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VALLEY RAILWAY BILL NOT SAFE

Interests of Province Not Properly Safeguarded Says Mr. Byrne.

C. P. R. SCHEME

FREDERICTON, March 19—Today the New Brunswick Legislature is face to face with one of the most important and, under the plans of Premier Hazen, one of the most dangerous pieces of legislation with which the province has ever had to deal. This is the St. John Valley Railway measure.

This bill, once passed in its present form, will place on the province a liability of at least $5,000,000. As Mr. Byrne of Gloucester pointed out, should the province ever be called upon to meet this liability direct taxation will be imperative.

Properly safeguarded, the Valley Railway proposition might be expected to meet with fairly general favor in all parts of the province. The Hazen bill does not properly safeguard the interests of the province.

It is a tremendous thing in a small province, this liability of $5,000,000. The fact that the responsibility for $5,000,000 is to be assumed is something which takes the question far and away above politics.

Mr. Hazen's scheme endangers the very future of the province. It may mean that half the revenue will be demanded to meet the interest charges on the bonded debt.

The Hazen bill is legislation of the most dangerous kind. Driven through the House by a majority of 'stand pat' followers of the government, the bill may pledge the country to the construction of an electric road down the valley of the Saint John with no through connections, able to carry nothing but local traffic, a scheme playing right into the hands of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which, indeed, it is rumored, is the company which is really behind the bill.

Hon. Mr. Robinson, the leader of the Opposition, in discussing the bill, said that he believed taht if the road were constructed up to the standard of the Transcontinental and connected with the latter railway at Grand Falls thus being part of an ocean to ocean system between St. John and Prince Rupert; if it were operated by the Dominion governemnt as part of the Intercolonial Railway on a rental of forty per cent. of the gross earnings; if it were a competing line with the Canadian Pacific down the valley, then he believed that the province would be justified in going ahead with the scheme. But he was unalterably opposed to a cheap railroad, an electric railroad, a non-competing railroad, a railroad with no guarantee of western connections, a railroad constructed by unknown capitalists. The construction of such a road under a bond guarantee of $25,000 per mile would be a menace to the future of the province, so grave that no right thinking citizen could contemplate it without feelings of apprehension.

The Hazen bill which, it is feared, has been drafted to meet the wishes of the Canadian Pacific Railway, provides, it is true, for Intercolonial railway operation of the proposed line; but such conditions have been placed about the scheme for Intercolonial operation as to render it practically impossible for the Dominion authorities to consent to take over the road. In this regard Premier Hazen has departed from his proposition of last year. On the end of the bill he has tacked another proposition, not making the possible construction of a non-competing electric or steam road down the valley with no western connections guaranteed, a local line running from Andover upon the Canadian Pacific Railway a couple of hundred miles further down the river. It is for such a line that the premier—who spent an hour in dilating upon the benefits of an electric road—would pledge the credit of the province to the extent of $5,000,000. A few years ago, when in opposition, the present Surveyor General declared that a local road down the valley would not pay even for the grease on the axles. Today, it is for such a road that Mr. Hazen and the Surveyor General and Mr. Morrissy and the other members of the government with their docile followers would pledge the province to liability for $200,000 in interest charges per year.

It is no wonder that such a scheme brings fear for the future of the province into the hearts of all the men who are not totally blinded by desire for party advancement.

One of the strongest speeches on the bill was made by Mr. Byrne of Gloucester. 'In view of the tremendous liability which would be incurred,' he said, 'in view of the uncertainty of the provisions of the bill in many respects, in view of the wide scope of the discretionary powers vested in the government by the measure, there should be the most serious consideration given the bill. This is not a question for the valley people alone. Fair treatment must be given them, but all parts of the province are vitally interested in a measure providing for so enormous a liability. If the bill is going to entail a heritage of debt it should not be allowed to pass.'

After pointing out that Mr. Hazen formerly viewed railway projects with disfavor and branded the International schemes as wild and visionary, Mr. Byrne went on to show that the interest on the bonded debt is increased the day must come when every cent of revenue must go for interest.

The bill provides for a survey. Surely, he said, the government should have had its surveys made and all possible information obtained before the Legislature was asked to vote for a liability of $5,000,000. Such additional liability must seriously affect the credit of the province.

The government is plainly not desirous of carrying out that part of the bill which provides for Intercolonial operation of the line, and connection with the Transcontinental. Instead, it is favoring an indefensible scheme which may result not only in serious injury to the province, but may bring that evil day when there will be direct taxation.

