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### House of Assembly.

MONDAY, April 26.

The House met at 3.15.

Petitions were presented by Mr. Walsh from Little Paradise and other settlements in Placentia Bay for a wharf; from Great Paradise, also for a wharf; from Patrick's Cove for telephone or telegraph connection; from Colinet Island for breakwater. These petitions were supported by Messrs. Sullivan and Shirott. By Mr. Targett from 600 electors of Trinity Bay South asking that Mr. J. W. James, J.P., be transferred from the Magistracy of Bonne Bay to that of Trinity Bay South; by Mr. Higgins, supported by Messrs. Vinnicombe and Fox, from Flat Rock, St. John's East, for concrete road to landing place, and from Shoe Cove asking for a way off.

Messrs. Sullivan and Walsh then asked the following questions:

#### QUESTIONS.

MR. WALSH.—To ask the Hon. the Minister of Finance if it is the intention of the Government to increase the vote for old age Pensions sufficiently so that all applicants can receive the Pensions.

MR. WALSH.—To ask the Hon. Col. Secty. to table all correspondence between the Government and the Reid Newfoundland Co. with regard to the closing down of the Trepansey line last December.

MR. SULLIVAN.—I give notice that I will on to-morrow ask the Hon. the Col. Secty. to lay on the table of the House all copies of correspondence memoranda and other data whatever in reference to or in connection with directly or indirectly any proposal, scheme or undertaking of a public nature in Newfoundland in which Harry J. Crowe either personally or in a representative capacity is interested and upon which he is or has been in communication with the present or past administration or any department thereof, particularly in reference to the acquisition of any rights, privileges or undertakings heretofore enjoyed or carried out or proposed to be enjoyed or carried out by the Reid Newfoundland Co. I give notice that I will on to-morrow ask the Hon. the Prime Minister,

who owing to the absence from this House of the Minister of Agriculture and Mines, represents the Agriculture and Mines Department.

(1)—What steps if any have been taken with regard to cancellation of Timber Grants which are held by Speculators and not developed.

(2)—If it is the intention of the Govt. to take steps to cancel Grants that are held by parties who are not fulfilling the conditions as laid down by the Crown Lands Act.

I gave notice that I will on to-morrow ask the Hon. the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs.

(1)—To lay on the table of the House a statement showing the number of incomplete extensions of the Telegraph System which were commenced in 1919, in the District of Placentia and St. Mary's and when the work will be completed?

(2)—What provision if any is being made to connect Cape Pine Light House with St. Shott's or Trepansey by Telegraph or Telephone?

(3)—What work has been done with the extension of the Telegraph Line from Peter's River to St. Shott's?

(4)—What work has been done with the extension of the Telegraph Line to Long Harbor, Placentia Bay.

(5)—When the Telegraph Office is to be opened in North Harbor, Placentia Bay, the Line being now built to that important settlement.

(6)—What provision is being made to connect up Mall Bay, Colinet, Patrick's Cove, Arnolds Cove, North West Clattice Harbor, Little Paradise, and St. Joseph's, Placentia Bay with Telegraph or Telephone System.

I gave notice that I will on to-morrow ask the Hon. Colonial Secretary to lay on the table of this House:

(1)—All correspondence between the Reid Newfoundland Company and the Government and between the Reid Newfoundland Company and the Government Engineer in reference to the condition of the railway and all proposals for the improvement of the Inland Transportation facilities generally.

I give notice that on to-morrow I will ask the Hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries, to lay on the Table of this House:

(1)—Any correspondence he may have in connection with the establish-

ing of Life Saving Stations between Cape Race and Cape St. Mary's.

(2)—If it is the intention of the Government to establish Life Saving Stations and further aids to navigation in this dangerous Coast between Renewa and Cape St. Mary's.

(3)—What moneys if any, have been sent to The District of Placentia and St. Mary's, since November 1919 from the Marine and Fisheries Department.

(4)—Where and to whom the money was sent.

(5)—For what purpose the money was required.

(6)—At whose request the money was allocated?

I give notice that I will on to-morrow ask the Hon. Minister of Posts and Telegraphs:

(1)—To table all correspondence between the Marconi Company or any other Wireless Telegraph or Telephone Companies in connection with the introduction of further Wireless Telegraph or Wireless Telephone Stations in this country.

(2)—Also any correspondence in connection with the closing down of the Directional Wireless Station at Cape Race.

(3)—If it is the intention of the Government to vote sums of money for the erection of at least two more Directional Wireless Stations, one to be erected Cape Ray and one at Cape Chapeau Rouge at the entrance of Placentia Bay, as further aids to navigation.

(4)—If any provision is being made for the erection of a small wireless Telegraph or Telephone Plant at Odein, Placentia Bay, or if the Government had decided to connect Odein by Cable with Flat Islands or Baine Harbor.

