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The Mail and Advocate

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OUR POINT OF VIEW

That Land Grant

THE granting of certain timber lands on the Trinity-Bonavista Peninsula to one McNamara in June last by the Morris Government has created quite as much stir as the revelation of the scandalous overpayment of Paymaster Timewell of the Newfoundland Volunteers.

It will be remembered that, in 1912, the F.P.U. Convention protested against such an act on the part of the Bond Government; petitions were circulated in Trinity and Bonavista Bays and were widely signed and, as a result, the obnoxious Grant was rescinded.

This year, though, to the surprise of everybody, the present Government, many of the members of which were most active in denouncing the action of the Bond Government in making the Grant in the first place, handed over a large portion of the area to McNamara.

It is hard to understand just why such an inconsistent and entirely unpopular act should have been performed by the Administration under Sir Edward Morris, unless, of course, it was their wish to favor McNamara or parties represented by him, in some special manner. Whatever reasons there were for opposing the Grant two years ago, still exist and there is absolutely nothing to justify the Government in so flouting the wishes of the people, as emphatically expressed at the F.P.U. Convention of 1912 and in the petitions presented to the House of Assembly.

This lack of justification of what may reasonably be termed an outrageous act is amply proved by the stand taken on this matter by the two Government newspapers, both of which denounce the granting of the timber lands to McNamara.

The Herald, in its denunciation, says that the grant was made while both the Premier and the Minister of Justice were absent from the country. Accepting this statement as correct, we must, therefore, saddle most of the responsibility of the grant on the Hon. S. D. Blandford, the special protégé of the Premier and we call Sir Edward's attention to the old saying "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child," or, what amounts to the same thing, to have a political child that does not always regard its father's interests.

The mass meeting of the F.P.U., held at Catalina on Friday night, expressed itself emphatically in protest against this outrageous proceeding. "Be it resolved," ran the resolution dealing with the matter, "that this meeting of the fishermen of Catalina and other parts of Trinity and Bonavista Bays hereby indignantly protest against such a breach of trust "on the part of the Government and requests the Premier to take immediate steps to rescind this timber land grant to McNamara."

In view of the general condemnation of this grant to McNamara, Minister Blandford felt compelled to "explain" the action of his department, and this "explanation" which simply amounts to a condemnation of the act, is given in full in another column on this page. It absolutely fails to convince anyone, even the editors of the two Government papers, of the justice of the act and there is now a

general demand that the Government immediately rescind the act. Commenting on this timber land grant, The Herald on Monday said editorially:

"Elsewhere in this issue will be found a statement by the Minister of Agriculture and Mines explaining how part of the tract of land on the Trin.-Bon. Peninsula, the granting of which by the last Government provoked such vigorous protests, had come to be granted anew by the present Administration.

"We do not think it can be well claimed that the case set out in the Minister's explanation is sufficient warrant for the present Government pursuing a policy which it denounced before taking office. We remarked Saturday that the only justification for granting the land now would be the presentation of an absolutely conclusive case for such a proceeding.

"The explanation elsewhere does not make out such a case, and in our own opinion no time ought to be lost by the Government in cancelling the concession."

"The Telegram was equally emphatic in its condemnation. It said:

"Elsewhere in this issue appears a statement from the Minister of Agriculture and Mines on the protest we made last Thursday against the grant of 110 miles in the body of the tongue of land, which divides Trinity Bay and Bonavista Bay.

"Our complaint was that a grant of 110 miles out of the 160 made to C. Emerson, which was protested against and afterwards reacquired by the late Government had been granted again by the Government, the members of which had been the most active protesters against it when in opposition.

"The Minister states that 29 miles of it was not in the Emerson grant, but is west of the railway at the root of the tongue, but that 81 miles does form part of it.

"In substance this is a confession that our protest was based on solid facts. The Minister could not do otherwise than admit the facts we cited were well based. For we based them on a diagram which was with the application and with the approval, and which we examined and discussed with the Minister himself and Mr. J. W. McNeily.

"Both admitted the plan, which showed the timber land granted extended over the peninsula, eastward towards Pope's Harbor.

"We notice that at a mass meeting at Catalina, on Friday the grant was condemned, that resolutions were passed, calling for its cancellation and that copies of the resolutions were directed to be sent to the Premier, The Daily-Mail and The Evening Telegram.

"These resolutions we have not yet received, but they were telegraphed to The Daily Mail on Saturday.

"In conclusion we call attention to the words of the Editor of The Daily News on the Minister's statement, and emphasize his opinion that the Minister has furnished 81 unanswerable reasons why the grant should be cancelled.

"It is up to the Government to cancel it."

Commenting on the report that the lands had been granted, and before Minister Blandford had published his famous "explanation," The News said editorially:

"In Thursday's issue of The Evening Telegram, the Editor stated that grants for certain timber areas between Trinity and Bonavista Bays had been approved.

