921. He shared many of the fiscal views of the Progressives.

E. J. McMurray - Prominent Winnipeg lawyer who in 1919 defended some of the leaders of the Winnipeg General Strike. Elected to parliament in 1921, he served as Solicitor-General in the King government, 1923-25.

Arthur Meighen - Sat as a Conservative and Unionist member of parliament, 1908-26. He was appointed Solicitor-General in the Borden administration in 1913 and in 1920 succeeded Borden as party leader and Prime Minister. Defeated in the 1921 election, he was Prime Minister again briefly in 1926 but was again defeated in the general election of that year. In 1927 he resigned the party leadership, was called to the Senate in 1932 but in 1941 he resigned to accept the Conservative nomination in York South where he was defeated by a CCF candidate.

General S. C. Mewburn - Soldier and politician, he left the Department of Militia and Defence in 1917 to run as a Unionist candidate. After his election he served as Minister of Militia until his retirement from politics in 1920.

Walter Mitchell - Quebec provincial Liberal who served as Provincial Treasurer and Minister of Municipal Affairs, 1914-22.

J. J. Morrison - Farmer-politician who served as Secretary-treasurer of the United Farmers of Ontario. In 1919 when the U.F.O. won a plurality of seats in the Ontario Legislature he was asked to become premier but refused.

W. R. Motherwell - Saskatchewan Liberal politician who served as Minister of Agriculture and Provincial Secretary from 1905-1918. He entered Federal politics and served as Minister of Agriculture, 1921-26 and 1926-30.

Charles Murphy - Ontario Liberal who sat in the House of Commons, 1908-25 when he was called to the Senate. He served in the Laurier

government as Secretary of State, 1908-11, and as Postmaster General in the King government, 1922-26.

N

T. C. Norris - Manitoba provincial Liberal politician who became leader of his party in 1909 and in 1915 assumed the premiership of the province. His administration held office until its defeat in the election of 1922.

O

Grattan O'Leary - Prominent Conservative journalist and occasional politician. He was appointed to the Senate in 1962.

Frank Oliver - Journalist and politician. Editor of the *Edmonton Bulletin*; he participated actively in both provincial and federal politics as a Liberal. In 1905 he succeeded Sifton as Minister of the Interior in the Laurier Cabinet.

John Oliver - Liberal Prime Minister of British Columbia, 1918-27.

William F. Osborne - Professor of French language and literature at the University of Manitoba, and author of several books of literary criticism.

P

Fred Pardee - Ontario Liberal politician who sat in the House of Commons 1898-1902 and 1905-21.

Isaac Pitblado - Winnipeg lawyer, well-known as an active participant in Manitoba legal and educational affairs.

W. T. R. Preston - Politician, journalist, civil servant, he served in various capacities in the organization of the Liberal party in Ontario. He later served as Commissioner of Immigration in London, England, and aided in the negotiation of the "Peterson Contract" in 1925.

A. W. Puttee - Winnipeg Labour journalist and politician. He sat as a Labour member of parliament, 1900-04.

R

W. E. Raney - Ontario lawyer who was Attorney-General in the United Farmers of Ontario government, 1919-22. He was an ardent advocate of prohibition.

J. D. Reid - Medical doctor, businessman, and Conservative politician who sat from Ontario, 1891-1921. He was Minister of Customs in the Borden

government, 1911-17, and Minister of Railways and Canals, 1917-21. In 1921 he was appointed to the Senate.

R. L. Richardson - Founded the *Winnipeg Tribune*, 1889, which he published until his death in 1921. He sat as an independent Liberal from Manitoba, 1896-1904. He was elected as a supporter of Union Government in 1917.

J. A. Robb - Quebec Liberal who sat in the House of Commons 1908-29. In 1921 he was appointed Minister of Trade and Commerce, in 1923 he moved to the Ministry of Immigration and Colonization, and in 1925 became Minister of Finance. He held this position until his death in 1929, with the exception of the brief period in 1926 when the Meighen government held office.

Gideon Robertson - A labour leader appointed to the Senate in 1917 and appointed Minister of Labour in 1918. He held that office again from 1930 to 1933.

Sir Rodmond Roblin - From 1889-99 he was leader of the Manitoba Conservative party in the Manitoba Legislature. In 1900 he succeeded Hugh John Macdonald as premier of Manitoba and held that position until his party's defeat in 1915.

William Robson - Independent farmer member of the Manitoba legislature, elected in 1920, and re-elected in 1922.

Robert Rogers - Leading Manitoba Conservative politician who sat in the provincial legislature, 1899-1911 serving as Minister of Public works in the Roblin Government. In 1911 he was elected to the House of Commons and became Minister of the Interior and then Minister of Public Works in the Borden government. He was not included in the Union government in 1917. He remained active in politics until his death in 1936.

W. B. Ross - Appointed to the Senate in 1912, he acted as Conservative leader in the upper house, 1926-29.

N. W. Rowell - Leader of the Ontario Liberal party, 1911-17 when he entered the Union government as President of the Privy Council. He left active politics in 1921. In 1936 he was appointed Chief Justice of Ontario, and in

1937 he became chairman of the Royal Commission on Dominion Provincial Relations, of which J. W. Dafoe was a member.

