

## Damning Indictment of Hon. W. F. Coaker.

Sir John Crosbie Produces  
a Fourth Cheque  
for \$82,675

Signed by J. Sellars, Payable to  
Union Trading Co.

The present session of the Legislature has, without doubt, seen more memorable happenings than any other since the introduction of Responsible Government, and yesterday's occurrence was by no means the least of these. There have been interruptions from the crowd, and startling exposures but the scene which took place when the unemployed deputations visited the House late yesterday evening rivals any of these in sensationalism.

The House met at 3.15 p.m. Notices of question were given by several members of the Opposition. The questions on the Order Paper were next taken up.

The Minister of Marine and Fisheries told Mr. Macdonnell that the dredge would not be used this year. He also told Sir M. P. Cashin that there would be no fishery inspectors this year.

The Prime Minister told Sir Michael Cashin that 1700 barrels of local potatoes had been purchased by the Department of Agriculture and Mines.

Sir John Crosbie rose to speak to the proposed Address to His Excellency which was moved by Sir M. P.

pleasure at the knowledge that the Auditor General had waked up. He suggested that the matter of road grants be held over for a short while. The Minister of Public Works also spoke briefly on the matter.

After Sir John Crosbie and Sir Michael Cashin had passed some brief comment the Committee rose and reported progress.

The Motion of Sir Michael Cashin's was again taken up and Sir John Crosbie continued his speech. He first asked the Minister of Marine and Fisheries if there were any official cheques in connection with the "President Coaker" affair. He was told that the accounts were supposed to have been gone through by the Auditor General. He also asked the Minister to lay on the table of the House the last cheque paid for freight. Mr. Joseph Sellars absolutely denied having had anything to do with the "President Coaker's" cargo. When the Premier tabled the cheques on the previous day he did not think that he (Sir John) knew as much as he did. The underwriter's who insured the "President Coaker's" cargo were according to Mr. Coaker, Dale and Barr. Sir John said that, all his statements were correct. The Bill of Lading was made out in the name of the Government. When the Premier produced the cheques on Thursday he did not know there was another cheque. It was only fair to Mr. Sellars that this matter should be cleared up. The "Little Princess" was loading hull to hull with the same kind of fish, and why was she allowed to go out and have her cargo sacrificed. He did not believe that any Minister of the Crown had acted in such a way before. He had deliberately sold the "President Coaker's" cargo and tried to throw a veil over it through Mr. Sellars. Sir John asked for an explanation as to why Sellars' fish had been paid for at a higher rate than others had paid. The cheque and the insurance business proved satisfactorily that there was something to be hidden. And that was why the Government would vote the matter down. He had a word to say to the Auditor General over these cheques. The Government had tabled three cheques. He had a fourth (at this juncture Sir John had to admonish the Speaker for inattention). The cheque for \$82,675 was presented to Mr. Sellars by a man in the employ of the department of Marine and Fisheries. The fourth cheque was that of Mr. Sellars himself in favour of the Union Trading Co. for the same amount. And yet, he was told that Mr. Sellars had bought this fish. If he had had that cheque Thursday, the Premier would never have read out the others (at this point in the proceedings a huge crowd of unemployed advanced to the Bar of the House). Continuing, Sir John said that if the enquiry did not take place he warned the Minister of Marine and Fisheries that something would happen. The public would take the matter into their own hands and that investigation would take place in spite of the Government. This was not a case in which there could be any doubt for all of his statements were proven facts. He was anxious to know what the Government's opinion on the matter was. The Premier did not know who was looking after the "President Coaker's" cargo on the other side. Could we afford to toss about \$95,000 like dice. That cargo of fish, said Sir John, would not be sold for the next six months.

Minister of Marine and Fisheries.—"Some of it is sold now."

Sir John Crosbie.—"At what price?"

Minister of Marine and Fisheries.—"I don't know. I gave orders for it to be sold at 45s."

Sir John Crosbie said the loss on the cargo would be £7000 even at 45s. It would cost the colony \$35,000 through the way it had been handled. He asked Hon. Mr. Coaker to table the cheque issued to pay the freight on the "President Coaker's" cargo. He also asked if the Minister would welcome the enquiry.

Minister of Marine and Fisheries.—"I would."

Sir John Crosbie said it was up to him then to get it for the Minister was the man behind the gun. If the Motion were not passed he would go

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to a higher authority than the Government. He left it now to Hon. Mr. Coaker and his followers to vote for the motion.

Mr. Macdonnell said the situation showed the danger of having a Minister of the Crown acting in a dual capacity. He had not believed the charges against Hon. Mr. Coaker but he was not satisfied beyond all doubt. In their truth. And he saw now that the Minister not only did something wrong, but when he did it he knew he was doing something culpable. He had no doubt that the transaction had taken place with the full connivance of certain members of the Government. Every member who voted against the Motion was taking a share of the blame for the transaction on his own head. He had no hesitation in saying that the Minister of Marine and Fisheries was politically dead. Any member of the House who voted down the Motion laid himself open to the charge of being a party to that deception. Let every member think well before he lent himself to a deception which was undoubtedly the shadiest transaction that was ever made by a member of the House. The Government are only trustees for the people and the fact that it was public money which had been misused put an even worse complexion on the matter. There had been enough talk of getting together, talk when such things were going on. The man who had so shamefully attempted to deceive the House was not the same man who so manfully owned his mistake six weeks ago. He wondered if the Prime Minister knew the story of the swapped cheques. If he did not know the facts it was nothing to his credit, for he should have known them. If he did know them, he was worse than the Minister, for he did not have the personal interest in the matter which would urge him to let it go. The only way out of it was to have an impartial commission enquire into the matter thoroughly. He, for one, had no confidence in any department of the Government. The only Minister he had had confidence in was Hon. Mr. Coaker and since he had found that he had done wrong, he dreaded to think what had happened in other departments.

