

Yesterday's Proceedings

Attorney General Promises Further Enquiries—Colonial Secretary's Itemized Expense Sheet Commented Upon.

When the Enquiry opened yesterday morning the Attorney General was placed in the witness box and questioned in reference to the following statement made by Mr. Howley: "I submit that this investigation and this enquiry and the reports that have been dealt with have not been full; have not been thorough, and I can only lay the blame for it upon the gentleman who was primarily in charge of the investigation, namely the Attorney General."

Asked by the COMMISSIONER if during the course of the enquiry particularly in Section I he had kept anything back that touched the section of the Commission, the Attorney General replied that not a thing had been kept back, and the same applied to the proceedings in the second and subsequent paragraphs.

Questioned about the suggestion that he had drafted the trend of the Commission so as to avoid certain issues, the Attorney General explained that when he promised the investigation the only things he knew of were the payments to Mrs. Harcourt and the charges of extravagance in relation to the Pitt Prop. account, and the charges by Dr. Campbell. There were at the time some allegations re the Model Farm, but they had not been the subject of debate in the House Assembly.

Regarding the Public Works and Charities accounts, he knew of no shortage, but as it was decided that there was to be an investigation, these departments were included.

The Attorney General referring to the statement of Mr. Howley that he took full responsibility for the resignation of Sir Richard Squires, informed the Commissioner that at the time of Sir Richard's resignation there was no question of an enquiry. He further stated that the Commission was drafted by himself with the assistance of Mr. Winter and Mr. Hunt after which it was submitted to the Council of Government. The witness continuing, said he left here in September for England, and an hour or so before going aboard the steamer he asked Mr. Watson to make his investigation. The latter went into the Liquor Control Department, but his report on the matter was not submitted until a day or so before the Enquiry opened, so that he had no time to deal with the matters contained therein, but when all the facts were made known he promised that there would be a further investigation into the Department's affairs.

Cross-examined by Mr. Howley, the Attorney General said it was correct that Mr. Meany came to him in July and made a brief of his affairs, but he did not go into details, nor give him to understand that there was anything like a shortage of \$200,000 in his Department, nor did he tell to what extent he had given liquor away.

MR. HOWLEY—In the opening stages of this Enquiry into the Liquor Control Department, I asked for the Attorney's reports, and you refused to produce them; was it because of the information that the report gave that you stated it was not in the public interest to do so?

A—No, I said before the report was incomplete. It was not made as an auditor's report, it was made as a brief for council to use, and not for the Government.

Q—Did all the matters it referred to come within the scope of this enquiry as defined by the Commission?

A—No, I do not think there was anything in that report that came within the scope of the Commission except the shortage.

Questioned further about the report, the Attorney General said it was contained on three or four pages and was in the nature of a general statement.

MR. MEANY'S CONFESSION.

Following the cross-examination by Mr. Howley the Commissioner questioned the Attorney General on what Mr. Meany told him to which he replied: "Mr. Meany told me, practically, as far as Sir Richard Squires is concerned, all that had been stated here, he did not talk about commissions; but in the course of telling us the details he told us that he was badly off, that he had no money, that he had to mortgage his house, and that even the presents that he had received from time to time had all been spent. He told us that he had given liquor without getting any payment for it. He said that at two or three occasions, I am not sure which, but when elections came along that liquor was given out in large quantities. He did not mention why. He never mentioned anything about selling liquor on credit. He never mentioned anything about receiving commissions. I think he said he had received presents. He turned his conversation to the point that was agitating his mind and that was the payments to Mrs. Harcourt. He showed us the documents, which he afterwards re-

so bring with you the receipt from Knowling's, as it might help to clear the matter up. You can depose to it at any time convenient to you, Dr. Barnes.

CROWN CASE NEARING COMPLETION.

Following this, Mr. Hunt stated the case as far as he was concerned with the exception of Mr. Bryant and Archibald and several others who may throw light on some of the minor matters that had already been touched upon, was practically closed.

