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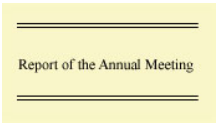


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# SIR SAM HUGHES AND THE PROBLEM OF IMPERIALISM

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SHOULD any one attempt to write what used to be called a standard work about Sir Sam Hughes he will discover very soon that his subject is unrewarding. A man who had a highly developed talent for notoriety, such as few Canadian politicians have possessed, Sir Sam must often have dwelt upon his future fame, but from either carelessness or impatience he gave little heed to the task of the historian. He kept few private papers and none organized after the manner of men who have an eye for biography. The few which he left are the unsatisfactory gleanings of brief periods of inactivity. When he was busy there must have been a vast amount of correspondence of a private and semi-private nature, and if report be true a great number of his papers were destroyed in the Department of Militia and Defence after his death. The private records of his early life, and of the period before he became Minister of Militia in the Borden Government, are likewise meagre. For this heedlessness the historian has taken, and will probably continue to take, a just measure of revenge.

One volume has appeared since his death which can best be described as an act of friendship—a brief biographical sketch by the late Brigadier General Charles F. Winter, who was Military Secretary when Hughes was Minister. The author makes no attempt to deal with historical material and the book is in no sense systematic. Yet as a repository of anecdotes and atmosphere it is all anyone intended it to be and it was compiled without any assistance from family sources. There are several memoirs and biographies of other men in which Sam Hughes is either acclaimed or assailed, and finally there are the beginnings of an official history of the Canadian forces in the First World War, of which it is perhaps fair to say that on this subject it represents the attitude of officialdom armed with a knowledge of after events.

In view of these difficulties and deficiencies it is surprising that the memory of Sam Hughes remains green among Canadians of every age and many origins. Those who did not know him personally have heard fabulous stories from those who did, and of the older generation of his countrymen there are few who once having met him are not still gratified to testify to a relationship which over the years and in the course of numerous anecdotes appears to have been more intimate than perhaps it was. For the stories, friendly or hostile, are legion. Not all of them are true and very few can bear close scrutiny. Many are obviously apocryphal and fail to take into account the fact that Sam Hughes was a non-drinking, non-smoking Methodist of Presbyterian origin, widely known to the Canadian soldier of the First World War as the "Foe of Booze." He was all his life, and remains to this day, a natural focus for story telling. He sought applause on every hand and not infrequently met with derision.

He had a prodigious, almost superhuman, memory, the tricks of which form the theme of many fugitive recollections. A good memory for people has rightly been regarded as one of the foremost of political assets. It bespeaks an interest in individuals of the most flattering kind. It transforms a passing acquaintance recognized years after into a fast friend. The friends of Sam Hughes were not all of them staunch in the hours of trial, but in every corner of the country, in every walk of life, he left men and women behind him who generally speaking wished him well. They have not allowed his memory to fade.

Sam Hughes was born in Darlington Township in the County of Durham in 1853. He had three brothers and seven sisters. His father, John Hughes, was, as a victim of the ebb-tide of Irish emigration in the forties, a farmer in spite of himself in the austere region south of Lake Scugog. John Hughes farmed with indifferent success but he was a man of parts and good humour, taught school, presided at public meetings, and instilled in his children a liking for literature. His sons in their anxiety to disclaim the taint of native Irish blood insisted on a Welsh or Scottish origin for the family, but it is probable that the numerous Hugheses of County Tyrone are native to the soil and were there before the plantations of Ulster.

