

POOR DOCUMENT MAY 20 1935

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JULY 30, 1921

The Evening Times and Star

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LAST NIGHT'S MEETING.

Last night's meeting in the Imperial finally dashed the hopes of the champions of the harbor commission act. They got a very polite hearing, but the applause showed where public sympathy lies, and it does not lie with the proposal to give up the harbor under an agreement which could only place greater burdens on the port. Mr. Baxter's extraordinary and uncalled for attack upon the lieutenant governor, bitter and personal, and his effort to drag in politics, did not benefit the cause or enhance the speaker's reputation for wisdom as a campaigner.

Commissioner Bullock had a woful tale to tell, but after Monday next he will go placidly on as usual and the cost of necessary repairs to the harbor, spread over a term of years, will not be larger than it has been. As a matter of fact, a capital expenditure of \$91,000 has been added to the bonded indebtedness against the harbor properties since the harbor commission act was passed, and the total expenditure on the harbor last year was \$176,500, of which \$75,000 was for repairs and renewals, and yet there was a surplus last year over all expenditure of \$19,200. A glance over the annual reports for a term of years shows there has never been until last night such a wall of woe about needed and costly repairs. The city engineer in 1914 reported the city wharves and general equipment kept up to the standard during the year. In 1919 he denied a report that Shed No. 3 was unsafe. Last year he said the wharves had been kept in reasonable repair. A study of the reports since 1912 gives no indication of such a condition as Mr. Bullock attempted to set forth last evening.

It was very evident that an attempt was being made toward the end of last night's meeting to weary the audience and send them away before Mr. McLellan could get a chance to reply; but it failed utterly, and reacted against the cause of those responsible for it.

The most striking features of the meeting were the list of names read by Mr. McLellan of leading business firms opposed to the commission act, and his challenge to the mayor to wire or telephone Hon. Mr. Carvell and ask him what the intention of the government was in regard to the city harbor bonds. This last was a clincher, as it supplemented the question as to why Hon. Mr. Wignome has not faced the people to answer the same question.

The largest public meeting of the series held was clearly and decidedly against the commission act.

THE VOTE ON MONDAY.

To defeat the harbor commission act on Monday will not close the door to harbor development. The tripartite agreement, which will provide facilities as needed on the west side, will remain; as will the necessity for the C. N. R. to have terminal facilities on the east side of the harbor, plans for some of which have been prepared.

In advocating as strongly as it could the rejection of the commission act, the Times has pursued a course which it believes to be in the interest of St. John. It seems preposterous that any intelligent citizen should expect the federal government to go on with the national work of providing additional terminal facilities at this port, when it puts in the commission act a stipulation that hereafter the harbor revenue must pay three and a half per cent. on the cost of the national work already done. That stipulation alone would add from \$175,000 to \$200,000 to the burden on the harbor before a new dollar was expended, and the interest and sinking fund for every new dollar would be added as the money was expended. This is such an outrageous proposition that any attempt to persuade the people of the eagerness of the government to spend public money to develop the harbor borders on the ridiculous.

But there is another proof of the government's real intentions; for while it agrees to guarantee payment of the \$650,000 harbor commission debentures, it takes care to make those debentures a charge on the harbor revenue, to ensure that it will not have to pay them; while it declines to guarantee payment of the \$1,340,000 city harbor bonds, thus making it necessary for the city to keep a sinking fund to protect its credit.

With regard to the belated contention that it is not the act but the principle

the people are to vote upon—that is mere deception. It is an after-thought put forward to catch votes. For if we are only to vote upon the principle there will have to be a new act and a new plebiscite. Such a contention is farcical in the extreme, for everybody knows, and the mayor has said, that the city council wants to know what the people think of the act. The vote will be taken on the act. Indeed this is acknowledged by the advocates of the act when they talk about changes and amendments to be made after the vote is taken. Those changes could only be made by parliament. If they can be made now, why were they not made before? But what folly it is to assert that the mayor and city solicitor can change an act of parliament. Even the government cannot do that.

Why should the people of St. John consent to a complete change in government policy in relation to this harbor—throwing upon the harbor revenue the task which under both the LaRue and Borden governments was assumed by the Dominion of Canada?

The vote will be taken on Monday. Every citizen whose name is on the voters' list should go to the polls, for the question at issue is vital to the future of the port. The vote should be decisive, and if the harbor commission act is buried as it deserves to be the way will be clear for a real effort to get the government to recognize the just claims of this national port. If the present government is too much concerned over its own impending fate, no real interest will suffer until another takes its place; when we may hope to have such representation at Ottawa as will command public attention and get results quite different from those which it is now attempted to thrust upon us.

ON THE AWFUL VERGE.

The blow has fallen. The Globe last night shouted in loud and horrified accents:

"The dollars and cents aspect of this question will be brought home with fearful earnestness to every citizen, every taxpayer, every house-renter, if there is failure now to face the problem."

