

Report of Sir George Bury

ON OPERATING THE RAILWAY.

RECOMMENDS ANOTHER COMMISSION.

Dear Sir,—I have made a study of the railway situation in Newfoundland, as desired by you, and my suggestions are:

That a contract be entered into for one year, from the 30th June 1921, with the Reid Newfoundland Company to operate your railway, without prejudice to former agreements.

That the Reid Newfoundland Company be required to operate the railway with the utmost economy, consistent with safety and reasonable service.

That a capable general manager be appointed by the Reid Newfoundland Company to operate the railway and that the appointment be subject to your approval.

That a commission of three be formed with the powers of the Canadian Railway Commission, except where such powers would conflict with any agreement existing between the Government and the Reid Newfoundland Company. This commission to deal with all public utilities in addition to the railway.

That expenditures on capital account be made only upon the written sanction of the Government and that these works be paid for when completed upon a certificate from the Government engineer.

The railway since 1904 to date has cost to operate, five and three quarter million dollars more than the railway earned. Of this amount, one million six hundred and fifty thousand dollars was lost during the past year when the railway was operated by the Commission appointed by the Government and one million, one hundred and thirty-five thousand and one hundred and seven dollars and fifty cents the year previous.

During the year ending with this month wages of employees were increased, rolling stock shop force, maintenance men and porters on the 30th June last; engineers and firemen at the end of September and the station staff and trainmen at the end of the year.

The officers of the railway estimated that the loss on the coming year's operations will be over two millions of dollars.

The earnings are falling and the railway's traffic officers place the decrease to be expected at almost half the present receipts. I believe that the report is too pessimistic and have made my calculations on a more hopeful outlook.

To operate the railway at the minimum cost, consistent with safety and reasonable service, certain changes in operations must follow, which have been placed before the Reid Newfoundland Company in the form of suggestions.

That the Government agree to pay the actual loss on operating the railway during the coming year, but that should the loss exceed one and a half million dollars that such excess should be borne by the Reid Newfoundland Company.

The very large expenditure that was proposed to place heavier rails on the line, should be deferred. The rails on the Fortune Bay branch (never opened) should be taken up and used for replacing worn rails.

For a number of years to come the rails at present on your railway will answer by anchoring them either by substituting angle bars for the fish plates now in use, by rail anchors or by slotting the rails at the ends to hold the joint on the tie. I recommend that the rails be slotted, which can be done cheaply as they lay and that only sufficient angle bars for one hundred miles of track be purchased to substitute fish plates on swamps and such places where the most difficulty is experienced in preventing the rails running.

A series of light snow sheds, through and side hill, to the extent of about a mile should be constructed west of Avondale. Much delay to traffic avoided and economy will result.

So soon as money is available, a coal handling plant should be erected at Argentea. One suitable to the present and prospective tonnage to be transferred.

If you are unable to enter into a contract with the Reid Newfoundland Company, or believe it undesirable to do so, there is only operation by the Government left. In view of the unfortunate results which have come from Government operation of railways in Canada, the United States, Great Britain and elsewhere I imagine you would prefer to go some lengths before embarking upon such an undertaking.

Yours truly,
(Sgd.) GEORGE BURY,
Honourable Sir Richard A. Squires, K. C. M. G., Prime Minister, St. John's, Newfoundland.

Shipping Notes.

S.S. Digby arrived at Liverpool on Friday last, and leaves for this port on Saturday.

S.S. Fern leaves Sydney to-day for St. John's with coal for the Reid Nfld. Co.

Dr. Ross's Ointment used by Physicians

The Ayre Athletic Association Garden Party.

AT BROOKFIELD, NEAR BOWRING PARK—THE BIG EVENT OF THE SEASON.

As will be seen from our advertisement, the Ayre Athletic Association Garden Party will be held at the beautiful grounds of Brookfield, junction of Waterford and Old Placentia Road (a glorious spot) on Wednesday afternoon, July 13th.

Now the purpose, for which this Garden Party is being held is to raise funds to complete that beautiful and attractive Educational Property, formerly known as Coady's Farm, on Pennywell Road, and so generously presented to the Methodist College by Charles P. Ayre, Esq. Extensive alterations and improvements last year to the extent of \$10,000.00, not including the cost of property, have been made to beautify and regulate these grounds, which include Football Square, Baseball Diamond, Regular Measured Racing Course, Lawn Tennis Greens, Bowl Greens, etc., for the improvement of the college students in the outdoor sports of life, but more yet to be done to complete the grounds, and when we inform the public that these grounds will be exclusively used as the exercise grounds for the pupils of the Methodist College to develop their physical powers so as to fit them for the more strenuous college studies, we think the appeal to all Newfoundlanders to help make this Garden Party the very best yet financially will not be in vain.

It is only necessary to show the Newfoundlanders that something is being done to provide for our boys and girls, the men and women of tomorrow, when we feel the call will be responded to nobly.

