

(April 15, 1935)

Country First

By HON. L. P. D. TILLEY, K.C., LL.D.

PRESIDENT JAMES:—Gentlemen, today it is my privilege on your behalf to present Hon. L. P. D. Tilley, K.C., LL.D., Prime Minister of New Brunswick. Seldom do we have a guest speaker who possesses as interesting a historical background as does our guest of today. The son of Sir Leonard Tilley whose father, Samuel Tilley, first settled in St. John in 1783—Sir Leonard, as he eventually became, took an early interest in the affairs of the Province, and at the age of 32, we find him a member of the Provincial Legislature. Ten years later he became Premier. Then followed the work which resulted in Confederation. The next five years he was a member of the Dominion Cabinet. Then followed his appointment as Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick, and what to us in Ontario must seem extremely odd and, at the same time, flattering, is Sir Leonard was again appointed Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick and served a further eight years. With such a background, I think you can readily accept the services and accomplishments which our guest has done for New Brunswick. Like his father, he too took an early interest in politics, starting, he tells me, at the age of 19. After graduation at the University of New Brunswick, he attended law school, graduated at Dalhousie Law School and was called to the bar of New Brunswick in '94. Following his chosen profession of law he was able to give considerable time to politics and to work for his own Province.

Elected a member of the Legislature in 1912, he has, I think, sat continuously as a member since then. He has occupied various portfolios in various governments and

last year culminated that in his elevation to the Premiership of the Province. To many of you it will be interesting to recall the honor that was paid to Mr. Tilley here in Toronto last year. For the Centennial Year the University of Toronto determined on a very special centennial convocation. For this, representatives were chosen from many if not all the Provinces. The selection for New Brunswick was Mr. Tilley who, at that convocation, received the honorary degree of LL.D.

Gentlemen, it is with much pleasure I call upon Mr. Tilley, and I think I may say his subject for today is indeed a happy one—"Country First."

MR. TILLEY:—Mr. Chairman, gentlemen, before touching on the subject chosen for my remarks this afternoon I want to say a word to you about the Maritimes and more particularly about the Province of New Brunswick—my native Province, because, down by the sea, we are told that the people of Toronto do not know exactly where the Maritime Provinces are situated. If you asked them to bound the Province of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and give the boundaries, the only one Province they could accurately bound would be little P.E., and they would say it is bounded by water.

Gentlemen, perhaps I will not be digressing, to be able to find out, estimate and sum up, just how many of the people, to figure it out proportionately, of this great City of Toronto, have ever visited the Maritime Provinces, who have ever visited the Province of New Brunswick—I am going to digress with your permission, and ask you gentlemen who are present, if any of you have, at any period in your life, been in the Province of New Brunswick. Will you please raise your right hand? I hope there is no camouflage. For those who are listening in the laughter is caused, ladies and gentlemen, because three-quarters of them have raised their right hands—a very much greater percentage than I had expected.

Well now, you do hear sometimes about Maritime rights and Maritime claims, I can assure you they are just. They are equitable, they are fair and reasonable.

Now, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I want to say to

you in a friendly and a candid way what my opinion is of some of the national questions that confront us. I know that you have already had several of the Western Province premiers here to address you at the Canadian Club and that you have sent for us from time to time as a matter of courtesy, to look us over and size us up and see what, in your opinion, is the kind of calibre we are—the men, who in these days, are attempting to rule over the respective Provinces. Well, it is your right as the centre of the universe, I mean the centre of Canada, it is your right to be able to judge from your personal contact.

I want to say to you that today we have reached the stage in this country where we want less narrow partisan politics. Heads of governments, whether they are civic, provincial or federal, have a trying time in a trying period, and they need fair treatment by the public and the press. We are so often tempted to jump at conclusions and stop and look at our own side, and our own side only, of one particular question and, sometimes, we are warped by our too narrow political affiliations. There are two sides to every story and before a just and fair-minded man or woman can give their opinion they must look at both sides and hear both sides of the question. And then, if after hearing both sides of the question, you have made up your mind that there is something good in the proposition that has been submitted, even by a political enemy, be fair enough, be manly enough to say that the recommendation or the suggestion is sound. Whether it agrees with you politically or not you do not have to change your politics to be fair. These are days of stress for the young people of the country—thirty-five per cent of the new voters, who have been given their franchise, aye and many others besides—young people do not give a hawbee whether you are a Grit or a Tory or a C.C.F., or what you are. They are thinking only of their country and what is best for the country and they are looking for real leadership, looking for men to lead them and put country before party—to work in the interests of the country.

