

motion did not suit his opponents, so it was defeated, whereupon the standing orders were suspended, and Hon. Mr. Walkem moved, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Beaven:

"Whereas, the hon. the member for Nanaimo has stated in his place in this house, that he was credibly informed that prominent members of the late and present government were in a ring to acquire possession of Texada Island, in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the public, be it therefore resolved:

"That a respectful address be presented to His Honor the Lieutenant Governor, praying that he will cause a royal commission to be appointed, with full power to take evidence under oath, and send for persons and papers, for the purpose of inquiring into the whole matter and reporting thereon to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor for publication."

Now, sir, there is a precedent set by the hon. the leader of the opposition for the way these things shall proceed, by which you will observe that the hon. gentleman was not content to go to trial upon the charge formulated by Mr. Robson, but distinctly formulated the charge himself upon which he was to be tried.

MR. BEAVEN—Amplified it.

HON. MR. DAVIE—No, sir, he particularized it; and he selected the charge upon which he was to be tried.

Now, that case, sir, will also serve to show what was done on the commission. Hon. gentlemen opposite ask who is to prosecute it. Why, sir, those who bring the charges. Else, why do they bring them? The hon. leader of the opposition should know that, he has had experience enough in this line for upwards of twenty years; he has had experience enough to come out in a courageous manner and conduct his prosecution as Mr. Robson did then. And the hon. member from New Westminster and the hon. member from Nanaimo District, and any other members on the other side who made these charges, should come forward and conduct their own prosecution, and without a lawyer also. The hon. leader of the opposition, as I have had occasion to remark before, is excelled by few legal men as a constitutional lawyer, he does not need any lawyer. And we will see that it is a non-political tribunal. And similarly, other hon. members opposite, can act without a lawyer. Who prosecuted in the Texada case? Did the government employ a lawyer to prosecute themselves, as suggested, by hon. gentlemen opposite that they should do? No, Mr. Robson, with a courage equal to his ability, appeared before the commission and prosecuted.

Here is what the report of the Royal Commission says referring to the sittings of the commission:

"That, at such sittings, the three Commissioners were all present, except on one occasion, viz., the 20th day of August, at Victoria, when an enquiry was held before the Honorables Messrs. Crease and Gray, as to the mode of examination, by interrogatories of Mr. DeCosmos, a witness then absent at Ottawa, the Chief Justice on that occasion not being present, owing to his having gone to Cassiar on circuit.

"That at these various sittings, of which public notice was always given in the newspapers in Victoria, the honorable member for Nanaimo, Mr. Robson, was always present, and was afforded every opportunity, by examination and cross-examination of the witnesses, and by suggestion and argument, to promote the enquiry and establish the charge."

Now, then, there is an example for hon. gentlemen opposite to follow, that of a man who was always honorable in his methods in political matters, and was courageous and straightforward in his actions. They do not want a lawyer at the expense of the province. So now having told the hon. members of their privileges, I shall hope they will avail themselves of them.

Now, let us look at some of the objections raised. I shall take up the remark of my friend, Mr. Stoddart. I think that hon. gentleman has exercised an independence in this matter for which he is to be complimented. Although I think if he had had the opportunity of seeing this amendment in print, and considering at greater length the resolution that I proposed and the amendment of the hon. the Chief Commissioner, he would not have had occasion to express himself as he did. Now, sir, the hon. gentleman says that he is quite sure that there are more members of the Nakusp & Slocan Railway Company and of the Construction Company than have been stated by these papers already brought down. Well, sir, that is so, and there is any suspicion that cabinet ministers are members of either the Nakusp Company or the Construction Company, the amendment of the Chief Commissioner gives exhaustive power of enquiry. Here is his amendment: "And whether any of His Honor's ministers have or had any interest, directly or indirectly, in the Nakusp & Slocan Railway Company, or in any of the contracts of the company, or in the Construction Company, either in furnishing material or supplies, or in any way whatsoever." Why, sir, the original resolution was comprehensive enough to cover all that, and it was intended to be so. "Whether corrupt motives of any kind existed with or influenced His Honor's ministers in the advice tendered by them to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor in rela-