Like many literate young men of his day, when formal education was rare and a university degree a mark of distinction, Sam Hughes sought escape from the life to which his father had become a reluctant convert and became a schoolmaster. A brief period of service in the Fenian Raid of 1870 gave him a taste of the world. At all events it confirmed two of the dominant influences of his life—the powerful and perverse loyalty to Britain of his Ulster forbears and a love of "volunteering" in a day when the Canadian militia was an even more widespread social and recreational force than it is today. Hughes taught briefly in Belleville and Bowmanville, and finally in Toronto where, for eleven years, he was English and History master at the old Toronto Collegiate Institute. This was a period which he loved to recall, of part-time attendance at the University, of great athletic activity especially on the lacrosse field, and of the birth of two of his three children. He enjoyed teaching and indeed there was always about him a marked didactic quality which inspired much of his celebrated tactlessness.

But the rewards of teaching were neither so tangible nor so impressive as Sam Hughes desired. After failing in an attempt to become Inspector of Schools in West Durham[1] he made what must have seemed a rash move to his friends and particularly to his family. He bought a country newspaper, the *Lindsay Warder,* and embarked on a tempestuous period of political agitation and self-advertisement which soon gave him the limelight he always admitted desiring. He was thirty-two.

Lindsay was then a town which had emerged barely ten years before from the lawlessness of lumbering.[2] Then as now it was the gateway to

[1]Private Papers and Memorials in the possession of the author, "Educational Standing, etc. of Mr. Samuel Hughes."

[2]Watson Kirkconnell, *Victoria County Centennial History* (Lindsay, 1921).

the wild regions of Haliburton; however, they were not then traversed by impeccable motor roads but isolated and inhospitable and pitifully unproductive. Haliburton was inhabited almost exclusively by Protestant English and Irish who had been transported thither from the richest farmlands of the British Isles. They were a simple, self-reliant people, who lived very poorly in scattered communities which, without an abundance of fish and lumber always at hand, would soon have perished. With the uninhibited enthusiasm of a newcomer, whose unrestrained newspaper agitation was getting him a mixed reception in the prosperous environment of Lindsay, Sam Hughes made this rugged northern countryside his spiritual home. In his eyes it took on the glamour of the Scottish Highlands which he had never seen and for forty years at Masonic, Orange, and political gatherings and over the rail and tree-stump fences he spoke in still unforgotten language to those whom he called "the free men and women of North Victoria." For North Victoria he was first elected to the House of Commons in 1892, where he sat for nearly thirty years thereafter. Although the constituency was enlarged to contain Lindsay and the fair farmlands of South Victoria, it was in the North that he was strongest. There, the great controversies were of little moment; election contests were minor episodes of many years of devotion on either side.

When Hughes began his newspaper work he flung himself from one controversy to another. Flavels[3] and Fenians alike were assailed with the type of editorial invective which is no longer fashionable in an age when the practice of plain speaking has declined. The little newspaper office was burned down, and shots were fired at the ardent editor in the darkened streets. A libel action was repelled without benefit of counsel. In a few short years the journalistic venture, which had never been profitable, had served its purpose. North Victoria sent a Conservative member to the House of Commons after a long connection with Reform. At the masthead of the *Warder* stood the following uncompromising quatrain:

A union of hearts, A union of hands,
A union no man can sever,
A union of tongues, A union of lands,
And the flag—British Union forever.

The introspective cast of British political thought at the close of the nineteenth century is well known to historians. The wide bounds of empire became solidly set and the chill of economic competition sharpened the horizon on every side. The principal beneficiaries of the Industrial Revolution became self-conscious about what in Professor Seeley's famous phrase they had created "in a fit of absence of mind." Problems of imperial defence and imperial government interwoven with the perpetual problem of Canada's relationship with the United States were

[3]The name "Flavelle" is an embellishment of the original name of "Flavel" (pronounced to rhyme with gravel) by which the family was known in the old days in Peterborough and Lindsay.

actively discussed in this country by those who on the one hand looked for eventual annexation and on the other sought a larger share of the material rewards of empire. Hughes found in Victoria County strong but confused sentiment among the farmers in favour of commercial union with the United States—a not unnatural hankering for the good times of Reciprocity days. He set himself against this opinion and especially against the annexationist agitation which was often associated with it. As early as 1887 a roving representative of the *Detroit Evening News* found that the *Lindsay Warder* had its own version of commercial union, which was to consist of one federal state comprising the British Empire and the United States of America and ruled by the hereditary sovereigns of Great Britain![4] From this time forward Hughes seriously advocated the cause of what was known as Imperial Federation although the prize package which he had offered to his neighbours on this occasion appears to have been only a *ballon d'essai* for local opinion.