We have one of the greatest problems to consider—unemployment relief. It is one of the major problems that

men in public life have to handle, and I often wonder if you go about it just quite the right way. Would it not be better to go in first and take a census, an inventory of any particular area and find out how many men on the unemployment list are laborers, how many are artisans? And if you find 80% of the men in that particular area are laborers you do not want to build a custom house or a post office, as you are not going to supply the bulk of the aid to the 80% of laborers. Better spend your money on roads or on some other constructive work that would take out of that community the bulk of the laboring people. In other words, cut your cloth to suit your garment, according to what people are unemployed in the particular area.

Another subject of interest is capitalism. You ask what am I in favor of? Mr. Chairman, I am in favor of democratic capitalism, if you get my meaning. Democratic capitalism means that labor cannot succeed without capital and capital cannot succeed without labor. They must work hand in hand. There must be good feeling between them. There is an axiom in law which says a corporation has no soul. A corporation must have a soul and its soul must be human and it must treat its employees the same as you would expect to be treated, if you were an employee, in all fairness. The successful businesses are those that are considering their employees. An illustration would be this. If a corporation has a good year and makes a large bonus why should it hand it out to the shareholders, stockholders and bondholders? Why not proportion part of that bonus to your employees for loyal work? And thus help to make your business a success. I give you that illustration as to what I call constructive capitalism.

We are seeing today the nations of the world throwing monkey wrenches into machinery, into national commercial machinery. And how are we doing it? We are doing it in three ways. The tariff is one. There is no give and take in tariffs. Two; there is no national uniformity of wages or working hours. Can a man compete in lumber in Ontario when he pays a proper living wage on a Canadian basis, with a man in Finland, who is em-

ploying labor at 7½ cents an hour and working them ten hours a day? I hope Senator Meighen catches on to my remarks. There is no national uniformity of quotas.

Now we must get our ship of commerce on even keel. If we do not, gentlemen, something is going to snap. You cannot go on from year to year, from now on, bleeding your Civic, Provincial and Federal Governments to death. When you have taken the last drop of life blood of the nation financially, something is going to break, and we must guard against that before the breaking time is reached.

Then in Canada we have had something wrong in the state of Denmark, to use an old saying. We have listened to the price spreads mass buying commission; we have seen that there are conditions that need rectifying, but I do not put that down as one of the major problems. That problem can, and no doubt will, be solved. But I put down as the three main problems that are confronting this country today these: the breaking of the national tariff barriers and establishing equitable national quotas; unemployment relief to be reduced to a minimum; and the Canadian railway problem. If you solve these three main suggestions that I have given you, you save Canada.

Indeed, I have heard that in this City of Toronto, from which all good things spring, you are forming or have formed a national association for a national form of government. Well, my friends, Mr. Chairman, I want to say to you that, in my opinion, you will have no national form of government until something happens. The Tories say they are going to win the next election. The Liberals say they are going to win the next election and the C.C.F., while they may not claim they are going to win, they say that they will hold the balance of power. If such a thing should happen, then Mr. Chairman, I predict that this country of ours will have a national government but not until then. Let me appeal to the men and women of Ontario who are listening-in today as well as to this great audience—let me appeal to all our Canadian citizenship—to stand fast and uphold constitutional government in this day of trial. Do not be carried away by any frothy demagogue who is attempting to set up some form of govern-

ment that he claims to be a panacea for all our evils. In this country of ours we must keep inviolate the credit of our nation. We must stop bitter partisan politics. We must get together. We must pull together, and it is only by doing so, Mr. Chairman, we can save this country of ours.

PRESIDENT JAMES:—Mr. Tilley we are extremely grateful to you for the message you have brought us. We have seen you and you have seen us and I trust that the visit will be repeated in the not too distant future.

Next Monday we will hold the annual meeting of the Club.