"These grants, it was intimated, were those against the issuance of which there was a prolonged and successful protest during the Premiership of Sir Robert Bond. In that protest The News took a prominent part.

"We understand that an enquiry is now being instituted into the matter. At present we have only this to say, that nothing has transpired to make the issue of grants for this area, or, so far as we are aware, any portion of them, any more desirable to-day, than seven years ago. In the name of the fishermen of these bays, in the public interest, and in pursuance of the policy of condemnation voiced by the present Government, when in Opposition, we protest against a violation of what we can only regard as a covenant made with the people.

"Despite the general statement, the accuracy of which we are not in a position to question, we are compelled to believe that there must be some explanation which is not presently apparent, and reserve further comment pending the enquiry."

Then came the Blandford explanation on which The News commented as follows:

"Elsewhere is an explanation by the Minister of Mines and Agriculture of the present position of the Trinity Bay Land Grants.

"We have carefully studied it, and the only interpretation that we can place upon it is, that an application for 81 miles of timber limits has been approved, although such approval had been vigorously protest-

ed against by the present authorities, then in opposition.

"Summed up, the Minister has given "81 undoubted reasons for the immediate withdrawal of the approval."

BLANDFORD'S "EXPLANATION"

THE WHOLE of the area approved of to Mr. Emerson, acting for Mr. George Roberts, Doctor Tait and others, was 160 miles, and this approval covered every bit of land on the peninsula between Trinity and Bonavista Bays, less the three-mile limit.

Out of this 160 miles approved to Mr. Emerson 81 miles have been approved to Mr. McNamara, within the Emerson grant of 160 miles, but even this 81 miles includes blocks of land between the Reid land blocks and at the head of the Bays adjoining the railway.

These blocks were not given to the Reid-Newfoundland Co. under the present building contracts for the Bonavista Bay Branch Railway or any of the other Branch Railways, but were granted to the Company in the regular way in 1904 under the amended contract of that year, being land due the operating contracts of 1893, 1898, and 1901.

The total quantity of land approved to Mr. McNamara is 110 square miles, including the 81 miles above referred to and 29 miles of this land is situated west of the railway.

In other words, with the exception of the 81 miles, the balance of 110 miles west of the Railway and not included in the land approved to Mr. Emerson, neither is it on the peninsula between the two bays, and except to the extent already referred to, does not comprise in any way any portion of the land against the granting of which a protest was made by the people residing in Trinity and Bonavista Bays.

No portion of this land has been applied for by the Reid-Newfoundland Company to the present Government, nor has any portion of it been approved of or granted to them.

It will be seen therefore, that the essential differences between the two approvals is that the 160 miles approved to Mr. Emerson ran through the whole peninsula from end to end between the two bays; whereas the portion of the 110 miles approved to Mr. McNamara is in addition to the portion lying between the Reid blocks adjoining the railway at the head of both bays and a portion east of these blocks.

The area remaining will, of course, consist of a large portion of bog land, rocky land and water and land containing no timber. Or, putting it in another way, the whole of the 160 miles of land approved to Mr. Emerson, and to which objection was taken at the time, was east of the railway track.

A large portion of the land approved of to Mr. McNamara is west of the track, and only the portion east of the Reid blocks and between the blocks is included in the approval to Mr. McNamara.

Further, when the survey, called for under the Act, is made, and a diagram filed and an application made for the issue of the License, the Government may restrict the quantity of land to be granted, situate on the Peninsula, so as to conserve the public interest.

'PRINCESS PATS' FOR FRONT SOON

London, Nov. 18.—The Princess Patricia regiment have left Eustard camp, Salisbury Plain, and gone to Winchester, in order to be nearer Southampton.

It seems likely they will be merged with the home division and are, therefore, likely to see active service before any of the other Canadian regiments.

Schr. Susan is loading salt bulk fish at Burin for Gloucester.

A GOOD SIGN

IT is a good sign to observe that the F.P.U. has now formally committed itself to encourage enlistment for the Naval Reserve, said The Herald editorially yesterday.

Mr. A. B. Morris, in the address on the war which he gave at the Patriotic Meeting at Catalina on Sunday as reported in yesterday's "Mail" put the position clearly showing the Colony's obligations in the present crisis, the needs for prompt action, the local interest—in the way of securing marketing for fish and other products—which forms one of the factors that should influence us to move in the matter and exploding some of the improper cries and arguments that have been put abroad in this Colony to discourage participation by Newfoundland in a struggle on which her own future depends.

He made it unmistakably clear that Terra Nova must rally round the flag of the Empire, and his views in this direction were loudly endorsed by Mr. Coaker who delivered an address that is most creditable in all the circumstances and the key-note of which is found in the declaration—"duty's stern demand calls for 500 of our young fishermen to take their places on the decks of British warships and I hope the call will now meet with steady response from every part of the North."

