

THE DAILY NEWS

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DAILY EDITION



Saturday, August 29, 1914.

The report of the possible confiscation of the property of German investors in this Province is hardly along the right line. Canada has been seeking immigrants and investors from the whole world in the last few years. From Germany she has received some of her best settlers and a great amount of cash that has helped very materially in the development of the West. It has been said repeatedly that the British have no quarrel with the German people but rather with the military tyrants who have been oppressing the people at times in the interest of their war schemes. While the German Government has grabbed all the cash and investments of the Allies in Germany this is no reason for the British to do likewise. Britain can boast not only of her efforts for the freedom of the world but also that this was done disinterestedly. While we,

therefore, have right on our side even in confiscating the property of our enemies, it would be much more along the line of British tradition to leave them alone.

As a matter of fact, nothing should be done inconsistent with national safety and honor to antagonize the German residents in this country. We have always boasted, to be a refuge to the down trodden nations of Europe and we should continue to be so even in the face of provoking circumstances. Citizens who have come to us from the lands of our present enemy should be made to feel that they are in perfect safety so long as they do not antagonize the patriotism of our people. If this should be done in any case the offenders will receive the full benefit of the law, but the onus of any such action must not be borne by Canadians.

In the Letter Box

Mr. Editor.

Dear Sir.—In the issue of The Empire of the 25th instant I notice an article relative to a name for the new regiment to be formed in this city in which the writer intimates that any opposition to the appointment of Mr. Peck to command the regiment would be most unpatriotic.

Also in a former issue of The Empire a letter from Mr. Peck appeared in an endeavour to justify his position in endeavouring to secure the command of this new regiment over the heads of qualified men, in which Mr. Peck appealed to the patriotism of the citizens to stand by him in the hour of need, and branded as disloyal any one who objected to his appointment.

It is a well known fact that as an officer of the Militia of Canada qualified to hold command of a regiment, I take exception to the appointment of Mr. Peck to this new command, and in the fact of this charge of disloyalty I feel that in justice to myself and the other qualified officers in the city who also take exception to Mr. Peck's appointment, a statement of my position is due the public.

Days before there was any inkling of the formation of a regiment in this city, I, as well as four other qualified officers in the militia of Canada had freely and voluntarily offered our services to the Empire. Mr. Peck has endeavored to lead the public to believe that he offered his services to the department and that in recognition of this offer he was handed the command of the regiment. He has also endeavored to justify his position by stating that as Captain McMullin had consented to serve under him there was no reason why other officers should not serve under him. He has not, however, informed the public that when Captain McMullin consented to act under him he did not know that Mr. Peck only held sergeant's papers and was not an officer of the Militia of Canada, and I am strongly of the opinion that had Mr. McMullin known the true condition he would never have consented to serve.

It is only fair to the qualified officers in this city who feel that they could not with any self-respect serve under Mr. Peck, but who are nevertheless enthusiastic militia men that the above facts should be given to the public. At tremendous expense the militia list of the officers of the

militia are published from time to time, the one fundamental purpose of which is to preserve the seniority of the officers. Why this expense if in a case of this kind the lists are not to be consulted?

Representing five of the qualified officers in the city who are opposed to the appointment of Peck, a delegation waited upon Captain McMullin and registered a protest against Mr. Peck's taking command of the regiment, requesting that he use his best endeavour to have Mr. Peck stand aside and allow the regiment to be formed with Captain McMullin in command, and at least six other qualified officers in the regiment. Captain McMullin admitted that the protest of the qualified officers was justified and stated that he would take the matter up with Mr. Peck which he has since done. However, Mr. Peck could not be moved, and stated that the objection of these officers did not amount to anything.

Mr. Peck well knows that if he were given command of this regiment and same were required for service in two weeks or a month's time, he could not take command as it will take some months for him to qualify. On the other hand were he to step aside a regiment could at once be formed with its staff officers and company commanders all qualified men who would bend every effort to give Prince Rupert an efficient corps. From the standpoint of loyalty and patriotism, I ask the public what is Mr. Peck's duty in this matter?

Like Mr. Peck, I, too, have risen from the ranks but not with such meteoric rapidity, having won my rank after fifteen years continuous service with my home regiment, serving under Lt.-Col. Marsh, Lt.-Col. Alexander and Lt. Col. T. G. Loggie. I received my first commission as second lieutenant from Lord Stanley of Preston in 1890, and in 1895 got my first step in rank through service to the rank of lieutenant. Again in 1900, through service, I got my second step in rank to the rank of Captain, serving with the regiment until coming to the coast in 1903 when my name was carried to the reserve. During the last six years I was with the regiment I was on the staff as Adjutant, and during my service with same attended nine camps of instruction. My position must therefore be clear to any militia man and I believe will be fully appreciated by the public.

It must be evident to Mr. Peck that in order to have an efficient regiment in this city he must have the support of every qualified man in the city and as this

is impossible, if he is the patriot he professes to be he should be a big enough man, considering the service of other men to step aside and himself take a command in the new regiment under a commanding officer who will have the entire sympathy and support of every qualified officer in the city. In conclusion I wish to say that under the regulations of the British Army a man in the ranks cannot be promoted in one step to a rank higher than that of lieutenant and that at the present time H. R. H. the Prince of Wales, our future King, is serving as a lieutenant with his regiment, thereby recognizing the seniority and service of the officers under whom he is serving and upholding the glorious traditions of the British Army of honour and chivalry.

Thanking you for your valuable space, ours very truly,

W. S. FISHER.

P.S.—This letter was for publication on the 27th instant, and was on that date shown to Captain McMullin who requested that a publication be withheld so that a further effort could be made to convince Mr. Peck that his stand was not in the best interests of the militia.

In the presence of Mr. Maitland the writer told His Worship the Mayor he felt that if he, in the best interests of the militia, in order to heal the breach which existed in Prince Rupert was willing to step aside and serve under two junior officers, Mr. Peck should also step aside and go in as a captain. This suggested compromise seemed fair to Mayor Newton, who requested that the letters be withheld from publication another day, promising to interview Mr. Peck and use his influence to have him agree to the above compromise. Nothing has been done in this regard.

W. S. F.

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