

The Enquiry Conducted By T. Hollis Walker, K.C.

(Continued from page 5.)

A.—There were separate conferences and one joint.

Q.—At the time these conferences took place the story of Meany was in the hands of the authorities was it not?

A.—I believe so.

COMMISSIONER.—What do you mean by the story was in the hands of the authorities? How can you tell us that, when Mr. Warren has been told by Mr. Higgins, is that what you mean by the story being in the hands of the authorities?

MR. HOWLEY.—That is what I mean.

COMMISSIONER.—He had apparently seen the exhibits.

MR. HOWLEY.—I have heard a lot that is news to me but it seems from what I have heard that conferences took place between political leaders and men of prominence before there came your retirement from active politics.

Q.—My temporary retirement from active politics.

Q.—In other words it seems to me that these conferences or discussions you talk about were directed to a political issue.

COMMISSIONER.—Is this the way to cross examine? I do not think it is quite in order. He said it was political intrigue?

MR. HOWLEY.—Possibly, but for my purpose we need to go through it. There are a number of matters that have arisen in the course of this examination and there is one phase of the situation that I propose to submit to you. First because it may take a little time to develop it having regard to the nature of the cross examination with regard to campaign funds and campaign subscriptions that it is in fact necessary that a description of conditions as they are in Newfoundland should be given to you.

COMMISSIONER.—Descriptions of conditions of the weather or of the streets, what conditions? If it is with reference to elections, geographical conditions, methods of getting in touch with districts, etc., it would be expensive. I have no doubt that politics cannot be carried on without funds. I presume election and campaign funds are carried on in Newfoundland pretty well the same as they are in England. Politics I think cannot be carried on without funds. That I think is obvious; and politics are not cheap to run.

COMMISSIONER.—Has there been any permanent political organization in this country identified with the care and financing of election campaigns?

A.—We have no permanent organization here.

Q.—We have no permanent organization here.

MR. HOWLEY.—In the case of your political party, I think you told us that your general election of 1919 was followed by a series of bye-elections and election petitions and so on and consequently that.

COMMISSIONER.—That kept the organization alive instead of letting it die at the end of the election. Election petitions are not cheap, so I understand?

A.—Bye-elections are worse.

MR. HOWLEY.—So that the necessity of a continuation of the financial assistance operated right through the period of the general elections?

COMMISSIONER.—I have been told that and I follow.

MR. HOWLEY.—In addition to the voluntary subscriptions that are made from time to time to party funds, there were other means adopted to get party funds?

A.—Oh yes, funds were canvassed for. I have myself almost travelled up and down Water Street, not visiting every place but most of them looking for subscriptions.

Q.—Funds are solicited by you?

A.—Yes, party friends and supporters have brought in funds.

COMMISSIONER.—You have not done it individually, enthusiastic supporters and friends have taken a part in it. Just like anything that is supported by voluntary subscriptions. Just like the hospitals that are supported by voluntary subscriptions. The people are reminded by appeals. You have got to go and ask for it.

A.—Not only ask for it yourself but to ask for it by others.

COMMISSIONER.—In the main you came under the heading of an institution supported by voluntary contributions, obtained in the usual way.

MR. HOWLEY.—Can you give us the instances of funds secured by others than yourself for party purposes?

A.—I am not prepared to mention the names.

Q.—Begged by others?

A.—Oh yes.

COMMISSIONER.—There would be a length of begging friends for you?

A.—Yes, sometimes large amounts would be collected by friends.

MR. HOWLEY.—What would be done with it?

A.—It would be handed over by them to me. I unfortunately, was leader of the party, campaign manager and treasurer all in one.

COMMISSIONER.—When you have the operations for the purposes of the election, or the aftermath of the election I should say, is it an operation which has a committee, trustees, or a constitution, or is it yourself under another name? Is there no real constitution?

A.—No.

Q.—Not even a committee?

A.—No.

Q.—Not a separate bank account?

A.—No.

COMMISSIONER.—Or any audit?

A.—No, under our conditions the leader has to take the responsibility of it in the first instance.

