

House of Assembly
Proceedings

WEDNESDAY, April 29.

The House opened at 3 p.m. MR. K. BROWN presented a petition from the residents of Wild Cove on the subject of telephone connection. The petition was supported by his colleagues.

MR. HICKMAN presented a petition on the subject of opening St. John's East Division. Messrs. Halfyard, Scammell, Brown, Ashbourne, Duff and CASHIN supported the prayer of the petition.

MR. CAHILL presented a petition from the people of Harbor Main on the subject of a road. Hon. Mr. Woodford supported the petition.

The Council's amendment to the Old Age Pensions Bill was sent back to the Council with the intimation that the amendments cannot be entertained.

QUESTIONS.

THE FINANCE MINISTER laid on the table of the House all correspondence in reference to the four million dollar loan raised in England. The Finance Minister said that when Mr. Hickman had time to look over this correspondence he would demand that the leader table any information which he claimed to have in reference to the matter.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION replied that he had not made any charges of wrong doing against anybody, but he believed there was a nigger in the woodpile. Mr. Hickman claimed that 60 per cent. of the loan was still on the hands of the underwriters owing to the fact that it was not advertised in sterling instead of dollars and cents. He quoted extracts from the London Times of Feb. 11 and 17th on this matter to show where he got the idea from. Mr. Hickman read a considerable portion of the correspondence tabled and claimed that the Prime Minister must have been misled when he replied to his questions. He thought that he should have had the correspondence sooner.

HON. MINISTER OF FINANCE—Mr. Speaker. In reply to the honorable Leader of the Opposition I would like to first point out in connection with this loan that one of the demands of the Opposition was that these loans should be advertised and tenders called for. I am not prepared to say whether this was the best thing to do or whether it would have been better to have accepted the loan privately. Perhaps in honesty to one's self the best thing would have been to have called tenders as we did. In reference to the correspondence laid on the Table of the House there would have been no object in keeping this correspondence from the Prime Minister, none whatever, and I don't think that the honorable Prime Minister would imagine that I had any intention of hiding it from him; but when he asked me if there was any correspondence, I took it for granted that he was all the time talking about correspondence taking place since tenders were being called for, and I said there was not. Since the 20th of August I have been sending cables to the High Commissioner and to Colonel Sullivan trying to boost that loan, and that was all that was possible for the Minister of Finance to do, and then, I think in February, I took the advice of the High Commissioner, which will be found in the correspondence. I believed I was doing it in the best interests of the country and to safeguard the country's rights. The Prime Minister knows that this loan was placed in the hands of agents who were to take care of the tenders, the loan in Canada, United States and England. It is quite true that the loan was not called for in sterling, but the Finance Minister and the Prime Minister were not going to gamble with exchange on behalf of the people of the country; and though called for in Newfoundland currency it was accepted in sterling when the tenders were opened at the Bank of Montreal in the presence of the Prime Minister, Mr. Gardner, Mr. Bruce and myself. The Leader of the Opposition could have been there if he wanted to. When these tenders were opened, we were negotiating in connection with the purchase of rails in England. It was therefore figured out as to whether we



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AT THE
NICKEL MONDAY.

april 30, 11

should accept the sterling tender, of which there was only one from the Dominion Securities, Ltd.; and in the interests of the Colony and of Great Britain, we decided to accept that tender, and buy the rails in England, as we would get 3 1/2 per cent for five years from the British Government if we bought the rails and raised the loan in England. We did so feeling confident that what we were doing was in the best interests of the Colony. Why did I send cables since August 20th—why was I sending cables to the High Commissioner? Because I was trying to find out the financial conditions, and the best time to issue the loan on behalf of the Colony. Why did I wait until Feb. 10th or 12th to borrow that money? For only one reason—to save the interest on behalf of the Colony. And it is insinuated here that I was paying the interest from July 1st, 1924. No such thing could possibly happen.

MR. HICKMAN—Pardon me. I would like to explain that I got the information from the Prime Minister, and the correspondence that he gave me, amongst which there was a copy of an advertisement that appeared in the papers, and in that advertisement it said that the interest was to have been paid from July 1st, 1924.

