

# LAURIER DEALS WITH SCANDAL CHARGES

**Says Hyman Denies Stories of Immorality, and That Bourassa Deals in Gutter Gossip**

**Member for Labelle Moves for Committee of Inquiry in Bitter Speech, and Prime Minister Replies with Plain Language Including Discussion of Remarkable Rumors About Characters of Cabinet Ministers—Foster Attacked by Carvell—Motion Voted Down by 109 to 56.**

Ottawa, March 26.—"I quite understand," said Henri Bourassa, as he rose to address the house this afternoon, "that the majority of this house should be amused by the fact that I am greeted with applause of only my good friend, Armand Lavergne. I can quite realize that members on both sides are contented with which, under other circumstances, I might be received by them. But that as it may, I fear that the members may be somewhat disappointed with the proceedings today. If it is expected by anyone that I am going to engage in the work of the man with much rake, I wish to dispel that expectation."

"I have not come here for the pleasure of dragging before the public the good name of my colleagues with whom I may have had some political differences but no personal enmity. I may perhaps claim that I have some advantage in presenting this matter inasmuch as the future and the fate of either political party, as at present constituted, is a matter of indifference to me. I therefore bring this question forward, not with the view of helping the government to ruin some of their political opponents, nor with the view of helping the opposition to bring to task some members of the government. I bring it forward because I consider it is my public duty to give voice in parliament to the clamor of public opinion as it is expressed at the present time throughout all Canada."

## A Public Scandal.

"The origin of this question lies with the royal commission, not with this house. Certain facts with which the names of members of the commons and the senate are connected have been passed up to the commission. These facts are public notoriety; they are contained in official documents printed under the authority of the crown and by the consent of parliament. Upon these facts the press of the country has been carrying on a campaign of comment, I might say a campaign of slander. Commentaries have been passed up on the honor, the integrity, the independence of members, that neither the accused parties nor those who think they may have been renies in their duty can allow the session to close before on the one side they should justify themselves as public men and on the other side justifying their accusations against these public men."

## Fowler Caused the Crisis.

"The matter was brought to a crisis by Mr. Fowler, who took the ground that if he were attacked for private matters he would carry the war into Africa. This gave the matter an importance that it otherwise would not have had. But what makes it the imperative duty of the house as a national assembly is the fact that public opinion is losing confidence in the integrity of its public institutions and of the members of those institutions. Rightly or wrongly, impression prevails that both parties are afraid of the revelations and that neither party wants to pass judgment on the other."

Mr. Bourassa quoted from a Hansard what Mr. Fowler actually had said and was called to order by the speaker, as he began, for referring to past debates. The speaker said that the speaker had no objection to the matter and as no one objected, Mr. Bourassa was permitted to continue on that well known rule so as to be the better able to establish his case.

Mr. Bourassa endeavored to show that there had been a bargain between the prime minister and Mr. Fowler to shut out discussion on this matter. His justification for this claim was that the prime minister stated to the house that if there were anything in the report of the insurance commission against Mr. Fowler it would be proper to proceed against him when the report came before the house. "I would like to know," said Mr. Bourassa, "where the connection is between the report of the royal commission to investigate insurance and the relations of members of the government to the women and girls." "I do not know that the insurance commission was instructed to inquire into the private and public conduct of ministers of the crown. Even without the insurance commission it would be the duty of Mr. Fowler to make good his threat. Except for the semblance of a gag-off, the premier admitted the session should not close without the matter being discussed. The leader of the opposition had agreed with Sir Wilfrid. Mr. Fowler had admitted it was necessary to have an investigation."

Mr. Bourassa said he had waited long enough for the members of the house to have read the insurance report, and had then brought up the matter. On the first occasion the prime minister said that the matter would be investigated before the session closed, and on the second occasion he had stated that there was nothing to investigate as far as Mr. Fowler was concerned. Mr. Fowler had mentioned, no names nor any offence, and this action was taken by Sir Wilfrid notwithstanding that two weeks previously he had said that the house could not proceed without an investigation.

This led Mr. Bourassa to the insurance report, from which he was to read the charges that were of the most damaging character against certain members. He said that the charge of one member against another should not only be investigated but a committee should be instituted to investigate and find out who are the honest men and who are the dishonest men. (Cries of Oh, Oh.)

Mr. Bourassa—"My honorable friends need not think that I am taking this attitude with the idea of posing as the censor of my colleagues. I shall endeavor to prove that the vast majority of the members of this house, whom I esteem as honest and honorable men, should take upon themselves to make the line clear between the honest and the dishonest."