Is this to say, if the citizens do not agree to place upon the harbor a burden of three and a half per cent interest per annum on the cost of the grain elevator and government wharves, including the marine wharf, and pay the money over to the government, the fate of ancient Troy will be as nothing compared with the horror of great darkness which will stretch from Green Head to Red Head, made infinitely more terrible at intervals by the thunder of falling wharves as they tumble into the engulfing tide. Woe, woe and lamentation—sackcloth and ashes—"fearful earnestness"—crash of worlds and no ferry.

White as a white sail on a dusky sea. When half the horizon's clouded and half free, Fluttering between the dun wave and sky Is Hope's last gleam in man's extremity."

And who is the white hope of St. John, on the awful verge of this dread calamity? Who but the Globe's list of immortals.

Hon. F. B. Carvell was not available last evening to aid in humbugging the nation into believing the government meant to guarantee the harbor bonds. Mr. McLellan invited the mayor to communicate with Mr. Carvell on that point. That is a fair challenge. Mr. Carvell was in town yesterday—but Mr. Wignome was not.

Will the Globe publish the list of names of those firms who are against the harbor commission act? Is it only a partial list to which numbers might be added by simply asking them to sign. Business interests are against the harbor commission act.

Deputy Minister Johnston of the marine department is now quoted to the effect that the harbor commission act guarantees the city harbor bonds. It is unfortunate that a deputy minister should not be able to interpret plain English.

Had the Dominion government no friends at last night's meeting to protest against handing it the gold brick exposed by Commissioner Bullock? How can we have the heart to do it?

Vote on Monday and help to bury the iniquitous harbor commission act.

Do not have faith in the government on Monday—have faith in St. John.

American Woolen Prices.

American Woolen Co. prices on woolen and worsted lines for spring of 1922 are practically on a par with fall quotations made last February, worsted remaining the same, but woolen fabrics are slightly advanced. Burying is heavy.

KILL THE ACT

Sample of Ballot

Against Commission X For Commission

Vote Against The Commission Act on Monday.

Put the X in the right place

SOME HARD NUTS FOR ADVOCATES OF ACT TO CRACK

Clear Cut Exposure of Benevolent (?) Intentions of Government—What Adoption of Harbor Commission Act Involves.

To the Editor of the Times:

At the meeting held a few evenings ago in the Seamen's Institute, the advocates of Harbor Commission avoided reference to the stipulation contained in the act that the property at St. John of the Dominion government, comprising wharves, warehouses, elevator, etc., shall be taken over by the harbor corporation at construction cost, to bear interest at rate of 3½ per cent per annum thereafter, to be paid to the Dominion government, such interest to be provided from the harbor revenue.

Assuming construction cost to be at least \$5,000,000, an annual charge of not less than \$175,000 would be added to port revenue. Doubtless, some revenue is received now from these properties, but certainly very far short of \$175,000. But against such inappreciable revenue now received from warehouses and wharves belonging to the government, what about the yearly outlay for repairs and improvements? The Dominion government always provided for that. Under Harbor Commission St. John port receipts would be called on for all that up-keep. Might not that outlay wipe out completely the receipts, and perhaps exceed same, adding materially, therefore, to the \$175,000 interest requirements on construction price?

Is this not a most onerous feature? Does it indicate that the government is yearning eagerly to bestow upon this city gracious and unique favors, and marvellously greatly at the obtuseness and perversity of the citizens in their inexplicable opposition to seizing such signal example of the benevolent designs of the government toward the port of St. John? Not Principle, But Act.

Much stress has been laid by zealous advocates of Harbor Commission upon the point that the citizens are not being asked to vote upon the Act, but upon the principle of commission. The opponents of that contention stoutly contest that argument, claiming strongly that it is the Act as well as the principle upon which they will vote. They are both inseparably united. Look at the published plebiscite notice. However, let it be granted that it really is the principle involved—not the Act—upon which they will vote. Grant further that the result of the voting will then be favorable to putting the harbor under commission. Will it not be to approach the government and announce the decision of the people, stating that the city council is now prepared to make a contract carrying out the principle? What contract? Would not the government immediately say: "There is the Act upon which the agreement must be based?" Surely there is no escape from that conclusion. Eager advocates say the act is merely the general outline of the agreement. Many, however, feel that the act is embodied. Certainly, for instance, the Act does not state who will be the commissioners, appointed, or what their salaries will be. Of course there are details—many details to be inserted in an agreement, but the fundamentals, the vital features stand out in bold relief. There is no getting away from them, and those are the controversial points, and all specious reasoning and flimsy arguments against this contention are suggestive of drawing a herring across the trail.

