

When People Like These Endorse Government Control

—justifying their stand by such sound reasons, the proposal must possess real merit. They cannot all be wrong. Let their judgments help you in forming yours!

Sir John Aird, President Canadian Bank of Commerce, Toronto:

"Stress has been laid by prohibitionists upon the evil effect of liquor upon young people, and the claim is made that they will consume more liquor under the conditions proposed by Mr. Ferguson than under the O.T.A. If the aim of the prohibitionists is to strengthen the moral fibre of our youth, then in my opinion they are defeating their own object. Most of the young people whom I have had under me have occupied positions of trust, and have naturally been subjected to temptation. I have always found that to train a man to resist temptation worked out much more satisfactorily for all concerned than to try to devise elaborate means to remove the temptation from him."

Sir Alan Aylesworth, Toronto:

"I have been voting now for more than fifty years in parliamentary elections, and I have never given a Conservative vote, but I am going to do so this year, because I think that any measure of prohibition by law as opposed to prohibition by education is the very reverse of what I have always considered were the true principles of Liberalism. As well might one try to advance the interest of religion or of Christianity by legislation that would compel the people to go to church."

Professor Alfred Baker, University of Toronto:

"The O.T.A. has proved a failure, conceived though it was with the best intentions and administered by Attorneys-General who earnestly desired its success. It has not stopped the use of liquor; there has grown a contempt for the law; it has created a class of bootleggers who have been enriched beyond the dreams of avarice. Surely it is time to make a change!"

Hon. R. B. Bennett, K.C., M.P., Ex-Minister of Finance, Calgary, Alberta:

"Not only has the Alberta Act been declared to be legally valid, but in practice it does control the liquor traffic in that province. The best proof of what can be done is what has been done, and in the language of one of the judges of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of the province in which I reside—I think the present Liquor Control Act a good and sound one, and has done more in the direction of temperance than any law we hitherto have had."

La-Col. Arthur L. Bishop, St. Catharines, Ont.:

"No good can come from arbitrary and hysterical measures. The O.T.A. has proved unenforceable even under two such dry Attorneys-General as Mr. Nickle and Mr. Raney, and where they have failed no one else will succeed. We are facing facts, not theories. I think Government Control should be given a fair trial in Ontario, as it has been in the West, and I believe the result will be equally satisfactory."

Col. Herbert A. Bruce, M.D., L.R.C.P., Toronto:

"It is not a question of 'dry' or 'wet'; it is a question of another Temperance Act against one that has been tried and found wanting. I consider Mr. Ferguson's proposal reasonable and enforceable, and therefore a great advance on the old Act. As such it should have the support of every one sincerely interested in furthering the Temperance cause and reducing the evils of drunkenness."

Police Magistrate C. H. Burgess, Peel County:

"My view of the matter is that the sale of liquor is out of control and is running wild (under the O.T.A.), and it is necessary to try to bring it under control again."

Rev. Father J. E. Burke, C.S.P., St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Toronto:

"It (the O.T.A.) has been no blessing. During the years it has been on our Statute Books the youth of Ontario, with singular and beautiful exceptions, has gone back. The terrifying increase in liquor amongst our boys and girls, even of tender years; the consequent deterioration of moral standards and conduct; the curse of the bootlegger; the conquest by strong liquor of our parents, our homes, our clubs, our students, our gatherings, have been begotten and thrived under the sway of prohibition."

Mr. L. N. Byrns, former Treasurer Sarnia Prohibition Union, Sarnia, Ont.:

"There are two questions before the electors in this campaign: (1) will we continue Government control under the Ontario Temperance Act, as we have had it for the last few years, whereby any person wanting liquor can buy all he likes from the bootlegger, or (2) will we have it controlled so that a person can only buy it through a Government commission house, where a person has got to have a permit to buy it, and then only a certain quantity at a time? I am not a staunch Conservative; I have voted Liberal when I deemed it wise, but will not this time."

Col. R. H. A. Carnan, Belleville, Ont.:

"I am convinced the people have seen enough to lead them to decide they would rather have the distribution of liquor by Government regulation than by the unscrupulous bootlegger."

Hon. and Reverend H. J. Cody, L.L.D., D.D., Toronto:

"The great achievements of the control plan, in my estimation, consist of the following: In the first place, people were no longer thinking and talking incessantly about getting a drink; in the second place, there was an overwhelming public opinion behind the enforcement of the Act where in the past public opinion had been strongly divided and illegal traffic had flourished because resorted to by a considerable section of the public; in the third place, bootlegging on a large scale was enormously diminished."

Draper Dobie, Toronto:

"Having voted Liberal in the last general election, and dry in the first two referendums, why have I decided to vote for Premier Ferguson's Government and policy? It is because Ontario wants more business and less taxes, more honesty and less dishonesty, more breadth of education and less narrowness of parochialism, more self-respect and less fear."

