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**The Legislative Session**

The House was not long in session on Tuesday, April 25th, when the Government threw a bomb into the Opposition camp that caused serious consternation. After the usual routine proceedings, Hon. H. D. McEwen rose and moved, seconded by Hon. Dr. Jenkins, the following resolution: "Whereas during the bye-election in the First District of King's County, held on the 5th day of January, 1916, it was charged by Mr. John H. Bell and Mr. James J. Johnston, members of this House, that the Hon. James A. McNeill, Commissioner of Public Works, had corruptedly paid to Messrs. Philip and Andrew Arsenault, contractors, or one of them, with his Department or with the Government, a sum of money.

"And whereas it is in the public interest that such charges be fully investigated, therefore resolved, that a special Committee of five members of the House be appointed to enable the same members or other members of this House to substantiate such charges, and that the said Committee be empowered to send for persons, papers and records, and to examine witnesses under oath."

Mr. Bell seemed completely taken by surprise, and asked that the clerk re-read the resolution. This was done, and Mr. Bell remained seated completely non-plussed. Then Mr. J. J. Johnston urged him to get up and ask for notice to be given. Mr. Bell rose and at the out-set said he wished it to be understood that as far as he was personally concerned he had not charged the Commissioner of Public Works with corrupt motives. He had specifically excepted him in his speech, as no doubt the Speaker would remember. He strongly objected to the wording of the resolution and to the resolution itself. He thought this was a matter that ought to be investigated in the Public Accounts Committee, and he again protested against Mr. Saunders and Mr. McInnis having been appointed on that Committee instead of himself and Mr. Johnston. He hoped the Government would not proceed with the resolution until he had time to consider it.

Mr. McEwen said he would be very sorry if there was anything in the resolution to the injury of the hon. member which he had not brought upon himself. He would state, however, that there was a great effort made by the two members named during the Souris election to create and leave the impression that there was a bribery scandal in which the Commissioner of Public Works and the Government were involved. The Leader of the Opposition now wishes it to be understood that he did not impute anything against the Commissioner of Public Works, but that was not sufficient, it was only fair to the Commissioner of Public Works, to the House, and to the country that a thorough investigation should take place and if there was anything in the charges that the blame should be placed on the proper shoulders. The Government had nothing to fear from such an investigation; it had nothing to hide, and in the interests of all concerned felt it was its duty to proceed with the investigation at the earliest possible moment. Mr. Johnston said he did not want to discuss the matter at that juncture as he hoped the Government would consent to consider it a notice of motion. It was an important resolution and he had not the advantage of

seeing a copy for the purpose of carefully considering and analyzing it.

Premier Mathieson pointed out that the Leader of the Opposition must know that no notice was required. But if a notice was necessary, he had already given it earlier in the session. He quit well understood, however, that the hon. members were not prepared to go on with the resolution, and he had no objection to the matter taking the form of a notice of resolution. He would like, he said, to refer for a moment to the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition. He was constantly airing his grievance about the constitution of the Public Accounts Committee, saying that he and his friend Mr. Johnston had been purposely excluded. The Premier then administered the scourge to Mr. Bell and his friends against their reprehensible conduct in connection with their attempt to ruin the Hon. Commissioner of Public Works, by means of the Arsenault scandal, sprung on the public during the bye-election in the Souris district. Now, when an opportunity is afforded to investigate this conspiracy, Mr. Bell whines and pleads he had no notice. He had ample notice; but in order to afford him every possible opportunity to prepare himself for the ordeal, the Premier said he would allow the resolution to stand for another day. The House then took recess at 6 o'clock.

House met after recess at 9 o'clock. After a private bill had been read a second time and put through committee, the House resumed the consideration of supply in committee. Mr. Prowse in the chair. The Committee continued to sit until 5 o'clock Wednesday morning, when all the resolutions of supply were passed. The Speaker then took the chair; the chairman reported the supply resolutions and the House adjourned.

There was no session of the House Wednesday forenoon. In the afternoon the House sat with closed doors until 5.30. After the doors were opened business of a routine character occupied the attention of the House until 6 o'clock when recess was taken.

It was 8.30 when the House resumed. After some private bills had been advanced a stage, the Drainage Bill was considered for some time in committee. Progress was reported, and the House adjourned at 10.15.

