

HON. FRED MAGEE SUGGESTS B.C. LIQUOR PLAN FOR N. B. AND URGES PLEBISCITE

President of Executive Council, Speaking as Private Member, Asserts Vendors and Doctors Growing Rich on Prohibitory Law—Other Matters Before Legislature.

Fredericton, April 1.—Hon. Fred Magee, president of the Executive Council, speaking in the debate on the budget in the Legislature here tonight, came out in favor of a system of Government control of the sale of liquor similar to that which obtains in the province of British Columbia and in Sweden. He advocated a provincial plebiscite to obtain the consent of the electorate upon his proposition to exchange the present system of licensed vendors who, under the law, are allowed to sell liquor for sacramental, medicinal and industrial purposes only, for a system under which liquor could be obtained for beverage purposes with a permit from Government vendors.

Although a member of the Cabinet, Hon. Mr. Magee made it clear that he was not speaking for the Government of Premier Veniot but only in his capacity as a representative of Westmorland county.

Says Enforcement Impossible. The enforcement of New Brunswick's present prohibition law was impossible, Hon. Mr. Magee declared, and the failure of the attempt to enforce such a law was shown in this province as elsewhere. The worst opponents of the act were smugglers and producers of moonshine liquor. Their operations should be stopped; but the provincial officers could not cope with them; it was not their duty in any case, but the duty of federal officers.

Vendors under the present law, Mr. Magee declared, were making half a million dollars a year and doctors, almost as much. Hon. Mr. Magee decried the pessimistic talk which he said was rampant among the Conservative members both in Fredericton and Ottawa. Such talk injured New Brunswick, he said. The present unsatisfactory economic conditions were due to the slow recovery of the world after the most devastating war in the world's history and other lands were experiencing depression even more than Canada. He thought New Brunswick was holding its own very well in the battle.

Hon. Mr. Magee favored the handling of Canadian trade through Canadian ports and pledged himself to do all he could to promote the commercial interests of St. John as the winter port of Canada.

Consolidation of Statutes. The bill to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act, introduced by the Government, was introduced in the Legislature this afternoon by Attorney-General Byrne. As has been predicted, the bill makes no change in the important principles of the act but was apparently designed merely to "tighten up" and to provide means whereby the Workmen's Compensation Board could enforce payment of assessments where employers failed to return their pay-rolls to the board or decline to pay assessments.

The most important feature of the bill is that it provides that the board's charges shall be a lien, that contractors and sub-contractors not assessed shall be considered as workmen for principal, and that the right of appeal is taken away.

Consolidation of Statutes. A commission of three persons to be named by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council are authorized to undertake a consolidation of the statutes of New Brunswick under a bill introduced by Hon. J. P. Byrne this afternoon. A period of two years is allowed for completing the work and \$20,000 is appropriated for the purpose. Members of the Legislature are not debarred from participating as members of the commission.

Claim Land Damages. The proposed bill to amend the act under which arbitration proceedings are held to settle land damages in connection with hydro development in New Brunswick, in connection with which Hon. William Pugsley, former Lieutenant-Governor, was reported to be active recently on behalf of his clients, the Inglewood Pulp and Paper Company, and their claim of some \$30,000 for land damages in connection with the Musquash development near St. John made its appearance in the Legislature today. It was introduced by Attorney-General Byrne.

Mr. Burdock Speaks. After questions had been answered in the House this afternoon the usual routine was proceeded with before Mr. Burdock, who had adjourned the budget debate on Friday, began his address. His speech was essentially from the farmers' standpoint and contained many arguments which have been advanced before and are none the less true now than they were a year or two ago. Mr. Burdock continued the debate until nearly 6 o'clock and P. P. Melanson, of Kent, followed him.

Expected a Lot of Letters. Coming to the question of prohibition Hon. Mr. Magee said he could not take his seat without referring to the great doctrine of prohibition. He would speak not for the administration but as a humble servant of the great county of Westmorland. He expected that after his remarks he would be written to anonymously by all the bootleggers, some of the vendors, a doctor or two and even by his friends of the Temperance Alliance on account of the opinions which he expressed. Being Irish, he must speak his mind. He knew he would offend the bootleggers, the vendors and the doctors, and did not expect the Temperance Alliance to fall in with his suggestions.

Suggests Plebiscite. He wished to submit the suggestion that the people of the province be asked if they are satisfied with the present liquor law or would prefer a permit system similar to that in effect in Sweden and British Columbia. "Let us use commonsense," he said. A change in the law might not end the evil, but at least the attempt could be made. Vendors of liquor in the province of New Brunswick under the present act were making half a million dollars a year and doctors were making almost as much.

Mr. Bentley—"How do you know the doctors are making it?" Hon. Mr. Magee—"I do not say I know what the doctors make but if they charge a dollar for each prescription they make as much as the vendors. He could not see why control of the sale could not be had by the commis-

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price for each permitt. Under such a system the commission would be able to sell liquor cheaper than now. He said that because he recognized that

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