

Mr. Quinn (Halifax) - January 26, 1926:

"I want to say that the people of the Maritime provinces do not desire and will not be content with the opinion of a mere government appointed commission upon the important issue of Maritime rights."

So far as the official attitude of the Conservative Party is concerned, it was indicated by the Conservative Leader, Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen, on January 18, 1926:

"But what has been the record of royal commissions under the Government? Is there any one of them with ingenuity, with imagination enough even, to suggest the name of one single royal commission they ever appointed which did a particle of good."

The Liberal Government ignores Conservative
Opposition to Duncan Commission.

Despite the opposition from leading Conservative Members from the Maritime provinces and the bitter hostility of the Leader of the Conservative Party, the Mackenzie King Government went on with its plans and appointed a royal commission on April 7, 1926, consisting of Sir Andrew Rae Duncan, Judge Wallace, of Halifax, and Professor Cyrus Macmillan, of McGill University, a native of Prince Edward Island.

The spirit in which the Liberal Government wished the inquiry to be conducted is indicated by the following extracts from a letter sent by the Prime Minister to the Members of the Commission on April 17, 1926:

"The Government of Canada is asking you to undertake a task of national importance in inquiring into Maritime Province grievances. The scope of the inquiry is indicated in the Order in Council constituting the Commission. My colleagues and I desire to emphasize our conviction that the Commission should not interpret its instructions or its duties in any narrow or technical sense, but should take every opportunity for the fullest and frankest discussion of the economic difficulties facing this part of the Dominion, the endeavours which have been made to overcome them, the causes of any shortcoming in these endeavours, and the most effective and practicable remedies.

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I am sure that I am speaking for the people of Canada as a whole when I say that it is our earnest desire that the impartial and thorough inquiry which we anticipate will be made, will result in clearing away any misunderstanding or lack of appreciation of one another's problems, and will