It was 12 o'clock before the House opened on Thursday. After the usual routine the resolution asking for a committee to investigate the charges made against Hon. James A. McNeill, Commissioner of Public Works, was called up. Thereupon Mr. Benjamin Gallant rose and moved a counter resolution asking for a withdrawal by the Government of the resolution requiring the investigation.

Hon. Mr. Arsenault, then rose and pointed out that the resolution of Mr. Gallant was certainly out of order. A resolution before the House must be disposed in some way before another resolution can be moved.

Mr. Bell, Leader of the opposition, now undertook to crawl out of the position into which he had put himself in connection with this matter. At this point the Premier rose to a point of order, and showed that the resolution of Mr. Gallant was clearly out of order. Mr. Bell was then allowed to make an explanation, the Speaker reserving his ruling for the moment, on the point of order.

After Mr. Bell had concluded his remarks Hon. Mr. McKinnon

took up the discussion. He pointed out that Mr. Bell's statement that he did not hold himself responsible for the reports of the Patriot newspaper regarding this matter came too late, such denial should have come the day after such reports appeared.

Some remarks on the question were made by Mr. McMillan, Mr. McInnis and Mr. Saunders, on the opposition side, before the House took recess.

After the House resumed at 4.30, Mr. J. A. Dewar, spoke, briefly on the subject. He thought, as the Leader of the Opposition and other members on that side had expressed the idea that there was no intention of imputing corrupt motives to the Hon. Commissioner of Public Works, it would seem a waste of time to discuss the matter any further. Mr. Speaker then rose and said that, as there seemed a disposition to allow the matter to drop, he would ask all in favor of that course to rise. All the members present rose and thus by unanimous vote of the House the question was removed from controversy. Hon. Mr. McEwen then asked for leave to withdraw his resolution, which was granted by unanimous consent. Several private bills were then advanced a stage.

Hon. Mr. McKinnon introduced an amendment of the Election Act 1913. The purport of the amendment is to remove a defect, to correct an omission in the act relative to the qualification of members of the Executive holding offices of emolument, such as Attorney-General, Provincial Secretary, Commissioner of Public Works etc. The act did not provide for the salary attached to the office of Premier. The Leader of the opposition made a long speech against the bill.

Hon. Mr. Arsenault pointed out that the Premier was President of Executive when he ran his last election. That was the office he held now, and consequently the contention of the Leader of the opposition was quite nonsensical. He showed the Premier and Attorney-General was empowered by the law to assume any other office without rendering his seat vacant. But should it come about that one member of the Executive should be Premier and another Attorney-General, the case would be different.

Premier Mathieson took the Leader of the opposition severely to task for his course in this matter, and pointed out that Mr. Bell should be the last man to say anything about corruption at elections. Evidence was not wanting to show that Mr. Bell won his election by the most corrupt means. He pointed out from the statutes in question that the amendment asked for was not really needed. But it was thought best to remove any doubt by passing it. The discussion was not finished when the House took recess at 6 o'clock.

House met after recess, at 9.45, committee resumed consideration of the bill relating to the Legislature. Considerable discussion was indulged in by Mr. Hughes,

Hon. Mr. McKinnon, Mr. Gallant, Mr. Dennis, Mr. Bell and Hon. Mr. Arsenault. Several divisions were taken on the clauses as they were put to vote. Finally the bill was reported at 10.45. The House then took up further consideration of the drainage bill in committee of the whole. The bill was reported at 11.20. The House then adjourned.

It was 12 o'clock before the House met on Friday. After the usual routine, the bill amend-

ing the Act relating to the Legislature was presented for third reading. When the Speaker proceeded to put the motion Mr. Johnston rose to discuss the merits of the bill. He was ruled out of order, and he then appealed from the Speaker's discussion. The appeal was not sustained, and the bill was then read a third time. On the motion for the passing of the bill the House divided and the motion carried 16 to 13. It was then 1 o'clock and the House adjourned until 5 o'clock.