I give notice that I will on to-morrow ask the Hon. Minister of Posts and Telegraphs to lay on the table of the House all correspondence in connection with the dismissal of Miss Best as Operatrix at Come-By-Chance, and why a man from Trinity Bay was given the position as operator at Come-By-Chance?

I give notice that I will on to-morrow ask the Hon. Minister of Finance to lay on the table of the House a statement,

(1)—Showing the amounts received as Profits Tax from the Dominion Iron and Steel Co., and the Nova Scotia Steel Co., operating at Wabana.

(2)—If both Companies have paid the Profit Tax? And if not, Why?

#### FISH REGULATIONS.

The address in reply was then taken up.

Sir John Crosbie said in part—I have read the Governor's Speech from the Throne with considerable interest. It is not what is in the speech that is interesting, it is what is left out. One part of the speech I am fully in accord with, and that is we are all proud the great world war is over and we are settling down to peace. I am proud to welcome Lieut. Small and Sergt. LeGrow to the House and fully realize the great work they have done, and the noble boys who laid down their lives for the greatest nation in the world, upon which the sun never sets. The only Crosbie who was fit to volunteer did so—my nephew, at 16 years of age—and was killed in the great drive of July, in which so many of Newfoundland's sons laid down their lives. We are proud of them one and all. When reading the speech I came to one of the most important things which, in my judgment, even this House of Assembly ever attempted to handle—fish regulations—and after careful thought decided I would not interfere, in fact decided it was useless. But after a moment's further thought felt that I would be avoiding my duty to my constituents and my country, who had sent me here to represent them, and I immediately decided that I would do my duty. In the speech from the throne it has been said that considerable money has been saved by these regulations. I, for one, cannot see it, nor can any other man, acquainted with the full facts. It's really a dream, it's not a reality: I would be glad if it were true, but I know it is not. Now, on or about the 4th day of February I made a speech to the Board of Trade. I tried to be moderate and fair, as I was anxious that any attempt to assist the fishermen in obtaining better prices for their products should not be blocked. But, Mr. Speaker, I contended that these regulations, in the way of fixing prices were dangerous, mischievous and troublesome, and the only way prices would ever be fixed was by supply and demand, and I said at that meeting, using the words of one of England's Prime Ministers, "Just wait and see," and now results are beginning to prove that I was correct. Fish is a troublesome produce to handle; it is a perishable article, it is similar to the fruit trade, not quite as perishable, but nearly as bad in a warm climate. It has been said that under my time as Minister of Shipping, I tried to rule the prices, etc. That is not correct. It was an arrangement made by the merchants themselves, in which I acted as chairman, and it only covered a term of a month, to be cancelled at any time if they so decided. We did not interfere with prices anywhere, except in Brazil, where we tried to maintain prices, but had nothing whatever to do with payment, etc. That was entirely for the merchant himself on the other side. We tried to regulate cargoes for different markets, but this was mostly with Labrador fish—that

is practically what I did. Associated with me were Hon. W. B. Grieve, late Hon. J. Harvey and Hon. A. E. Hickman, and as soon as markets brightened we dropped it again. During my visit away last May and June I learned certain things in connection with exchange, and I called a meeting of the Board of Trade and told the exporters exchange would likely go very low, and I was prepared to give every assistance I could in helping to arrange for the coming season's catch. The merchants wanted the Government which I was associated with to lay down some rules and regulations re shipments, etc., but they declined to interfere—and that, Mr. Speaker, is the history of anything I did with fish. Some time last September I attended a meeting with several exporters and discussed with Mr. Hawes the handling of our fish in Italy, and what could be done with the Consorzio. We had a considerable number of meetings, and I pointed out to Mr. Hawes all I did through the Governor, the British Government, etc., yet we could do nothing with the Consorzio, and I feared he would have the same result. Yet, Mr. Hawes started in to work with the Consorzio, and some time late in October I got a note saying he had made sales and hastened to give me the good news, but alas the sales fell through. On November 3rd, as you gentlemen are fully aware, we were beaten at the polls, and as soon as the result was known I understand Messrs. Hawes and Job proceeded to Port Union, and presumably, some arrangement was made with the Hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries, which was never discussed with me; and the next I knew was that regulations were issued from the Hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries, regulations laying down prices, etc., and appointing Mr. Hawes agent. After reading these regulations carefully, I decided to sell my holdings of fish locally, and did so, as I saw trouble ahead. Now, Mr. Speaker, begins the real trouble. I claim, and nobody to the contrary can prove different, that the fixing of prices, etc., has brought about a change of affairs that really may be very serious, indeed more serious than most people can imagine. Just imagine, if you can, our country with a population of 250,000, a small-sized city, dictating to millions what they must pay for codfish. One would imagine we were the only country in the world who catch fish, but we are facing all kinds of competitions now that the world war is over, and if we are not very careful we may lose our markets altogether. I can well remember our Black Monday in 1894. Be careful, then, gentlemen, that history does not repeat itself. Remember the financial position of the world to-day is unsound, and these countries we sell our fish to are seriously handicapped by this great difference in exchange. Remember that to-day it is not hastily we must act, but with serious and careful judgment. One mistake may ruin the whole trade of the country. Diplomacy is required. Standardize your fish, and give your customer the article you profess to sell. Never mind fixing prices. Supply and demand with quality will remedy that, and let everybody sell to whom he pleases. Apparently someone has found light in his darkness. Take Mr. Walter Monroe's message of warning in a cable sent here the other day:

"My opinion is regulations now detrimental to trade interests. If continued, curtail supplies to a minimum. Give publicity."

What does it mean? Mr. Monroe is on the other side and has seen what has happened, and he is now a big enough man to admit his mistake, and I feel before very long, gentlemen, that the Hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries will do the same. Just wait and see. We do not realize at all what the loss has been to us through these Regulations. I will here compare figures as to shipments to Brazil:

Sir John Crosbie presented statistics of interest and importance. Amongst them he showed that from Oct. to Dec. 31, 1919, 69,457 drums were sent to Brazilian consignees. For the same period of 1918, the number of drums was 111,885, showing a shortage of about 42,000 drums.

Shipments during the six months ending on March 31st last, compared with shipments of the corresponding months of 1918-1919 show a decrease of 70,000 drums. Figure up the loss:—

74,000 drums would mean a loss on Packages . . . . . \$105,000  
Labour on same . . . . . 42,000  
Less Freight at 2½ . . . . . 175,000  
— \$322,000

Look at the loss to coopers and to people who have been making drums in Conception Bay, also to labourers, and the loss on freight, etc. Where is this money gone? It is easily answered. I will read to you a clipping from the Maritime Merchant:

"From the Importers' standpoint, things of-day are looking pretty good, except in the consignment markets. Porto Rico and Barbados are overloaded with supplies, but Cuba is already ready purchaser, with prospects that she will continue such for some months to come. North Brazil, too, has begun to buy quite freely, after showing extreme bashfulness for some time, and it is expected that she will be a good customer until after the Lenten season; she is not, how-

ever, willing to pay the high prices of last year. One of the most interesting bits of news in the dried fish trade at present is what comes to us from Newfoundland. The Government down there are attempting to regulate the export price of fish; that is, to set a minimum below which nothing can be sold. Permits to make shipments have to be secured from the Government who also stipulate the terms which may be given to foreign purchasers. The effect of this effort will not be felt directly in our market, the West Indies, but it should have a tendency to strengthen prices in a general way, and so it is that we find local exporters much more satisfied with the business outlook than they were a year ago. They think they can now see quite clearly how it will be possible for them to clean up everything they have without much effort; they feel that they should have the minimum of worry from this time forward. Some enquiries locally are reported from Italy, but stocks held here which would suit for that market are unfortunately light; what there is that would suit is needed, so it is said, for 'order' trade with Brazil."

How delighted these Nova Scotians must have been. Halifax got the coopers making packages, Halifax laborers got the labor, and Canadian ships likely got the freights, and poor old Newfoundland must suffer. Isn't it awful. All through an error in judgment, making Rules and Regulations to suit some people, Brazil Regulations call for practically 90 per cent. payment before the cargo sails; in the old way they used to pay on 60 or 90 day bills, which, apparently, most people were satisfied with. But, now you cannot do this any more; you must pay cash, and buyers fight shy and do business with other countries on reasonable terms. Yet, they turn around and force us to do business with Mr. Hawes, and draw at 60 or 90 days at Mr. Hawes' pleasure, when often and often we could sell cargoes outright. In other words, they change things at Brazil and turn around and change the conditions and practically go back to Brazil conditions in Europe. It is a funny state of affairs.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Spain has gone to pieces, just as I expected, and predicted. Hawes practically throws up the sponge and sends his ultimatum, and I will read you his cable:

"Situation Spain serious. Our total stocks 55,000, besides 25,000 on the way. Spain average total sales 2,000 weekly. Alicante advise have ample proof. Lazo offering Alicante really good quality large and medium 71/6, small 68/6. In interests of consignments already received and next season, protest must refuse anything more whatever even without advances."