Here's More Expense. In section 6 Harbor Commission Act, it is stated that the corporation may appoint not only a harbor master and deputy and port wardens and other officials, but also shipping master and deputy shipping masters.

Does this mean that the office of the existing shipping master would come entirely under the jurisdiction of the harbor corporation, and that the cost of conducting that office would be lifted from the Dominion government and laid upon the commissioners, involving a heavy outlay for salaries, etc., of a number of officials provided for by a shipping master? There's Nothing To It.

Was it not plainly stated at the recent meeting at Seamen's Institute by advocates of harbor commission that if the citizens voted against the harbor commission act, and subsequently endeavored to secure commission under a new act, years would be consumed in framing an act proving acceptable and further years before accomplishing the passing through parliament of same? Is there any justification for such an extraordinary statement? Is it possible that it would require a term of several years before a new Act could be prepared and passed finally in parliament?

A Pertinent Query.

Little is being said concerning operations at Courtney Bay. The Dominion government provided all the money required there hitherto. With the harbor put in commission will not that money be taken away from Courtney Bay?

ABOUT TAXATION

It is darkly hinted that if the people reject the harbor commission act taxes will go up. What about the \$175,000 to \$200,000 additional burden put upon the harbor before a new dollar is spent? Do not forget that harbor revenue must provide three and a half per cent on the cost of the grain elevator and government wharves, including the marine wharf, and must also provide the increased cost of administration. Whether you call it direct or indirect taxation there it is. How much will be left to provide interest and sinking fund of new expenditures? Think it over.

For put in commission will not all wharves, warehouses, elevators, etc., be constructed there, be made a charge as to principal and interest—to be cared for by the Harbor Commission? Up to the present time all outlay there has been paid for by the federal government. It is a national work, rendered necessary by the anticipated needs of the government railway system at St. John. Under harbor commission will not all this projected extensive work be shifted from the "broad shoulders" (to use a recent much hackneyed expression) of the Dominion government to the over-burdened back of the Harbor Commission—that is to say upon the port of St. John.

Yours, JUSTITIA.

AS IT WOULD SEEM.

Another one killed, what does it matter? Child life is cheap in Toronto! What is one more when every day Some little life is thrown away, Broken and crushed when out to play? They should not play in Toronto.

The city's streets are not for them, The little ones of Toronto; If they do not heed a warning shout, As they cross the street, it's their own look out! We have other things to think about, We citizens of Toronto.

It was not always thus, we're told, In the city of Toronto; But times are changed by all accounts, So what if the daily death roll mounts, It's the car and not the child that counts. Today—In Toronto.

A. M. Naismith.

IN LIGHTER VEIN.

International Diet. Two Tommies turned puntsters went into a restaurant over on the eastern front and said to the waiter: "We want Turkey with Greece." The waiter replied, "Sorry, sirs, but we can't serve."

"Well, then get the Rosporus." The boss came in and heard their order and then said, "I don't want to Russia, but you can't Roumania." So the two Tommies went away Hungry. Commerce and Finance.

On His Dignity.

Foreman—What is all that arguing down the road? Laborer (Indignantly)—Why, the man running the steam roller wants us to call him a chauffeur. Pearson's Weekly.

Poor Son-in-Law.

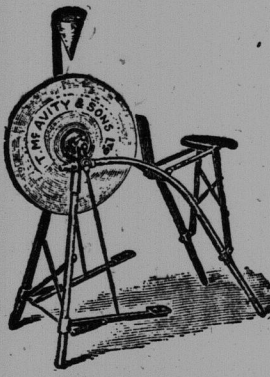
(New York Herald)

—Speaking of marriages reminds me of what an old friend of ours down south said to a young man who asked for the hand of his daughter. "I am confident you do not know who I am," said the young man after he had made his formal request, when he noticed that his prospective father-in-law levitated heropically. "I am a director in the Y. M. C. A. I am the superintendent of the Sunday School and personally teach a class. I am one of the local lecturers for the prohibition movement. I do not swear. I do not smoke and never have taken a drink in my life. There is more I could say of myself, but these things are sufficient to let you know the kind of life I lead."

"Young man," replied our friend, "from what you tell me of yourself I am now convinced that you will make my daughter a mighty good husband, but you are going to make me a darn poor son-in-law."

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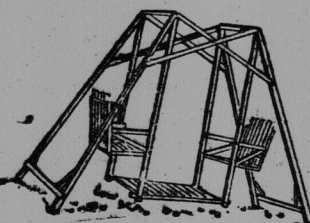
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TO REPLACE FRENCH.

May Make English Compulsory Foreign Language in Germany.

Bavarian parliament at its next sitting will debate the innovation which will require the public schools of Bavaria if Minister of Education Matt has his way. The rank of optional study. The ascendancy of the English tongue synchronizes with the mushroom-like upspringing of American bars in Munich and other Bavarian cities.

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