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House of Assembly

OFFICIAL SYNOPSIS OF PROCEEDINGS

(Continued.)

TUESDAY, July 10, 1923.

The House met at 12.15 pursuant to adjournment.
 Mr. Speaker informed the House that His Excellency would receive the address in reply presently.
 Mr. Speaker and the House proceeded to Government House and being returned to the House Mr. Speaker informed the House that His Excellency had received the address of Thanks and had been pleased to reply as follows:

Government House, St. John's Nfld.
 Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Honourable House of Assembly: I thank you for your Address in Reply to the Speech with which your present Session was opened.
 (Sgd.) W. L. Allardyce, Governor.

Mr. Speaker informed the House that the Legislative Council had passed the Bills sent up entitled "An Act further to Amend the Act Geo. V. (1915) Cap. 4 entitled "An Act for the Confirmation of a Contract with the Newfoundland Products Corporation" and "An Act for the Settlement of Certain Disputes relating to the Newfoundland Railway and other matters" — without amendment.
 The House then adjourned until Thursday next at 3 p.m.

Thursday, July 12, 1923.

The House met at 3.1 p.m. pursuant to adjournment.
 Following questions the House went into Committee of the whole on Supply pending further information re expenditure, and at the request of the Leader of the Opposition, Supply was deferred until Tuesday next when the Minister of Finance will be ready with his Budget speech.

Hon. the Prime Minister stated no supplies or guarantees for supplies had been given by the Government this year.

Hon. the Prime Minister gave notice of a bill entitled "An Act respecting certain rights privileges and franchises connected with the supply of Electric Light and Power to St. John's for street Railway and other purposes."

The House then adjourned until Tuesday next at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

Friday, July 13, 1923.

The House met at 3.15 p.m. at the call of the Speaker.
 A message from His Excellency the Governor was received commanding the attendance of the House in the Council Chamber.

Mr. Speaker and the House attended His Excellency in the Council Chamber where His Excellency was pleased to assent to the following Bills:

"An Act further to Amend the Act Geo. V. (1915) Cap. 4 entitled "An Act for the Confirmation of a Contract with the Newfoundland Products Corporation Ltd." and "An Act for the Settlement of Certain Disputes relating to the Newfoundland Railway and other matters."

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Act for the Settlement of Certain Disputes Relating to the Newfoundland Railway and other matters." The House then adjourned until Tuesday next at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

Tuesday, July 17, 1923

Hon. the Prime Minister tabled Annual Report of Newfoundland Patriotic Fund, Dec. 31, 1922.

Hon. the Minister of Education tabled reports of the Council of Higher Education, and the Department of Education for the year 1923.

An Act respecting certain rights, privileges and franchises connected with the supply of Electric Power and Light to St. John's for Street Railway and other purposes, was introduced and read a first time.

Hon. the Prime Minister moved that ways and means be deferred until Tuesday next. The Budget was ready but there were some provisions arising out of the Spanish Treaty and treaty arrangements with Jamaica necessitating certain tariff changes for which resolutions had to be brought down.

On motion of the Prime Minister the House adjourned until Monday the 23rd inst. at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

MONDAY, July 23, 1923.

The House met at 3.15 p.m. pursuant to adjournment, and there being no quorum present Mr. Speaker adjourned the House until tomorrow at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

TUESDAY, July 24, 1923.

The House met at 3.15 p.m. pursuant to adjournment.

Mr. Higgins (St. John's East) presented a petition from the residents of Bauline on the subject of a Breakwater. Mr. Fox and Mr. Vinicombe gave the petition their hearty support.

In moving the adjournment of the House, the Hon. W. R. Warren made the following statement:

"Mr. Speaker, in moving the adjournment of the House I desire to say that since the House last met, the Government as a Government has gone out of office. The resignation of Sir R. A. Squires as Prime Minister automatically carried with it the resignation of all of the members of the Executive Government. As His Excellency the Governor has pointed out to me, Ministers are still retaining office as the King's Government must go on, and the constitutional practice is for them to retain office until they are succeeded or the positions are otherwise filled. His Excellency sent for me yesterday afternoon and asked me to form an administration and, while realizing the magnitude of the task, I told him that I was prepared to make the attempt.

Sir, the Government is primarily formed by the people and can only function while it has the confidence of the House. In fact I go so far as to say it can only function at times when it has the confidence of the people.