By 1892 the Liberal-Conservative party which claimed the adherence of the new member for North Victoria was staggering in the confident stride which Confederation, the National Policy, and the Pacific Railway had enabled it to take. It had lost the incomparable guidance of Sir John A. Macdonald. It was, to borrow Mr. Guedalla's phrase, "an *arriviste* who had arrived." Deriving support from ill-assorted and mutually antagonistic groups, the party entered upon a period of confused and maladroit retreat, and without purpose or consistent leadership lurched towards the precipice of 1896. The prospect was by no means encouraging for a new member, but during this period Hughes came into contact with one of the Canadian worthies, whose independent mind and political conduct were powerful influences upon the younger man. Sir Donald Smith, as he then was, was at this time the member for Montreal West and during the period of paralysis which followed the death of Sir John Thompson, Hughes is reported to have looked to Smith as the only hope of the Conservative party.[5] Smith's views on the imperial relationship were a great deal more mature and methodical than Hughes's and it is reasonable to believe that they were in large measure absorbed by the latter. But there was another and more significant bond. Hughes as an enthusiastic militiaman was drawn to the old empire-builder who never concealed an acute interest in military affairs.

Then and thereafter until the end of his life Sam Hughes was obsessed with the importance of colonial participation in the wars of the Empire. We are now half a century away from the South African War and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion in the light of two subsequent wars that colonial politicians of the day were governed by servile motives. But England then as always made no effort to draw her colonies on to the stage of world events. The modest efforts of Joseph Chamberlain were decried as jingoism: the problem for the colonial loyalist was in essence the same as for the colonial republican, to obtain greater recognition and freedom

[4]*Detroit Evening News*, Aug. 10, 1887.

[5]Beckles Wilson, *The Life of Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal* (London and Toronto, 1915), 428.

of action for his own colony. If the channel of constitutional development was sluggish and obstructed, that of defence might reasonably be expected to be clear. Defence has always been the touchstone of imperial speculation. During three wars it has wrought profound changes in the structure of the Empire.

As the South African War approached, Sam Hughes saw an opportunity to ride his hobby-horse to some purpose. In the session of 1899 he gave notice of his favourite motion on the expediency of colonial assistance in British wars, a proposition which found no favour on either side of the House. In the press he openly canvassed the youth of Canada to recruit a corps for active service in South Africa. As Officer Commanding the 45th Battalion he offered his services simultaneously to the Minister of Militia and Defence, Dr. F. W. Borden, and to the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, to raise and command a Canadian unit for service in the Transvaal. This offer, which was received with every sign of favour, provoked a bitter quarrel with Major General Hutton, the Imperial officer then commanding the Canadian militia. Hutton, whose life work was directed towards the same goal as that of Hughes, strongly resented the freedom of action enjoyed by a militia officer who was also a member of Parliament. By adopting a very narrow although strictly correct view of the iniquity of ignoring the proper channels of communication, he did his own reputation and that of the Imperial Army in Canada a singular disservice. It is unnecessary here to recount the details of the quarrel which resulted in Hughes going to South Africa as a civilian forbidden military employment, and scarcely a year after in the final breach between Hutton and Dr. Borden, and the former's recall from Canada.[6]