HON. MINISTER OF FINANCE—That statement shows that the honorable gentleman does not know anything about finance at all. The honorable member should certainly know that the Loan Act called for that loan to be raised from the 1st July, and that the first coupon on the bond would be due on December 31st, 1924, but the Govt. does not issue that coupon. It takes it off before the bond is sold. We ought to be put into a Lunatic Asylum if we started to pay interest on money that we never had. The coupon on the bond will be due July 1st next, but I have arranged that bonds not already subscribed for shall only have interest paid on them as from January 1st; and the Bank of Montreal has the money now to pay interest for only a month and twenty days. I have had only one object in carrying out that correspondence, that I have tabled, and that was to try and boost the loan, and try to get the best I could for Newfoundland.

Another insinuation has been broadcasted by a crowd of hypocrites. It has been whispered about the lobbies of this House and outside that I had a message from the High Commissioner's Office in London offering a tender for the loan at 99, and that I declined it. Not only that, but the Prime Minister and the Colonial Secretary have been told the same story. Some gentleman told them that the report was about town. It is not true. Why should I care what rumor says about me? There is only one thing that stands before me. It is my conscience and the knowledge that I am doing my best. Long ago I would have sunk into oblivion if lying tongues could have done it; but I am here to-day, and the lying tongues are gone. I have done the best for my country when I have had charge of her financial affairs, and I defy the honorable Leader of the Opposition or any member of this House to prove otherwise. I did not care whether he was a rich man or a poor man, even if he was Sir Edgar Bowring, when he owed a dollar to the Customs House I collected it. And why did I do it? For only one reason. I had taken an oath to His Excellency the Governor to be loyal to the country, and to all my office in the best interests of this Colony, and I have done so, and I defy contradiction from any man in this House or outside. I will have to

be like my honorable friend Mr. Wainman—and use the privilege of the House to defend myself from lying tongues. They have been lying about me for a long time, and they have kept on lying, but they have not been able to keep this chap down. He is still up—and on top—and will be when my traducers are dead. As far as the loan is concerned, I say it was raised honestly, absolutely honestly, and every dollar that is coming from that loan is going to the country; and Crobie will not ask the Colony for five thousand dollars to sign those bonds as other Finance Ministers have done but he will sign them because he thinks it is part of his duty to do so, without being paid a penny extra. Now I have replied to the honorable member and the lying tongues on the street, and to the man who hides behind the doors and round the corner, saying he did this, and he did that, and he robbed the other thing. The only thing I can say to that sort of man is that he does these things himself, and he thinks that other people must do them too. I have taken the trouble to send a cable to the High Commissioner in London to ask him if he ever sent a telegram to me, or to anyone else here saying that anyone over in London had ever offered through him to take up the Newfoundland loan at 99, and here is his reply for my friends here, and for the liars that have been talking around this town, and in the lobbies of this House. I ask my friend the Colonial Secretary now, sir, to produce the original of this reply to the House. Here is the answer, and if you want further proof, the Hon. Colonial Secretary can show you the original. He sent me this copy this morning, and I will read it to the House:—

LONDON, April 28, 1925.

"Your telegram 27th April. Statement cable was sent by me offering ninety-nine for loan is incorrect. No tender for loan made through this office."

(Sgd.) HIGH COMMISSIONER.

What further answer do you want than that. Yes, I corresponded with Mr. Sullivan. I sent him messages and I sent them to Mr. Jennings. I sent them, if you like, to the High Commissioner's Office, but as I have already stated, I did it only in the interests of the country, and of the department of Finance, which I represented. I shall have an opportunity before this House closes, perhaps, to throw light on a situation that Newfoundland does not understand. I will soon throw the searchlight on these things, and some who think they can hide away in the shade, will find the light shining very brightly on them, to their discomfort. I admit that I am only human, and I have made my mistakes. I know I have made them—I make them every day; but it is only by mistakes that we can learn. There is a man who is so perfect that he cannot make mistakes; if so, he has no business here, he should be gone beyond. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I have had to take the stand I have taken this afternoon, but I want to say to my friends who believe in me, and would not hesitate to stake their existence on me to-day, that lying statements made by my enemies are just like water on a duck's back—drops off.

MR. HICKMAN replying, said he did not mean any insinuation against Sir John, and all rumours should not be attributed to him (Mr. Hickman).