In case you forget the date, remember it is WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, July 13th, at Brookfield, on the field owned by the Department of Agriculture, and so very generously put to the use of the Association. This field is just five minutes' walk from Bowring Park, and is really a beautiful spot to hold such a Garden Party, as ample space is provided for everything.

Trains and Busses are running all day, so that nobody need worry about getting in and out. Be sure and remember the date, WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, the 13th of July, at Brookfield.—adv't.

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House of Assembly.

MONDAY, July 4.

The whole of the afternoon session was taken up with a debate on the American duty embargo of 15 cents per lb. on imported fish. Several Opposition members spoke at some length on this matter which is a more serious one than the general public may realize. During the night session several Bills were put through the Committee stage. Amongst them was the Argentea Railway Bill which was again discussed at some length.

The House met at 2.15 p.m. The Bill respecting the appointment of a temporary Municipal Council was passed under suspended rules. The Bill is as follows:—

(1) "The Governor in Council shall have power to appoint a Commission consisting of seven persons to administer the Municipal affairs of the City of St. John's from the expiration of the term of the present Commission until the Council elected under the proposed City Charter shall assume office.

(2) The said Commission shall have all the powers, rights and duties vested in the St. John's Municipal Council under the Municipal Acts relating to St. John's and the Chairman chosen by the said Commission shall stand in place of and have, exercise and perform all the powers, rights and duties of the Mayor under the said Municipal Acts."

Before the Bill passed Mr. Higgins paid a tribute to Mr. W. G. Gosling, the retiring Mayor for his work in the interests of the city. Mr. Bennett, associated himself with Mr. Higgins remarks. The Prime Minister joined in the eulogy of Mr. Gosling. After the Bill had been read a third time the Prime Minister tabled Sir George Bury's report on the Railway which is published in another column. He withdrew his notice of motion for a Commission and said that he would introduce Resolutions to deal with the question on Wednesday.

The following Bill was read a first time, "An Act to amend Chapter 210 of the Consolidated Statutes (3rd Series) entitled "Of Warehouse Receipts and other Securities in the Possession of Banks."

The Prime Minister informed Sir Michael Cashin that the interest on debentures due at the end of the past month was taken out of the Revenue of the then current year.

Mr. Coaker tabled a reply to Sir Michael Cashin's question with respect to Mr. D. Jas. Davies. Sir Michael asked for Mr. Davies' report. He asked if it were correct that a tax had been put on fish and fish products entering the United States. If it were true it was one of the most severe blows the country had received. He wanted to know why the Report of Messrs. Collishaw and Devine with respect to their mission to Washington had not yet been tabled.

The Prime Minister said Mr. Devine's report would be tabled to-day. He also stated that a special commission consisting of Messrs. Eugene Outerbridge, W. C. Job and J. M. Devine had been appointed to confer on the matter and that Mr. Outerbridge had been further commissioned to go to Washington.

Sir Michael Cashin thought it a joke to send men like Messrs. Collishaw and Devine to represent Newfoundland on so important a commission. It was now too late to do anything in the matter. He asked Mr. Coaker if it were true that \$50.00 a qt. duty had been put on our fish going into Spain. Referring again to the American embargo Sir Michael said that we were a good customer of the U.S.A. and everything was in our favour. The Prime Minister had stated that Sir Edgar Bowring would soon be in Halifax and would be sent to Washington on this Commission. Sir Edgar Bowring was the right sort of man to have on this commission but it was now too late. The work of men like Bond, Whiteway and Morris was wasted. He wouldn't be surprised to hear that the Government's first knowledge of this new tariff was gleaned from the public messages. It meant millions to this country and no move had yet been made. Not a sound had been heard from the other side of the House. It was ridiculous.

Mr. Coaker attempted an explanation. He told Sir Michael Cashin that Mr. Devine had been fully supplied with statistics before he stated our case.

Sir Michael asked that the statistics and instructions given Mr. Devine be tabled.

Mr. Higgins suggested, to show the Oppositions attitude is not merely critical, that one of that party would leave the House so as to permit a member of the Government to go away on that matter. He said that Dr. Campbell had been sent to Canada to see what bread of hens or pigs we should have whilst at the same time the Government were only in correspondence with Mr. Devine with respect to this important fishery matter. He said that somebody should be sent away now. "You get nothing in this world unless you get out and hustle for it," said Mr. Higgins. He claimed that nothing like the consideration that would be given to accredited representatives would be received by the gentlemen just commissioned.

Mr. Bennett agreed with Sir Michael Cashin that the Government's action in the matter was a case of "locking the

stable door after the horse was stolen." He had no hesitation in subscribing to the opinion that this tariff would not now be against us, if the Minister of Marine and Fisheries or some other Minister had gone up to Washington to state our case. Mr. Coaker should lose no time in getting to Washington to see that a clause removing the tariff as it applies to Newfoundland be inserted.

