

DESPITE ST. JOHN'S PROTESTS AGREEMENT GOES INTO EFFECT

Hon. Mr. Hazen's Reply to Hon. Dr. Pugsley's Plea to the Ministers For Justice For This Port -- Defends I. C. R. - C. P. R. Arrangement -- Hon. Mr. Rogers Promises Harbor Improvements

Yesterday's important and somewhat dramatic meeting of the Board of Trade developed many features which will command earnest public attention. In some respects it was the most important meeting of this character held in St. John in many years. Toward the close it took on a fighting edge.

The meeting may be divided into two portions, first that portion during which the Board of Trade's numerous recommendations with respect to the expansion of the port's shipping facilities were presented to Hon. Mr. Rogers, Minister of Public Works, and discussed by him at length, and the second portion, during which St. John's loss of the Empress and the Allan Line mail steamer, and the Gutelius agreement which is causing that loss, were discussed vigorously by Hon. Mr. Pugsley, by Hon. J. D. Hazen and by W. M. Jarvis.

The several recommendations regarding the construction of new berths on the west side, the extension of the Negretown breakwater to Partridge Island, the expediting of the Norton, Griffiths contract in Courtney Bay, and the matter of bringing the Grand Trunk Pacific into St. John, and other matters were taken up by the Hon. Mr. Rogers, section by section, and in a business like way he announced his own position with respect to these questions, saying what, in his view, would be done, and what could not be done.

In brief, he virtually promised:

That the terminal wall on the west side would be built at once, so as to enable the C. P. R. to fill in the space behind it for yard room.

That the contractor who is building the new berths on the west side would be told to finish the job within a certain time or it would be taken of his hands and given to some one else who would do so.

That the old breaker would be extended to Partridge Island as soon as possible, as Mr. Rogers considered this of immense importance.

That the Norton Griffiths contract in Courtney Bay would be completed within as short a time as possible, inasmuch as the government would be ready to pay for the work as rapidly as the contractor could complete it, Mr. Rogers saying that if it could be completed even within twelve, or eighteen months, or two years, nobody would be better pleased than himself and the government—and the money would be provided.

There were some requests in the memorandum which Mr. Rogers said could not be complied with. For example, he said that the government was not building grain elevators at the various ports, that being a matter for the railways or harbor commissions.

He made a somewhat important and perhaps significant statement with respect to the terminal facilities, which are to be built by the government in Courtney Bay, saying that the wharves and other terminal facilities to be built there ought not, in his opinion, to be tied up for the sole use of the Grand Trunk Pacific, but that they should be kept within the control of the government to be used on equal terms by the National Transcontinental, the Canadian Northern, the Valley Railroad, the Intercolonial, or even the Canadian Pacific.

This statement, when discussed after the meeting by citizens who had heard it, led them to revive the recent report that the Canadian Northern is to have an entrance to St. John by means of the Valley Railroad, and that this is the reason for belief in Conservative circles that the Canadian Northern steamer (the Royal Line) are to come to this port.

Hazen Nailed Down to Definite Statement

After Mr. Hazen had made a few remarks about the Board of Trade's programme of improvements and had taken his seat, Hon. Mr. Pugsley asked President Robinson and the ministers if the matter of the direct mail steamer might not properly be discussed at this meeting, as it was a vital question of the greatest concern to those present and to the whole city and country.

Mr. Robinson was disposed to dissent, but W. M. Jarvis, as an ex-president

of the St. John Board of Trade, and an ex-president of the Maritime Board of Trade, expressed his astonishment that there should be any talk of excluding this subject from discussion, since it was really the occasion for the calling of a meeting and the presence of the federal ministers, and when he had taken his seat and Dr. Pugsley had again reverted to the matter, the meeting very plainly made known its opinion that the subject should be discussed. Mr. Robinson then bowed, reluctantly, to the will of the meeting.

Thereupon Hon. Mr. Pugsley placed before the ministers the salient facts with respect to St. John's loss of the C. P. R. Empress and the Allan Line Calgarian and Alastair through the making of the Gutelius-Bosworth agreement, the agreement would be an unjust character of the arrangement, and pointing out that unless the government intervened the agreement would go into effect on Saturday next. His earnest and impressive statements were heartily endorsed by the meeting.

Hon. Mr. Hazen then rose and made a somewhat impassioned speech with respect to St. John's position as a general and mail port, asserting that an opportunity would be given this year to test the direct St. John-Liverpool route, and saying that this port would be in a better position this year than before with respect both to freight and to the direct mail service.