W. J. Fair, Kingston, Ont.:

"When the late Principal Grant was at Queen's University he convinced me as probably no other man could of the pernicious evils of prohibition. Those like myself who remember Principal Grant, will agree with me when I speak of his far-seeing vision, his profound scholarship, and his true appreciation of human values. I believe prohibition is the blackest spot on the whole history of the Province of Ontario."

Clara C. Field, Cobourg, Ont.:

"Speaking from a woman's standpoint, I fear very much the result our present system of controlling the liquor question will have on the character of our young people, who are growing up in an atmosphere of reckless law-breaking and deceitful living. Will it be possible for them to have those feelings of patriotism they should have if they feel a contempt for the laws of their country? I feel I can certainly endorse Mr. Ferguson's policy as a sincere endeavor to solve a perplexing problem."

Sir Joseph Flavelle, Bart., Toronto:

"If the responsibility were mine I would not choose Government control as now stated as a reform for existing evils. I believe, however, there is a weight of public opinion which demands a change in the existing law, and which will not be set aside by the present hesitating body of public opinion for its enforcement. Therefore, with the elimination of the legal sale of liquor in public houses of entertainment, I accept the sale of liquor through Government agencies only, under a system of permits, as probably the best obtainable change enforceable under the existing state of public opinion."

Rev. T. W. Goodwill, Presbyterian Church, Cobourg, Ont.:

"I believe the O.T.A. to be a failure, but in this election campaign I regard the Act as a political issue, but a moral issue; not a question of lack of enforcement but rather of impossibility of enforcement. I find conditions under the Ontario Temperance Act to be much worse than they were before. I believe that Premier Ferguson is making a sincere and studied effort to secure a law that will be observed and one that can be enforced."

Principal W. L. Grant, Upper Canada College, Toronto:

"As a total abstainer of twenty-five years' standing, as one who loves the young men of Canada and whose life is spent in doing his best for them, I am glad to align myself with Canon Cody, Sir Thomas White and Sir John Willison in support of the Prime Minister in his fight against the evils of intemperance and lawlessness."

David Griffith, Greening Wire Works, Hamilton:

"I travel twice every year through the whole of Canada. I know the extent of the bootlegging evil in Hamilton. I do not know that it can be worse in any other part of the Province. In the West you cannot hear any complaint with present conditions. In Ontario it is impossible to get away from expressed ridicule and disrespect for the O.T.A."

Mr. F. Barry Hayes, Pres., Toronto Carpet Mfg. Co., Toronto:

"My impression of prohibition is that whereas the country generally thought it would be very much to its interests, it has only resulted in making many of our citizens hypocrites and law-breakers. This is having a very bad effect generally. Drinking in our cities and larger towns has certainly increased to an alarming extent. I am not a 'wet', but I am not in favor of repressive legislation. The idea of making people good by statute is a delusion."

Rev. Father C. J. Killean, Belleville, Ont.:

"I view with a great deal of concern the increase in lawlessness and crime that prohibition has engendered. It leads to a spirit of distrust. It is no use saying to the people 'You cannot have liquor.' Those who want it will get it. Fifty-one per cent. of the people cannot impose their will on the other forty-nine per cent."

Rev. John Lyons, M.A., Church of England Rector:

"After studying the situation I have become convinced that Premier Ferguson's policy is the best solution yet placed before the people of Ontario to adequately deal with the liquor problem."

Ven. Archdeacon Mackintosh, Dundas, Ont.:

"You never heard of the prohibitionists of the Provinces which have Government Control asking for a change to what we call a prohibition law. It shows that they are satisfied with the law, and feel that it is useless to ask for a change."

J. C. Makins, K.C., Stratford, Ont.:

"In a very large percentage of the cases in my experience contested in court in these districts (Waterloo County and Windsor Border), perjury has been committed. This is one feature that our so-called 'temperance' friends seem to overlook. In this respect the cure seems worse than the disease."

Rev. W. G. Martin, Pilgrim United Church, Brantford, Ont.:

"No man, unless he is blind, can say with sincerity that the O.T.A. as a prohibition measure has been the success we hoped and believed it would be, when it became law. The more I consider the question the more convinced I am that the bringing about of prohibition, an ideal towards which we are all striving, and to which we are committed as men and women, eager for the best moral interest of the community and of the state, is a process of destruction. It is the responsibility of the home, the school, and the church."

D. L. McCarthy, K.C., Toronto:

"The Ontario Temperance Act has undoubtedly abolished the bar, but unfortunately, instead of having one bar in a hotel, we now have rooms in hotels converted into private bars."

C. C. McKie, Vice-President, Welland Vale Mfg. Co., St. Catharines, Ont.:

"Not only labor, but the country as a whole, will be better under Government control. I strongly endorse the Ferguson policy."

