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## UNION MEMBERS ARGUING FOR ELECTIVE ROAD BOARDS; AND POINT OUT ADVANTAGES.

Mr. Grimes—Mr. Speaker, I have listened very attentively to the history given by the Premier, and I think it a very good sign for the country to see both sides of the House agreed upon doing something in regard to the control of road monies in the various districts. That there is need for reform is evident. I have only to add that in the small experience I have had in the District of Port de Grave, I find things very much in the same state as in other districts. In many cases money has been sent into the district that the district knows nothing of, and this has created great dissatisfaction.

There should be no system by which their money is spent without their knowledge. I have seen many examples of misuse of public monies and I think it is a well-grounded principle that the money should not be spent otherwise than with the control of the people. Otherwise it is certainly a system of taxation without representation, if people are taxed for money in the expenditure of which they have no voice and over which they have no control.

### Much Money Misapplied

There has been at so many times money sent into the district and not properly spent that at a conservative estimate I should say that at least \$20,000 has been misapplied. This has not intentionally been brought about, but the system has been wrongly worked for a number of years.

And what hope have we while such a system is continued that we will have honesty in affairs of this kind? It is only natural that if one man is going to go \$5.00 to spend for his own private purpose, that another should expect to get the same. My opinion about a reform such as this is that it will give the people a more direct interest in the affairs around them and they will begin to realize that in future it is their own concern how the money is spent, and if they do not take an interest in it they are also responsible for its misuse.

### Elective Board Abolished

I noticed the Premier asked whether there were any instances of the control being taken from elected boards, and others appointed in their place. I was informed in North River the people asked for the election of a road board. The road board as elected was in existence four months when some dissatisfied persons circulated a petition and sent it on to the Government, and another board was appointed in its place. I think that these elective boards are the only satisfactory solution to the difficulty, and they must have complete control of their local expenditure. I have much pleasure in supporting the resolutions before the Chair.

Mr. Coaker—That was the Clarke Beach case I referred to.

Mr. Targett—Mr. Speaker, Mr. LeFevre seems to think that we are reflecting upon the men who spend the money and he seems to think that there is not much money wrongly expended. That may be because he does not know how it is expended. All he wants to know is that the money is going out, and he does not trouble how it is being spent. It does no matter to him if some get it all, and others do not get any.

### Business of Members

With regard to those districts that have not got elected road boards, I think that is the business of the members of the District to look after that kind of thing. Probably in most districts they do not know that they can have them. The elected road boards in some districts have been due to the members of the district who have looked after their people.

Mr. Winsor—Mr. Speaker, in Bonavista Bay for the last four years the members have been instrumental in calling the people together to elect Road Boards, and it has worked very well in some respects. But one rather curious thing happened in a certain locality. A man wrote to the member for the district, asking if he could be chairman, as the previous chairman had resigned, and this member wrote back to another man to know if he would take it, and that if he did not want it he could give it to the man who had asked for it.

### Strange, Indeed

I thought that very strange when the chairman is supposed to be elected, but it appears that the proper rule has not been carried out.

The way the money has been expended the last four years is a very bad system and created a great lot of bad feeling, and I think many people did not vote for the Government party in the last election on that account. There were so many family

grants that they were disgusted with the party.

I have much pleasure in supporting the resolutions. I do not wish to say very much because enough has been said. I just wish to refer to what Mr. LeFevre said about there not being much dishonesty. If he knew as much about road boards as I do, he would think differently. We are interested in this business and we mean to rectify it.

### A Contribution

Mr. Clapp—Mr. Speaker, I did not intend to say anything; but the remarks of the hon. member for Placentia impel me to contradict a statement which he made this evening. He said that members of the Opposition had been shirking responsibility in not properly looking after their districts.

Every man who represents a district should know all about that district. For five years I have been a member of the Opposition, and during that time I have tried to get information about my district in connection with the various road grants.

I was informed that orders had been given to the officials that no member of the Opposition should receive any information from the office.

### Refused Information

Mr. Kent—In corroboration of my friend, Mr. Clapp, I say that I was also informed that during the session I could get information, but not during the recess of the House.