## Seizes Senator Cox.

Mr. Bourassa quoted from the insurance report, dealing first with Senator Cox. He said that Senator Cox had caused the

money of the Canada Life Insurance Company to be diverted from its natural channels and to be put in stocks, that he was personally interested, to the small amount of \$6,933,000. He referred to Senator Cox's dealings with the Canadian Bank of Commerce and with A. & C. Co., and said the senator had helped to make false entries in the books of the Canada Life Insurance Company, and yet the prime minister did not find anything in the report of the insurance commission to investigate.

Mr. Bourassa next took up the Independent Order of Foresters, and quoted from the report what was said against the Hon. George E. Foster, Dr. Montague and others.

## Hot Shot for Foster.

The Union Trust, of which Mr. Foster was manager, was declared by the report to have been a large and bold operator, with the money of the Foresters forming its capital. Indeed, Mr. Foster at that time pointed out that, what in reality the trust company would be controlled by the Foresters it was best that this should not be emphasized to the public, but rather to the Foresters themselves. Mr. Foster suggested that they should be careful who they elected as directors.

Mr. Bourassa, commenting on the report, said it must not be forgotten that the Union Trust Company was for all practical purposes the member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster), who was the general manager and financial adviser of the trust company, and that the syndicate of four who received the money from the trust company to buy land with for themselves, included Mr. Foster.

Mr. Foster—I caution my hon. friend, because I know he wishes to be fair, that it might be well for him to examine some of the documents before he takes as law and gospel the statements made by three gentlemen, who, if they were in the house, would not be more than the equal of my hon. friend.

## Says Foster Misused Trust.

Mr. Bourassa—I think I will clear my hon. friend's mind for I am going to say in conclusion that we must give him a chance in this house to make his case as a public man. The meaning of the words is that Mr. Foster has misused the trust of which he was the trustee. On the one hand he is accused by the commissioners of having formed the syndicate in order to take the trust funds of which he was manager and loan them to himself.

Mr. Foster—Might I ask my friend to repeat that because it is a little confused as it reached my ears?

Mr. Bourassa—I repeat that the hon. gentleman has been accused by the syndicate of four who received money from the Union Trust of which he was manager to buy lands for their own profit and secondly that he has been accused by the syndicate of four who received money from the Union Trust and gave it to the syndicate, of which he was a member, but he received twice during the transaction personal advantage.

## False, Says Foster.

Mr. Foster—All of which is contained in my hon. friend's statement is absolutely a misrepresentation.

Mr. Bourassa—Does the hon. gentleman claim it is a misrepresentation of the words of the commissioners?

Mr. Foster—It is a misrepresentation as the echo of the commissioners, whether it be a true and absolute report of the commissioners or not.

Mr. Bourassa—I accept the correction of the hon. gentleman. I leave it to the judgment of the house if the way in which I have summed up the words of the report is not a faithful report. Mr. Bourassa said the report stated that in the fall of 1903 R. H. Pope, ex-M. P., and G. W. Fowler, M. P., commenced negotiations with the C. P. R. for the purchase of land on behalf of a syndicate, including themselves, W. H. Bennett, M. P., and A. Laforgue, M. P. Can the hon. member for North Toronto leave that report to the public and the members of the country in documents that will be referred to and quoted by generations to come, much more damaging than they were uttered by the public and the members of the country in words which convey to the mind of anybody not familiar with the fact that the manager of a trust fund is not to be allowed to loan money in order to make a profit for himself without disclosing his connection with the transaction.

Mr. Foster—As another mild caveat, if either Mr. Bourassa makes the statement that nothing was disclosed to the Union Trust Company's statement, that is true in either case. It may be true that nothing is disclosed in the minutes but there are documents as well as minutes and it is a common practice to refer to documents but not to spread it on the minutes. If they make the statement there that because it is not disclosed in the minutes therefore there was no disclosure, it is a misrepresentation. They knew that it was disclosed and therefore I say again it is another misrepresentation.

Mr. Foster—Quite so, I agree with Mr. Bourassa. If it is disclosed without anything having been written with regard to it I will be happy to give him a chance to prove it.

Mr. Foster—Which again is not true. Mr. Bourassa—Quite so; but I am quoting from the report.

Mr. Bourassa said that the statement of the commissioners was that the Union Trust fund was nothing else than the order of Foresters, and that Mr. Foster, as manager of the trust fund, lent money to syndicates in which he was interested and that besides he received a commission. The business of the commission was to investigate and ascertain where the money of the Foresters went, and with respect to the company with which Mr. Foster was connected they were improperly dealt with, both in regard to the amount invested, the kind of investments, and the interest of the manager of the trust company in these investments.

