

APPOINTMENT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION TO
INVESTIGATE MARITIME CLAIMS

In the Speech from the Throne at the beginning of the session of 1926, it was announced that the Government proposed to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate the claims of the Maritime provinces. This policy, which is now recognized as having been a wise and statesmanlike method of meeting a difficult situation, was ridiculed and strenuously opposed by Conservative Members from the Maritime provinces. One after another rose in his place to protest against the appointment of a Royal Commission which is now recognized as the source of inestimable benefit to the Maritime Provinces. A few observations made by Conservative Members from Nova Scotia during the session are sufficient to illustrate the general attitude of hostility toward the Duncan Commission, which characterized the Conservative delegation from the Maritime provinces:

Mr. MacNutt (Colchester) - February 26, 1926:

"In the Speech from the Throne we are promised a commission to investigate rights that are already known. Conditions are too serious in these provinces today to have such matters as that come up indefinitely in the hands of a commission. We do not want a commission. We want clear-cut definite action."

Mr. MacDonald (Cape Breton) - February 25, 1926:

"We do not want any commissions in Nova Scotia. We know exactly what we want down there and there is a fairly strong determination on the part of the people of that province to get it."

Mr. Smith (Cumberland) - April 12, 1926:

"I would like to ask the House, Mr. Speaker, if an important part of the Dominion of Canada such as the Maritime provinces require a royal commission to investigate its affairs."

Mr. Cantley (Pictou) - April 12, 1926:

"I again tell the Government we do not want a commission."