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

The House went into Committee of the Whole on Supply and Mr. Hickman made some further reference to the loan and the period when the interest is due. Sir John informed him that no interest is due until June, and further that that \$6,000 had been saved on exchange.

MR. HICKMAN stated that it was a great pleasure to the Opposition and the country generally to learn that the loan was selling at a great deal over par.

MR. CASHIN, replying to Mr. Lake's address, claimed that Mr. Lake was not more independent than himself and referred to his appointment as director of the Power and Paper Co. He, however, pointed out that Mr. Lake was as much entitled to the position as anyone else. The job, he said, was offered to Mr. Lake last year, and if he was not given it, he would cross the floor like himself. Mr. CASHIN resented being called a traitor, claiming his position was analogous to that of General Ironsides, who, as an officer was a spy in the German Army for the British Government. He claimed that the Prime Minister's reply to him last night was weak. The speaker read the article signed "Observer," which appeared in the Morning News, and also quoted the editorial which, he claimed, was written to deceive. Mr. CASHIN denied he ever tried to induce any member to leave the party, and asked Mr. Moore to bear him out.

MR. MOORE—Mr. Chairman, I am glad that the Hon. member has brought this matter to a head this evening. There has been a lot of whispering, and a lot of surmises, both inside and outside of this House, with regard to my relation to this party. As far as the Hon. member himself is concerned he never asked me to leave the party. I did not know what the Leader of the Government was referring to last night when he said Mr. CASHIN was using his influence to take members from the party. I knew that for the last three or four weeks Mr. CASHIN had grievances with the party,

but he always told me to use my own opinion. I will say that for him. With regard to my support of the Monroe Party, I went to the country as a supporter of the Monroe Party and I was returned as a supporter of the Monroe Party. But there seems to be doubt amongst some members of the Party and amongst some people outside this House with regard to my loyalty to my leader. If my connection with Sir Michael CASHIN, which has lasted for fifty years and over, were going to interfere with my allegiance to my party I would give up the Party a thousand times rather than lose the friendship of a man who has stood by me for more than fifty years. Mr. Moore, the Leader of the Government, has many men in this party who are loyal to him but he has none who are more loyal to him than I am.

MR. CASHIN thanked his colleague for exonerating him from that charge and asked the Prime Minister to withdraw the charge.

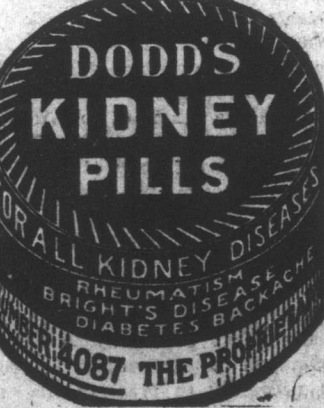
THE PRIME MINISTER said that he had made no such charge, but had remarked that he had suspected that Mr. CASHIN had tried to induce other members to leave the Party. He accepted the member's denial and withdrew the remark.

MR. CASHIN thanked the Prime Minister and then continued his criticism of the Daily News articles. Before concluding, he asked if the previous or present Government had endeavored, so that they may try and repay us for any little assistance we may have given, to induce the Home Government to pay over to us some of the reparations which were going to Canada and elsewhere.

MR. GRIMES thought the stand taken by Mr. CASHIN was very commendable. Not so that by Mr. Moore who he expected to follow suit. It was a disappointment to hear him pledge his loyalty to Mr. Moore. Mr. Grimes continued the debate on the tariff and pointed out that the duty on clothing was too high. Over \$300,000 worth of ready made was coming into the country and he claimed that the wealthy people were not affected by the high price of clothing. Sir John took occasion to point out that ready made compare favorably in price here with elsewhere and he exhibited his own suit which he made locally and cost \$35.00. Mr. Grimes continued to deal with the question before the chair from the standpoint of the working man until 6.30, when recess was taken.

NIGHT SESSION.

