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April 19, 23



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**House of Assembly****SYNOPSIS OF PROCEEDINGS**

(Continued.)

Hon. the Leader of the Opposition regretted that the Opposition could not agree with the principle enunciated in the letter of the Inspector General. He had just been told by the Prime Minister. For this official personally, as well as for his next in command, Superintendent O'Neill, as to their competency and faithfulness in the discharge of their duty he had nothing but praise to offer, but if the Inspector General was to be paid for special services through the Justice Department. He (Mr. Higgins) contended that the money was improperly paid; there was no authority for it, it was a case of public moneys being passed over by an unauthorized person, and he went so far as to say that the moneys could not be legally retained.

The Model Farm vote was then taken up. Mr. Higgins and Mr. Sullivan both objected on the ground that it was unnecessary. The Minister said he would be in a position on to-morrow to state whether he considered the farm a necessity or not.

Hon. the Prime Minister said he was convinced that the model farm was not a necessity and moved that the vote of \$25,000 be stricken out. He then moved that the vote for the encouragement of Agriculture be raised from \$15,000 to \$20,000.

While on the Public Works Dept. vote, Mr. Higgins repeated his request for detailed information under No. 2 relief account. He was told the information would be ready to-morrow. The Vote stood over until the information was supplied.

Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Walsh supported by Mr. Hawco, appealed for better Ferry Service in the district of Placentia and St. Mary's. The members were told by the Prime Minister, to consult with the Minister of Public Works when their requests would be given every reasonable consideration.

The members for Ferryland, Messrs. Cashin and Moore, renewed their demand that the Government telegraph office, recently installed at Ferryland be discontinued, and that the office be transferred to St. Shott's. There is already an Anglo Office at Ferryland. It was pointed out that the people did not want the office. The necessity for telegraphic of telephone connection with St. Shott's was admitted by all. The Minister of Posts and Telegraphs intimated that he had made enquiry and was satisfied that the people of Ferryland did not want the extra telegraph office, and he saw no valid reason for forcing it upon them at considerable expense to the department. In the interest of the public service he would have the amount required to maintain the office at St. Shott's and Peter's River, where telephone communication would be established, just as soon as the poles could be got on the ground.

Customs vote for the purchase of liquor for the Controllers Department was reduced by \$236,000.00. Asked how this could be done when a sale valued at \$48,000.00 was looked for by the Budget, the Minister replied that there was an immense

stock on hand and new liquor would be purchased from the sales of what was now in stock and supplied the dept. as required. The Customs duties would be collected from time to time as the goods were delivered.

Mr. Higgins asked the Prime Minister what progress he had made with regard to a Commission of inquiry into recent happenings?

Hon. the Prime Minister replied he was meeting with great difficulty in getting the right kind of men to act. If within the next few days he could not get the Commissioners other steps would be taken.

Mr. Higgins asked if he proposed to start the enquiry before the House closed to which the Prime Minister replied in the affirmative. The Prime Minister in reply to a further question stated Mr. Berteau was still acting liquor Controller. Mr. Meaney was suspended, and that this department would be the first to be enquired into when the Commission of Enquiry began its work.

While the vote for the salaries of the Military Pensions Board was being considered Mr. Peter Cashin objected to the presence of Dr. Mosdell on that board, claiming that appointment should go to a returned soldier.

Hon. the Prime Minister in reply stated it had been deemed advisable by past Governments to have a civilian on the Board. Dr. Mosdell succeeded the late Mr. Clift. Dr. Parsons is the soldier's representative and Chairman of the Board.

The Shipping Department of \$50,000 was next considered. Mr. Moore wanted to know if there still existed a ministry of shipping.

Mr. Cave, in explanation, said we still had the Coastal boats running.

Sir Michael Cashin objected to the vote going through on the grounds that the House had nothing before it in the way of records to show how we stand financially in respect to that department.

Mr. Walsh spoke of the great injustice being done a large section of his constituency when the whole of St. Mary's Bay and from Trepassay to Placentia was without service.

Mr. Sullivan supported Mr. Walsh and expressed the hope that before the House closes some provision would be made for the supplying of a steamer to that part of the district.

Mr. Higgins asked the Prime Minister to consider the advisability of having Departmental Heads take recommendations from elected representatives with regard to district expenditure, rather than from persons who were not responsible to the House.

