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## House of Assembly

### GENERAL SYNOPSIS OF PROCEEDINGS NIGHT SESSION

Mr. P. F. Moore complained of the manner in which native mechanics and workmen were being discriminated against. He told of the story of five plasterers arriving by the Red Cross steamer to engage in work on the Normal School, whilst we had competent men of the Chalkers and Conway type who were experts in this line of work.

Mr. Higgins agreed with Mr. Moore and said he hoped to see the Normal School as it is now termed by this administration, into what is more useful, a hospital. He was in no sense a Normal School man. He believed it was a farce. This country cannot afford it, much less an expert to lay out the ground. He could show where the country lost thousands of dollars in not accepting the lowest tenders for work, and would prove his words when the tenders were tabled.

Sir M. P. Cashin brought up the position of Mr. Frank Penney, Government labor agent at the Humber. Hon. the Prime Minister said the appointment was not a permanent one, and no salary would be voted in the Estimates.

Mr. Sullivan discussed several matters of importance. He contended after the revelations of the past months that the Audit Act should be amended. If not Auditor General should be held to strict accountability of the acts of the Government for his current year. Not only police had to be supplied but they had to be dressed in different uniforms. Now they are coming back to scrap their uniforms. The Normal School being turned into a hospital he heartily endorsed. There was a crying need for more hospital accommodation as the outport people could not be admitted.

Mr. Vinnicombe (St. John's East) discussed the conduct of the Comptroller's Department and showed that in the first year of its operation the Government made \$6,000. Last year he was informed with a turn-over of half a million dollars the Government lost \$28,000. What was wrong? There were fifty-four public houses in Newfoundland when prohibition came in force, and the year previous the importation was valued at \$380,000. Now the Government is in the liquor business and they import half a million dollars' worth and lose \$28,000. There was not much business in that. Mr. Vinnicombe continuing, criticized the Deputy Head of the Public Works Department for having taken \$1,000 from No. 2 Relief Account for light services, which he contended should be regarded as regular work.

In reply to a question by Mr. Higgins, if the Government contemplated the appointment of a Deputy Liquor Controller, Hon. the Prime Minister said no, the matter had never been considered by the Government. The final vote in supply then passed.

The House went into Committee on Ways and Means.

The Insurance Tax was made one and a half per cent. instead of one per cent. to liquidate the loan for the purchase of the fire trucks, etc. The tax to be continued until the loan of \$30,000 with interest is liquidated.

## Stall's Books

Rev. T. Albert Moore, D. D., General Secretary of the Dept. of Social Service and Evangelism of the Meth. Church of Canada, who visited Newfoundland in Sept., 1917, in connection with the Social Congress, says:

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 Bay Roberts.

The Prime Minister introduced resolutions which calls for a loan of \$3,500,000. The items of expenditure are made up as follows:

Temporary Loan Bank of Montreal	\$855,426.76
Deficit June 20, 1923	850,000.00
Loss on Pit Props, Relief, Seed Potatoes, etc.	1,000,000.00
Estimated Loss Railway Operations	400,000.00
Due Bank of Montreal For Expenses of Militia Department	114,573.28
Expenses connection Soldiers Graves	40,000.00
Roads and Public Improvements	240,000.00
	\$3,500,000.00

Hon. the Prime Minister stated the Government had appointed the Railway Commission to look after the operation for one year or until other arrangements were made as follows: The Colonial Secretary, the Auditor General and the Government Engineer.

The Leader of the Opposition and Mr. Sullivan objected to the form and personnel of the Railway Commission.

Hon. the Prime Minister replied that the Commission had been appointed mainly because of the insistence of the member of St. John's West by Sir Michael Cashin, who properly argued that some one responsible to the House should have supervision over the management. Mr. Hall, the Government Engineer, had experience gained as a member of the late railway commission and because of his position, while the Auditor General would look after the financial end. This was merely a temporary arrangement to continue until the House meets six months hence. Railway operations are going at the present time satisfactory. The operating account is in credit and no demands for advances were being made on the Government. The Auditor General had estimated that the default on railway operation this year would not exceed \$400,000.00.

Hon. the Colonial Secretary said he did not covet the appointment, but assured the House that so far as he was concerned there would be no discrimination of the 300 men employed on the Come-by-Chance Section. This was the timber the railway management stated could be profitably used, and it was decided that the work should be divided equally between the ten districts which would be seeking such employment.