Hughes's experience in South Africa had a lasting effect upon his political and military opinions. From the first he had seized upon the occasion as an opportunity to demonstrate his cherished theories about the value of colonial troops which he claimed Hutton had disparaged. History could hardly have provided him with a better proving ground and justification. The conduct of the war by the mother country was the jest of Europe. The colonial contingents were, on the whole, composed of men who could shoot and ride better than their comrades from the United Kingdom. British generalship was admittedly bad until a series of disasters brought Roberts and Kitchener to the scene with overwhelming forces. Hughes, who had passed the long voyage in civilian clothes in accordance with Hutton's order, began his campaign by sitting down in the Grand Hotel in Capetown and writing to Lord Methuen and other commanders whom he had met during the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 1897. He begged for employment.[7] This was eventually given him on the line of communications as a transport officer. In somewhat less

[6]*Canada, Sessional Papers*, 1900, 77 and 77a, Return to an order of the House of Commons, dated 19th February, 1900, for copies of all correspondence . . . touching the conduct of Lieut.-Col. Hughes, M.P.; Sir Charles Lucas, *The Empire at War* (Oxford, 1921), I, 146-7.

[7]Private Papers, letter from Hughes to Lord Methuen, Dec. 6, 1899.

than a year he had become a senior intelligence staff officer with a flair for reconnaissance, and assisted by a spirited commentary on the campaign in his letters to friends at home the Hughes legend began to grow.[8] He was described by *The Times* as the "beau ideal of a leader of irregular troops."[9] He began to be idolized by the young soldiers as a sensible, hard-headed officer who did not waste the lives of his men.[10] His career ended abruptly while he was serving under Sir Charles Warren who, by all accounts, enjoyed no such reputation. As in the Hutton incident, Hughes's taste for voluminous correspondence was the cause of his discomfiture, and some of his strictures upon Warren and his staff were reported in Capetown. Ostensibly in command of the troopship *Gascon* he was returned to England in 1900, and although he never admitted in public the cause of his removal from the theatre, it is clear that he was not deceived.[11]

Nevertheless, Colonel Sam Hughes, who had left Canada as a martyr, returned a hero. There were many important people who were prepared to deny him a crown in either capacity, but the vigorous, handsome 47-year-old officer cut quite a figure among his unsophisticated fellow-countrymen. It was known that he had no resources and had made sacrifices for his opinions which were themselves flattering to Canadian susceptibilities. Service on the battlefield was not then the common experience of healthy manhood which it has since become. The South African episode had brought Hughes into touch with men who instantaneously responded to Canadian imperialism. He was at once a member of Parliament and a man of action. Lord Milner was at the time the most brilliant exponent of practical imperialism and his reputation was heavily involved in South Africa. He and his disciples, such as Lionel Curtis and Leopold Amery, established a warm and sympathetic relationship with the Canadians.[12] They no doubt saw in Sam Hughes and those like him the perfect instrument of their policy of creating an imperial state and there is no doubt that he, for his part, kept the imperial vision in his mind's eye, if only with the fatalistic assurance of the Ulsterman that the mother country must be magnified in spite of herself. Generals Hutton and Warren might have discouraged the most ardent.

Hughes resumed with zest the role of opposition member under the long tutelage provided by Sir Wilfrid Laurier. In and out of season he urged full partnership of the colonies with the mother country especially in the sphere of defence. He continued to maintain good relations with Sir Frederick Borden, the Liberal Minister of Militia and Defence, and his cousin, the Leader of the Opposition, came to regard Hughes as a reliable parliamentarian.[13] The latter's reaction to the Dundonald incident, which provoked the same constitutional argument with which he

[8]Private Papers, *Watchman-Warder* (Lindsay), April 19, 1900.

[9]Private Papers, undated clippings from the *Mail and Empire* (Toronto), 1900.

[10]Private Papers; and Lionel Curtis, *Victorian Rhymes* (Oxford, 1942), 17.

[11]Private Papers, letter from Hughes to Lord Roberts, Nov. 27, 1910.

