

*Imperial Cable Merger*

I will again read certain portions of the correspondence which might explain why I want to know who Mr. Brown is: The following appears in the correspondence:

Should there be any change at council, or anything to add, we will cable you—in code, if necessary, using the code which Mr. Brown left with us when here last summer.

I think it is quite evident that Mr. Brown is an important personage. He evidently carried in his possession certain secret codes which he handed over to some official of the Post Office Department. It goes without saying that he must have been acting for some other party. If Mr. Brown acted as an intermediary between the Canadian government and some other party, I want to know who Mr. Brown is and whom he was acting for. Surely that is not an unreasonable question.

Mr. VENIOT: The only person that I or the department had any transaction with in connection with this matter was the representative of Canada on the cable board in London, Sir Campbell Stuart. I know of nobody else.

Mr. HEAPS: I do not think any hon. member will claim that I am asking for anything unreasonable. The Postmaster General has said that all the conferences he had were with Sir Campbell Stuart. I take that as being correct; I would not for a moment doubt the statement made by the Postmaster General. But this is a communication from the Assistant Deputy Postmaster General. Evidently he had been in touch with Mr. Brown. Has the house not a right to know whom the Assistant Deputy Postmaster General was negotiating with on such an important question. Why is the house to be denied an answer to my question?

Mr. LAPOINTE: Will my hon. friend state what Mr. Brown seems to be doing? What is the purport of all this?

Mr. HEAPS: I am sorry that I have not made myself clear to the Minister of Justice. Mr. Brown left in this country some secret codes to be used in case of necessity between this government and other parties interested. I claim that a gentleman who comes to this country and who evidently is in negotiation with the highest officials of the Post Office Department—

Mr. LAPOINTE: The negotiations took place at a conference in London. Was Mr. Brown there? Who is he?

Mr. HEAPS: This makes it all the more confusing and all the more necessary that we should know who Mr. Brown is.

[Mr. Heaps.]

Mr. GUTHRIE: What is his first name?

Mr. HEAPS: There is no initial given. This letter is signed by the Assistant Deputy Postmaster General.

Mr. STEVENS: Who is now present.

Mr. VENIOT: I think I have discovered the mysterious Mr. Brown. There was a Mr. Brown engaged in financial arrangements for carrying on the business of the old Pacific board as between companies interested and ourselves, but he had absolutely nothing whatever to do with any negotiations carried on for this merger. That is one Mr. Brown.

Mr. STEVENS: What was his first name?

Mr. VENIOT: I forget the Christian name of the first Mr. Brown, but I have a second Mr. Brown. He is Mr. F. J. Brown, C.B., C.B.E., who is a director and who is among the list of witnesses called at the conference in London in connection with this merger. He was called by the board of trustees, if I may use that term, of the Pacific cable board when they were investigating the condition of affairs in connection with that cable prior to the suggestion of a merger. Those are the only two Browns.

Mr. HEAPS: The Mr. Brown whose name I have here represented the Indo-European Telegraph Company.

Mr. VENIOT: This Mr. F. J. Brown is the man who represents the Indo-European Telegraph Company.

Mr. HEAPS: I understand from the Postmaster General that the other Brown was a gentleman who was here in the summer of 1927 in a financial capacity. I want to know whom he represented, what financial institution if any he represented?

Mr. VENIOT: All the information I have is that he was an accountant of the Pacific cable board, but had nothing whatever to do with the merger.

Mr. HEAPS: The Postmaster General stated a moment or two ago that this Mr. Brown was interested in the financial aspects of the whole question, or he used words to that effect. Am I to understand that he represents the Pacific cable board or another board?

Mr. VENIOT: Which Mr. Brown does my hon. friend mean?

Mr. HEAPS: Not the Brown in that report, not the Brown that gave evidence, but the Brown in this letter of the 4th January. The minister need not try to confuse the matter. It is very simple.