

LETTERS OF GENERAL MAURICE THREATEN TO UPSET PRESENT CABINET OF GREAT BRITAIN

has made it known that it will consider the adoption of Mr. Asquith's resignation as a matter of no confidence and will, as a matter of course, promptly tender their resignation.

The same correspondent understands that the Premier in tomorrow's debate will make a full statement regarding the issue raised, and says:

"He will probably find it necessary to give certain facts and figures which, from a military point of view, it might be better not to discuss. These have been supplied to him as the basis of the war cabinet by responsible officials of the army council. The House may expect to have placed before it figures concerning our forces on the western front at the beginning of 1917 and the beginning of 1918, with a review of the relative strengths of the British and German armies at the commencement of the enemy's present offensive. Mr. Bonar Law may also make an explanation on his own behalf."

Others May Be to Blame  
One explanation offered in circles well acquainted with the practical workings of British parliamentary institutions of what the Premier and Mr. Bonar Law came to make the statement questioned by General Maurice is that their statements were the mere slips of busy men trusting details of transactions concerning which they were compelled to trust subordinates for information.

It is stated that General Maurice is the last man to fail to appreciate the effect, both national and personal, of his remarkable letter. He is not only a distinguished soldier but also a highly cultivated writer and noted for his keen, analytical mind.

Bred up, moreover, in all the traditions of the British cabinet, he could never have broken with his colleagues in the professional matters unless he was convinced that it was absolutely necessary.

He feared, it was suggested, that the army was growing indignant at what it considered an attitude of the civil officials. It knows that it is facing the hardest task ever set to a British army, and it is performing it without regard to the cost to itself.

Think Subordinate Blamed  
The friends of the Government are quite sure that the ministers never intended to mislead the nation. Their surmise is that Bonar Law, knowing he was to be questioned about the extension of the judicial inquiry plan spoke of in the War Office, and that the official who supplied it blundered. Consequently, the error is placed on the shoulders of the subordinate.

As for the statements of the Premier, it is pointed out that they were made in the course of a long speech introducing the man-power bill, which, it is safe to assume, was not entirely of his own composition. It was noted at the time that he read from voluminous notes which he said he had only partly written himself, and it is urged that to hold him personally responsible for every word in the technical part of his address would require of him an accuracy of detail impossible in a man of his immense responsibilities.

Meanwhile, Maurice's letter has inevitably roused excited speculation as to its effect on the Government, and many believe that it will assuredly cause its fall. Coming, as it does, just as the Irish question is once more springing into prominence, it is doubly dangerous.

It is believed that there is no real majority of Irish conscription in the Commons, and that if the desire to keep the Government in were removed they would be defeated over that. Then, of course, they could appeal to the country if they wished, and would probably find that their Irish policy was far more popular in the constituencies than in the House of Commons.

They would have, therefore, a chance of remaining in power, but the old objections to general elections on a register nearly five years old remain in full force. The register, with the addition of millions of women and new voters, is not likely to be ready before November, and there will undoubtedly be a great effort made to prevent a political upheaval until that time.

Suggests Asquith and Milner  
It implies the possibility of a stop-gap Government to carry over, and one very interesting suggestion is a Milner-Asquith combination. Lord Milner has gathered considerable strength since he became a member of the war cabinet, and his appointment of War Secretary was generally approved.

Strangely enough, considering that it had been considered correct to criticize him on the ground of his arbitrary method, he has won great favor among the younger labor leaders. They regard him as a straightforward, able man who cares nothing for old politics and parties and is only out to win the war, but he is no parliamentarian, and a British Prime Minister must be a ready speaker and debater. It is, therefore, suggested that he might lead the Government from the peaceful atmosphere of the Lords, while Asquith, with his rare personal popularity, would lead the Commons.

Of course, there would be an outcry against Asquith's return to the ministry from certain sections of the community, and indeed it is unlikely that he could again be Prime Minister during the war. But those who favor his inclusion in a possible Milner cabinet hold that, as the leader of the House of Commons, his great powers of conciliation would be again turned to the service of the country, while Milner would, in himself, be quite strong enough to



PREMIER LLOYD GEORGE Charged by General Maurice with making misstatements in Parliament regarding the situation of the British army

TEXT OF MAURICE LETTER WHICH CAUSED BRITISH CABINET CRISIS

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The text of Major General Sir Frederick Barton Maurice's letter to the Daily Chronicle follows:

To the Editor of the Daily Chronicle: "Mr. Pringle has been called to answer given in the House of Commons on April 23 by Mr. Bonar Law to questions put by R. C. Lambert, Colonel C. R. Burn, and W. M. R. Pringle as to the extension of the British front in France. Those answers contain certain misstatements which, in sum, give a totally misleading impression of what occurred. This is not the place to enter into a discussion as to all the facts, but Hansard's (parliamentary) report concludes:

"Mr. Pringle—Was this matter entered into at the Versailles war council at any time?" "Mr. Bonar Law—That particular question was not dealt with at all by the Versailles war council."