[12]Charles F. Winter, *Lieutenant-General the Hon. Sir Sam Hughes, K.C.B., M.P.* (Toronto, 1931), 23-4; and Curtis, *Victorian Rhymes.*

[13]Henry Borden (ed.), *Robert Laird Borden: His Memoirs* (Toronto, 1938), I, 74.

had belaboured Hutton, will be quoted against him and against anyone who seeks to develop a pattern of consistency in his political life. But Dundonald was no disparager of colonial troops—he was a dashing cavalry officer who had commanded a brigade in South Africa which comprised Lord Strathcona's Horse, and he was a personal friend who moreover had been shamefully treated in the Province of Quebec.

On February 2, 1905, Colonel Hughes addressed the Empire Club in Toronto on "The Defence of the Empire."[14] This was one of many speeches and articles of the same tenor, but it contains his life-long position in a nutshell.

> At the outset I may say that I can regard no possible defence of the Empire that does not involve a full partnership union of Great Britain and all her colonies. I maintain, and as you are well aware have always maintained, that any system must be largely democratic—must be of the people. . . . There will be thousands of high and prominent positions that will thus be thrown open to the young men of the Dominion of Canada because we will then be full partners in the Empire. . . . There would be no extravagent taxation under a broad militia system. There would be no creation of classes. There would be no humiliating of the men by making the private soldier a separate class by himself and the officer a separate class by himself. . . . I have never believed that discipline and training meant abasement of the men trained: it never meant oppression or slavery. On the contrary, discipline means polish, education, development of the spirit of individuality and of liberty. It means patriotism and loyalty to your country. The development of the physical means manhood; and from the military standpoint it means knowing how to shoot.

He went on in some detail to elaborate a system of militia training, beginning with the cadet system in the schools which he was to do so much to foster and to establish in the years of power. In the course of this address he freely condemned the attitude of people who say, "Stay as we are, a colony of the Empire, and contribute not only to our own militia but contribute also with sums to the imperial treasury for battleships and to carry on wars in foreign lands." "It involves," he said, "the principle for which our neighbours across the border fought and died, and which has been recognized throughout the World ever since—that taxation carries with it the right of representation." At a later date he did not give marked support to R. L. Borden's naval policy, which was that and nothing else, and in fact a highly professionalized Royal Navy did not fit into his scheme of an imperial militia armed and authorized by an imperial federal parliament.

When at last, after a sojourn in the wilderness which no other Conservative leader in Canada has survived, Borden became Prime Minister, he reluctantly gave the Militia and Defence portfolio to the most active promoter of militia training in Canada.[15] Sir Frederick Borden had inter-

[14]J. Castell Hopkins (ed.), *Empire Club Speeches 1904-5* (Toronto, 1906), 176-84.

[15]Borden, *Memoirs*, I, 330.

ceded with his cousin and still more powerful was the request of one who on the morrow of the anti-Reciprocity triumph could not be denied. This was Sir Clifford Sifton, one of the few members of the House who saw in Hughes something more than an irresponsible enthusiast.[16] Lord Grey was not pleased,[17] and the new imperial champion was to learn the military disadvantages of a vice-regal office shorn of its administrative functions but still permitted wide scope for interference in military affairs, especially when filled by a prince of the blood with a Hanoverian interest in the minutiae of military custom and dress.[18]

The new Minister, with the dreams of a lifetime to fulfil, succeeded in nearly doubling his estimates in the two years before the outbreak of war.[19] He missed no opportunity of warning the country against the German danger.[20] With ample experience of the real requirements of the militia and in fulfilment of his declared belief in an imperial militia democratically raised and trained, he embarked on an unprecedented programme of building armouries,[21] and he made cadet training a reality almost overnight.[22] These activities caused a hum of criticism which was not confined to the Opposition. Hughes's colleagues in the Cabinet, with the notable exception of the Prime Minister, were uneasy at the activity developed by a department which had been neglected and disparaged since Confederation. When, in August, 1914, the Minister sprang upon the stage in full panoply and persistently held the spotlight thereafter, open friction developed.[23]

