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OPPOSITION CRITICISE THE COSTLY RAILROAD POLICY OF THE MORRIS GOVERNMENT

Mr. Coaker (continued)—
Now, it would have been better if instead of spending this extra \$4,000,000 on these railways the Premier had taken \$2,000,000 of it and spent it on motor engines for the fishermen; he could have bought 15,000 motor engines, and let the fishermen pay it back on the instalment plan. Now, I referred to this matter in a speech in this House earlier in the session.

Supposing each one of these men that would be provided with a motor engine were to get 20 quintals of fish extra. Look at the vast amount of fish that would be brought into the Colony. It would mean that 300,000 quintals extra would be brought in each year.

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister—It would lower the price of fish about \$2.00 a quintal.

Great Demand
Mr. Coaker—It would do nothing of the kind, because new markets would be found for our fish, and even today there is a greater demand for our fish than we can supply. At present the market is clean and not a fish to be had, and in the reports which the Premier read the other night, it was pointed out that our fish were properly marketed we would sell 500,000 quintals more in Brazil and Spain.

That is quite true as I know these countries would take that fish if it were cured to suit them. If that \$200,000 quintals were brought into the

country it would mean \$2,000,000 added to the earnings of our people.

Happy Consumption
Now if the Premier knew what I know and heard what I hear about this railway business and other matters, he would be converted to our views and make the best Premier we ever had. It is too bad the way things have turned out, because I believe he is trying to do his best, and I agree with Dr. Lloyd that he did not deliberately attempt to deceive either the House or the Colony.

I know he has his good points as well as his bad ones, and I believe if he were weighed in the balance we would find that the good would outweigh the bad. However, this work has been done and these contracts have been made, and the money must be raised to pay for them, and we have got to find the loan.

I hope when the Prime Minister goes to London next June he may get the loan, and that he may get it for 3% and at 95 or 96, and if he does when he comes back we will pat him on the shoulder and say that after all he is a good fellow.

Judge Conroy's Pension
Mr. Coaker—Mr. Chairman, I would like to know what the intention of the Government is in the matter of pensioning Judge Conroy.

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister—It is the intention of the Government to take that matter up at an early date.

DR. F. W. BURDEN

330 DUCKWORTH STREET

HOURS:

9 a.m. to 10.30 a.m.
2 to 3 p.m.
7 to 8.30 evenings.

Mr. Coaker—I think the matter should be taken up by the Government at once, for there is a Retiring Allowances Bill before the House now. If the Government has not yet decided what to do in the matter it can easily be taken up and dealt with within a day or two. The amounts that are set forth in the Bill before us seem to be very moderate. I should like to know if any of the parties named will receive the Old Age Pension.

Hon. Minister Finance and Customs—No.

Oppose Them

Mr. Coaker—The F. P. U. has a plank opposed to pensions of the kind now before us. There should be a system whereby those entering the Civil Service shall make certain payments, and when they are old in the service they will receive insurance based on what they have paid in.

The fishermen of the Colony have a strong objection to men being placed in the Civil Service for two or three years, and then retired on two-thirds of their salary.

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I understand that the Civil servants named on the list before us, have all been in the service for a number of years, and I have no objection to men who have worked hard in the service receiving a few dollars in their old age.

Undesired

I notice a sum of \$534 for Thomas Morris, and I understand he has no desire to be pensioned.

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister—He applied for a pension two years ago.

Mr. Coaker—I have heard that he has no wish now to be pensioned, and if that is so, and he can do his work well, I do not see why he should be pensioned.

I should particularly like the Government to make up their minds about Judge Conroy's position. I would very much like to see my hon. friend, Mr. Morris, in that position.

Dr. Lloyd—Mr. Chairman, before the statement of the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, I thought this Bill would go through without remark. However, I wish to offer a strong protest against the attitude of the Government as disclosed by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, in the matter of Judge Conroy's retirement.

Direct Insult

We are told that it is the intention of the Government to take up the question of his pension at the earliest opportunity. That is a direct insult to this House. It may not be meant, but it is none the less an insult. This House is the proper place to deal with salaries and pensions, and it is not for the Government to tell this House while it is in session that they will go into the question of pensions when the House closes.

There are matters of urgency which demand the attention of the Government when the House is not sitting, but it is not so in this case. For over two years the condition of Judge Conroy's health has been well known. It is an unfortunate fact that he has been in poor health. In the face of this, it is an insult to this House to be told that the matter of his pension will be taken up when the House closes.

Not Decided On

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister—Mr. Chairman, I quite agree with my hon. friend, that, if it had been decided to give Judge Conroy a pension, now is the proper time to take it up.

There has been no decision arrived at, and as a matter of fact there will be correspondence on the matter, and the whole question will have to be discussed. When a decision is arrived at we shall come in here and have it ratified.

That is the universal practice, and my hon. friend will see that we cannot put it in the Bill when there has been no decision in the matter.

Long Time Deciding

Dr. Lloyd—Mr. Chairman, that is exactly the point I am referring to. The matter has been before the Government for the past two years and there has been ample time for all correspondence to be over long ago.

It is common knowledge that Judge Conroy came here last time to see about his pension, and yet we are now in session, and there seems to have been nothing decided in the matter.

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister—When Judge Conroy was last here he did not make any reference whatever to the matter.

Should Be Pensioned

Mr. Coaker—Mr. Chairman, it seems to me to be perfectly clear that a man who has not been able to do his work for the past two years ought to be pensioned. The office is a most important one, and somebody ought to be appointed to it. Every day there is new work to be done, and, although I have no doubt that Judge Knight does his work in a satisfactory way, he cannot be expected to do the work of two men. That is not fair to him, nor is it fair to the country.

Settle It Now

Let the Government have the pluck to deal with the matter as it should be dealt with. Why do they not give it to the hon. member for Placentia, who has been looking for the position for the past five or ten years. He is growing old and he has been in the political world for the past twenty-five years. He is a very nice man, too. I only wish his brother was as nice to us as he has been.

The Government need not fear opposition from us in Placentia Bay, and we should all like to see my hon. friend made 'His Honor.'

Mr. Morris—I must thank my hon. friend for his kind remarks.

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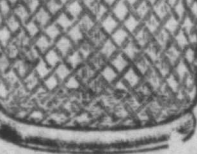
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