

# ECONOMY IN THE GOVERNMENT'S DICTIONARY

**Carter-Foster-Carvell-Veniot Administration Not Satisfied with Enlarged Cabinet but Must Have Assistant Attorney General as Well.**

(Official Report). Fredericton, May 30.—After routine business the house went into committee with Mr. Young in the chair and agreed to the bill to enable the town of Milltown to provide a water supply. The house again went into committee with Mr. LeBlanc in the chair and agreed to the bill relating to the appointment of county auditor in York and to change the name of James Edward Barry McKee and others with certain amendments. The house again went into committee with Mr. Leger in the chair and took up the further consideration of bill to amend the successions duty act.

**Succession Duties.** Major Tilley on consideration of section 2 said he knew of cases where the executors had not prepared a proper inventory because of lack of information. He thought it would be a hardship to double the amount of succession duties in such cases, but in cases where it was shown that information had been wilfully withheld such action would seem necessary. He thought the bill should be amended to provide exemption of the penalty in cases where no guilty intent was shown.

Hon. Mr. Foster said that it was not the intention to impose an undue hardship upon an estate where there had been no wilful misrepresentation of facts. He thought the bill might be amended along the lines suggested by the hon. member from St. John.

Hon. Mr. Robinson said the present act was retroactive and could go back to the year 1892. Perhaps it would be well not to make the bill too drastic.

Hon. Mr. Byrne said that while the present act went back to 1892 the proposed one would only be applicable from the date of its passage.

Hon. Mr. Baxter said that every succession duty act was now retroactive. Succession duty means wealth and an estate should be compelled to pay the tax imposed upon it. Power should be retained by the bill to deal with cases of gross negligence. He had no sympathy with those who did not take the trouble to look up particulars of an estate. He was satisfied to leave the bill in the hands of the attorney-general and hoped he would discuss the matter with the law committee.

Mr. Potts said it seemed to him that the bill proposed to make excuses for those who did not do right, whereas the ignorance of law is in reality no excuse.

Mr. Campbell said that the hon. member had drawn no distinction between ignorance of law and ignorance of fact. A man should not be punished for not knowing facts.

Progress was reported. The house went into committee with Mr. Leger (West) in the chair and took up consideration of the bill relating to shorthand reporting in certain courts.

Hon. Mr. Baxter expressed approval of the provisions of the act providing for the assignment of stenographers and also of the section which made stenographers available for work in chambers. He felt that remuneration of court stenographers was none too liberal and when attorney-general he had under consideration the advisability of making an increase. He considered the staff a most efficient one and in this connection special mention might be made of Mr. Simpson who was now the dean. He hoped the attorney-general would carefully consider the claims of the stenographers.

The first 29 sections of the bill were agreed to with very little discussion. Hon. Mr. Baxter suggested that some means be taken to provide prisoners in criminal cases with a copy of the evidence without charge.

The bill was agreed to.

**Deputy Attorney-General.** The house again went into committee with Mr. Leger (Westmorland) in the chair and took into consideration the bill to provide for the appointment of a deputy attorney-general.

Hon. Mr. Byrne said that the bill was something of a new departure. For the information of the house he would say that when the bill was proposed to create a new office it would not entail any extra expense upon the province. It was proposed to pay the salary of the deputy attorney-general out of the commissions now allowed for the collection of succession duties and the balance, which would amount to a considerable sum, would go into the treasury.

Hon. Mr. Murray (Kings) asked if it was proposed to increase the salary of the attorney-general to compensate him for loss of commission on succession duties.

Hon. Mr. Byrne said the salary of the attorney-general was \$2,100 and he would continue to perform the same duties, the collection of succession duties excepted.

Hon. Mr. Baxter regretted to learn from the hon. attorney-general that there was to be no increase in his salary. He wished to go on record as saying that the salaries paid the members of the executive are inadequate for the duties they perform and he was prepared to support any proposal for an increase.

Mr. Morneau—"How about the members?"

**Regardless of Politics.** Mr. Baxter continued, saying he always found hon. members able to speak for themselves and the new government would find this out as the former government did. He approved of the action of the government in abolishing the commission of five per cent. on the salaries of the members of the executive. On several occasions he had discussed this matter with his former colleagues and had placed there would probably have been legislation this session abolishing the commission and using the salaries of the members of the executive. He believed that the services of the minister were worth \$2,500 or \$3,000 a year to the province and the matter should be dealt with regardless of politics. In regard to the bill to create a deputy attorney he was not impressed with it.

Many men of ability had filled the office of attorney-general in the past. The late Mr. Blair, who stood at the top of his profession, was called upon to deal with many constitutional questions during his term of office and got along without a deputy. There had been successive attorney-generals who had done the same thing without assistance. In regard to criminal prosecutions it was impossible for the attorney-general to attend to this while the house was in session, but he could not see the necessity of the bill.

His honest conviction was that if a deputy attorney-general was to conduct criminal business in outside counties his services were not necessary.

