

Finding of Inquiry Into Power Co. Business

Some Surprising Features in Currier Commission Report - City Option to Buy at \$2,800,000 Plus 10 Per Cent - Legislature Can Amend

Boston, Feb. 27.—The Currier commission has finished its report on the matters in dispute between the citizens of St. John and the New Brunswick Power Company, and copies of the findings have been mailed to the interested parties.

The commission finds that the cost of the property of the company in service Jan. 1, 1919, totals \$2,800,000, and this is accepted as the rate basis, that is the amount on which dividends should be provided.

The commission recommends that the bonds, the preferred stock and the second preferred stock shall stand as valid, their amount being \$3,100,000, but the report says the common stock of \$2,000,000 should be reduced to \$500,000 and that no dividend should be paid upon it until a separate reserve of \$300,000 has been built up out of earnings, from which a return on the \$500,000 of common stock may be paid in the course of time.

The commission advises that complete control of the company, its finances and operation, shall be vested in a board of seven directors, four to be elected by the company and three to be appointed as public directors by the lieutenant-governor-in-council.

The commission does not attempt to fix the rates to be charged by the company for its various services, but says the present rates should remain in force until July 1, 1919, and that after that they should be fixed by the seven directors.

The commission also recommends that all special taxes be abolished, such as charges for snow removal, rental of streets or bridges, and the like, in other words, that the company shall pay only the general property and income taxes.

The cost of the investigation made by the commission is to be charged to operating expenses and spread over a period of five years.

Provision is made that if the company accepts the commission's report the city is to have the option of purchasing the company's property and franchises for \$2,800,000, plus ten per cent. To this would be added any premium which it might be necessary to pay on the bonds.

The purchase price would also be increased or diminished by any additions to the property or any diminution of plant or property between the present date and the date on which the city exercises its option to buy.

In case public directors should be appointed they would be in a minority, but would have the right of appeal to the Board of Public Utilities in case they disagreed with the company directors as to expenditures exceeding \$25,000.

The report of the commission is made to the lieutenant-governor-in-council, and the legislature has power to accept it, reject it, amend it, or use it as a basis for a new deal made by the legislature after a full discussion.

The commission was appointed by the lieutenant-governor-in-council last year after a committee of citizens went to the legislature in opposition to the New Brunswick Power Company's petition for permission to increase street car fares, lighting and power rates.

Experts were engaged by the city and by the company to value the property, make estimates and recommendations. For the city, C. W. Whiting, of Boston; S. H. Milliam, of New York, and W. B. Bennett, of the University of Michigan, were engaged; and for the company H. M. Brinckerhoff, and W. C. Dunlop, both of New York city.

The city engaged as counsel Hon. John A. Sullivan, of Boston, who was assisted by City Solicitor J. B. M. Baxter, K. C., and W. B. Wallace, K. C. F. R. Taylor, K. C., was attorney for the company.

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Tariff Matter Stands Till Later In The Session

Unionist Caucus Yesterday; Increased Indemnity; Some Members for Beer and Light Wines

Ottawa, Feb. 27.—The first Unionist caucus of the session was held today. Questions discussed included the tariff, prohibition, civil service, appointments, good roads, appropriations and colonial indemnities.

On the tariff question, as might have been expected divergent views were expressed. The western members stick out firmly for some tariff relief this session, or at least the laying down of some principle of gradual general reductions.

There was some criticism of alleged extremes to which the government had gone in taking away absolutely all rights of the members of parliament in regard to civil service appointments. No patronage at all does not seem to be very popular with some members.

There was also strenuous objection taken by some of the Conservative members to allowing the appropriations for good roads to be handed over "to a bunch of Grit provincial governments." They thought the Liberals were "putting one over."

In regard to sessional indemnities the opinion was expressed by several members that the pay of the parliamentarian should go up with the cost of living and it was suggested that \$4,000 a year was not too much for a grateful country to give now.

Incidentally a resolution proposed by one of the Ontario Liberal Unionists to form a permanent Unionist party was not enthusiastically received and was withdrawn.