Major-General the Hon. S. C. McBurney, Hamilton, Ont.:

"Unhesitatingly state that in my opinion the policy of the Government control of liquor, as it is now stated by the Prime Minister, is sound and is the best interest of all the people of the Province. I have lately been in the Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. This is what I have learned. The people who were strongly in favor of prohibition will without any qualification whatever say now that since Government control of liquor has come into force they would never for one moment go back upon their present legislation."

Controller William Morrison, Hamilton, Ont.:

"There is more alcohol drunk in Hamilton now than at any time in the city's history."

William Mulock, K.C., Toronto:

"I have no hesitation in telling the people of Ontario that I favor Government control in preference to the O.T.A., and that I will support the policy of the Ferguson Government."

Mrs. Emily Murphy (Jenny Canuck), Police Magistrate, Edmonton, Alberta:

"Before Government control became the law of Alberta I opposed it vigorously, both on the platform and by my pen. I was fearful that our last state would be worse than our first. It seemed only logical that if the restrictions were removed there would be more drunkenness and crime. No living person could persuade me to the contrary. After a period of several years in which I have been called upon to enforce the present Liquor Control Act, both as a city and provincial magistrate, I am bound to acknowledge that my fears were largely unfounded. There was not even a rush of inebriety as I had predicted, the people showing a remarkable degree of restraint. The conditions were steadily improved—again I say, not from any degree of spiritual enrichment on the part of our people—but because the law was well conceived and is being well enforced."

Dr. C. J. Munro, Temperance Candidate in 1919, Niagara Falls, Ont.:

"Before 1916 we had 15 bars and liquor stores in Niagara Falls; now we have double that number of bootleggers. The Provincial Police and the License Inspectors have been very active in endeavoring to enforce the Ontario Temperance Act, but it is really impossible to do so. I am not only in favor of Premier Ferguson's policy, but I particularly endorse the provision that no permit shall be given to persons under 21 years of age."

Mr. Paul J. Myler, Pres. Canadian Westinghouse Co., Hamilton, Ont.:

"As an employer of labor I see no possibility of room for complaint in Ontario when a man shall be allowed to bottle of beer in his own house. Long experience with our men in this company is good enough for me on this point."

J. G. Notman, Vice-President McKinnon Industries, St. Catharines, Ont.:

"We have as much trouble now with our labor as we had before prohibition came into effect. There are the same Monday and Tuesday difficulties, but now they are due to poisoned alcohol. Our men would be much better if they could have good beer when they want it. Government control as they have it in the West is what we should have in Ontario."

Col. W. N. Ponton, K.C., Belleville:

"As a lawyer I know that the fact cannot be controverted, that in liquor cases under the repressive O.T.A. truth has lost its ancient power. The administration of justice has been honeycombed by perjury and the oath has lost its sanctity, despite the conscientious and able efforts of magistrates, Crown attorneys and police officers who have done their best to stem the tide of revolt. Where the law ends, tyranny begins. The O.T.A. is despotic, arbitrary and against the will of the citizens of Canada. A 'wet' law is the State's collected will. The O.T.A. never was. Under the O.T.A. we are all treated as children and weaklings and criminals."

Dr. A. Primrose, Dean of Medicine, Toronto University:

"The (medical) doctors are legally permitted to issue a definite number of prescriptions each month, the inference being that the number of sick folk requiring alcohol should not exceed that number, criticism. The present situation is intolerable. The medical profession must be released from such undignified servitude."

P. D. Ross, Publisher Ottawa Journal, Ottawa:

"Government Control has operated in several of the Provinces of the Dominion, and apparently without grave evil—at all events without such palpable evil as to suggest that prohibition is a necessity, certainly without such evil as is palpable under prohibition in the United States. It seems to me that the amount of public or private harm which the proposed Government control leaves possible need not compel any of us to interfere with the personal freedom of other people."

Dr. F. N. C. Starr, Toronto:

"Some over-zealous people tell us that Government Control does not work in the Provinces where it is being tried, but such is not my interpretation as I have found it. I have visited each Province where there has been a change, both under prohibitory measures and under Government Control, and the odds, to my way of thinking, are all on the side of Government Control."

Mr. Edward Tellier, former Liberal Member for North Essex, Windsor, Ont.:

"I do not look upon this as a party fight. I think we must all take off our coats and put Government Control over. I am for Government Control first, last and all the time."

Dr. J. A. Temple, M.R.C.S., L.D., Past President Ontario Medical Association, Toronto:

"There is one fact that is very prominent in my mind and which I think might well be emphasized—that is the great increase in the use of narcotics in the last three or four years. The man who was addicted to liquor has switched in many cases to drugs. While there is always hope for the drunkard, it is almost impossible to cure the drug addict. The O.T.A. was much too sweeping in its provisions."