Hon. the Prime Minister said he had given orders that the Militia Department be closed up in a month or two days. The Revenue Bill and Public Service Act, 1923-24, were passed and sent to the Legislative Council for its concurrence. The Bill providing for a steam trade service between the Colony and the West Indies was referred to a Select Committee consisting of Sir W. F. Coaker, Mr. Cave, Capt. Randell, Mr. Higgins and Mr. P. J. Cashin.

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

Friday, August 17, 1923

The House met at 3:15 p.m., pursuant to adjournment.

Hon. the Colonial Secretary, in reply to Mr. Sullivan, said that Dr. R. H. Brehm was acting Physician to the Fever Hospital and Dr. A. Carnell acting Doctor of the Port, neither had received full appointment.

Strong objection was made to the publication of the speeches, in pamphlet form of the late Prime Minister on the Humber and Railway resolutions, by the Leader of the Opposition and Sir Michael Cashin.

Hon. the Prime Minister said the printing was undertaken without his knowledge. It was, of course, ordered when the old administration was in power.

The House then went into Committee on the Loan Bill.

Hon. the Prime Minister stated that at last sitting he had announced a Railway Commission which the Opposition did not agree for the several reasons given, and he had recognized the force of the objections raised.

The Government had considered the matter and now was prepared to announce a New Commission consisting of the Colonial Secretary, under whose department the railway came, the Hon. T. Cook and the Hon. George Shea. This Commission would supervise the railway policy until the House met again.

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Mr. Higgins said the objections of the Opposition were consequently withdrawn. He thought the new Commissioners would see to it that partizan politics did not play a part in the management of the railway and docks. He wished to see that the Opposition supporters as well as the Government supporters got a fair show in any employment which might be forthcoming.

Sir Michael Cashin further criticized the vote for the Militia Department. Hon. the Prime Minister replied it was the intention to wind up the department as speedily as possible.

Hon. the Prime Minister dealing with the unemployment situation, said a quarter of a million would be available for allocation on a per capita basis to relieve the unemployment situation, and an additional \$50,000 would be spent on railway improvements. There was also a balance due the Government on temporary loans to the Armstrong Whitworth Co. which would be available later on. He estimated that the Armstrong Whitworth Co. now were employed 2,000 men and an additional 1500 would find work in the lumber woods when the season opened. The A. N. D. Co. would be taking their usual quota, the Mooney and Crowe enterprise—there would be other operations carried on, cutting pitprops, and he thought these combined industries would furnish employment for about 7,000 or 8,000 men.

Hon. the Leader of the Opposition said he also trusted that those who were to be employed would be given useful public work and no more able-bodied pauper relief as in the year past. He also enquired as to the Municipal work. He hoped the necessary guarantee would be given to enable the Council to carry out their plans. If any emergency arose which called for extraordinary expenditure, he felt that the Opposition should be consulted.

Hon. the Finance Minister said the loan would be put up for tender and the fullest opportunity given entertaining bidders to have their tenders treated in a business-like manner.

Mr. Fox (St. John's East) in commenting on the item of \$1,000,000 required under the new loan to meet the loss on pitprops and other accounts incurred by the Department of Agriculture and Mines, asked the Prime Minister whether the proposed Commission of Enquiry would be appointed under the Public Enquiries Act.

Hon. the Prime Minister said that the Public Enquiries Act was the only Act under which the investigation could be held. The only case he ever knew of such powers granted to a Commission was that mentioned by Mr. Fox, the Parnell case. Even in the Supreme Court a witness may decline to answer a question if such answer might incriminate him and lay him open to prosecution. He doubted the wisdom of amending the Public Enquiries Act.

The Loan Bill then passed all stages and was sent to the Legislative Council for the concurrence of that body.

The House then went into Committee on the Retiring Allowances Bill. This was passed without comment.

The Prime Minister introduced two Bills; one an Act respecting Preferential Tariff on the Products of Spain; the other respecting a Preferential Tariff on the Products of Jamaica.

These bills were read a first and second time and sent to Committee of the Whole. The Committee passed them without debate and sent to the Legislative Council for concurrence therein.

The House then adjourned until to-morrow at 2:30 when His Excellency will attend for prorogation.

Saturday, August 18, 1923

The House met at 2:30 p.m., pursuant to adjournment.

Mr. Speaker informed the House Continued on page 3.

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The attention of Owners and Masters of British Ships is called to the 74th Section of the "Merchant Shipping Act, 1894."

75.—(1) A Ship belonging to a British Subject shall hoist the proper national colors—  
 (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.  
 H. W. LeMESSURIER,  
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