The Prime Minister moved that the

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When perhaps your liver is the cause of it all.

**Stafford's Prescription "A"**  
cleanses the system and will make you

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Wholesale & Retail  
CHEMISTS AND DRUGGISTS,  
St. John's, Newfoundland.

Debate be adjourned as he had some observations to make on the Motion before the Chair.

The House then went into Committee of the Whole on the Bill to Repeal the Codfish Exportation Act.

On motion of Mr. Higgins the debate on this Bill was adjourned.

The Bill to amend the Profiteering Act was next put through the Committee stage.

Mr. Bennett spoke at some length on the Bill and said it was a matter of "locking the stable door after the horse had been stolen." Amongst the many important statements made by Mr. Bennett was the charge that we were paying 50 to 100 per cent. more than the Canadians were for foodstuffs. At this juncture the debate was interrupted by a deputation of unemployed which advanced to the Bar of the House. A report of the proceedings from this time on will be found elsewhere.

At 7.15 the Committee rose and adjournment was taken until 3 p.m. Monday.

**Civic Commission.**

**WEEKLY MEETING.**

The weekly meeting of the City Council was held last night. Deputy Mayor Mullaly presided. Councillors Ayre, Morris, Peet, Jackson and Viall were present. After the minutes of the last meeting were confirmed the following matters were considered:

A communication was read from the Colonial Secretary stating the Estimates for 1921 submitted by the Council would be tabled at the present session of the Legislature. The Controller and Auditor-General asked for what purpose the temporary loan advanced the Council would be used. This information has been forwarded. A letter was read from His Excellency the Governor in relation to the public meeting to be held regarding the War Memorial. The date of meeting will be May 25th. A communication was received from Wood & Co. stating the Pipes ordered for new work which were short shipped last Rosalind, would be forwarded next trip.

Residents of Rennie's Mill Road petitioned against Soon Lee & Co. being given permission to extend laundry at Rawlins Cross. It was decided permit for this erection be refused as the locality is too congested. C. E. Hunt on behalf of McLeas Estate, etc., asked that he be furnished with plan showing land to be appropriated by the Council on Golf Avenue. This was ordered to be forwarded.

On the advice of the Health Officer, J. P. Newman will not be given permit to use outhouse rear dwelling Mullock Street for stable purposes. Request of Tessier & Co. to erect concrete vault over their premises was referred to the Engineer. D. E. Pelley's application for street line, Pleasant Street, will be attended to by the Engineering Department.

The following plans were passed subject to the Engineer's approval: B. Taylor, Springdale St., A. Horwood, Barter's Hill, T. Kennedy, Cochrane St., D. Power, Barron St., Newfoundland Atlantic Fisheries, Ltd. are to be communicated with to remove some moored near the Long Bridge. J. E. White suggested the planting of trees on the made ground South Side Road. This matter will be given consideration. In the matter of repairs to retaining wall, Shea's premises, Harvey & Co. stated they were willing to keep to last year's agreement, i.e., pay half cost of said repairs. The attention of the Electric Light Co. is to be called to the unsatisfactory condition of many city lights. The widening of Waterford Bridge Road (at Tor Cottage), Palks Hill, Golf Ave., etc., is to be immediately proceeded with. The Secretary was instructed to communicate with the owners regarding the matter of compensation for land to be taken. Request of residents of McKay St. for water and sewer extensions to this locality will be attended to as soon as possible.

**Unemployed Discussed.**

A deputation consisting of the

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### Girls' Industrial Home.

Donations Received Since April 29th.

The Society of management desires to express grateful thanks for donations from the following:—Ladies' Auxiliary St. Andrew's Society, \$100; Proceeds of Social held in Congregational Church Lecture Hall, \$40.00; Mrs. C. Macpherson, \$10; Mrs. F. Smallwood, \$4; Mrs. S. Milley, \$2; Mrs. R. Cross, Material; Mrs. Brown, \$5; Hon. J. Anderson, Bowring Bros., Ltd., Ayre & Sons, Ltd., Jas. Baird, Ltd., Parker & Monroe, Ltd., Nicholls & Inkpen, Hon. S. Milley, Material; British Wholesale Dry Goods Co., Mr. E. Cowan, Milk.

The Society desires to express grateful thanks to all contributors. Meetings of this Association are being held at the Seamen's Institute on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays in each month at 3.30 p.m. At the meeting held May 7th the several committees reported

good progress. Garments made in the home were sold and orders taken. There are now five girls and a matron in the staff house of Jensen Camp, Visiting day Monday afternoon.

Within the home every effort is being made to surround the girls with healthful, happy influence. The effects of misguided childhood can only be rectified by constant associations in surroundings conducive to curing the evils, and preventing the unprotected girlhood of our land.

Women of Newfoundland, rally to the work of prevention, and support this industrial work. Membership fee 50c. per year, can be sent to Mrs. E. W. Forbes, Treasurer, Gower St. Parsonage, St. John's.—COM.



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By Bud Fisher.

