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THE ELECTIVE ROAD BOARD SYSTEM

Speeches of Dr. Lloyd and Mr. Halfyard in Defense of the New Measure—Northern Districts Have Availed of It and Find It Most Satisfactory.

MR. LLOYD—I rise merely to correct some wrong impressions that may have arisen from the remarks of the hon. member for Placentia and St. Mary's in reference to his statement that fifty per cent. of the people of Newfoundland have taken no advantage of this Act. I do not know whether his figures are correct, or on what basis they are formed, but I can assure the hon. member that his statement is not correct in reference to the Northern District of this Island. So far as Trinity Bay is concerned, there are only one or two sections, or at any rate very few sections, and small sections at that, which have not taken advantage of the Act. I am informed also in reference to Fogo that practically all the district has taken advantage of the Bill. In Bonavista practically the whole district has done similarly. The same may be said of Twillingate. If his remarks are correct in reference to Placentia, an average for the whole Island cannot be struck from results seen there. So far as we are concerned we wish no encouragement to be given to any small section of the North to go back to the old objectionable system of nominated road boards.

Measure Well Received in The Northern Districts

MR. CHAIRMAN, I assert again the position I rose to assert before. The hon. member referred to the whole Island. Referring to the whole Island I was perfectly justified in pointing out that so far as this side of the House was concerned the statement of the hon. member was not correct. The North is the part of the Island that I was referring to. I do not take back what I said. I have no wish to accentuate it, but I am not going to allow the hon. member's statement to go broadcast as true, while it is not true of Trinity Bay or of the other districts which I, with my colleagues on this side of the House, have the honor to represent.

My point is that if the North to the extent of 90% accepted the Bill and that covers a large section of the outport constituencies, there must be a remarkably small section of the rest of the island that accepted.

I mentioned four districts, and these four take ten men out of thirty representatives, and they are 90% in favor of the Bill.

I named the districts represented by ten men and there are six other hon. members representing two sections to which this bill does not apply; so that you have the positions that the other parts of the Island must have been extremely slack in taking advantage of this Bill; and I should like to see the figures on which the statement of the hon. member is based.

MR. HALFYARD—Mr. Chairman, I had no idea that the debate on this Bill would take the course it has. I did not think it was of a contentious nature. But we gather from the remarks made by the member who has just spoken from the Government side of the House, that in his opinion this Bill is not as workable as many thought it would be. It is patent to everybody that the expenditures of public money in the past have not been right at all times. The object of this Bill is to give the control of all ordinary grants to the elective road board which will be responsible for the right expenditure of same. I believe in that principle; I believe that the men of the different localities should take that view of the matter, and should do everything to enforce the principles of this Act. Mr. Devereaux, the hon. member for Placentia and St. Mary's said that the outports were not so anxious for elective boards as some had imagined. As far as the North is concerned, they were very anxious to take advantage of it, and I think at least 95 per cent. of the places North have elective road boards. In the most extreme parts of Fogo District they have them, and are satisfied. I think the hon. gentleman said it was a matter of education. Well I have to congratulate Fogo District on being educated in this particular. I hope they will continue to take an interest in their own affairs as has been proven by their action on the 16th of December last, in the election of their own boards.

The Old System Was Most Unsatisfactory And Wasteful.

I am very sorry for the other sections of the country who did not take advantage of this Bill and were not public-spirited enough to elect their own boards to take charge of their own affairs. The hon. member said that they had the very best men that could be procured as members of the road boards, I do not know that any one questions that; they may have been the very best men—in some cases the very best men for their own interests; but we know that in certain places that public moneys were not spent to the best advantage. What about grants when you had surplus revenues? If you had elective road boards then and all the surplus grants were spent in improvements—being sent to the road boards, and these boards having to give returns annually and have them posted up for public information—do you think we would be asking so many questions from this side of the House to find out how hundreds and even thousands of dollars that were sent out and no returns made, were spent?

Why The "Local Affairs Act" Was Passed.

The public did not know how it was spent or where it was sent. If the people to whom grants were sent had to give returns so that anyone in the locality would have an opportunity of looking at the posted list of expenditures, do you think you would have the condition of affairs that existed then? That was one of the principal reasons why this Local Affairs Act was put on the Statute Book, so that the people would know how the money was spent. The hon. member said: "We have discarded the people who have protected expenditures of public moneys for the past number of years."

We did inform the hon. member and this House, that we can produce returns that will show that money was not wisely spent—that the money was not protected. Money was granted and given to people who did not do a day's work for it. In some cases the names of men were put on the returns and sent to the Auditor-General, and when the men were told that their names were on those returns they wondered why their names were there. They said they received the money but did not work for it. We can give you proofs of this. Then you say this Bill is not workable. No difference what bill is brought before the House you will have some features of it which appear unworkable.