The public estimate of the usefulness of Hughes's career has never been free from controversy, but the assembly and dispatch of the First Canadian Contingent in October, 1914 is justly regarded as a triumph of energy and devotion. Like Winston Churchill's timely preparation of the Grand Fleet in a similarly unfavourable atmosphere, it was an achievement which was to ensure a great measure of public indulgence for its author as the hostile clamour rose around him. Obsessed as he was with the urgency of the hour, Hughes's usual geniality was more and more replaced by an imperious temper aggravated by the manoeuvres indulged in without pause by certain of his colleagues.

To examine the record of Sir Sam Hughes's conduct of his transformed Department during the first two war-time years is not within the scope of this paper. In 1914 he was 61 years old and thus embarked upon the fulfilment of his life's design at an age when the peak of activity is usually past. Anyone who thought that his tirelessly reiterated

[16]John W. Dafoe, *Clifford Sifton in Relation to His Times* (Toronto, 1931), 386.
[17]Borden, *Memoirs*, I, 330.
[18]*Ibid.*, I, 459 n., 462.
[19]A. F. Duguid, *Official History of the Canadian Forces in the Great War 1914-1919* (Ottawa, 1939), I, 3.
[20]*Ibid.*, Appendix 6.
[21]Winter, *Sir Sam Hughes*, 36-42.
[22]Lucas, *The Empire at War*, I, 236 .
[23]D. M. A. R. Vince, "The Acting Overseas Sub-Militia Council and the Resignation of Sir Sam Hughes" (*Canadian Historical Review*, XXXI, March, 1950, 5); and Private Papers.

views of the duty of Canada within the Empire unfitted him for the task of maintaining its identity and freedom of action in war-time was quickly disabused. While recognizing the obvious limitations of the Canadian militia in matters of command, and being prepared to accept a War Office nomination for the command of the First Division, he reacted sharply to Lord Kitchener's suggestion that the contingent should be broken up to reinforce British formations as an alternative to forming that division at all. The occasion when the sacrosanct Secretary of State for War was defied in his own office on this point has been recorded by the official historian without comment.[24] The long battle on behalf of the Ross rifle used exclusively by the Canadian militia since its adoption in 1902 is a chapter in itself. If it is conceded that the Ross was a better target than service rifle, this might only have served to reinforce the confidence of the Minister, who had been President of the Dominion Rifle Association, had created the Connaught Ranges, and had fostered Canadian competition at Bisley where the weapon had scored notable successes. But above all it had been a Canadian weapon and Hughes was convinced that the main opposition to its retention came from the same British Army contractors whose refusal to supply Canada with Lee-Enfields in 1902 subsequently had compelled us to manufacture our own rifle.[25] Similarly the wholesale condemnation of Canadian transport on the eve of the First Division's departure from England for France seemed to be a belated insistence on standardization after years of patronizing neglect and was therefore strongly resented by the Minister.[26]

In spite of acquiescence in British selection of a commander, G.S.O.1 and A.A. & Q.M.G. of the First Division, the Minister and his advisers attempted close control over the overseas force both from Ottawa and on periodic visits to the theatre of war. The form of this control was a matter of domestic debate which ultimately led to Hughes's resignation, but there was no dispute about the principle of direct communication between Ottawa and the force commander or the Minister's representative in Great Britain at the time.[27] This was a disagreeable novelty to the War Office, although in the Second World War the principle involved was taken for granted.