Sir Michael Cashin thought there should be somebody with a seat in the House responsible for the operation of the Railway as this was now one of the most important departments of the Government.

Hon. the Prime Minister said he recognized the force of Sir Michael Cashin's observations, but the magnitude of the task in arriving at a solution of the present difficulties must be apparent to all. He felt that ample time should be taken in formulating plans for the future operation of the railway. The Government, under recent legislation took over the railway on July 1st. In the meantime Mr. Russell had been appointed Acting General Manager.

Although a young man, he was regarded as quite capable and efficient. Under his management everything was going along well. As a young Newfoundland he felt Mr. Russell should be given a chance to make good. In the past the Government had been assailed for bringing outsiders in to assist in railway management. He (the Prime Minister) hesitated very much to rush at some proposition which would bind the Government only to find later that it had not been the best one. He hoped to open the House again in February next, by which time it may be possible to conclude an agreement with some responsible outside parties to take over and operate the road under a subsidy which we would know in advance.

The following bills were then put through their second reading:

Second Reading of Bill entitled "An Act to Amend 12 and 13 Geo. V. Cap. 17, entitled "An Act for the Encouragement of Shipbuilding."

Second Reading of Bill entitled "An Act respecting certain Rights, Privileges and Franchises connected with the supply of Electric Light and Power to St. John's for Street Railway and other purposes."

The House then adjourned until to-morrow afternoon at 3 o'clock.

Tuesday, August 7, 1923  
The House met at 3.15 pursuant to adjournment.

Sir Michael Cashin tabled questions re printing and a vote under contingencies of \$2500.00 paid to the Tariff Revision Commission.

Mr. Walsh asked the Colonial Secretary to lay on the table of the House a statement, giving (a) the estimated amount charged by the Newfoundland Publishers, Ltd., for printing the four volumes of the Census; (b) how much money has been advanced on account, the date and amount of each cheque; (c) when was the work submitted to the printers, and how much of it is done to date.

The Prime Minister gave notice of resolutions re new industrial projects with H. J. Crowe, Morris J. Mooney and others.

The Minister of Marine and Fisheries introduced a bill to encourage trade with the West Indies, which was read a first time. Part vote on supply passed at last sitting were agreed to.

The House then went into Committee of the whole on supply.

Minister of Marine, Grimes, and Minister of Public Works, Piccott, justified the pensioning the Messrs. Mercer, Norman and Belbin. These men were 75, 69 and 62 years of age and have given good service to the Government. They had been recommended because of the services they had rendered.

Mr. Higgins stated that his information was that the men themselves did not want to be pensioned. If they were satisfied he had nothing further to say on their behalf.

Mr. Sullivan asked about the pension of W. J. Blandford. His information was that he was only in the Civil Service three years.

The Prime Minister stated that his information was that Mr. Blandford was seventy-two years of age. It was true that he was only employed for a period of three years.

Hon. the Minister of Agriculture and Mines presented a petition from the residents of Thomkins, St. George's. He referred to the difficulties the farmers in this section have in getting their produce to the railway line, and also to the fact that there were no storage facilities, consequently serious losses often occurred. Petitioners ask that a siding and shed be erected.

Sir Michael Cashin objected to the appointment of Mr. C. J. Furey as Railway Inspector and further objected to appointment of Commissioners in the Department of Mines and Agriculture on the ground that with the abolition of the Model Farm and the reduced vote, there was nothing for the Commissioners to do.

Hon. the Prime Minister in replying to Sir Michael Cashin, pointed out that the offices referred to were not the creation of this or the late Government. They were made under the Morris Government, of which Sir Michael Cashin was an Executive member. He very well knew the reasons why the law had been changed to permit members of the House of Assembly to hold office of emolument without seeking re-election.

He agreed that the principle was bad but he had come into office with the present estimate already prepared, and regarded it unfair that it should be made to appear that the present administration was responsible for the present conditions. It was thoroughly well known that these positions were from the start intended to be political appointments. Two of the first Commissioners, now passed away, had no practical knowledge along agricultural lines, and the same may be said of the present appointees. Messrs. Higgins and Walsh strongly opposed the voting of the salaries of the Agricultural Commissioners. The vote stood over.

Mr. Downey defended the early Commissioners and paid a tribute to the excellent work performed by the

Continued on page 3.

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(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.

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