We trust that during the next few weeks the Colony will see evidence that these declarations by men whose word counts for so much in the councils of the Union will have substantial value by the large enrolment from the North that will follow.

In the meantime, we congratulate both on the patriotic stand they have taken, and we also congratulate Mr. John G. Stone, one of the members for Trinity Bay, on his undertaking to volunteer as a Naval Reservist, which undertaking we hope his associates will approve, and we wish him, if he enters the service, good fortune and a safe return, as we wish all others, feeling confident, however, that if, at the call of duty, any have to lay down their lives, they will meet the reward of duty well done and their memories will ever remain in grateful remembrance in their native land.

TO THE EDITOR

Send Our Own

(Editor Mail and Advocate) Dear Sir,—The common topic of to-day is that of sending cigarettes and tobacco to our First Newfoundland Regiment, and, while some are in favor of having this supplied on the other side, many are of the opinion that the local article should take precedence.

With the latter I wish to join and wish to say that I think this is perfectly just and fair for many reasons. One is, our boys would appreciate the gift coming all the way from

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CIRCUMSTANCES SURE TO FORCE ITALIANS TO DRAW THE SWORD

Turks Are Behaving Toward Her Colonies in a Way She Can Hardly Ignore—Serious Raids by Bedouins On Borders of Tripoli and Cyrenaica—Porte Asked To Explain

Rome, Nov. 13.—Italy is sending troops to Tripoli to defend her settlements and loyal tribesmen against Arab rebels and Bedouins, who have raided supply columns in the interior and have attacked an encampment of submissive tribesmen at Derna. Turkey has disregarded the promise made to Italy by Germany that the Porte would not attack the Italian colonies, and that Turkey had no designs on Tripoli. Events are tending more and more to force Italy into the war on the side of the Allies. The newest, most momentous crisis has developed in Cyrenaica, due to the aggressions of Bedouins stirred by the pretexts of Turkish and German agents.

Turkey's Intentions. News received here today indicates Turkey's intention to drive the Italians out of Tripoli and to regain the provinces lost in the war between Italy and Turkey. For a week Bedouins in the interior have way laid small detachments of troops, and have fired upon and wounded Italian soldiers. Bedouins appeared in force at Derna, on the eastern extremity of the Cyrenaica promontory, and made a savage effort to destroy the encampment there. The desert marauders were driven off by Italian infantry.

Critical Situation. There is no attempt here even in official circles to minimize the present crisis. Italy's occupation of Tripoli is seriously menaced. The blood and treasure poured out for North African territory may be wasted unless Italy acts quickly. All the news indicates that the Bedouins and rebel Arabs are being spirited by the Turkish to acts of warfare. This country's hold on Tripoli has never been certain beyond the littoral except for a few places not far in the interior.

Governor Genl. Emeglio has sent from Cyrenaica an urgent demand for more troops and the War Office is now responding. Italian garrisons have been strengthened in recognition of the seriousness of the situation.

It seems probable that within the next day or so Italy will demand an explanation from Turkey and possibly from Germany, since Germany has assumed to guarantee the safety of Tripoli. The situation is already comparable to that which resulted from the acts of the Turkish fleet in the Black Sea, when Great Britain, Russia and France, giving Turkey the opportunity of disavowing and making amends, declared war when satisfaction was refused.

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"Black List" Law (Editor Mail and Advocate) Dear Sir—I should like to draw attention of the public to the "Black List" law now existing in this Colony, and especially to the members of the House of Assembly.

It appears that a person placed on the "Black List" is debarred from entering a public house and purchasing drink; also any person found to purchase liquor for the party in question is liable to a fine or imprisonment; but this same party can carry liquor in his clothes and supply the Black-lister without any fear of punishment.

Now, in the name of common sense, can you see any reason attached to this law? I'm sure I can't, and a person (at his own risk) can purchase liquor for a blacklister, and this is a common occurrence to-day.

It is to be remembered that when a woman places her husband, son, brother or any one she has the power to, on the "waggon," she only does so after she has been forced to by the party in question becoming a nuisance and an annoyance to her, and any person found supplying liquor to this person should come under the penalty of the law, whether a bar-tender or otherwise.

I ask the members of the Union Party to give this matter their attention and trust the Government can see the wisdom of same; and that after the next meeting of the Legislature something will be done in this direction to relieve parties troubled by this nuisance from same for all time.

MILITARY GENIUS TRIUMPHS Philadelphia Public Ledger:—The movement of vast bodies of troops over such magnificent distances has never before been attempted in warfare. The transport of British troops to South Africa is the nearest approach to it, but that does not stagger the imagination as does the moving of a mighty army through polar seas 2,500 miles from one front of the enemy to another, or bringing reinforcements from the Antipodes to Western Europe. Distance seems to be annihilated and there is apparently no problem so stupendous as to overawe modern military genius.

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