I was at Versailles when the question was decided by the supreme war council, to whom it had been referred.

This is the latest of a series of misstatements which have been made recently in the House of Commons by the present Government. On April the 9th the Prime Minister said:

"What was the position at the beginning of the battle? Notwithstanding the heavy casualties in 1917, the army in France was considerably stronger on January 1, 1918, than on January 1, 1917." "That statement implies that Sir

recates highly placed officers until who has spoken the truth and a select committee, which might continue its deliberations for weeks, seems a cumbersome tribunal to decide a point of honor which an impartial judge would settle in five minutes. If military secrets are to be disclosed, it is probable that the House will go into secret session."

The Chronicle's parliamentary correspondent writes this morning: "The House of Commons, always jealous of its own rights, did not jump to Bonar Law's suggestion that the allegations contained in Maurice's letter should be inquired into by a court of two judges. In order to constitute such a court, legislation would be necessary, and the terms of the reference to it would have to be settled by the House, but the objection of the members is not to the time that would be occupied by these preliminaries. It is the traditional objection to calling in of any external tribunal to pronounce on matters affecting the House of Commons."

"Last evening Mr. Asquith handed in a notice of a motion that a select committee of the House be appointed to inquire into Maurice's allegations. The motion will be discussed on Thursday. I understand the Government will oppose it and treat the matter as one of confidence. In short, they propose to regard Mr. Asquith's motion as a vote of censure. That being so, a division on Thursday evening will be one of critical importance. A hostile majority would mean the downfall of the Government."

"In ministerial circles the situation is viewed with serene composure. I am informed the Government are confident of their ability to substantiate the accuracy of the statements that have been impugned. As to the statement about the fighting strength at Haig's disposal on March 21, it may well be that Maurice excluded certain factors that were included in the estimate made by the prime minister. Otherwise the variance is inexplicable. It is incredible that Lloyd George in a carefully prepared

speech such as that of April 9 would make a misstatement on a vital matter that must have been for days previously engaging the attention of the war cabinet. General Maurice and other officers of high rank were present at cabinet councils where the facts and figures in regard to the strength of the British army in France and Flanders were discussed."

VARIOUS NEWSPAPER COMMENTS ON CRISIS

London, May 8. Comment of the various newspapers on General Maurice's letter follows:

The Times and Daily Mail (two Northcliffe newspapers), came to the support of Premier Lloyd George today in the incident involving charges by General Maurice that misstatements had been made regarding certain military affairs.

Both papers expressed the belief that the Premier would be able to justify his statements.

The Times and the Mail favor the Government's method of investigation. The Mail believes Asquith thinks he has found a weapon with which to destroy the present Government and return the old Government—of which he was the head—to power.

The Daily News "hopes Commons will not allow the issue to pass from its hands." It understands the Government will not accept the Asquith motion, but will treat it as a vote of censure. Therefore, Parliament will make a decision which will involve the life of the Government.

The Post is bitterly opposed to the Government. The Daily Telegraph, in its comment upon General Maurice's letter, said:

"It does not derive its importance wholly from within itself, but to a large extent because it focuses upon the public mind a question of the most serious nature. It may have momentous consequences, and according to the good old English fashion, each side must be heard before judgment can be pronounced."

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GUFFEY IN LANCASTER

Lancaster, Pa., May 8.—Joseph P. Guffey, who seeks the gubernatorial nomination of the Democratic party, and several of his running mates opened their campaign in this city yesterday.

