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Jan 9, St. John's



The Voice of the Toilers.

Liberal-Labor Campaign Opens.

Supporters Throng Star Hall--Candidates and Other Speakers Receive Tremendous Ovation--The Menace of Coakerism Fully Explained--Greatest Enthusiasm Ever Displayed.

"The most enthusiastic political meeting in the history of St. John's," as it was last night described by one who has for many years been a campaign manager in the district, may be taken to epitomize the great rally of the Liberal-Labor adherents at the Star of the Sea Hall. Long before the meeting began the hall was filled, and as the Chairman opened with an address of explanation hundreds more squeezed in through the doors and filled aisles, box entrance and exit halls, orchestra and every possible place where a man could get. Calculated by those who know the hall and its capacity, there were slightly over fourteen hundred people present, and in every man-jack the invincible Liberal-Labor Party had a staunch, enthusiastic, true-blue supporter and worker. There was not an East End face in the hall, while boys (usually seen at such meetings) had been prevented admittance.

Spontaneous enthusiasm marked the night. Applause greeted each point scored and the applause was none of your half-hearted, undecided applause of men who chered but didn't know at what.

"Hang 'Er Down!" was a cry caught up and carried by the packed hall, and to "hang 'er down" every man was determined.

Mr. John Cadwell occupied the chair, and he said that a chair was never filled better nor with more acceptance on the part of the audience. His frank, fearless explanation of the events which had resulted in the Workingmen's Political Party, going with the Liberal Party appealed to every man as being straight, hard, clear-cut facts, and the cheering

which greeted his speech was proof sufficient that every man accepted his explanation.

Mr. J. R. Bennett, the sitting member for St. John's West, was the first speaker. Mr. Bennett in a masterly manner disposed of the attacks made on the ministry of Sir Michael Cashin, which was only in power five months, and the personal attacks made by the Government press on himself and late colleagues. The policy of the Government to the present was vilification and abuse. He was prepared to stand it all, but he doubted if the intelligent voters of St. John's West would lie down under the attacks made on their honesty and their rights to vote as they would. Mr. Bennett concluded his address without any personal reference to the Government candidates, and asked for a straight, honest, clean fight.

Mr. W. J. Linegar followed, and his speech proved that St. John's or any other district in the Dominion would have a fitting and able representative on the floor of the Assembly if they honored him with their support. He fully explained his position in uniting with the Liberal-Progressive Party. After the General Election he, with Mr. Cadwell and Mr. Foley, interviewed Mr. Squires, by request, and after more than an hour's talk with him they were just as much in the dark as to what he wanted or wished to propose as when they entered his office. The interview only ended with Mr. Squires using a lot of words so meaningless that they did not go back to their committee to report. Then followed a meeting with Sir M. P. Cashin, at which Mr. J. McGrath, the Chairman of the Labor

Party, attended. The offer of Sir Michael was such that he and his colleagues reported to their committee. Some wanted two Labor candidates to run, but 95 out of the 100 agreed to the Cashin proposal. Mr. Linegar also dealt with the housing problem and the building committee, of which he was chairman. It would be idle to tell his story here, but no more contemptible transaction could possibly be framed than that of the men with whom he had been associated when they called themselves together, and formed a new committee. Mr. Linegar told of an interview with Mr. Squires at which Mr. Gibbs and Mr. McGrath were present and some other directors of the housing company, at which Mr. Squires offered to do something if the directors of the company took off their coats and fought for him. He could not be a party to such an outrage, and because of this stand he was vilified and attacked. Other matters were also gone into by the speaker, but space does not even permit a review. The electors will again have a chance to hear Mr. Linegar, and when they do they will hear a practical, sound, reasonable and convincing argument that will prove to them that he is worthy of their confidence in the forthcoming bye-election.

Sir Michael Cashin was the next speaker, and devoted his speech to fishery matters. In a practical and logical way he gave facts and figures of our codfishery during the last 30 years, and how the catch was handled. Up to a few years ago Water Street held the key to the situation as to making the price, and they guided themselves as to whether the catch was normal, short or above the average. Then came the outside buyer from Canada and the U. S. A. and elsewhere, and through competition the price went up. Water Street was not satisfied with this and last October was formed a combine, or a trust, which if allowed to carry out its programme would bring the fisheries back to the days of "sell here or you can't sell anywhere." That such was the case was very much in evidence when an agent for a foreign concern called on Mr. Job to offer a protest against the Coaker regulations. He was politely told by Mr. Job to go into some other business, Water Street could handle and dispose of all the fish that was caught. Sir Michael continued by reading the agreement between Hawes and the Water Street six, as to the shipping and handling of the fish exported to Europe. Hawes, the other party in the agreement, was given full control of cod to Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece, or any other countries or markets in Europe. The agreement gave Hawes exclusive rights, and the commission given him, which was on the gross proceeds, would net about \$1,250,000. Sir Michael thought that if Mr. Hawes got \$250,000 a year out of the fishermen he was getting a fairly good salary, and he would like to know if there was not another agreement, and if some others interested were not sharing in the \$1,000,000 of profits that were left. When these iniquitous regulations were put into force there were many objections by the small man who was shipping to Canada and the U. S. A., but no heed was given. Every other government in Newfoundland had a policy of trying to find new markets, but the Coaker-Squires combination were trying to kill the markets we had. Permits were applied for to ship fish to the U. S. A., but were refused. The result was that action was taken in the Supreme Court against the Government's action, and a unanimous decision was handed down by the Judges that the action of the Government was illegal. The whole trouble with the fish ring was to make money quickly, and with Coaker to move St. John's to Port Union. It was up to the people of St. John's West to decide whether these conditions would continue or not, and their verdict would be given on the 22nd inst. In conclusion Sir Michael had no hesitation in saying that Coaker and ring rule would be ousted by the voters of St. John's West.