If the government is called upon, as it may be, to pay an additional interest charge of $200,000 on account of this scheme, where will the money come from? Already the government has increased the highway taxes. If increased taxation is necessary now, what will happen if the province has to face interest charges of $450,000? The educational interests must suffer, agriculture must suffer, all the provincial services must suffer.

Mr. Byrne went on to say that the government is favoring an entirely new scheme for the construction of this road. The ministers withhold from the people's representatives the names of the members of the company which the premier says is prepared to construct the road. The government is vested with discretionary powers which make it possible for the ministers to do as they please in the matter. The scheme may entail frightful consequences upon the province.

'If the government goes ahead and takes what proves to be a mistake and the province is called upon to pay the interest on the bonds, then I can see nothing ahead but direct taxation.

'This scheme should not be gone into until it is submitted to the people. The premier himself has said that it was not an issue in the local elections. It has not been pronounced upon by the people and I cannot support the government's plan until it has first been submitted to the electors.'

A few sentences from Dr. Sormany's speech will show his attitude:—

'I will never vote for any scheme that will not guarantee a trunk line.'

'The government's scheme is designed to build a branch of the C. P. R.

'I could not conscientiously vote for a bill creating so great a liability for merely a local road.'

'I will support a measure providing for a trunk line connecting with the Transcontinental—and I will support nothing else.'

'If we have I. C. R. operation it will bring the G. T. P. down the valley to our winter port.'

'This line should and must connect with the G. T. P. if the interests of the province are to be considered.'

'I am ready to see the Saint John Valley get a railroad if the interests of the province are not sacrificed in getting it.'

Hon. Mr. Burchill opposed the scheme on the ground that the province could not afford so tremendous liability at the present time.

No matter what Mr. Burchill may think or Mr. Byrne or Dr. Sormany or Mr. Robinson or Premier Hazen, the fact reamins that if the government forces through the House its bill in the present form, and follows its evident intention of avoiding Intercolonial operation the entire future of the province will be placed in jeopardy.

The Hazen scheme for company construction and operation is a monstrous one which may drive the province into absolute bankruptcy.

The people everywhere should be warned.

A BEAVER STORY AT ST. JOHN

Campbellton Man Says Many Beaver are Killed Despite Law.

WEARING BEAVER COATS

The St. John Telegraph says:—

Campbellton would seem to be a town of bold spirits or of singular disregard for the game regulations. A citizen of the town who is prominent and responsible there told the Telegraph yesterday of a situation with regard to the capture of beaver, something absolutely prohibited by dominion law, which is glaringly in contravention with the regulations.

'There are,' he said, 'at least four men in Campbellton who walk about the streets every day in handsome and very valuable beaver skin coats which they have acquired this iwnter. They apparently have not the slightest fear of molestation, palpably as they have the goods on them.'

'This is a strange situation in view of the fact that the trapping of beaver is absolutely illegal and has been since a time several years ago when the dominion government took steps toward preventing the then rapid extermination of the remarkable animals which are the original of Canada's national emblem. These skins must, of course be procured from trappers, and they can probably be had just as readily from white trappers as from Indians, much as the latter are reviled in this connection.'

'It will not be legal to take beaver until the close of 1910. In New Brunswick their numbers have not grown so greatly that there is probability of the close period then coming to a permanent end.'

WHY DR. SORMANY MADE HASTY EXIT

Lady Not Assigned to Him at Capital Reception—Leaves With Wife.

AFFAIR CREATES FLUTTER

FREDERICTON Mar. 21—Somewhat of a flurry of excitement has been caused in social circles by an incident which occurred in connection with the double dinner given by Lieu. Governor Tweedie last week. The trouble arose over a question of precedence, a matter which has caused trouble of a similar nature at other capital cities in the past.

As is often the case with double dinners, there were not as many ladies as gentlemen in attendance for dinner, and in assigning the ladies to gentlemen who would escort them to dinner, no lady was assigned to Dr. Sormany, the member for Gloucester.

Mrs. Sormany was to have been escorted to dinner by Mr. H. V. B. Bridges, Principal of the Normal school.

Dr. Sormany took grounds that as a member of the Legislature he took precedence over the public officials present and that a lady should have been assigned to him, and for that reason he left the Queen Hotel, accompanied by Mrs. Sormany, without being presented to the Lieutenant Governor and Mrs. Tweedie or attending the dinner.

While no official statement can be obtained, it is understood that as a result of the incident the member for Gloucester has had his name struck off the government house invitation list.—Globe.