Sir John Crosbie regretted the Government had not acted sooner in the matter. There was no doubt that it was one of the heaviest blows we had got recently, and he believed it was more serious even than the Railway question. Messrs. Devine and Collishaw may be alright but no notice could be expected to be paid them if they went without credentials. It had already been stated that certain gentlemen had now gone from New York on this same matter. These men were acting on their own initiative. The Executive had really forgotten about the country. He would take Mr. Coaker back to the debate some years ago on what put the price of fish up. It was the purchase of green fish on the West Coast which made Oporto such a strong market for Newfoundland. To-day green fish could not be sold to the United States and as a consequence, Oporto would be glutted. Prices would come right down. He felt that Mr. Coaker realised that certain things must be done to keep up the price of fish in this country. During that gentleman's absence the Government did not act though they knew that after Harding's election this tariff would go on. And the best men we could find to represent us on the Commission were Collishaw and Devine. The Government had never received a worse castigation than it had on this matter. He was sorry for the Prime Minister. It was the old story of the over loaded horse. He was trying to do too much and had overlooked one of the greatest factors in the marketing of Newfoundland fish. If the whole Executive were now sent up to Washington it would be too late. What it would cost us in dollars only the future could tell but it was a calamity. He was sorry that the Government should allow such things to pass their notice. We had been sending boys to undertake men's jobs. A road was now being built from Badger to Hall's Bay to bring up Scotch Cure herring. What was the use of going on with it? We would sell no more herring to U.S. He asked the Prime Minister to bring all the official documents on this matter to the House to see if it were possible to save something. Rather than allow the Government to be embarrassed he supported Mr. Higgins' suggestion that a man be paid off from the Opposition. All information was brought down and a man sent to Washington. It might do some good but he feared it was too late. He concluded by asking for information concerning the Spanish embargo.

Capt. Lewis also referred to the U.S. tariff on Newfoundland fish. He said that the calamity could not be exaggerated especially as we were already rick to face with disaster. He thought it ridiculous that men like Messrs. Devine and Collishaw had been sent to represent us. He was greatly surprised at the inaction of the Government on the matter. It was quite time for them to act. The Americans should be allowed to use our bait and in return they might take the embargo off our fish.

Mr. Walsh thought there was some ulterior motive behind the Government's inaction. Was the Government trying to compel us to enter into confederation with Canada? With respect to Sir George Bury's report he stated that any porter on the railway could have done as well.

Mr. Archibald felt that the Government had no report to table on the Collishaw-Devine mission. He said it was only one of the things which had led him to leave the Government ranks. If the Government continued this sort of thing the fishermen would rise and put them out. The only thing that some of the Government members had backing them were the seats they were sitting on. Was it the Government's intention to destroy the country? He served notice on the Government that if this sort of thing continued he would put the position before the Hr. Grace people and let them see what was being done with them. He referred to Sir George Bury's report and wondered how much he would get for it. He wouldn't be surprised to hear that the Humber deal would go through after the House closed. His candid opinion was that the Government had done nothing on the fishery tariff matter beyond sending Messrs. Collishaw and Devine to Washington. With regard to the \$5,000,000 loan he said that until it was made, not an Executive member knew anything of it. What had the men on the Government side of the House to lose? Nothing, not even a reputation. If Mr. Collishaw had not an interest in this country why did he go to Spainard's Bay to try and break up his meeting. The Government was absolutely indifferent to the welfare of the people. He referred to the fact that as an independent he had no private room in the House. He hoped some place would be found for him to hang up his hat in as he expected the House would be open for some time yet.

Mr. Fen paid a tribute to Mr. Archibald. With reference to the U.S. Fish Tariff he asked if a duly accredited representative were to be sent to Washington in connection with this matter. Everything the Government had done had been only at the prompting of Sir

Michael Cashin. The remainder of the afternoon session was taken up by the answering of questions. A lengthy discussion took place on the unpaid Customs Bonds.

Sir Michael Cashin asked why the names of the men owing money at the Customs were withheld and the only answer he received was that "it was not considered good business policy to publish these names."

Mr. Jennings said the Government's action in this matter was giving foundation to the quoted saying "One law for the rich and one for the poor."

The House went into Committee of the Whole on the Neglected Children Bill, recess being taken at 6.30 until 8 p.m.

NIGHT SESSION.
After recess the Neglected Children Bill passed the committee stage with very little debate and the House next discussed the Argentea Railway Bill.

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Sir John Crosbie asked the Attorney General if the proposed railway resolutions would be governed by Sir George Bury's report and was answered in the affirmative "If that be so," said Sir John; "poor old Newfoundland. She is gone." He hoped to have opportunity to-day to lay some startling facts before the public. He asked for all documents in connection with the railway to be tabled.

Capt. Lewis also passed a few remarks on the supplies given to the Spaniard's Bay men and asked for the same consideration for Harbour Main. Adjournment was taken shortly after 11 p.m. until 2 p.m. to-day.

Mr. Jennings told Sir Michael that by the system which must have caused the Board of Works Department untold hours of careful thought, in working it out, the Government would be recompensed from the men's first earnings.

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