One of the important revelations of Canada's initial efforts was her capacity to make shells. The establishment of a Shell Committee as early as September, 1914 to organize the manufacture in Canada of shells to British order was the sort of triumphant improvisation in which Sam Hughes revelled. At the time the fabulous shell expenditure of 1916 was undreamed of and British Ordnance made every conceivable difficulty about accepting Canadian basic steel where acid steel was specified. The Shell Committee with the enthusiastic support of the Minister suc-

[24]Duguid, *Official History*, I, 12.
[25]*Ibid.*, Appendix 111.
[26]*Ibid.*, I, 146 and Appendices 219-22.
[27]*Ibid.*, I, 128-9.

ceeded in satisfying the most rigid tests and colonial industry was perforce admitted to the charmed circle so long associated with Woolwich without recourse to purchasing in the United States. In the struggle to maintain the Canadian character and identity of this important body, which more and more claimed the attention of the Ministry of Munitions in Great Britain, very sharp differences of opinion developed between the Minister and Lord Rhondda. These resulted in the replacement of the latter by Lionel Hichens who was able to rely successfully upon the comradeship of the South African War in his dealings with Sam Hughes. The anomalous position of the Shell Committee, at once a Canadian government creation and an agent of the British Ministry of Munitions, was regularized by the end of 1915 when its functions were taken over by the Imperial Munitions Board. The Committee had been responsible for the procurement of twenty-two million shells since the beginning of the war. The achievement was marred, however, by the bitter attack made upon the Committee and its creator, Sir Sam Hughes, by large sections of the Canadian press, and its valuable contribution to the self-sufficiency of Canadian industry was only recognized long after the war was over.[28]

Examples of Sir Sam's vigilant interest in the independent action of the Canadian government can be multiplied almost indefinitely. None reveals more acrimony than his condemnation of the V.A.D. hospitals in Great Britain in which Canadian wounded were frequently placed and which received the strongest censure in Colonel Herbert A. Bruce's famous report. Instances of neglect and insufficient training to the prejudice of wounded men provoked ungallant outbursts from Hughes and deep dislike in the hearts of many noble ladies in England. But in spite of Sir Andrew MacPhail's official efforts, the principle of segregating Canadian wounded was also taken for granted in the Second World War. All these instances of friction, in which Hughes invariably maintained the equal voice of the Dominion, are so many examples of the practical difficulties in the path of the exponents of Imperial Federation. In 1916 as in 1904 he adhered to his belief that an imperial parliament should be responsible for foreign affairs, international trade, and war, while the existing bodies confined themselves to local matters. But the emphasis had changed:

> A Dominion which sends to a European war an army immeasurably greater than the allied armies sent to the Crimea cannot again have the issues of peace and war determined for her by a government in which she is not represented. This I may say in full confidence of the righteousness of the British cause and naturally with full approval of the action taken by the British Government in going to war. Some solution however must be found for the situation in which we find ourselves.[29]

[28]David Carnegie, *The History of Munitions Supply in Canada 1914-18* (London and Toronto, 1925), I, 115.

[29]Sir Sam Hughes, "Canada's Future within the Empire" in E. A. Victor (ed.), *Canada's Future* (Toronto, 1916), 11.

Sir Robert Borden, with a more methodical and speculative intelligence, sought the solution in the war-time improvisation of the Imperial War Cabinet; but the post-war political leaders of Canada turned their footsteps in the opposite direction. With the single exception of the Ottawa agreements of 1932 so bitterly assailed by Mr. Mackenzie King, whose cherished atavism has played a vital part in latter-day imperial relationships, the Canadian government has moved steadily towards the constitutional dissolution of the British Empire. Hughes and his friends rightly rejected the policy of deliberation without decision and expected much from the compulsion of comradeship in war, but the forces arrayed against imperial ideas were too strong for them.

