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April 19, 23



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OFFICIAL SYNOPSIS

(Continued.)

Thus the lowest tender was accepted, with a saving to the Colony of \$9,040, or approximately \$45,000. In addition to Cold Storage provision and Bronze Propeller, which were included in all the figures above quoted the Waterway Company will install Radio Wireless, Directional Wireless, Deep Sea Sounding, will load and unload a three-quarter cargo for the trial trip, a concession none of the other tenderers was willing to concede. Two strong features in the accepted tender are a guarantee from the Bank of Rotterdam, and provision for demurrage of \$100 a day, in default of prompt delivery on the first day of July.

Several other firms were asked to tender, but none of them was in a position to offer delivery under fifteen months.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

CAPTAIN W. C. WINSOR said that he had no intention of speaking very fully on the Speech from the Throne, as later on the various subjects would come before the House and an opportunity would be afforded him to speak more fully on the matter. In listening to the various criticisms that were offered the previous day he felt that the members opposite were very hard on the Government, accusing them of not living up to their slogan of "Clean Up". Since he became the head of his Department he had tried very hard to institute this policy, but had found that her had a hard job before him. Bills were yet coming in that were contracted for long ago, in some cases as far back as 1921. The other day he was congratulating himself on the fact that he had finished with all the back bills, when he received one for \$5300 from the Imperial Oil Ltd., for a contract in selling oil through a Mr. Chesebrough of Burn during 1923. By the time a cheque had been found to meet that, he assumed that there would still be other bills forthcoming. As a matter of fact, he thought that they would have to have another term of office before they would clean up everything.

MR. WARREN said that he had been able to make only a few remarks on the opening as time was limited, but that he would crave the indulgence of the House in order to make a few constructive criticisms and he trusted that everything he said would be accepted in the spirit that he meant it to be. He said that there were some subjects not in the Speech that he would like to talk about. In the first place he would like to refer to the mail boat service in Fortune Bay, which was now the best that District had ever had. He would like to bring to the attention of the Government the amount of work that the Glencoe was performing and he was very glad that they had abandoned the idea of sending her to the ice, as there was no other boat that could take her place. Coming to another subject, not in the Speech, the Hon. member referred to the Prohibition Act, and said that, whereas the city man had no difficulty in obtaining his bottle a day or when ever he wanted it, the men in his district could only get a bottle a trip of the mail boat and then pay an excessive rate for it, owing to the expressage. A man could get one bottle for every day, but he could not get ten bottles for ten days in bulk, yet he might get ten bottles at the rate of one a day and the expressage on this was very high and the price was hence too much. He suggested both to the Commission and to the Government that some regulation be made to rectify this. At the last session he had been asked to investigate the logging industry in order that the Bill then introduced might be carried out or not, as the House thought best after hearing his report. There was a Bill to provide for a minimum wage of \$45.00 per month. He had investigated and his Report had been tabled. The honourable member for Twillingate had said that a better one could be written by a man sitting in his arm

chair. He would like to know whether exception was taken to its diction or its general literary quality, for every fact supplied had been attested on oath. He found that the men were wanting \$65.00 and that the Companies were ready and willing to give this provided they got the results from the expenditure. Logging is skilled, or at least semi-skilled labour and one bad man in a gang would destroy a lot of valuable work. The men must know something about this or else the Company would be unwilling to pay them the wages demanded.

At this juncture Black Rod appeared and summoned the honourable members to attend His Excellency in the Council Chamber, where the Loan Act of 1924 Amendment, and the Sealing Act were assented to.

When the members returned from the Council the honourable member for Fortune continued his speech. At the time will come be required, for the men will be in a strong position and able to have their own demands attended to. He would like to see the Civil Service run by a Commission as is the custom in every other country. At present investigations are rife and the reports of these investigations show a bad conditions of affairs everywhere. Previous Governments are responsible for this, for since Responsible Government it had been the invariable custom to appoint partisans to fill any post irrespective of their capabilities. The man in the street has to pay these salaries and he wants value for his money. Until he has a Civil Service Commission he won't get this value for his money. The relations of the Government with Besco have always been strained. They had a long contract which expired in 1920, which was replaced by a different one. This present one was made with this House, and as soon as Besco got it they tried to evade it. In dealing with this subject, Mr. Warren said in part:—