Nobody expects that this insurance report should be legislated upon this session, but in the name of hundreds of thousands and millions of policyholders in Canada there is certainly as much necessity for legislation this session as for the bill. It is not so much legislation that is expected by the people as that we will show a strong hand in the inspection of companies. What justice can be expected from a parliament and from a government the leader of which says, in the face of this report, that there is no finding against Mr. Foster? Sir, if the prime minister will oppose investigation now, if he does not give Mr. Foster a chance to clear himself or if he should not not only support him in explaining the matter for North Toronto, what confidence can the people of Canada have in the government? If the matter is left as it stands the people will say that Senator Cox and Mr. Foster have paired.

Mr. Foster—It is not the first time we have paired.

Mr. Bourassa replied it should be the last time there is a chance to pair. Mr. Bourassa then said that, looking over the insurance report, he became of the Foresters' money, they found that the member for Kings (Mr. Fowler), as well as Messrs. Bennett and Laforgue received

Mr. Bennett—Will the honorable gentleman state in what part of the evidence it is shown that I received part of the money of the Union Trust?

Mr. Bourassa—I will deal with that later on. The Liberal press pointed out that these members had accepted favors from Mr. Dan. Mann, in order to have their transactions completed, and repaid that service by opposing the G. T. R. bill. These are no ordinary questions. The charge was also made that they received favors from a railway magnate who has to deal with parliament every day. Mr. Bourassa taunted Mr. Foster with having brought a young man before the bar of the house last session for saying discreditable things about him, but rather to attempt to deal with the editors and newspaper men who were now circulating such damaging statements against him.

Mr. Bourassa asked Mr. Foster, "If you are so sure of your own honesty, why do you not attempt to make a public statement to the house?" Mr. Foster—I am not going to make a public statement to the house. I am not going to make a public statement to the house. I am not going to make a public statement to the house.

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addressing the honorable member for Yale-Cariboo (Mr. Ross), stated: "We will show your connections with Mr. Hill that we will give you the true insight of the Hyman story, too, and add to it once or twice say good-bye and that is all. There has never been any communication between myself and the member for Kings. For what reason should I choose to let a saw-off in the matter? Because it has pleased the member for Labelle to level some insinuations against certain colleagues of mine? I tell him that I have no reason to fear any investigation and that there is no occasion for my resorting to any saw-off."

The hon. member says more. He accuses me of having had a saw-off with the member for Kings, but he went a little further and took a note of his words at the time and he said that I had taken the opposition under my paternal care. Mr. Bourassa wanted to have an investigation of the royal commission referred to by the member for Kings on Feb. 21. I had to see what was to be done and what was my duty under such circumstances, when the question first arose I stated to the house that I should wait until we had the report of the insurance commission. When we did get that report, then that we should have a discussion upon it before the session closed. My young friend is more lucky than I am since he has been able to read the whole of the evidence and the report of the royal commission, to examine witnesses on oath or affirmation, and to report to the house during the present session.

Mr. Wilfrid Laurier. "The motion which had been placed in the speaker's hands by Mr. Bourassa is the most extraordinary one which, in the course of a long parliamentary life I have ever seen. It is certainly unique in its character. The honorable gentleman has chosen to bring this motion in shape of an amendment to go into committee of supply."

It was open to him to submit his motion as a resolution, or one which could have been debated upon its merits and in all its aspects. He is aware that, by the method which he has adopted, discussion is not free and there is not free scope to present the different aspects. According to rules of the house the motion has to be taken in its entirety. I followed his speech very closely and I noticed that he avoided telling us what was his own conclusion. He told us the conclusion arrived at by newspapers and what was reported in the streets but not his own views.

I can tell him that I have nothing to withdraw from what I said on a former occasion to which he is now referring. I said that beyond submitting the blank bill for the consideration of the house, the commission did not report and had made no report against Mr. Foster. It is of course that they made no report against any member of parliament and I have nothing to withdraw from that statement.

Passing to another part of the motion referred to Mr. Fowler's statements, Sir, I informed him that the member for Labelle had on a former occasion that the member for Kings had made no charges against any member of parliament.

"Well, Mr. Speaker, I have to perform at this moment a rather painful duty, but it is a duty which I must discharge in justice to myself and in justice to my league, the minister of public works, and when I have made the explanation the honorable gentleman (Mr. Bourassa) will understand why I have been compelled to go into a saw-off with the member for Kings (Mr. Fowler)."

There may be a great many rumors against my colleague Mr. Hyman, there is no use in denying it. There have been rumors in this house that he was shaming himself and in justice to myself and to my league, the minister of public works, and when I have made the explanation the honorable gentleman (Mr. Bourassa) will understand why I have been compelled to go into a saw-off with the member for Kings (Mr. Fowler)."

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