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April 19, 23



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House of Assembly

OFFICIAL SYNOPSIS OF PROCEEDINGS

(Continued.)
 Tuesday, July 3rd, 1923

The House met at 3:15 pursuant to adjournment.

Hon. the Minister of Finance tabled the Estimates.

Hon. the Leader of the Opposition asked when the Auditor-General's report would be available.

Hon. the Prime Minister: I think the Auditor-General's report will be here before the House rises.

In reply to Mr. Cashin, Hon. the Minister of Marine and Fisheries said no marine grants had been sent out to the District of Ferryland within the last six weeks.

In reply to Mr. Walsh, Hon. the Minister of Finance stated same arrangements will be made for coastal service between Trepassay and Placentia as last year.

The Railway Resolutions were deferred.

The debate on Industrial Development Bill was then continued.

Leader of the Opposition asked the Prime Minister in connection with the Humber Deal, if at the end of 80 years when all debts are paid the Company was still to be exempt from taxation?

Hon. the Prime Minister: The directors will pay the usual taxes.

Leader of the Opposition contended it was a vicious principle to give a company that we are granting such concessions exemption from taxation forever. The average man has to bear the burden of taxation for his lifetime; but he must look on and see a corporation given freedom from taxation in perpetuity. He could not vote for that. We will give the Company a guarantee of principal and interest for 20 or 25 years, but after they have paid of their obligation must become an ordinary company, liable to taxation under Newfoundland laws do not have it be said that this House granted a corporation freedom from taxation forever.

Hon. the Prime Minister: I may say that the Company is not free from Import, sales tax, or dividend tax, and is taxable under these just as any man is taxable.

Hon. the Leader of the Opposition: Are we not to tax them as an ordinary business undertaking?

Hon. the Prime Minister: There would be no such tax.

Hon. the Minister of Justice explained regarding the taxation of this Company. The scheme originated in 1915, when the Newfoundland Products Corporation obtained certain concessions, amongst others freedom from taxation from import tax, profit tax, and dividend tax in perpetuity. The Company subsequently interested the Armstrongs, who realized the advantages and when we took the matter up with them they expected the same terms. But we had promised a guarantee on both principal and interest and insisted on taxing their exports at the rate of \$1.00 a ton and paper and also taxed the horsepower developed. The Company replied they had started on the strength of the concessions granted in the 1915 Act. We succeeded in taxing them \$120,000 to \$150,000 per

year. Then the Opposition suggested limiting this clause to 30 years. In reply to this the Company says: If you do this then at the end of 30 years we have a readjustment, so that we will not have to pay our present taxation together with whatever taxes you might put on us at that time.

The Leader of the Opposition agreed to a clause providing for a re-adjustment at the end of 30 years as to whether we shall continue the same method of taxing the Company or change it to a new form.

Hon. the Prime Minister: We will let that clause stand over for the present.

Mr. Fox and the Minister of Justice here discussed the legal form and effect of the clauses relating to taxation.

Hon. Leader of the Opposition asked about the minimum wage.

Hon. the Prime Minister: Two dollars an eight hours day had been agreed upon between the Government and the Company and between the Company and its sub-contractors.

Mr. Fox understood that the Company objected to have the exemption from taxation limited to 30 years in the case of their aluminum projects.

Hon. the Minister of Justice: Under the 1915 Act all raw materials coming in for manufacture of nitrates should be duty free, as they have substituted the manufacture of aluminum for nitrates they expected the same arrangements.

Hon. the Leader of Opposition closed the debate. He contended there must be a limit. Make it 30, 50, or 90 years. We had no right to legislate in this manner over the possible wishes of our posterity. The Act of 1915 is not a precedent we of necessity follow.

The Chairman from the committee reported progress and asked leave to sit again at a later hour.

The House then went into Committee to consider certain resolutions relating to the Newfoundland railway and other matters.

Hon. the Leader of the Opposition pointed out that there was no relation whatever in the passing of those resolutions and the Humber Deal. They were not the Government's but in reality the Reid Newfoundland Company's. The Reid Company were the Products Company and they availed of the opportunity that the railway was to be settled before putting through the Humber Deal. The country has had to pay an awful price to get rid of the Reids. The two million dollars was not the worst of it; but the enormity of the position of the Government having to operate the railway. The Opposition was not going to take any responsibility for a situation entirely of the Government's own making and was not going to vote for the Resolutions. It was a pity that in 1920 he gauntlet was not thrown down and the eminent Counsel in England asked for their opinion would have been obtained then than that handed down now. Matters have drifted for three years and now the Government are at this late date absolutely with out a policy.

He contended the Reids knew what they were doing when they shut down the railway. There was more heart than head in the manner in which the Prime Minister had dealt with the Reids from the first. In his pre-election speeches the Prime Minister told the country a reputable concern of English contractors was going to take over and run the railway; how there was no policy except that the Government was going to take over the railway and run it.