MR. HOWLEY said he intended to call Dr. Campbell and Sir Richard Squires. The Commissioner remarked that there was not much for the latter to explain but there was some that Dr. Campbell should be heard upon.

ENQUIRY INTO OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

Referring again to the statement made by Mr. Howley, the Attorney General reiterated that the reports and the investigation and the enquiry had been as full as it was possible for him to have made them, and that not only would there be another enquiry into the Liquor Control Department, but other departments as well as soon as the Commission was finished.

MR. HOWLEY in reply said he accepted the explanations of the Attorney General, but down in the bottom of his heart the impression he had all along and to which he had given voice was not completely eradicated. If he had wronged the Attorney General by any statement he apologized to him most humbly.

MR. WARREN—I would like to accept my learned friend's qualified apology were it not for the fact that I, too, have more knowledge than I have given expression to here.

COMMISSIONER—It cannot be wiped off the slate as I had hoped it might have been, and that there would be no need for me to deal with it in my report.

COLONIAL SECRETARY CALLED.

After a remark or two by Mr. Howley the discussion closed, and Hon. W. W. Hallyard, Colonial Secretary, was called and examined by Mr. Hunt. Witness said he came at his own request to give evidence in relation to the expenditure in Nov. 1921 of \$37.43 on a trip to Port Union and charged to Pitt Prop. account. Witness explained that at that time the Executive Government was considering ways and means to meet the situation that prevailed through unemployment, but before action was decided upon it was desired that all members should be unanimous. As Sir Wm. Coaker was at Port Union it was the expressed wish that his opinion should be sought, as he was in touch with the situation North. With the approval of the Executive Government, Hon. Dr. Campbell and himself went to Port Union to interview Sir William. Witness had forgotten the incident, but he presumed he had ordered the car which took them over and the bill was sent to him. Previously Dr. Campbell informed him that there was a transportation account opened at his Department and the matter of the expense having been talked over at the Executive meeting, it was decided that it was a legitimate charge to make against the Pitt Prop. account.

OUT OF POCKET IN TRAVELLING EXPENSES.

The witness in answer to further questions said in all cases the cheques were made by the officials of the department and being submitted to him with an assurance that they were O.K. he signed them. Witness said the amounts paid him in reference to travelling on relief matters left him out of pocket. In reference to the payments made for driving in the city the witness said there was a considerable amount of driving in connection with relief work but in addition there was a lot of driving done which had to do with the discontent that prevailed. Witness referred to the time in the beginning of 1923, when the Government called in the warships to prevent organized disturbances, after which letter, July 23rd, 1923, to the Prime Minister from Dr. Campbell was read. Witness asked to explain the increase of cab fares in 1923, said there was an election coming on, there was more excitement and he had naturally to increase his vigilance to prevent disorder amongst those who would be out of work during nomination time. He did not have cabs to bring him from door to door during his canvass, yet his expenses were between three and four thousand dollars.

POSSIBLE OVERLAPPING.

It would be possible that there would be overlapping but there was no intention of having any driving done in connection with his campaign charged to the Pitt Prop. account. As a matter of fact, the witness said, during his canvassing he had also to attend to relief work. And all matters incidental to relief work. He was charged to that account. In reference to Coles' bill of \$2 for the drive to church this was simply a matter of overlapping between a Government and a personal matter. This finished Mr. Howley's examination in chief.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Cross-examination of Dr. Campbell.

MR. HOWLEY asked permission to go in the box in reference to statement made by the Attorney General during the forenoon. The application was allowed to stand over until the Attorney General was present.

Cross-examination by Mr. Winter.

Following, Dr. Campbell took the stand and cross-examination by Mr. Winter began. In regard to the charges made by Mr. Walsh, M.H.A. in speech of July 5th, witness said he heard of it before he went to P.E.I. on a holiday. Questioned about the Budget cheque, witness said that probably he was canvassing at the time, and was also doing relief work and charging the drive to Pitt Prop. account was perhaps another case of overlapping.

NOT SERIOUS ENOUGH TO DENY.