A. C. Rutherford - First premier of Alberta, 1905-10; he was then succeeded by Arthur Sifton.

S

Walter Scott - Journalist-politician. Proprietor of the Regina *Leader*, member of the House of Commons, 1900-05 when he was called upon to form the first government in the newly created province of Saskatchewan. He remained premier until 1916 when ill-health forced his retirement.

William Sharpe - Manitoba Conservative politician who sat in the House of Commons, 1908-15. In 1916 he was appointed to the Senate. He had a distinguished military career during the First World War.

Lord Shaughnessy - Montreal financier whose most important position was that of President of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, 1898-1918.

J. T. Shaw - Alberta Progressive, elected as a United Farmers of Alberta candidate in 1921. In 1925 he defeated R. B. Bennett.

Arthur Sifton - Politician and jurist. Elder brother of Sir Clifford Sifton, he served first in the legislature and then on the bench in the Northwest Territories. In 1905 he became Chief Justice of Alberta, but in 1910 he returned to active politics assuming the premiership in a government badly shaken by scandal. In 1917 he entered the Union government as Minister of Customs. He was a member of the Canadian delegation to the Peace Conference in 1919.

O. D. Skelton - Professor of Political Science, Queen's University, 1908-25. A close advisor of W. L. M. King, he was appointed Under-secretary of State for External Affairs in 1925 and held that post until 1941. He was the author of many books, including the official life of Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

A. E. Smith - A Protestant minister turned politician who was elected to the Manitoba legislature as a Labour candidate in 1920.

Jan C. Smuts - Leading South African military and political figure who during World War I was very active in Imperial politics and with Borden, sponsored the famous Resolution IX at the Imperial War

Conference of 1917. From 1919-24 he was Prime Minister of South Africa.

John Stevenson - Canadian journalist of English origins who worked for a wide variety of Canadian newspapers from the *Grain Growers Guide* to the Toronto *Globe and Mail*.

Charles Stewart - Succeeded Arthur Sifton as premier of Alberta in 1917. When his government was defeated in 1921 he entered federal politics and was appointed Minister of the Interior in 1921. He held that post until 1930 with the exception of the brief period in 1926 when the Conservatives were in office.

H. J. Symington - Winnipeg lawyer, member of the firm of Hudson, Ormond, Spice and Symington. He was a very close associate of Dafoe and Sifton and a member of the so-called "Sanhedrin" which met regularly at the Manitoba Club to discuss politics and plot strategy.

T

Joseph Israel Tarte - A Quebec politician whose career was characterized by several changes of political allegiance. A loyal Conservative in the 1880's, he turned against his party and through his revelations of scandal, contributed to its disintegration and defeat. He was one of Laurier's chief organizers in Quebec in 1896 and joined the new Liberal government as Minister of Public Works. In 1902 he was forced to resign from the cabinet after embarking, apparently on his own initiative, on a crusade for increased tariff protection. In this quarrel Sifton was probably his chief opponent.

Louis-Alexandre Taschereau - Prominent Quebec Liberal who succeeded Sir Lomer Gouin as premier of the province in 1920 and remained in that position until the party's defeat in 1936.

Sir Henry Thornton - An American born engineer and businessman who held the position of President of the Canadian National Railways, 1922-32.

R. S. Thornton - Minister of Education in the Norris Liberal government in Manitoba, 1915-22.

J. T. Thorson - Winnipeg lawyer and Dean of the University of Manitoba Law School, 1921-26. He entered politics as a Liberal sitting from 1926 to 1942, except for the years of the Bennett administration. In 1941 he was appointed Minister of National War Services, and the following year left politics to become President of the Exchequer Court of Canada.

S. F. Tolmie - Conservative member of parliament from British Columbia, 1917-28. He was Minister of Agriculture, 1919-21, and again in 1926. In 1928 he became Premier of British Columbia, a post which he held until 1933.

V

Thomas Vien - Quebec Liberal M.P. and a leading member of the "Bonne Entente" movement which was organized during the First World War in an effort to promote better understanding between French and English-speaking Canadians.

W

Sir Edmund Walker - A leading Toronto businessman whose most important position was that of President of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, 1907-24.

R. Watson - Liberal Senator from Manitoba; began his political career in 1882 and was appointed to the Senate by Laurier in 1900.

Sir Thomas White - A Liberal businessman from Toronto who, in 1911 joined the opposition to the reciprocity agreement with the United States. He was included in the Borden government as Minister of Finance and remained in that position until 1920.

Sir John Willison - Distinguished Canadian journalist, one-time editor of the Toronto Globe (1890-1902), which he left to become editor of the Toronto News (1902-1910) and then Canadian correspondent of the London Times. In his early career he -was a Liberal, but his departure from the Globe coincided with his gradual movement toward the Conservative party. He was the author of several books on Canadian affairs.

H. W. Wood - An American immigrant to Canada in 1905 who became, as president of the United Farmers of Alberta, one of the leading spokesmen of Western agrarian discontent in the 1920's.

J. S. Woodsworth - A clergyman turned politician, he left the Methodist Church to engage in social and political activities. After being arrested for participating in the Winnipeg General Strike he was elected to parliament as an Independent Labour Member in 1921. He remained a member until his death in 1942. When the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation was founded in 1932 he was chosen as its first leader.

George M. Wrong - Professor of History at the University of Toronto, 1894 to 1927. In addition to his many books and articles on Canadian and British history, he was an active participant in public affairs, especially in matters relating to Imperial and foreign policy.