The relations of the Government with the Corporation generally known as Besco have been strained for some years. It will be remembered that the contract made by the Government, I think in 1905, and to last fifteen years, expired in 1920. By this contract the Company was to pay a tax on all iron ore mined at Bell Island. In 1920 another agreement was made, and since then various troubles have arisen. I consider that the miners are being exploited by the corporation, and the situation will have to be taken hold of with a strong hand if we are to arrive at a basis, where work at the Island will be carried on satisfactorily, and with profit to the country.

the miner and the Company alike. Perhaps a review of the situation since 1920 will help honorable members to obtain a view of matters in connection with the deal. In 1920 the contract expired, and it was the duty of the Government of the day to make another agreement with them. This agreement was a little different from the other, and obligations were put on them to carry out—insome cases the tax was increased—and in others the tax was abrogated. Further we must remember that that agreement was a mutual one, not between the Government and Besco but rather between Besco and this House. As a matter of fact it was accepted first outside this House, then submitted here, and to a joint Committee consisted of members of both sides of the House, and further, the Committee took the agreement up with representatives of the corporation, and agree to amend it so that peace might reign, and all would be satisfied. The Honourable Minister of Justice, I think, will bear me out that the Committee offered various alternatives, but the Company would not agree,—we offered a sliding scale and a tax, but the contract was fastened on the Government, and no sooner was it ratified than the Company began trying to evade it. The very year after, having found, to use a local colloquialism, that they had bitten off more than they could chew, that they had entered into a contract with the Government which they could not fulfil, they started to try and evade it.

MR. BROWNE: Why did they enter into the contract?

MR. WARREN: I do not know what was in their minds at the time, but I remember we met outside in the Speaker's room, and they would not agree to our proposal.

HON. THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE: President Wolvin of Besco says that they never intended to carry out the contract as far as certain sections were concerned, that clauses such as that dealing with the promise of an erection of a smelter, were never intended to be lived up to, and when asked as to why an alteration to the contract, as suggested by the Committee, could not be made, he stated the Company would not consider any alteration at all, because having had a signed contract with the Government they were afraid, in view of the talk of the famous dollar a ton export duty, it might possibly lead them into a worse state of affairs. This was Mr. Wolvin's statement to me in Montreal a short while ago. I had intended, Mr. Speaker, when the opportunity offered, to bring this matter to the attention of the House.

MR. WARREN: I do say this that so far as I was concerned in that Government and so far as the Minister of Justice was concerned, there was no question of \$1.00 per ton when they came into make that contract.

HON. THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE: In fact the proposal

of the Select Committee was to make a lighter tax.

MR. WARREN: But, having made the contract, they have tried to evade it, hence it is a strong hand that must be taken with them. When I was in the Government, year after year, in December month, when everything else was dead and there was not a stroke of work doing for laborers, Besco always stopped and closed down the mines. I think that the Prime Minister will find in his files a copy of a letter from me to Mr. Wolvin dealing strongly with the annual lockout on the part of his Company, and I hope that the Prime Minister will see that it must stop and that there are no more of these lockouts from the Besco people. And this is not the only country that has experienced trouble with Besco. They are up to their necks in it in Nova Scotia where Besco is having a fight with the coal miners. When it came to the end of 1924 in Nova Scotia Besco said to the miners "your wages must be reduced by ten per cent." The miners, through their Union, said "No, our wages must be increased by ten per cent." No arrangement or agreement could be arrived at, and eventually the Dominion Government stepped in and a conciliation board was appointed. The miners refused to appoint representatives on it. Although such a Board was illegal by a judgment of the Privy Council a representative for the miners was put on that board with the result that, after taking various evidence at what was known as the Windfield Commission, it was decided that the whole matter should be thoroughly explored and that there should be an investigation and both sides to the dispute were willing. Both the Company and the miners said, "Yes, we are satisfied to have the investigation." But what happened? They immediately fell out as to the scope of the investigation. The miners wanted a full investigation regarding the Company, internally and externally as to whether their side of the case was right or wrong and as to whether their wages should be increased or not. The Company wanted to limit the scope of the investigation and have it determined as to whether "we can this year afford to pay an increase of ten per cent." There the matter stopped and there it rested, except that the Prime Minister of

Nova Scotia has now offered a Royal Commission to enquire into the whole matter. It is not my desire to offer destructive criticism but constructive criticism, and I have made up my mind that the one course for our Government to pursue is to have a Commission of Enquiry who, frequently says at will that Besco cannot do this, that or the other thing. Let the Company come before the men and substantiate on oath what they are doing and then the Government, the miners, and the people of the country will know for certain what the position is, and until that is known we will be constantly in a state of turmoil over these annual lockouts and with a spirit of antagonism prevailing between the

(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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