

# House of Commons Debates

## FIRST SESSION—TENTH PARLIAMENT

### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, May 15, 1905.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

#### VACANCY IN NORTH OXFORD.

Mr. T. S. SPROULE. Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day are called, I beg leave to notify you and this honourable House that, through the death of Hon. James Sutherland, there is now a vacancy in the constituency of North Oxford, and to desire you to take notice of it in the usual way.

#### THE PORTFOLIO OF PUBLIC WORKS.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Before the Orders of the Day are called, I would like to inquire of the government whether or not there is any truth in the rumour, which has appeared in the public press, that the member for London (Mr. Hyman), the acting Minister of Public Works, has been sworn into office as a member of the administration; and also, if that has not taken place, if the government will be good enough to say whether it is contemplated that that shall take place at an early day?

Hon. Sir WILLIAM MULOCK (Postmaster General). The rumour referred to as to the acting Minister of Public Works having been sworn in as minister is not correct. With reference to the second part of my hon. friend's question, perhaps he will be good enough to repeat it to-morrow, when the Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) will be in his place.

#### INQUIRIES FOR RETURNS.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Before the Orders of the Day are called, I would like also to call the attention of the government to certain papers which were to be brought down, but which, I think, have not been laid on the table. I refer to the papers relating to the contract for a wire fence along the international boundary between the Northwest Territories and the United States. In that connection, I thought possibly the government would bring down some explanation from the secretary of the department, which,

I think, has not yet been laid before the House. The explanation which was read before the House on a previous occasion was not, as I understand it, from the gentleman who wrote the letter to the company which made some complaints because they were not afforded an opportunity to tender.

There was also a promise by the acting Minister of Public Works (Mr. Hyman) to bring down the papers in connection with a contract and a proposed contract for bitulithic pavement—the contract being for a pavement in front of the parliament buildings and the proposed contract for a pavement on Wellington street.

In one of these cases there was a promise by the Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) that the original papers should be brought down—I think that was in response to a request of my hon. friend from South Lanark (Mr. Haggart), and related, if I remember well, to the proposed contract with respect to the wire fence.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. When this subject of the wire fence was referred to in the House on Thursday last, the Prime Minister stated that he would have the papers laid upon the table at the earliest possible moment. I have no doubt that orders were given for their preparation, and there will be no delay in carrying out the promise made. My hon. friend will permit me to say that, as I understand it, there was no contract, although he spoke of a contract—

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. No, no.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. There was a draft sent over to the Justice Department of what might have become a contract. That is what he refers to, I suppose.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I refer to all the papers in relation to that particular matter.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. I understood the hon. gentleman to speak of a contract, and I wished to make the distinction, for fear that otherwise it might be assumed that I had assented to that view. I do not understand that there was a contract. As to the bitulithic pavement, my hon. friend the acting Minister of Public Works (Mr. Hyman) will answer.

Hon. CHARLES S. HYMAN (Acting Minister of Public Works). I shall be glad to