Last evening I was unanimously elected the Leader of those who sit this side of the House, but that does not necessarily mean that I have become Prime Minister.

I have to form a Government, and in that undertaking and in view of what I have said, I propose to attempt to form what in my opinion will be an administration of strength and stability and one which will possess the confidence of the country at large. In view of the situation and of general conditions, I want to ask here and now every member of the House, whether sitting on this side or on that, and, in fact, every member of the community to make any little sacrifice that may be necessary for the welfare of our common country. If this is impossible, and I cannot form such a Government, then I am quite ready to go back to His Excellency and, while telling him of my failure, ask him to send for someone who may be more successful. It will take some little time to make the necessary arrangements, and I therefore move that at its rising this House adjourn until Tuesday next at three o'clock in the afternoon."

The House accordingly was adjourned until 3 o'clock on Tuesday next 31st inst.

Tuesday, July 31, 1923.

The House met at 3.15 p.m. pursuant to adjournment.
 Before proceeding to routine business

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Continued on page 3.

ness the new Prime Minister, Hon. W. R. Warren, K.C., arose in his place and reviewed the political situation during the interregnum. The Prime Minister said:

Mr. Speaker:—Before the orders of the day are proceeded with I beg leave to say a few words, with the permission of you and the House. Since I last addressed the House I have succeeded in forming an administration and in carrying out the task imposed upon me by His Excellency. When called upon to form a Government in view of the conditions in the country and in order to make the Government a more representative one, I approached the Hon. and learned Leader of the Opposition and requested the co-operation of that party. In the interests of the Colony they were prepared to assist but in negotiating the details of an amalgamation we came to a deadlock and negotiations came to an end. I must express my regret that I failed but I take this opportunity of saying how I appreciate the personal tribute of confidence they paid me in preparing to co-operate under my leadership. Accordingly, Sir, I have formed a Government from the material I had at my disposal on this side of the House, and I am glad to say I have a united party behind me. The history and experience of previous Prime Ministers are not such as to encourage me to undertake the responsibilities of the position and I am further discouraged by the legacy left me. It cannot be denied that the party and the Government have sustained a severe blow by reason of recent happenings. Undoubtedly public confidence has been shaken. Then Sir, I have to ask myself the question "How can I restore that confidence?" My answer is, first, by an impartial and immediate investigation into the departments concerned. The commission of enquiry must have carte blanche. It must have an absolutely free hand. The commission must be one in which the public will have confidence, and I will even go so far as to submit the names to the Leader of the Opposition before the commission is appointed. I owe it to the country, to my party, and to myself to have this investigation and to make it as thorough as possible. We all want to start with a clean slate. Secondly, we think we can restore confidence by adhering to the path of rectitude and by seeing that no charges can be levelled against my administration, and thirdly, by prudent honest administration to merit the approbation of the country. I make no pretensions to statesmanship. I do not profess to be one, but by these simple means it may be possible to restore confidence. I count upon the healthy and helpful criticism of the Opposition towards this end. We shall of course come in for criticisms, harsh criticisms, but I think I am safe in saying—to use a common expression—they will not hit me "below the belt." And Sir, by the time a general election is upon us, if I have not inspired the confidence and trust I have anticipated I shall gladly and willingly transfer the burden to more capable shoulders.

The Prime Minister was followed by the Leader of the Opposition who spoke as follows:—
 Mr. Higgins—Mr. Speaker, following the example of the Hon. the Prime Minister, I have to ask the permission of yourself and the House for saying just a word or two. At the outset I desire to thank the Leader of the House for the very open manner in which he has just addressed us, and for his frank admission that the desire to form a Coalition government emanated from himself and those who supported him. I think in making this admission publicly he has done himself credit. I go further and say that in his desire to avail of the recent and unexpected political development to change the lines of demarcation which unfortunately are at present existing in this Assembly he has set an example in liberality of thought that should not quickly be forgotten. Every right-thinking man must deplore the present unnatural division which exists in this House. An opportunity was offered to alter this situation, and the offer was made from a majority of the House, it may be wondered why this proposal was not accepted. Well, Mr. Speaker, the answer is simple. It was not a question where we were masters of our own destiny. To me personally, the matter of associating with the new Prime Minister would have been a pleasure. As a lifelong friend I have had especial opportunities to confirm the statement I now make as to his honesty of purpose and absolute trustworthiness. It will be a great disappointment to me if in his new office he fails to live up to the high opinion I have always

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 colours—

- (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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