RIPARIAN OWNERS WELL PROTECTED

Restigouche Boom Co's Bill up For Consideration.

BILL REFERRED

(Special to the Graphic)

OTTAWA, Mar. 19—The Restigouche Log Driving and Boom Company's Bill, introduced by Mr. Jas. Reid, M. P., was taken into consideration on Thursday by the Private Bills Committee.

A large number of citizens from Campbellton and Dalhousie were present, including: Messrs. Mott, Napier, Hilliard, Trueman, Richards, and Messrs. Meredith, and Busteed of Montreal.

Messrs. Carvell, M. P. and Reid, M. P. were also in attendance, as well as the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Honorable Charles Marcil.

Mr. Carvell explained the bill on behalf of the promoters and Messrs. Marcil and Trueman presented the objections on behalf of the fishermen and others interested in the navigation of the Restigouche River.

The committee then decided to refer the bill to a sub-committee composed of Messrs. Tobin, Smith, Turcotte, Schaffner, Sharpe, Fowke. This sub-committee elected Mr. Tobin, M. P. as its chairman, and sat Thursday night and Friday morning, and finally agreed on the bill, which was reported to the Private Bills Committee and will be taken again probably on Tuesday, after which it will be reported to the House.

The bill, as framed, was accepted with very little modification in so far as the company was concerned, but important modifications were made at the request of the Honorable Mr. Marcil and Mr. Trueman regarding the navigation of the Restigouche River and the protection of the rights of Riparian owners, fishermen and the public generally.

The chief amendment provided that the main channel on the Restigouche River must remain open to navigation; that the company must indemnify the property owners as well as the owners of fishing stands for all damages incurred within the booming limits. Outside of the booming limits, common law rights are not interferred with; and, finally, if an amicable settlement is not arrived at between the company and the agrieved parties, the latter, on producing an affidavit setting forth the nature of their claims, will have said claims investigated on the initiative of the company by competent tribunal, setting within the district interested. The finding of that tribunal is to be final. The company obtain power of appropriation under the Railway Act, but if they proceed to expropriate any property or fishing rights they must give security with the officers of the court to pay any damages which they may be condemned to pay.

These are substantially the chief amendments, which, no doubt, will be concurred in by the Private Bills Committee when it meets again.

Mr. Marcil, in his address, made it clear that while realizing the great importance of lumber industry, and while willing and anxious to assist it by all means in his power, he also insists upon the navigation of the river remaining free and uninterrupted and all agrieved parties should be compensated, and this on the initiative of the company.

At the request of Mr. Trueman a clause was accepted, stating that any owners of fishing stand on the New Brunswick side, whether he had exercised his rights or not in the past, will be enabled to produce his claims if an amicable settlement is not arrived at in the meantime.

Mr. Meredith, as representing the Restigouche Salmon Club and other fishermen and Mr. Meredith for certain of the interested parties on the Quebec side, both declared themselves satisfied with the amendments of the bill.

Mr. James Reid took an active part in the proceedings in securing a fair hearing from all parties and the compromise arrived at was largely due to his efforts.

Mr. Marcil, at the opening of proceedings had read a petition signed by over four hundred electors of the county of Bonaventure, bearing on the subject.

It is hoped that this new legislation will put an end to all difficulties in the future and give ample protection to both the lumbering and fishing industries on the Restigouche River.

BALMORAL

Rev. Father McLanson, John J. Arseneau and Dennis A. Arseneau, spent Tuesday in Campbellton on business.

Jean J. Arseneau recently came home from the woods, where he spent the winter, looking after his operations on Halls Brook.

Henry Diotte, game warden, is at present spending a few days on the head of Charlo River, attending to his duties.

Mr. and Mrs. John Splude spent Sunday in Balmoral, the guests of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Arseneau.

The Artisans meeting held in Balmoral Sunday evening was well attended. Messrs. E. R. Gaudit, A. J. LeBlanc, Andri Landry and Dr. N. Doucett of Dalhousie, were present. Much business was done and the meeting was a very successful one.

Word received from Albert Roberts just arrived at New Westminster, B. C., says he likes the place and intends making his permanent home there.

Jos. M. LeBlanc, spent Monday in Dalhousie on business.

Jos. B. LeBlanc is working at his new house, Pasteur Poirier being the carpenter.

The weather is fine now and the snow is going away fast.

All the lumbermen are out of the woods and report a fair winters work.

Wedding bells are expected to ring after Easter. Guess who the parties are?

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