A vitriolic attack upon the prime minister and his frequent trips to Europe characterized the speech of W. C. Kennedy, Liberal member for North Kent, in the house of commons, tonight.

Mr. Kennedy insisted that Sir Robert's place was in Canada, and not on the "Sea of Marmara." President Wilson, he stated, was in Washington, Lloyd George in London, the Italian prime minister in Rome, but the prime minister of Canada found himself unable to leave Versailles.

Returning soldiers on the Northland ate rotten soup and putrid beef, and slept in ill-smelling cabins; they did not dine on gold plates, nor were they served by lackeys walking backwards. He demanded that the prime minister and the other ministers of the crown return at once to Canada, and discharge the duties for which they had been selected.

He denounced the Siberian expedition as unnecessary and said we might as well send soldiers to Mexico. The debate upon the address was resumed this afternoon by Mr. Gauthier, Liberal member for St. Hyacinthe, who was followed by Dr. Sheppard, of Toronto.

Other speeches to the debate were contributed by Mr. Dechene, of Montmagny, and Mr. Burnham, of West Peterboro. Mr. Duff, of Lunenburg, adjourned the debate.

In the house this afternoon, D. D. McKenzie, the opposition leader, inquired as to a statement in the Ottawa Journal that under a new order-in-council, which is to be retroactive, any deserter who had been fined less than \$250 could be rearrested and fined the balance of \$250.

He asked if it was true that parties already tried were to be retried. Hon. Arthur Meighen said that the order-in-council did not provide for the punishment of individuals who had already been punished, but by the order-in-council there had been no provision for fining deserters, there was only a provision for imprisonment.

The order-in-council was designed to enact that wherever fines had been imposed consistent with the magnitude of the offence nothing further was intended, but where this had not been the case the law would take its course.

ENEMY ALIENS HERE ON WAY TO GERMANY There are more Germans in St. John just now than there have been at any time since the early days of the war.

Soon after 7 o'clock, last evening, a special train of half a dozen cars rolled in from Vancouver with one hundred aliens who are being deported.

With the exception of a few Austrians, all the men are natives of Germany and before the war started, were working in British Columbia. After the outbreak of hostilities the alien enemies were rounded up and placed in internment camps.

Most of them have been used as laborers, under guard, at various times by the government. When the armistice was signed the authorities found that they had a "white elephant" on their hands, for the Pacific coast firms, corporations and individuals would not employ the "Teutons, and there was nothing to do but deport them, for had they been released they would undoubtedly have become public charges in the absence of means of self-support.

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Proposal in Utah to Compel Children to Attend Until They Are Eighteen

Compulsory education must be enacted by the United States Congress and the legislature of the various states, and every boy and girl must be compelled to go to school and be held under the jurisdiction of the educational laws until they reach the age of eighteen years, according to Ben. W. Johnson of San Francisco, government representative for seven western states of the Federal Board of Industrial Education, in an address delivered before a joint session of the educational committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Utah Legislature.

Mr. Johnson criticized the legislative body of Utah for the presence on the statute books of a law permitting the employment of children of twelve years of age. He declared that nearly every other state of the Union limits the age at which children may be employed at fourteen years. He urged upon Utah the necessity of the enactment of law providing for compulsory education up to eighteen years for every boy and girl in the state.

Mr. Johnson declared that this law should provide that every boy and girl up to sixteen should be compelled to attend both grade and high school and those between sixteen and eighteen should be compelled to attend school for an equal number of hours each week for the number of hours spent in labor.

The meeting was attended by prominent educators from all parts of the state, in addition to the joint educational committee of both houses. A. C. Johnson, superintendent of public schools of Ogden, outlined his plan of the "twelve months' school year, emphasizing the necessity of longer school periods and compulsory education.

A. E. Harvey, secretary of the Utah State Federation of Labor, spoke on the efforts that have been made by organized labor for years for compulsory education. He declared that organized labor is prepared to wage a strong fight for compulsory vocational education and free schools and text-books.

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