It would not take more than a fortnight of his time in a year to collect the succession duties. It seemed that the proposed new official was to do only the work which successive attorney-generals had carried on for years and holding that view he did not consider that the appointment should be made. In his connection he would point out that the salary of the attorney-general was fixed by statute and there was no reason why that of the deputy should not be fixed in the same way.

Hon. Mr. Byrne said he could not agree with the attorney-general in his short experience in that capacity himself he found that there were very many duties which fell to the attorney-general's lot and he had no doubt that his hon. friend had gone up against them too. There were repeated applications from assessors for legal advice. It was the duty of the clerk of the peace to assist the assessors and also to conduct prosecutions when they lived within 25 miles of the court house but it often happened that applications were made for assistance from outside. It was impossible for the attorney-general to be always on the spot to attend to the duties himself and therefore it was proposed that he should have a deputy who should always be at the office to attend to anything that might arise. One qualification was that he should be a barrister of at least ten years standing.

Hon. Mr. Murray (Kings). Hon. Mr. Murray (Kings) said that prior to the election his hon. friends opposite had made many promises in the way of reduction of expenses and retrenchment all round, but he could not see much sign of any intention to carry out these promises so far. On the contrary they seemed to be making increases all round. They had increased the personnel of the government till now the number was larger than almost ever before and the premier while he filled no portfolio found he needed a private secretary to help him and whose salary so far had never been fixed and was therefore without limitation.

Now the attorney general wanted a deputy to help him. He agreed with the policy of the government with regard to the collection of succession duties. The previous government had had that under consideration and would have attended to the matter had they remained in office. Instead of increasing the number of members of the government they should have been reduced and their salaries increased to such an amount as would have devoted all their time to their offices.

If a deputy attorney was to be appointed it should be insisted that he devote the whole of his time to his work. The idea he presumed would be for the attorney general to spend his time in Bathurst leaving his deputy to look after the work of the department in Fredericton and such a system would not rebound to the credit of the government.

Mr. Pinder said it appeared to him that it was a most humiliating position that was disclosed. The government consisted of nine members and the attorney-general was one of them. He was a lawyer and a clever man at that and if the attorney-general had not sufficient confidence in himself and his ability to conduct the public business he should get one of the other lawyers to do it for him. It was very humiliating to have the hon. gentleman get up and state that he was not able to attend to the duties of his office.

Hon. Mr. Byrne Objects. Hon. Mr. Byrne rose to order and said that he did not make any such statement and the hon. gentleman speaking must have known he did not make the statement and that in stating that he did he was saying something that was deliberately and knowingly untrue.

Mr. Pinder, continuing, said the attorney-general admitted every time he held a fact that everybody in the House had noticed as well. It was very humiliating indeed to see a man wanting a deputy to take his duties and responsibilities off his shoulders and the premier should see that some one should be got who could attend to the work.

**Motion Voted Down.** A motion by Hon. Mr. Baxter to report progress was lost, 22 to 17. The bill was then taken up section by section.

Mr. Tilley said he was glad to hear the premier declare that the province was going to be a winner by the saving of the attorney-general's fees. He had not been arranged for and now the attorney-general had asked for a deputy with an unlinked salary. It appeared that the principle they were acting on was to appoint the man first and then fix whatever salary he might choose to ask. For a government that was saving let them save, but don't waste the savings from one source by spending them on other ways.

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Hon. Mr. Robinson Agrees. Hon. Mr. Robinson agreed with the last speaker that the members of the government were underpaid, the salaries being underpaid of any private in the Dominion. It was idle to expect to get proper service for such inadequate salaries but if the attorney-general was willing to sacrifice himself to help the public would approve. That was the proper principle. He was willing to say that the government members should live in Fredericton but they could not do it on the salaries they were paid.

**Government Economy?** Hon. Mr. Potts said that his hon. friends would probably agree with him that the way of the reformer was hard. When his hon. friend the late premier said that he was in favor of a reduction in the members of the government he did not act on that principle. Instead of doing so he added two members to it just before the election. The appointment proposed by the bill was in the way of economy. Since 1908 \$23,800 had been paid to attorneys general for collection of succession duties and it was not the intention to appoint a high salaried officer who would be paid such a big sum as that. He would not be called upon to devote the whole of his time to his duties. He seemed that he did not intend to approve of the system of government in Nova Scotia, but the time was not ripe at present to make the change in this province.

Mr. Potts of St. John. Mr. Potts thought that when the premier rose to address the House he would at least have given them some information. He had thought that when the government changed and his hon. friend succeeded to the position he now occupied that the province would have a leader but he had been sadly disappointed. He looked upon the bill as simply a means to find some man a soft job on the pretense of saving money. He had always been under the impression that there were too many lawyers in previous governments and they were given to understand that the present government came into office that they were going to have a business man in charge for a change. If this bill was a specimen of business management by a business man he could not congratulate his hon. friend on it. If there was going to be any saving let them save, but don't waste the savings from one source by spending them on other ways.

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**That Identifies Genuine President Suspenders**

**Refuse Imitations.**

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