Witness did not associate such matters as the Budget affair with the charges he had read in the Canadian papers. Witness said that knowing the member of the house who made the charges in the Assembly, he did

not think them serious enough to make a denial. Referring to the driving done by Mr. Gladney, Mr. Winter asked witness to give an idea of a special occasion on which driving was required. Dr. Campbell followed with a description of the agitation meetings and general labor unrest which he considered it was his duty to prevent. Mr. Howley put in a copy Sydney Post, July 30th containing a despatch in reference to the incidents against Dr. Campbell and Mr. Meany, and the bringing of the Dr. back to St. John's. Witness said the editor of the Sydney Post was a personal friend of his, but he did not ask him to publish a denial. He decided the proper course to take was to demand investigation. Witness said he did not have time to do accounting and hence never investigated the expenditures under the Pitt Prop. account. He considered it not a regular departmental account.

PERFECTLY JUSTIFIED EXPENDITURE.

He did not have any intimation of the limits of the amount which would be open for this expenditure. He thought that the expenditure of the \$1,200,000 was perfectly justifiable and unavoidable, although unremunerative work had to be given. Questioned about the price paid for labor, witness said there were cases when employers let their men off in order to get a job on relief. The whole thing was a relief transaction from beginning to end he said. Witness next explained how the handling of the situation came to be placed in his hands.

PIT PROP ACCOUNT MISNOMER.

The word Pitt Prop. account, Dr. Campbell said, was a misnomer. In regard to the sale of the pulp wood cut in 1921 witness said he had hoped that the contractors would make successful sales. In fixing the prices of the contracts the object was to make the price just sufficient to permit a needy man taking up the job.

Questioned about the second year contracts, witness explained that there was about 20,000 cords of old wood on hand which was unsuitable for markets. Witness said that personally he never tried to sell any wood as he was too busy otherwise. He then referred to the effort of the Prime Minister to make a sale to a man named John of Montreal or New York, but it ended in talk in reference to the advances made to the contractors, witness said there were no advances paid under the first contracts.

COMMISSIONER—Did the Governor in Council ever decide what portion of the contract price was to be made?

WITNESS—There were discussions of Council, but I am not certain if there was a minute covering the matter.

WITNESS to further questions said he was instructed by the Prime Minister to make advances, and in the case of McKay he discussed the matter of the guarantee both with the Prime Minister and the members of the district. The reason why Mr. McKay received the guarantee was that none could be found to supply the work otherwise.

SCALERS ON EVERY OPERATION.

The essential thing, witness said, was to get fuel to the people.

The COMMISSIONER questioned the steps taken to check waste of the funds and referred to the placing of the orders with suppliers, who would of necessity have to obtain the goods from the larger firms, and consequently charge higher prices. Further he said, that in the case of the small business man there were no price lists to check against, and temptation to take advantage of the fact might assail them.

WITNESS remarked that it certainly had assailed the larger merchants.

The COMMISSIONER pointed out that while destitution had to be relieved, there was such a thing as relieving destitution too lavishly. The Government were the trustees of public funds, "You must take care to be just as well as generous," he added. "While it is necessary to provide for the poor, it is equally necessary to look after the interests of the public."

Referring to the scaling of the wood cut on Government account, witness said he had a scaler on every operation and Major Baird had charge of them. A great many of the men were returned soldiers out of employment.

Questioned about the Curran, Good-year and Moore operations, witness explained that the A.N.D. Co. agreed to buy wood cut in certain areas in the A.N.D. Co. did not enter into the purchase of the wood to help out the Government. Witness did not know if an Order in Council was passed covering these operations.

NOT AN AUTHORITY ON PRICES.

Questioned about the purchase of the supplies, witness said that there was no time to call for tenders. The names of those who had the patronage were read out and identified as to their respective places of business. Witness said he was not an authority on the prices and he depended on the integrity of those supplying. The checking of the prices was not undertaken by any particular person except that it might have been done

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by the Auditor General, the witness said.

Adjournment was taken at 5 p.m. For this morning's proceedings see next page.

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