Most Rev. G. Thorneley, D.D., D.C.L., Archbishop of Algona, and Metropolitan of Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, 1912:

"There is in human nature a sense of freedom which must be respected. All these considerations have to be weighed by the Government, and I have very great hope that the measures proposed by Premier Ferguson will be found, if carried out, to be a very great improvement on what we have been experiencing the past few years."

Sir Charles Tupper, Winnipeg:

"The reasons that convince me most firmly that Premier Ferguson's policy will prove a great boon for the people of Ontario are based on my observation of the great success of liquor control in Manitoba. Control in Manitoba has brought about the following three great improvements: there is less drinking by both young and old, particularly by the young; control has created a higher moral tone in the community at large; it has also brought about a decidedly higher respect for law."

L. A. Van Skoner, formerly Inspector Children's Aid Society, Pictou, Ont.:

"I have been an ardent prohibitionist all my life. But in the discharge of my duties as Inspector for the Children's Aid Society I came across conditions that impressed me with their seriousness. In almost every case of destitution which came under my observation I found that bootlegging was the cause. I do not believe in changing my prohibition beliefs that I am taking a retrograde step. Prohibition means war."

Rev. Frank Vipond, Streetsville, Ont.:

"I am not afraid to express the conviction that the greatest enemies of Christian temperance, of sobriety, and of the upbuilding of strong Christian character have not been the breweries and distilleries, but official and fanatical prohibitionists who have been willing to make of the Christian faith a lesser thing than that of the Mahometans."

B. S. White, K.C., President Ontario Bar Association, Toronto:

"I am satisfied that there is in the province no such thing as a prohibition under it (the O.T.A.), for the simple reason that every person who wants liquor can get it without difficulty. I believe that the Premier and the Government have followed the only proper course open to them in asking the people for a mandate to remove our affliction from us."

Rev. Sir Thomas White, K.C.M.G., Toronto:

"That the Ontario Temperance Act is not capable of adequate enforcement, lacking as it does the strong support of public opinion, must by this time be clear to all who have given any study to the subject. The time has arrived to amend it as to prevent and limit, as far as possible, the evils of intemperance under a system of Government control, having a firmer support of public opinion, and under regulations which will not lead to the evils which for the past seven years have been inseparably connected with the administration of the O.T.A."

Col. Rev. Cecil G. Williams, Dominion Secretary, Navy League of Canada:

"Should I steal, commit forgery or break any other law in Canada except that of the O.T.A., I am punished and upon my release ignored, until I have rehabilitated myself by those who know me, because they are sympathetic to and upholders of the law. But if I violate the O.T.A. and am punished for the same according to law, I have the sympathy of my friends, showing that they hold the law in contempt. Very different is the treatment extended in the two instances. The law should be the same from coast to coast for individuals and all classes, and until it is I cannot see the righteousness or the practicability of the O.T.A."

Most Rev. David Williams, Archbishop of Huron and Metropolitan of Ontario, London, Ont.:

"It (the O.T.A.) has done more to encourage deceit and subterfuge, more to demoralize the youth of the country and to create a general disrespect for law than all the other causes combined during the ten years of its existence. Government Control, with individual permits, is the only sane system."

Lord Williams, Police Magistrate, Pictou, Ont.:

"All my life I have been a temperance advocate. But when I saw not only how the law itself was being disregarded by people who were not addicted to law-breaking but by the actual perversion of the process of justice, I felt there must be some change. I have been magistrate in Pictou for 18 years, and what has struck me recently is the limits that people will go to to perjure themselves when faced with charges of violating the Ontario Temperance Act."

Sir John Willison, Toronto:

"I was wholly unprepared for the unanimity of opinion expressed in favor of Government Control. Again and again I was told by those who had opposed the system and voted for prohibition in plebiscites and referendums that conditions were better under control and that they would not vote to restore the prohibitory enactments. No one suggested that bootlegging had been wholly abolished or that there was no unlawful selling or illicit drinking. They did insist that bootlegging was less common and less profitable, that the law was generally respected and enforced, that there was far less drinking in hotel bedrooms and more respectable places, and that there was a greater degree of social contentment and no such feeling as under prohibition that shame must be carried and a secret store of liquor provided for dances, house parties and like events."

Albert Whitney, brother of the late Sir James Whitney, Prescott, Ont.:

"The facts stare us in the face. When the Government dispensaries of this province are in receipt of a yearly revenue of something like five million dollars, and the bootleggers are profiting to the extent of one million dollars, it seems to me that it is time to call a halt, and see ourselves in all seriousness if this whole business would not be in far better hands entrusted to a Government with the splendid business record of the present Provincial Government, of which the Hon. Howard Ferguson is head."

The above excerpts from letters, interviews and addresses are necessarily restricted, also limited in number, owing to lack of space.

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