If what Hawes says is right, there is forty weeks' stock there, and he now refuses anything whatever without advances. Oh, what a change to the wonderful things these Regulations were going to do. I wonder what about these hundreds of thousands of dollars they saved. Wait a bit, we are not through with Mr. Hawes, he is a clever man, although he could not handle the Consorzio like he handles the merchants here. He is clever, and somebody may find Mr. Hawes is not through yet. There is going to be lots of trouble before these Regulations of the past winter are finished.

What is the position in Oporto to-day? On April 7th, 1918, the stocks were 5,405 quintals, consumption 7,285 qtls.; April 14, 1919, the stocks were 15,275 qtls.; consumption, 5,608 qtls.; April 23, 1919, the stocks were 6,839 qtls.; consumption, 4,053.

Compare the position, same dates, for 1920:

April 3rd the stocks were 65,567 qtls.; consumption, 7,743 qtls. April 8th, the stocks here 75,200 qtls.; consumption, 5,000 qtls.; April 15th, the stocks were 60,000 qtls.; consumption, 4,057 qtls.; April 19, the stocks were 55,715 qtls.; consumption, 5,200 qtls.

And with six cargoes outside to enter, I will now read a message received from Oporto, which surely speaks for itself:—

"Owing regulations, unless shippers avail of their consignees and sell at best prices obtainable, result ruinous. Six cargoes waiting instructions here."

Is this not enough to make one sit and wonder what's to happen next? If something is not done, fishermen who have fish to come on here this spring will realize to their sorrow something has happened, as it will be practically unsaleable. What are we going to do with large and medium that is in the country now if these markets are unable to handle it? It is really serious, more serious than we think.

Last November no shipper was allowed to ship fish unless he could name the price and destination, not even to Halifax, yet when the Hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries returns from his trip his advice is to sell all you can to Halifax, rush all the fish you can there—what a change! Consorzio and Hawes—nobody seems to understand just what happened there. Some say Hawes sold 200,000 quintals and all kinds of great things were done; yet I know when some people get their account sales and final adjustments they won't be very happy. I know of a cargo sold to them which is now returning. I feel confident that things in Italy are much more serious than

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Kindly read over the list and communicate your requirements to the Vocational Officer, Militia Building, City.

876—Experienced Salesman; late Warrant Officer, has ability and education, would accept position as travelling representative.

2872—Returned Canadian soldier. Considerable experience with surveying parties. Would like similar work.

1250—Returned Naval Reservist, three years' experience in general store; would like similar position.

1705—Junior accountant and collector, with two years' experience. Education completed at Commercial School. Most excellent type of man.

4508—Returned Forester, age 54, would like position as watchman. Trusty and reliable.

3331—Disabled Vet. in receipt of small pension, desires light job; caretaker or of similar nature. Has fair education and a bright disposition.

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some people think. Yes, 1920 catch will never realize the prices of 1919, just as sure as the chickens come home to roost, and that's pretty sure. Yes, Regulations may be required, standardization of quality is a move in the right direction. Have proper inspection to see the qualities are shipped as sold. This, in my mind, is a move in the right direction, but don't interfere with price. Let a man sell to the best advantage; some men may be satisfied with reasonable profit, while others are not. Why should he not be allowed to sell at a small profit? Again, if these Regulations of prices remain, no young man can ever step up the ladder; he is down and out, the big man will be the man. It is difficult to know just what to do, but one must not act too hastily; it requires great thought and consideration. Remember to-day we have all the competition we want coming along from Norway, Iceland, France and England, which will all be competing with us. How can we, then, fix prices? Utterly impossible. Get the quality up to a good standard, and supply and demand will cover the rest. Buyers? Yes, the more the merrier; it makes competition in our local markets keener; it helps finance, and it will help the fishermen to obtain the very best prices for their fish.

I appeal to the Hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries to be very, very careful. Fish is our chief product; any false move may possibly change

the financial position of Newfoundland in more ways than he can ever dream of,—he, who was set by the fishermen to this House to protect their interests. I again appeal to him don't act too hastily, get the best brains the country can produce and give everything great and careful consideration, and, after all, good may come out of evil.

Finance,—the world to-day is topsy-turvy. Yes, I believe Newfoundland fishermen and merchants all did well the past five years; but they enlarged their business, increased their trade, and to-day they find themselves with vessels, traps, etc., which they cannot sell, and after all, is this not what has always happened in Newfoundland?

London brokers who have helped so many young men to become exporters to-day are essential to this trade, they are not perfect in everything, but they have been of great assistance, in fact they practically acted as a medium between buyer and seller, made finance easy to handle, and were a great assistance in helping to finance the season's catch, but to-day this way of doing business is no longer. They refuse to advance or handle our fish under these regulations. The result means that the whole fish trade may go into six or seven merchants' hands, and then see what will happen. Competition is the life of trade. Take it away and it means disaster—sure. In closing my

(Continued on 8th page.)

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