Mr. Clapp—Now, Mr. Speaker, we have no voice in the conduct of our district, and information is not afforded when asked for.

When I was a member of the Government I attended to my district, and can say now that when my road boards wrote to me, I answered back and told them to appoint their own board and their best men. Those were my instructions.

I heard no complaints from my district that such and such a person did not participate in the money distributed among them.

The other day I asked two questions: one about special grants and the other about local and marine grants. I have no other means of knowing how the money was spent in my district.

### Pre-election Grants

Some time ago I found out that money had been sent to my district previous to the elections, and had been spent among the friends of the Government.

Not a Liberal man got even a day's work; they were told that they were not wanted and were sent about their business.

The other day I proved to this House that thousands of dollars had come into the district before the elections.

These resolutions have been brought into the House to do away with this sort of thing and to prevent money from being spent for political purposes. Every man will thus get his share which he is entitled to.

By appointing these elective road boards, you will do away with these grievances. You will have the best men appointed to that Board. Is not that a move in the right direction?

### No Dishonesty Charged

I don't think that anything was said about a road board being dishonest, and I don't think it fair for any Government member to abuse a member of the Opposition. We are here to do our duty and we will do it as far as lies in our power.

I agree with the member for Placentia that every man elected by the people, whether on the Government side or on the Opposition, ought to have the control of his district. Why should the doors be closed against any man because he is on the Opposition? If it has been done by past Governments there is no reason for following in the same rut.

Why should we not have a change? If the people ask for these boards, why shouldn't they have them? I am in sympathy with the introducer of these resolutions and support them.

Mr. Winsor—Mr. Speaker, we have been somewhat misrepresented. The members on the other side seem to think we are asking for something that it would be difficult to give. All we ask for is that the road boards be elected, and that they be given all the money that belong to the particular place.

The Hon. Colonial Secretary asked if we would be satisfied if we were on the other side and had the giving out of the money.

We cannot just say at present what we are going to do when we get over there, because we are told that we are going to be here for a while yet.

### Many Promises Made

The Minister of Public Works spoke of the satisfaction in Bonavista Bay. There is no doubt that the People's Party promised a lot, but they did

not carry out their promises. If they had it might have been all right. But they failed.

I can remember the first time Capt. Winsor called a public meeting. There was quite a crowd there, and the Road Board was elected and all the people were satisfied. But the money was still given out in family grants just as they were when no board was elected.

Things went on like this for about a year. Then they held a second meeting, and there were not enough people there to elect a Road Board. The old board was disgusted and there was not enough to elect any one in their place. I do not know whether there is a board there now at all or not. The Board was disgusted and there was want to see any more of these family grants. No one knows anything about them.

### It Is Recognized

Someone gets a letter marked O. H. M. S., everybody knows that is a family grant. The Road Boards are disgusted over this. It is no good having Road Boards unless they get all the money.

The Premier said he did not know of a case where an elected Road Board was refused. I know one. It was in Trinity Bay, Fox Harbor. The people got together and thought it would be a good thing to elect a Road Board. They sent and asked the Government, but they were refused.

The men who formed the former Board were supporters of the Government. The man who was chairman resigned. Money came down for him, and there was no one to take it. The Postmaster wrote to one of the members, and got a reply, asking him to act as chairman.

### Usual Matter

We know all these things because we live among the people. It is seen day after day. If you are going to do anything, give the people the Boards. Difficulties have been pointed out. The greatest difficulty I see is that the Boards do not get the money. The trouble has been that these grants have been in the families.

The day before polling a grant was sent to a man I know. I have the letter here. I will read it for you if you like. It is a \$20.00 grant. He did not know what to do with it, so he came and showed it to me. I told him it was his grant. I told him he had to work for the member.

If all this money had been sent to the Road Boards there would be no difficulty at all. The people are asking for Road Boards and we are asking them for the people. If you give them to the people throughout the country you will not get such a bad name.

The people have never known how this money has been spent. We have been here only a few days, but we are getting to know, and we intend to know more in the future, and the people will undoubtedly know too.

(To be continued)

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