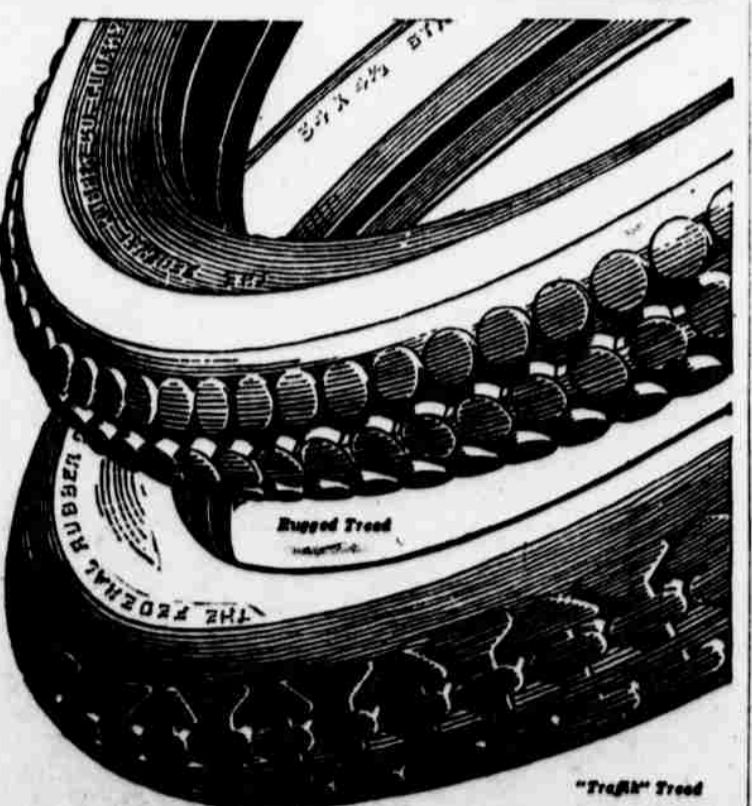
The candidates had a rousing reception at the Stevens House. With Mr. Guffey were Samuel R. Turner and J. Calvin Strayer, candidates for the Congress-man-at-Large nominations. J. Washington Logie, Democratic candidate for Lieutenant Governor, joined the party at York last night.

County Commissioner D. F. Magee, master of ceremonies, introduced the visitors to Mr. Guffey and his associates.

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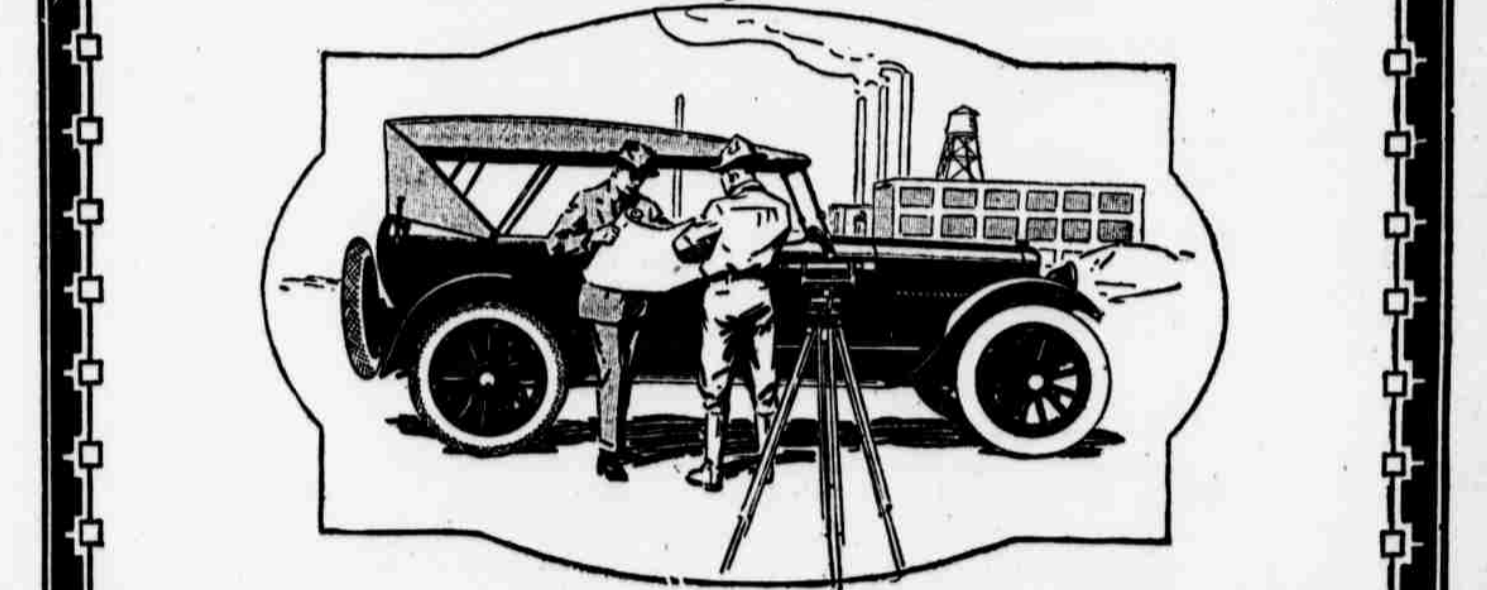
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WANTED

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