Mr. J. T. Martin was the next speaker and received an ovation on arising. As a workingman himself he appealed for the support of the laborers for Mr. Linegar and himself, assuring the audience he would always back up any measures in their interests brought forward by his colleague. In clear cut manner he pointed out that Squires and Brownrigg held power only at the pleasure of Coaker and if they had the interests of St. John's West at heart would have opposed the iniquitous fish regulations. They failed to do so because they hold high offices and must do as they are told letting the interests of their constituents go by the board. His own record as a member of the Municipal Council showed he was faithful to the people, and he would be so in the House of Assembly if elected with Mr. Linegar in the coming contest. The popularity of Mr. Martin was shown by the hearty applause which greeted his remarks, and at the close he was cheered to the echo.

Mr. W. J. Linegar followed, and when the cheering subsided he began by pointing out that those on the platform were not bruisers as stated in the Star, and no police had been engaged to control the meeting. As far as the fish case was concerned it would be improper for him to say more than that the Court had unanimously thrown down its own Government, a thing most unusual in the judiciary of this dominion. When such happened it was clear the conditions must be exceptional and the regulations considered improper by the Court. Advantage had been taken by Coaker and the few associated with him, of an act intended to deal with entirely different conditions to conserve for themselves all things pertaining to fish, and for Mr. Hawes everything in the way of commissions. Squires and Brownrigg had to do as they were told. They weren't strong as shown by their refusal to accept the challenge to attend the Liberal-Labor meeting, and dared not oppose their boss. By the fish proclamations Coaker could do as he likes. The attempt to put them into law was claimed to be to beat the Consorzio in Italy, but the facts are that the Consorzio to-day is further from defeat than when the mad regulations were started. Experiments in some industries are all right but tricks should not be tried which were likely to ruin the whole country. It is not right for one man to jeopardize the country's interests because Hawes comes in and says "I'm your only salvation." Hawes gets a good time for the next four years. It is against every principle of right for any legislature, executive or individual to take a crazy chance on the judgment of one who a few days ago did not know if Newfoundland were an island or attached to the mainland. Such a one-sided agreement was never known before. The one who agrees to a proposition giving the proposer all the benefits, is either soft or there is something in it for him. The Water Street merchants are not soft and the fish regulations were a good thing for those interested in them. The eter-

nal law of supply and demand holds good in the fish markets to-day. This is not the only fish producing country in the world, and it is foolish to think we can dictate to all outside. Knowing the decision of the Court and thinking the fish business too dangerous to be touched, where do the electors come in. On the 22nd will come the chance to answer by defeating the candidates of the Government which promulgated such outrageous regulations. In kindness to them don't send them back to be bossed about by Coaker. Labor and the Liberal Progressive parties are now bound together by a contract made above board. The issues now are different and only two parties are in the field. The question is "Is Coaker rule wrong for St. John's West?" St. John's East has already answered and as this is only one big district it is up to the West Enders to return Martin and Linegar and show they cannot be bought by the giving out of a few orders, the offering of which is an insult to a voter's intelligence. That sort of tactics may buy cheap men, but not those of St. John's West. The election of Martin and Linegar will give Labor the long-looked-for representation in the House and so strengthen the Opposition that no laws will be passed unless the Liberal-Labor Party approves of them.

Capt. A. Kean was next introduced and was warmly greeted. Capt. Kean also dealt with the fish problem and referred to a Government circular, which had been handed him, one of the paragraphs of which read: "You get more for culling \$12 fish than \$6 fish." What the paragraph meant the captain was unable to explain, but the only reasonable explanation was that the man carrying a barrow of \$12 fish would get more pay than the one carrying the \$6 fish, and if the price dropped any lower Coaker and Squires would have them carry and cull it for nothing. Dealing with the personal attack made on himself, he pointed out that during his nautical life he carried over 170,000 passengers and crews, and at no time did he have a single serious accident or any loss of life. In that time he had entered and left 25,320 ports and had struck his ship three times. The Star and Advocate wanted St. John's West to decide the election on the question of how many times he struck the Portia or Prospero. The policy of personal abuse and misrepresentation was the only means at their disposal. He was quite confident, however, that St. John's West would consider the issue of whether Coaker and the fish combine would rule, or whether honest Government would win out. He was sure of the answer, which would be a splendid victory for Martin and Linegar.

Mr. James MacDonnell, M.H.A., St. George's, who will be a power in debate in the next Assembly, came next and in a speech telling and effective held the audience for more than half an hour. While Mr. MacDonnell spoke one could hear a pin drop, and his appeal went home to the hearts

of his hearers. It is impossible, in the brief space at our disposal to even attempt to outline Mr. MacDonnell's address, but those who heard it will give it full circulation, and its effect would be felt. The

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