He intimated that he was ready to make a more definite announcement with respect to the mail service (presumably about the coming of the Royal Line steamer) but that it was his intention to make this announcement not at this Board of Trade meeting but to his Conservative friends and supporters at the banquet in the evening.

Hon. Mr. Pugsley then asked Mr. Hazen one question. It was this:

Do the government intend to prevent the Gutelius agreement from going into effect until such time as this agreement has been presented to and passed upon by the railway commission?

Hon. Mr. Hazen replied in the negative, saying that Mr. Gutelius had power to make the agreement, and that it would have to go into effect, inasmuch as it would not be subject to ratification for six months at all events, and at least not until the railway commission had given its approval.

Mr. W. M. Jarvis then very forcibly expressed the opinion that any announcement which Mr. Hazen might have to make of a public character, relating to public business, ought to be made at this meeting instead of at a meeting of his Conservative friends and supporters. And Mr. Jarvis went on to say that as he could no longer be numbered among Mr. Hazen's friends and supporters, he had no use for the tickets which he held, and he threw the ticket in the floor.

At the conclusion of Hon. Messrs. Rogers and Hazen's speeches, Mayor Pritchard referred to the action of the municipal council in asking the government to send a thoroughly qualified expert to St. John to make a comprehensive report upon the whole harbor situation. Mr. Rogers replied that Mr. Swan, an eminent British engineer who had great satisfaction in Montreal, is again in Canada and he would be glad to send him to St. John, next week, if possible.

Hon. William Pugsley.

Hon. William Pugsley then arose, was recognized by the chairman and said:

"I am sure the people of St. John are very appreciative of the action of the ministers in coming to St. John to make provision for the great trouble which is destined to flow through this port. Mr. Hazen we have with us often, but this is Mr. Rogers' first visit to St. John and I am sure that the people of St. John often feel glad to welcome him more often in the future."

"With regard to what Mr. Rogers has said about getting the estimates through parliament, we are sure the minister of public works will have no difficulty in asking parliament for anything which could fairly be granted—and we must feel that he would not ask for anything that was unfair—he gets it. When Mr. Rogers sets his mind upon getting anything, he usually secures it, even if it takes all night or until Saturday night. I have had some experience in this connection with his estimates. (Laughter.)"

"I would not like to say anything that would cause disapproval on this occasion but if the ministers consent I would like to present some views on the matter of the mail steamer and the arrangements for their sailings this winter. What is your pleasure, gentlemen?"

President Robinson: "I think that it would be better if we avoided a matter which might be regarded as controversial. There are many here who think as you and I do, Dr. Pugsley, but there are others who do not, and it has been the policy of the Board of Trade to avoid discussion of any matter which might be regarded as political. For this reason I think it would be better to postpone the discussion until some more suitable time."

W. M. Jarvis rose to his feet, but Dr. Pugsley was before him, saying: "I would like mightily well to submit this matter to the minister of public works and the minister of marine. It is the most important matter before the citizens of St. John at present, and I think that it is the reason for the large attendance here this afternoon. If it is not presented I think the people of St. John will be disappointed."

Wanted It Discussed

This statement was received with great approval. There was sustained applause and calls of "Go on—go on."

The chairman: "If it is the wish of the meeting I can do nothing but accede to the wishes of the majority. I will therefore leave it to the meeting to decide. The meeting again made it very clear

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that it would insist upon the mail steamer being discussed then and there.

W. M. Jarvis

W. M. Jarvis rose at this point and said that, as an ex-president of the St. John Board of Trade, and also as an ex-president of the Maritime Board of Trade, he was astonished to think that there should be any intention or desire to exclude discussion of the most important subject of the hour, namely, that of the mail steamer.

He asked what was the cause of this whole agitation? What was the real reason for the presence of the ministers and the calling of this special meeting? Was it not the situation that had arisen with respect to the mail steamer? He certainly thought the question should be discussed, plainly and publicly.

Dr. Pugsley then proceeded, saying in part: "I would say to Hon. Mr. Hazen, as a representative of this constituency and a member of the dominion government, that a great blow, an important subject of the hour, namely, that of the mail steamer, has been struck at St. John through a department of your government. Let me tell you how."

"After a great fight, extending over many years, and by the expenditure of more than a million and a quarter of dollars, this city provided steamship terminals here, doing what no other city in Canada has done. When the port was equipped the government was induced to withdraw the mail steamer from Portland and make Halifax and St. John the terminals for the mail service—and for seventeen years St. John has been the winterport of Canada."

"For many years representations have been made that the C. P. R. would prefer to bring their steamers direct to this port, but under the contract all mail steamer calls were obliged to call at Halifax to land their mails up to the end of the last winter season."