The House did not meet in the afternoon till near 6 o'clock. Some bills were advanced a stage and then recess was taken. It was almost 9 o'clock when the House resumed. Mr. Lea introduced a resolution relative to the automobile question. After some reference to the history of the automobile question in this Province since 1908 when the act up to that time in force was repealed. The act of 1913 was then discussed. After speaking on the different phases of the question he read the following resolution seconded by Mr. G. E. Hughes:— "Whereas in the year 1908 the Legislature of this Province passed an act to prohibit the use and operation of motor vehicles upon the public highways of this Province.

"And whereas in the year 1913, the Legislature of this Province passed an Act intitled 'The Motor Vehicle Law' by which it was in substance enacted that the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council may by proclamation published in the Royal Gazette from time to time open up the Public Highways in any county or part of the county or in any city, town or village in any county to the use and operation of motor vehicles.

"And whereas after the passing of the last mentioned Act the Government of this Province submitted to the people at their annual school meetings the question as to whether they approved or disapproved of the use and operation of such vehicles upon the public highways and the people at such school meetings expressed their disapproval by an adverse vote of about 9-1.

"And whereas the wishes and desires of the people so expressed at the school meetings have not been revoked.

"And whereas this Legislature recognizes the supreme and inalienable right of the people to govern and that it is the duty of the Legislature to carry out their expressed intention and wish.

"Therefore Resolved that in the opinion of this House the statute of 1913 should be repealed and the provisions of the law as it stood in 1908 should be restored.

Second, that the provisions of the Act of 1908 should remain in force until the people of this Province shall have had a proper plebiscite, an opportunity to confirm or reverse their decision as expressed at such annual school meetings."

Hon. Mr. Arsenault took up the debate for the Government side. He supported the position assumed by the Government in this connection. Now automobiles are not forced on any section where they are not wanted. It was his opinion that the automobile matter was in as good a position as could be desired. Mr. McInnis spoke against the automobile. He said the feeling in his district was very strong against the auto. Hon. Mr. McEwen followed on the Government side. He declared himself in favor of the automobile. He said he would vote against the resolution before the House; but he said the people of his district would not get automobiles until they asked for them, by a majority of seventy-five per cent. Mr. Dennis followed on the opposition side. He opposed automobiles and was in favor of the resolution. Mr. J. A. Dewar, was the next speaker on the Government side. He said his district was about 80 per cent against the automobiles. He thought if the autos were allowed to run the women and children driving

horses would be obliged to keep off the roads. He said he was not quite satisfied with the resolution; but was opposed to automobiles. Hon. Mr. Dalton said he thought the automobiles was for the good of the country. Mr. A. E. McLean, on the opposition side was the next speaker. He opposed the auto and favored the resolution. Mr. Saunders of the opposition followed. He said he did not think this was a very live question in the country. He opposed the resolution. Premier Mathieson was the next Speaker. He said the resolution before the House would not satisfy those who pledged themselves against the auto. He said a plebiscite would cost between four and five thousand dollars. Mr. Johnston followed on the opposition side. He said he intended to vote for the resolution. He then proceeded to give his reasons. Hon. Mr. McKinnon came next. He opposed the resolution, and gave his reasons for so doing. Mr. Bell, Leader of the opposition, was the next Speaker. He favored the resolution. Mr. McEwen followed on the Government side. He said he had taken the anti auto pledge in good faith. But had found out that the pledge was simply a piece of political treachery. He said he would vote against the resolution. Mr. David McDonald expressed his intention of supporting the resolution. He had signed the pledge and he intended to keep it.

The debate finished at 12.15 and Mr. Speaker put the motion when the resolution was lost on a vote of 15 to 13. Hon. Mr. Wood and Mr. J. A. Dewar voted with the Opposition, and Mr. Saunders voted with the Government. Mr. Benjamin Gallant absented himself. The House then adjourned.

The House met at 11.40 Saturday forenoon, and after some routine business adjourned at 12.15 to Tuesday May 2nd.

**Germany Desperate.**

If the opinion of the military critic of the Paris Matin represents anything more than ordinary comment on the war situation, then Germany indeed is in desperate straits. Major De Civrieux who, it may be recalled, predicted the successful retreat from Mons to the Marne, the defeat of the attempt to force the Dardanelles and the practical collapse of the Gallipoli campaign, now gives it as his opinion that the Germans are about to undertake a great concerted military and naval move against the Anglo-French lines and the coasts of France and Britain. This, he believes, will be the last and greatest of Germany's offensives.