It has been said rightly that the Borden Government stood ever in advance of public opinion during the First World War,[30] an effort which brought measureless misfortune upon the once paramount Conservative party. Few members of that Cabinet have lived in the public memory as long as Sir Sam Hughes, who left it in 1916 a physical and political casualty of the war which he had descried. Few Canadians have so fiercely proclaimed the nationhood of Canada even within the purlieus of Whitehall. None have sought more earnestly for the practical realization of the imperial dream now farther away than ever in an infinitely more dangerous world. He was a man whose zeal was at once animated and frustrated by an abnormal egotism and in whose mind the sense of imperial greatness warred continuously with that of national pride. His achievement was essentially democratic, and more modest than his vision. The verdict of a large part of his countrymen may be expressed in the words of Sir Wilfrid Laurier who is reported to have said, "He has done more in his day and generation for the upbuilding of the Militia of Canada and the Empire than any other man."[31]

## Discussion*

*Colonel Stacey* said that all these three excellent papers had been given by men to whom he was personally indebted for aid to his Historical Section. Colonel Jackson had been in charge of war diaries overseas and the Section was now continually finding the extent of its indebtedness to him for his work. He was now in charge of war service records at the Department of Veterans Affairs and was again of great help in producing the statistics which the Historical Section desired to use. Colonel Jackson was a deep student of the wars of the eighteenth century. Colonel Stacey hoped that future programmes would include more non-professional historians.

He went on to say that Major Lamontagne had been head of the Army Translation Bureau before coming to the Royal Military College. He had translated Colonel Stacey's book on the Canadian Army. In this paper he was opening up a forgotten chapter in Canadian military his-

[30]Lucas, *The Empire at War*, II, 17.

[31]Hughes, "Canada's Future," 10 n.

*These comments represent the discussion of the papers by Colonel Jackson, Major Lamontagne, and Colonel Hughes.

tory. Colonel Stacey noted with interest the connection between the Zouaves and the militia.

Colonel Stacey said that Colonel Hughes had been a member of the Historical Section. He hoped that his paper would be expanded into a fully documented book.

*Mr. Soward* said that Mr. Hughes had caught the spirit of Haliburton which he himself knew because he was born there. Sam Hughes had won the personal esteem of the people of the district which was his stronghold, but most of them knew nothing at all about his views on Imperial Federation. Sir Sam had had an extraordinary memory for people and faces. His great trouble was that he could never separate his enthusiasm as a soldier and his work as a politician and this seriously limited his position. It is noticeable that, faced by problems of federating the Empire, he at once put national interests first and imperialism second. This happened with all Canadian imperialists who had to deal with Imperial statesmen in London. Mr. Soward said that he disagreed with Mr. Hughes's statements about Canada's present course. He felt that we have taken the right course in post-war policy.

*Dr. Lower* said that Major Lamontagne and Mr. Hughes had both drawn attention to forms of imperialism. He said that Mr. Hughes had revealed a real distinction between Toryism and imperialism in Canada. In his opinion Canadian Tories had a nostalgic view of the past while imperialists were and are people whom the present scene never satisfies. The latter desire to be more important than they are and so they seek larger fields to conquer. In Major Lamontagne's paper the imperialists were those for whom the local scene was too small. They acted not so much from devotion to the papal see as in an attempt to transcend a petty localism. The Vatican has always been the metropolis of some French Canadians just as London has been the metropolis of certain English-speaking elements. He wanted to know whether an immersion in Rome affected French Canadians as contact with London affected English Canadians. Did it arouse a Canadian nationalism in the breasts of French-Canadian priests who went to Rome?

*Major Lamontagne* said that there was a difference between the two forms of imperialism which Professor Lower thought were the same. The Zouaves went to defend the Pope who was attacked by Garibaldi. They had a religious motive. He emphasized the fact that they paid their own expenses.

*Mrs. Wright* said that the Virginia Rangers were an important factor in the formation of the Queen's Rangers. Rogers was one of the creators of the idea of the Veterans of Foreign Wars because he asked for a huge slice of New Brunswick for his militia before he raised them.

*Colonel Jackson* agreed with Mrs. Wright about the origin of a movement from New Brunswick to Upper Canada which she had shown to have been begun by Rogers. He added that the second regiment of Queen's Rangers were artisans, who did such important building as that of Fort York and certain roads around Kingston.