

# RALSTON SLAPS POULIOT DOWN FOR HIS SLURS

Angered Minister Gets  
Applause of Both Sides  
in Denying Disloyalty

JOINED BY HANSON

(By R. A. FARQUHARSON.)  
(Staff Writer, The Globe and Mail.)

Ottawa, Feb. 21. — White with anger, Defense Minister J. L. Ralston rose in the House of Commons today to answer charges of disloyalty to his leader and to defend dollar-a-year men in his department from a series of amazing slurs heaped on them by J. F. Pouliot, a front-bench Government supporter.

"I do not think it is necessary to beat my breast and proclaim my loyalty to my leader," Mr. Ralston declared. "I think I have endeavored to show that by my actions."

A sustained roar of applause both from Government and Opposition benches was the emphatic answer the House gave to the Minister. As the House applauded, the rotund member from Temiscouata who had

precipitated the scene sat and scowled.

Mr. Pouliot was taken sharply to task a year ago by Mr. Ralston for indulging in a partisan outburst during the debate on the war appropriation bill then. Today's performance was longer, more bitter, more partisan. It ran the full forty-minute limit and included Toryism and all its works, The Globe and Mail and other advocates of National Government, the financial interests which supported the Sirois recommendations, and high officers in the Department of Defense as the targets for vitriolic attack.

Mr. Pouliot presented what amounted to a forty-minute variety act which repeatedly convulsed the House with laughter. He went over the whole Cabinet distributing his praises and then singled out Mr. Ralston and Munitions Minister C. D. Howe for attack.

Mr. Pouliot referred to our soldiers fighting now on the soil of England.

"I believe they should be here to protect our families in Canada, in sufficient numbers and properly

equipped to give us all a feeling of security," he said. He didn't attempt to explain what he meant by this observation.

Nor did he explain what he meant by this observation: "The air is thick and unbreathable, Mr. Chairman. I have never witnessed such backstage intrigue as there is now in high quarters. I am disgusted with the ways in which the intrigue is being carried on in the holy name of patriotism, when we know that behind it is a group of scoundrels, of buccaneers, of racketeers, of pirates, who are trying to get hold of Canada's wealth for their own purpose."

In defending Victor Sifton, Master-General of the Ordnance; Allan Magee, his executive assistant; Brigadier R. J. Orde, the judge advocate-general and others from the specific attacks of Mr. Pouliot, the Minister of Defense had the hearty co-operation of Conservative Leader Hanson. The Conservative Leader deplored such a speech as that made by the Quebec member in wartime. **Must Cease, Says Hanson.**

Mr. Hanson said: "This sort of thing must cease in the Parliament of Canada or we will be in disrepute."

He congratulated the Minister on his defense of officials, but said he had been wondering if it would not have been better to treat Mr. Pouliot's remarks with "dignified silence."

The Opposition Leader offered to co-operate with all the authority his own office carried in any efforts the Government might adopt to maintain the dignity of Parliament.

Speaking of the National Defense Minister, Mr. Pouliot said he was fond of Mr. Ralston "until he went to St. James Street."

"He (Mr. Ralston) is a very likable man, full of amenity," said Mr. Pouliot. "He is a brilliant lawyer, although he has no appeal to the masses. As I say, he is a most likable man, but I was here a long time before he was."

He referred to Mr. Ralston having been engaged as counsel for a grain inquiry commission some years ago at \$200 a day while he (Pouliot) was fighting the battles of the Liberal Party.

"We do not want to see the few enriched at the expense of the many," said Mr. Pouliot. "We want to see our soldiers well clothed and well armed, given useful weapons with which to gain the victory."

"We do not want any slackers in uniform to infest some of the branches of the Department of National Defense, such as that of the Judge Advocate-General; and I know what I am saying."

**Attacks Newspapers.**

Mr. Pouliot suggested some of the men who had spoken in favor of the adoption of the Sirois Report were speaking for persons who were interested in insurance and other fi-

nancial institutions which held large blocks of Government bonds, including bonds of the Prairie Provinces

From the same source, he said, came propaganda for a Union Government "in order that the rich may become richer and the poor become poorer."

Some newspapers, the Montreal Gazette, the Ottawa Journal, the Ottawa Citizen, The Globe and Mail, and the Winnipeg Free Press, "the worst of all," commended Conservative Leader Hanson for pressing for a National Government, said Mr. Pouliot.

The Winnipeg Free Press was owned by "Victor Sifton, now Master-General of the Ordnance under the Minister of National Defense, who gives orders to his scribes and slaves to attack the colleagues of the Minister of National Defense."

Mr. Pouliot, after attacking Mr.

Ralston, referred also to Mr. Howe, and said: "I have no lessons to learn from them because I am fighting the battles of the Liberal Party for my Leader, Mr. King, in order that he is not stabbed in the back after they have burned enough incense under his nose."

It was time the Government had a master, he said, "and that master should be W. L. Mackenzie King." He should not be "handicapped by intrigue among his colleagues."

**Sifton Defended.**

Mr. Ralston entered a vigorous defense of Mr. Sifton in reply to Mr. Pouliot's references. He said Mr. Sifton came to Ottawa to assist Philip Chester of Winnipeg in reorganizing the Ordnance Branch, which was most important in getting equipment and supplies for the forces.

When Mr. Chester returned to Winnipeg after several months he recommended that Mr. Sifton be Master-General of the Ordnance. After serious consideration and at the risk of "some heartburning for military officers," Mr. Sifton was appointed to the post.

"He is carrying on as a citizen without salary and without expenses, giving his services to the country," said Mr. Ralston. "I have the utmost confidence in him and I believe his services will be of great benefit to Canada."

At Mr. Hanson's suggestion, Mr. Ralston also expressed full confidence in Brigadier Orde, Judge Advocate-General, who, he said, was carrying out his duties "as a Canadian should."

Regarding his own fee of \$200 a day as counsel for the Royal Grain Inquiry Commission some years ago Mr. Ralston said at the time he had retired to private life and asked only the fee usually given "legal gentlemen on such commissions."

He could not take less in fairness to his law firm. The money was paid to his firm and in due course he received his share. The firm had to get the fee in order to be "at least partially reimbursed for the loss of my services."

He said he considered the fee proper, having regard to the usual payments to professional men.