At 8 p.m. the Chairman resumed and Mr. Brown took occasion to congratulate Mr. CASHIN on the noble stand he took in leaving the party on the tariff matter. Mr. Brown agreed with Mr. CASHIN that the fishermen and laboring classes particularly were not getting a square deal. He held that the name of CASHIN is not much yet, and though he differed with him on the floors of the Assembly, it was only in a friendly manner. Mr. CASHIN is the son of a man who was at one time Prime Minister and he claimed his name has gone down in history as being that of a man who has done his part. He was glad to see that his son was following out the example set. The name of Sir William Coaker had been introduced in the House in criticism of the group he did, but nothing was heard of the good he did. All the blame of the Fish Regulations was laid on him by the merchants and he had been looked down on although he was the first man to uplift the laboring man and the fisherman. The speaker asked what man there was on Water Street with more brains than Sir William Coaker. Speaking of the condition of the fishermen many years ago, they were told that there was black fever or smallpox or something wrong with the markets so that they only got a couple of dollars for their fish. But there was no such fever since Coaker came along. Mr. Brown told of his great great grandfather who was a member of the House of Assembly, was a merchant with sailing vessels and sealing vessels, and when he died he left £60,000 dry money which he sweated out of the laboring class and the fishermen. Speaking as a champion of labor, Mr. Brown averred he was prepared to fight to the limit in their interests. He claimed that the day was coming when the working man was coming into his own. Referring to the fishery he asked what was being done about the halibut. On the West Coast the fishermen can't get two cents per lb. for it, yet it is sold at Grand Falls for 30 cents per lb. Speaking of the Humber, the speaker referred to the fracas there recently in which it is reported that some French-Canadians whilst tipsy interfered with some residents and were broken up as a result.



He added further that he heard that one of our local constables had also been broken up. Mr. Brown recalled how in 1921 he led the strike of laborers at Grand Falls, and concluding said he failed to see where the square deal to all promises were being kept.

MR. ASHBORNE thought that Mr. CASHIN had asserted his independence, and deserved to be congratulated. Speaking on the tariff he would like any member to show where there was a decrease. All had hopes that there would be a reduction. In reference to the tourist traffic he urged that we make a big effort to capitalize our climate, and further not to spend money on roads which might compete with the railway. On the passenger matter the speaker held decided views, and questioned why all should be on a near equal basis. He complained that he had not been consulted on matters relating to his district which he claimed was not a square deal. On the matter of income tax, he said that he had paid his tax, he hoped that those who had not paid up should be made to do so. In conclusion he urged that the Government use the pruning axe.

MR. CASHIN moved an amendment to the tariff to the effect that the duty be reduced from 65 per cent. to 52 per cent. Mr. CASHIN claimed he was not the only rebel in the ranks, and to illustrate he told that last year Sir Patrick McGrath, the Prime Minister, the Colonial Secretary and the Minister of Justice were away in Canada. Mr. Morine and Sir John Crobie collided, and Sir John said that he had fired Mr. Morine out of the Executive. Referring to the News copy as gutter snipe journalism, he in very strong language condemned the writer who had characterized him as a rebel.

MR. HALFYARD supported the amendment moved by Mr. CASHIN, and took occasion to congratulate him on his stand in leaving the party in view of the fact that he had three more years in prospect with the Government. He did not know if Mr. CASHIN had personal motives, but he was surprised that he was not made a member of the Executive. Speaking on loyalty to a leader, Mr. Halfyard referred to a certain event which eventually put him on the Opposition side of the House. At that time it was a question of principle, and he and his colleagues stood on principle. Mr. Halfyard claimed that business people were taking advantage of the tariff and are marking up their goods. The consumers had not only to pay the increased tariff, but also a profit on the increase. [Mr. Halfyard discussed the question before the chair from every possible angle.]

MR. DUFF thought that the importations in consequence of the tariff would show a falling off. He referred then to several of his constituents, whom he claimed had been treated in a dastardly manner by the Government. Also he called attention to the condition of the cable office on Rawlin's Cross which, he thought, needed plenty soap and water.

The Committee rose at 11.45 and reported progress. The remaining orders of the day were deferred, and adjournment was taken until 3 p.m. to-day.

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J. and Mrs. Hippen, Miss S. E. Stewart, D. Fullerton, S. Gullage, A. Benson, C. Martell, F. F. Baker, F. Gushue, A. and Mrs. Gager, H. Abbott, Miss E. Abbott, I. and Mrs. Hatcher.

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