COMMISSIONER.—Mr. Howley wants me to have the facts and I am trying to elicit them. It is not a permanent thing and I want to see what its existence is like. It has no committee, no constitution, no treasury, no banking account, no soul and no body as far as we can see.

MR. HOWLEY.—Where there are occasions upon which these moneys, so collected, were handled otherwise than by delivery to you?

A.—Yes, there were occasions upon which the people who collected them would pay bills direct. On occasions when I was out of town substantial subscriptions were secured and supplied by them by my consent.

COMMISSIONER.—A candidate who was offered money would take it?

A.—Yes, and the candidate would bring it to me if I was here and if I was out of town he would sometimes use it for costs.

COMMISSIONER.—If he got the money it would be a pity to give him the chance of changing his mind.

Q.—These were mainly deposited in the Canadian Bank of Commerce?

A.—During the period of 1921 and 1922 yes, and during the period of 1919, no.

MR. HOWLEY.—I am dealing with 1921 and 1922.

COMMISSIONER.—The Bank of Commerce was the main political account?

A.—Yes.

MR. HOWLEY.—Did anybody but yourself or some member of your staff, make any deposit to that account in the Canadian Bank of Commerce?

A.—Yes, it is already in evidence about two deposits one of \$3000.00 made in December when I was out of town and \$500.00 in July when I was out of town by Miss Miller.

COMMISSIONER.—That was the bundle we went through yesterday?

A.—Yes.

MR. HOWLEY.—These are certified copies of your deposits in the Bank of Commerce with the exception of \$500.00 and \$3000.00?

COMMISSIONER.—Those are the ones that we went through yesterday afternoon and we found that some of them were by your clerk and one or two by the mysterious W. Have you found out who the mysterious W. is?

A.—I have not looked it up. I have not had time.

COMMISSIONER.—It is not very mysterious, is it?

MR. HOWLEY.—In the period of 1921 and 1922 covered by the deposits what did the total of the deposits amount to? From January 1921 to July 1922?

COMMISSIONER.—18 months.

MR. WARREN.—Why did you start at 1921?

COMMISSIONER.—We will have the questioned answered. During the period of 1921 the total deposits are?

A.—I have not personally added up the Bank Account.

MR. HOWLEY.—I have added it up. I have given you the account.

COMMISSIONER.—That is hardly the way Mr. Howley. If it is important that I should have this figure; it should be given by the witness.

MR. HOWLEY.—From January 1921 to July 1922. Add it up will you please?

A.—The total deposits from all sources during that period would be roughly of \$95,000.00 or \$100,000.00.

COMMISSIONER.—How much of this do you think was political; we know the account was not exclusively political.

A.—As I have said, the major part of it. It is a major political account. More than half. That is my statement without having made any effort to identify it.

MR. HOWLEY.—Will you refer to these deposits slips again.

COMMISSIONER.—You are not about to ask him how much was taken out for political purposes? The other side of the account is also interesting.

A.—Unfortunately the political balance has always been largely against me.

Q.—How much?

A.—I could not give you any idea without an elaborated system of book-keeping.

Q.—It would be an exaggeration to call yours an elaborated system of book-keeping, wouldn't it?

A.—Yes, because I have none.

Q.—However, it is largely against you?

A.—Yes.

MR. HOWLEY.—Sir Richard, as to those deposit slips, are there any deposit slips there, covering deposits made at the time you were out of the Colony?

COMMISSIONER.—We take it that one of them certainly was.

MR. HOWLEY.—Two of them are, but are there any others?

A.—I have a recollection that there was one for about \$150.00 but otherwise I have not.

MR. HOWLEY.—Mr. Commissioner, I want to submit these deposit slips to you and my friend, if you want to verify these figures?

A.—I don't want to get any more than that, that the total amount was about \$95,000.00 or \$100,000.00. It does not allow me as much as I expected when I heard that \$3,000.00 was nothing accounted of.

MR. HOWLEY.—It is purely a matter for argument.

COMMISSIONER.—\$3,000.00 doesn't strike me as such an insignificant sum. I thought it would run into the millions.

MR. HOWLEY.—There were no deposits during the period while you were out of the country except the \$150.00 one?

A.—As far as I can remember, these 18 months how long?

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