The prediction will cause elation rather than alarm. The British navy can be absolutely depended upon to retain its mastery of the situation in the North Sea and the Channel while the western fighting lines recently reinforced by hundreds of thousands of British and Russian troops, are of sufficient strength to withstand any attempt the Germans may make to make.

An excellent example of the resisting powers of the Allies forces on the western front is afforded by the operations in the vicinity of Verdun. That movement was to be a speedy and decisive triumph for the German Crown Prince, yet, after weeks of the bloodiest and most terrible conflict known to man, the French lines are still unbroken, what has happened at Verdun is likely to happen at any point on the western line where the Germans attempt an attack, and when it is known that knowledge of this fact is not confined to the Allies it can be imagined that Germany's plight is indeed desperate to cause her to consider for a minute what must prove a suicidal undertaking. A concerted naval and military attack by the Hun, at this time, would do more toward bringing the war to a conclusion than could be accomplished by months of trench fighting.

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**Dominion Parliament**

Ottawa, April 24—Col. J. Wesley Allison, who has been wanted in Ottawa for some time by parliament and the David Commission and who will be wanted this week by the Meredith-Duff Commission, is now in Canadian soil. At five o'clock this afternoon Col. Allison, accompanied by Dr. K. Van Allen of New York, and Mr. Geo. F. Henderson, K. C., of Ottawa, his counsel, walked into the Chateau Laurier. There was only a small crowd of people in the hotel rotunda at the time, but those present were intensely interested in the man whose evidence will be the factor of the fuse inquiry. Col. Allison lost no time in signing the register and went immediately to his room. Mr. Henderson subsequently stated that Col. Allison was far from being well and that it was not his desire to add anything to the interview given by him on his arrival at Ogdensburg Friday. He said that as his chief was of the opinion that he would be called upon at an early date to give evidence it was not desired that he should consent to a further interview. Col. Allison will rest at the Chateau until called upon by Dr. Van Allen accompanying him from New York and will remain in the capital as long as his services are required by the patient. Gen. Hughes, who was in Montreal yesterday, was at the desk in the militia department bright and early today. He seemed cheerful and confident. It is understood that the first witness to appear before the royal commission will be Mr. J. W. Flavell, chairman of the Imperial Munitions Board. His initial appearance on the stand will probably be for the purpose of identifying certain papers and documents affecting matters under investigation. It is probable that Col. Allison will not appear before the royal commission for some days, but will go on the stand before the Davidson Commission to clear up some points in connection with the sale of Colts' pistols to the government. Allison is also wanted before the Public Accounts Committee. He was subpoenaed by this body as far back as Feb. 23. Allison, in a recent interview, avowed that the subpoena had never been served upon him which explained his failure to appear in Ottawa sooner. It is understood that Yeakum, Cadwell and Baselik, the three most prominent figures in the American end of the Kite charges, have signified their willingness to come and give evidence and will be on hand to testify whenever wanted.

Ottawa, April 25—Hon. J. D. Reid stated in the Commons tonight that he hoped it would be only a few months until "he" have an elevator at St. John. The statement was particularly important as coming from the Acting Minister of Railways. Dr. Reid has been acting in that capacity since Mr. Cochrane's illness, and he said in answer to a question that the Minister of Railways would not likely be back in the House this session. Another interesting matter was mentioned during the progress of the discussion upon the railway estimates. Mr. Pugsley asked Sir George Foster, when dealing with the question of elevator accommodation, where the grain commandered by the government had fallen. The Minister of Trade and Commerce replied that the bulk of it went to Italy, and he added that it would continue to go to Italy until the needs of the country were satisfied. It will be remembered that during the session the Liberals, headed by Mr. Pugsley, attempted to make a good deal of capital out of the fact that the government had commandeered wheat but would not say where it had gone. The contended that it had been meant for Great Britain and made much of the fact that there was no confirmation from England of a report that the British authorities had asked the Canadian government to commandeer the wheat. Of course it was impossible for the Canadian government at that time to divulge the destination of the wheat. Not that the truth has been told, however, the whole case worked up by Mr. Pugsley and his friends about the Canadian government taking this action for the benefit of England, and giving out that they had been requested to commandeer it.