You will not have any organized family grants under this Act. This Act is for the control and management of local affairs within the limits of certain areas of this Colony, defined in manner hereinafter described—the management to be vested in elective road boards hereinafter referred to as "the boards." It is local boards I am talking about, and you do not mean to intimate that it is alright for family grants to be sent out as usual to individuals, and no returns given for the same.

MR. DEVEREAUX—I have never heard of family grants except through you.

Will Prove A Great Benefit To The Colony.

MR. HALFYARD—I have heard of too many. Do you not think it would be a good thing if all public moneys should be spent under supervision of publicly elected road boards, and that those boards give an account of all expenditures. It would do away with a lot of waste of money. The statements I make can be proven. It is unnecessary to cite cases where money has been spent and no proper return for it; the people of the place did not know that anyone had received the money. I am rather surprised, Mr. Chairman, that any member of the House would in any way defend the old system of spending moneys. If there are people in any section of the country who do not properly understand this Bill, I think they should be educated up to the point so that every feature of this Bill would be brought to their notice, and they should be encouraged, so that eventually they would have elective road boards. It is not my intention to delay the Committee, and I think, in spite of the remarks that have been offered by the hon. member for

Placentia and St. Mary's that in his own heart he believes, and I think that he has admitted, that this Bill will be of great benefit to the Colony if once brought into working order. You cannot expect everything at one time. You should encourage the people in those sections—you say there are only fifty per cent. of the country with elective road boards—well I think that in connection with the carrying out of your onerous duties in your going around the Districts on your official business as Commissioner of Agriculture, that you should try and educate the people in these parts, let them know the benefits they will receive by accepting the provisions of this Bill, and encourage them to have elective boards.

"Political Bunk," Says Henry Ford

This What He Calls President Wilson's Late Note to Germany—Ford in Running for President—Michigan and Nebraska Delegates Instructed to Vote for Him.

It seems likely that Henry Ford, the Detroit manufacturer of automobiles, will make a stronger bid for the votes of German-Americans and other pro-Germans than any other candidate whose name has been mentioned in the American primary elections. Already 46 delegates from Michigan and Nebraska have been instructed for him, and in view of the fact that he has no political organization, and no political experience, this is a remarkable showing. Equally remarkable is the fact that the delegates are Republican. Mr. Ford is entitled to the support of every hyphenated American, irrespective of party. For some months past he has succeeded in masquerading as a mere pacifist, his pretence having been assisted by the folly of several writers who professed to see in Henry Ford nothing but a lover of mankind, one whose heart was so gentle that he could not bear the thought of nations being at war. His famous excursion to Europe was interpreted not as a pro-German move, which it was in reality, but the expression of his humane and tender nature. After an interview which he gave to the New York Herald on Sunday it will be impossible for Mr. Ford to continue the fake of pacifism. In that interview he reveals himself as a pro-German.

To begin with, he asserted that President Wilson's late note to Germany was "political bunk." In his opinion there exists not the slightest reason why the United States should break with Germany. "There was no reason for breaking when the Lusitania was sunk, and there certainly is no reason which is apparent in the sinking of the Sussex." He recalled what he said at the time of the sinking of the Lusitania. He had taken counsel with five little boys, he said, whose ages were from seven to sixteen, and after they had considered the matter they said with one voice respecting the Americans who had been killed:

"What the h— did they want to go on her for?"

Mr. Ford, according to the Herald, defends the German method of using submarines. He refuses to consider vessels like the Lusitania as unarmed, for, he says, "What about the stores of munitions in the vessels 'leaving here every day?' He proceeded to say that submarines had made every dreadnought obsolete. For adequate defence, therefore, the United States needs only submarines. Mr. Ford said that commanders of British cruisers told him that when they sight a submarine they turn and run as fast as they can move their vessels. After these expressions of opinion, nobody ought to be deceived as to which side in this war has Mr. Ford's sympathies, and which side he is now actively working for under the pretence of pacifism.

TOO SOON!

It is much too soon to put away your rubbers for another year. We will have wet, slushy streets for some weeks yet. It is unwise to wear broken rubbers at this season, first because of the ever present danger of wet feet, and second, because mud will soon work its way through your rubbers and ruin your boots. If your rubbers are broken or likely to break soon, it would be well for you to buy today a pair of BEAR BRAND Rubber Shoes. You will know them, because the "BEAR" is stamped on the shank, and because the lining is purple. Distinctive in every way. Bear Brand Shoes are health preservers and money savers.

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