

THIRD READINGS

The following Bills were read a third time and passed;—

Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD: To amend the Interim Parliamentary Election Act of 1871.

Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD: Respecting the public lands of the Dominion.

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SUPPLY

Hon. Sir FRANCIS HINCKS moved the third reading of the Supply Bill.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE had objected last night to the third reading of the Supply Bill, in the first place because he thought they should conform to the old custom and make the Supply Bill the last Act of the House.

Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD: It is not the usual custom.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said that last night he had objected to this Bill being read a third time then, for two reasons; first, it had always been their practice that the final passage of a Supply Bill should be the last Act of the session. Then he had intended to make some remarks upon the policy of the Government during the session, after the final stage of this Bill.

However, at this late hour of the day, and with so very few members present he would not make any extended remarks. They were on the eve of a general election, and his impression was that he could secure, at all events, a much more appreciative audience, and a much larger audience; and perhaps he might say, without any disrespect to the House, in his view, a much better audience than he could possibly have to-day. (*Laughter.*)

He knew that he would be trespassing a good deal upon the patience of the House by making any extended remarks now; he would merely say therefore, that he looked upon the events of the session as exceedingly important; important in the coming results to the country; important in the enormous expenditure which the House had sanctioned; important above all, in his view from the unconstitutional manner in which that expenditure had been sanctioned by the House.

He had himself endeavoured as far as he could to check what he believed consequently to be a departure from sound principles of Parliamentary Government; but a very large majority of the House decided in a manner hostile to his view of the case; and from that decision of the House he was about to appeal to the country, in common with those who agreed with his views. That appeal would be decided upon within a very short time, and he was content to rest the whole case upon the issue of that appeal.

He believed that they had done incalculable damage to the cause of constitutional Government by the course they had pursued in regard to several matters this session. He believed at the same time that in a country like ours, where the people are habituated to self-government, they would generally appreciate more fully the reasons put forth by the Opposition for the course they had been pleased to take upon some of these matters.

It had been charged against them that they made certain motions in regard to the great Pacific Railway in a spirit hostile to the undertaking itself. That he invariably denied. During the whole of his Parliamentary life, especially during the period since the discussion of their present order of political existence first took place, he had taken the view, as his speech on Confederation would show, that it was important to have a Pacific Railway. He believed it was essential to the property of the country, but he did not believe it was at all necessary to proceed in the way the Government had chosen to proceed, and in the way sanctioned by Parliament. It was only against that course that he had proposed his amendments and had spoken.

With regard to the other greater matter of the session, the Treaty, he took the view early in the summer that he took now, and he had no reason whatever to regret the course he had taken in the House. He believed it was one that the country would fully sustain. It was yet uncertain whether England would humiliate herself as we had been asked to do and had done in order to get the Treaty. That depended on events now proceeding.

We were in haste to humiliate ourselves; England with more wisdom and prudence hesitated to commit the act of suicide that was demanded at her hands by the authorities at Washington. He believed, in short, that we had yielded to an intolerant political spirit towards this country on the part of the United States to an extent that we ought not to have done. The course we had taken would bring upon us disrespect instead of respect as a people, and our yielding so much would only result before long in our being called upon to yield something more. He might be wrong in these views, but they were conscientiously held.

With these few words regarding the two great measures of the session, measures which gave the session an importance above all other sessions since Confederation, he would not give any opposition to the passage of the Bill, but, as he had said, he would appeal in support of his views to those who would soon have the decision in their hands.

The Bill was then read a third time and passed.

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QUESTIONS

Mr. TOURANGEAU asked first in what manner imperial property in Quebec, such as the Citadel, barracks, fortifications, stores &c. has been transferred to the Dominion of Canada; whether in trust with power to take possession at any time or if