"At the last session of parliament a new step was taken. The government announced that the choice would be left to the steamship companies, that the door would be left open, and the subject would be an equal footing."

"I was of the opinion that the subject should be divided, that each port should have an equal share of the service on terms of absolute equality, but

the other arrangement prevailed. I had for the first time been able to make a traffic arrangement with the I. C. R. which enabled them to carry their traffic between St. John and Halifax upon terms which made it possible for them to make Halifax the terminus for the mail steamer.

"It appears that, on September 30 an agreement was entered into by Mr. Gutelius of the I. C. R. and Mr. Bosworth of the C. P. R. Under this agreement the rates between Halifax and St. John were greatly reduced as regards these four steamers."

"The passenger rates were made \$2 for first class and \$1 for second, with a maximum earning power of \$300 per train, although a reasonable train load would be ten cars each carrying sixty people per car, making a total of 600 passengers—for \$300, or at the rate of about fifty cents each."

"With regard to the freight traffic, at a maximum of 600 tons per train, a small maximum, goods will be carried at fifty cents a ton. By consulting the regular railway tariff we see that the lowest rate granted to other freight, from or for ocean steamers, and for the lowest class of goods, is 31-2 cents a hundred pounds, or \$1.70 per ton. This shows beyond doubt the nature of the discrimination of which we complain."

"I am informed that the actual cost of handling freight on the I. C. R. is from three-fifths to one-half cent per ton per mile, but this agreement provides for carrying freight at less than one-fifth of one cent per ton per mile, a figure far below the actual cost of operation. I claim that this is discrimination of the gravest kind. (Applause.)"

"That this is true is shown by the fact that under the old I. C. R. tariffs the C. P. R. and Allan lines could not make Halifax their terminus, in witness of which we have Mr. Bosworth's statement that the sailings from Halifax were only made possible by the new arrangement with the I. C. R."

A Grave Injustice.

"I earnestly hope that the ministers who are here today have learned of the feeling in the breast of every man and every woman in St. John who has the interests of the city at heart that a grave and gross injustice has been done

to this city, and to the ministers I would say that I hope you will do all in your power to see that this is not permitted."

"The agreement has been referred to the Board of Railway Commissioners, and Recorder, in presenting the claims of St. John before that body. The difficulty is that the agreement is to go into effect on November 15. If it does go into effect the Railway Commission can say that they are not required to decide academic cases and that they have no power to order the I. C. R. to cancel an agreement which was authorized by the government."

"Therefore I must ask you not to let it go into effect until the agreement has been passed upon by the Railway Commission. Stay the hand of Mr. Gutelius, and let the C. P. R. pay the ordinary tariff rates, at least until the railway commissioners have given their decision. Do not let it become effective, as it will on November 15 unless you take prompt action."

"I am sorry that I had to insist upon this matter being discussed this afternoon, but I felt it my duty to do so and I did not act from any desire to take advantage of the situation from political or partisan motives."

One or two Conservatives laughed. Dr. Pugsley went on:

"Some gentleman laughs! God knows that if I wished to go back to parliament by a greater majority than any man ever got in this constituency all that I could ask is that this iniquitous agreement should go into effect. (Great cheers and applause.)"

"But I do not want the agreement to take effect. As a citizen of St. John, as a property owner, and as St. John's representative in parliament, I want to see this unfair and unjust agreement cancelled, and I ask you to take immediate action."

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steps to prevent this how being struck against the commercial interests, the very life of St. John."

Prolonged applause marked the conclusion of Dr. Pugsley's speech. Mr. Hazen then rose to reply to Dr. Pugsley.

"It seems quite like old times," he said, "to reply to Dr. Pugsley, and I always convince myself that the doctor has convinced himself, that he is speaking in an altogether patriotic way. I believe, however, with the chairman, that it was unfortunate that this matter was brought into the discussion, for I was given a copy of the programme for the afternoon's proceedings, and was under the impression that other matter than the suggestions for the expansion of the harbor would be brought up."

"Since Dr. Pugsley has brought the matter forward, I wish to say that he has unfairly stated the position of the government in what has taken place. The mail boats had to come to St. John under the old contracts, but they had to stop at Halifax to unload the mails. The postmaster never recognized St. John as a mail port."

"I have no hesitation in saying that this state of affairs was unsatisfactory to the whole dominion. By reason of the stop at Halifax the distance from Liverpool to St. John appeared so much longer. We believe we can carry the mails (Continued on page 4, fifth column.)"

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