He (Mr. Higgins) wished the Hon. Member for St. George's might explain how a Government can run a railway more efficiently and economically than a private concern. The serious question now was not the payment of the \$2,000,000, but the future operation of the railway. The Government cannot run the system without incurring a heavy annual loss.

Mr. Grimes (Fogo) Why not?

Hon. the Leader of the Opposition: Because nearly three years ago the Hon. Gentleman's leader thought it could be so run, but a year later gave it up as a hopeless task. The resolutions do not settle our troubles they only re-create them; instead of a settlement on this 3rd day of July our railway troubles begin anew. The country ought not have a railway thrown on its hands without any provision for future operation. there was no pronouncement who was going to the general manager or whether there was going to be a railway department. For the reasons enumerated

he could not support the resolutions.

Mr. Grimes (Fogo): Had a few observations to make in reply to the Leader of the Opposition's objections to Government control of the railway. He (Mr. Grimes) contended that Government monopoly was better than private monopoly. We had experience of private monopoly for 25 years and who could say that private ownership of railways can be managed successfully in other countries why not here? Last year the Australian government operated a railway that brought them a revenue of \$100,000 over expenditure. Conditions were similar in New Zealand. The people of Canada were in favor of the Government taking control of the Canadian National Railway. He (Mr. Grimes) seriously believed in the principle of public ownership and felt that we have men here who can run the railway. If the railway had to be operated at a loss then better the loss under Government control. In either case the country has to make. He thought the money spent under the Railway Commission was wisely spent. The road was in a dilapidated condition; the Reids would not put it in proper condition to safeguard the lives of the people. They were kicking over the handling of freight and many improvements were made to the road at heavy cost. With private concerns the people are a secondary consideration whereas the Government runs the road in the interest of the people.

The Chairman of Committee reported progress and asked leave to sit again on to-morrow. It was so ordered.

The remaining orders of the day were deferred and the House adjourned until to-morrow afternoon at 3 o'clock.

Wednesday, July 4th, 1923

The House met at 3:15 p.m. pursuant to adjournment.

Mr. Walsh presented a petition from Fox Harbor, P.B., asking that the grant for the ferry on Placentia Sound be put back to the original sum of \$2000.

Mr. Higgins presented a petition from Flat Rock asking that the proclamation re the picking of partidge berries be put in force in that section.

Hon. the Finance Minister tabled the report of the Auditor-General.

In reply to Sir M. P. Cashin, Hon. the Prime Minister tabled the following information:

(a) The authorized capital of the Newfoundland Power and Paper Co. Ltd. is \$21,000,000, divided into 210,000 shares of \$100.00 each, of which 100,000 shares are six and a half non-cumulative preference; 50 ordinary shares; 60 deferred ordinary shares.

(b) The whole share capital is issued as fully paid.

(c) The whole share capital is issued for cash and other considerations.

(d) At present the entire capital of the Company is represented by assets other than cash.

It is not the intention to re-open the telegraph office at Peter's River, closed since June, 1922.

Hon. the Prime Minister tabled the following reply in answer to Sir M. P. Cashin re pit props cut:

Cords
 Pulpwood
 E. Moore, Twin Lakes 10,000
 J. R. Goodyear, Skull Hill 4,000
 J. M. Curran, Glenwood 7,328

Cords
 Pit Props
 Mr. Martin, Colinet River 13,785
 J. M. Curran, Glenwood 933

The House went into committee on an Act further to Amend the Act 6 Geo. V. 1915 Cap 4, entitled "An Act for the Confirmation of a contract with the Newfoundland Products Corporation, Ltd. The amendments offered by the Opposition were accepted.

The Chairman from the Committee reported the bill passed with some amendment. It was ordered that the bill be read a third time presently—whereupon the bill was read a third time, passed, ordered to be engrossed and sent to the Legislative Council requesting the concurrence of that body.

The House then went into Committee of the whole on Resolutions relating to the Newfoundland Railway and other matters.

Sir M. P. Cashin said Railway matters had been before this House since 1919 in all shapes and sizes. First the railway was going to be made a paying concern and so the Commission was appointed. Look down over the line and see where we have landed to-day. The sound commercial basis that was promised did not materialize.

The 1919 Manifesto was quoted to show the policy of the Government

Continued on page 3.



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The attention of Owners and Masters of British Ships is called to the 74th Section of the "Merchant Shipping Act, 1894."

75.—(1) A Ship belonging to a British Subject shall hoist the proper national colors—

(a) on a signal made to her by one of His Majesty's ships, including any vessel under the command of an officer of His Majesty's navy or full pay, and

(b) on entering or leaving any foreign port and

(c) if of fifty tons gross tonnage or upwards, on entering or leaving any British Port.

(2) If default is made on board any ship in complying with this section the master of the ship shall for each offence be liable to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds.

At time of war it is necessary for every British Ship to hoist the colours and heave to if signalled by a British Warship; if a vessel hoists no colours and runs away, it is liable to be fired upon.

H. W. LeMESSURIER,
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