SECOND READING OF NATAL BILL

Premier McBride Sums Up the Situation in an Able Speech

MR. McPHILLIPS' POSITION

Mare's Nest Discovered by the Member For Delta—Reply of Premier

(From Friday's Daily)

The Natal bill formally passed its second reading at the sitting of the provincial legislature yesterday. The debate was marked by a speech from Hon. Richard McBride, in which he summed up the arguments for the passage of the bill, eloquently defended the measure against the attacks which had been made upon it and through it upon the sincerity of the government and the Conservative members of the house.

The premier rehearsed his own stand upon the question of Asiatic immigration throughout his public life, and pointed out that it has always been consistent. He contrasted it with the stand which had been taken by the premier of the Dominion, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who had not fulfilled the promise made in a telegram to the west in 1896 on the eve of election.

Mr. McBride pointed out that the Conservatives had always tried to keep this question out of politics, and if in any way it had become a question of politics it was through the act of the Liberals and the Liberal press.

The speech of the leader of the government was a thoughtful one, and was the final word upon the matter. The situation in the province at present and the probable situation in the future, unless more radical legislation were enacted than that placed in force by the Dominion government, was depicted. Mr. McBride's remarks were punctuated with the frequent applause of his supporters, and elicited no answer from the opposition.

A. E. McPhillips followed with an explanation of his stand upon the matter. He had given it as his opinion legally that the bill could not prove effective. In the face of the statement of the attorney-general that it would prove effective in every way, together with the statement of the leader of the opposition that it would be in part effective, he could not in justice to his constituents do anything but support it.

H. C. Brewster (Alberni) closed the debate. Incidentally he stated that upon the right-of-way of the projected extension of the E. & N. to Alberni, there were five camps of Japanese laborers and one camp of Chinese laborers engaged in clearing.

Prior to the debate upon the Natal act, Mr. Hawthornthwaite's appeal to the house from the speaker's decision upon his motion, given the day previous, was considered. The speaker was sustained on a straight party vote, Liberals and Socialists voting against the government

With the aid of the postoffice officials, a microscope and one of his wife's relations, Mr. Oliver has discovered what he alleges is a scandal in the lands and works department. It is all involved in the day and hour at which a certain letter was posted. Mr. Oliver was fairly answered by the chief commissioner of lands and works yesterday, however.

A considerable amount of routine business has been amassed during the progress of the debates of the last week, and the house will probably devote most of its attention today to catching up with this. The debate upon the amendment to the railway assessment bill will probably be continued. The adjournment was moved by Parker Williams (Newcastle), and he will probably be heard upon it this afternoon.

The University bill and the Civil Service act also are due for second reading. Some pronouncement from Dr. Young will probably accompany them.

The announcement of the names of the license and police commissioners of the different municipalities will not be given until next week. It is not expected that the report of the irrigation commission will be received until the week following. It has been received by Hon. Mr. Fulton, and is a bulky document, comprising some 60 closely typed pages.

Hon. W. J. Bowser has given notice of his intention to introduce a bill amending the Municipal Clauses act. Under this the incorporation of the town of Duncans will take place.

The speaker took the chair at 2.20 o'clock. Prayers were read by Rev. W. Leslie Clay.

A petition was received from T. T. Beatty and others with regard to the opium traffic. It was presented by Dr. McGuire (Vancouver).

Bills Introduced

H. B. Thomson (Victoria), on behalf of the city of Victoria, applied for leave to introduce a private bill to amend the Victoria Waterworks act and Amending acts.

Hon. Mr. Bowser introduced a bill entitled "an Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to electors and elections in municipalities." It was given its first reading.

Mr. McInnis introduced a bill entitled "an Act to prevent discrimination against members of Trade unions." It was read a first time.

Chair is Sustained

On reaching on the order paper Mr. Hawthornthwaite's motion to impeach his honor the lieutenant-governor for his action on the Bowser bill came up.

Mr. Hawthornthwaite—I appeal to the house against your decision, Mr. Speaker, on two grounds, (1) that you have not supported it with authorities, and (2) because the people of British Columbia through their representatives in this house have the undoubted power to impeach any man, whether he be peer or commoner, and on any charge.

Hon. Mr. McBride—I think that my hon. friend has given rather far-fetched reasons for the position he has taken.

Hon. Mr. Eberts—There can be no debate on this matter.

Hon. Mr. McBride—I understood that there was a motion before the house and surely it is debateable?

Hon. Mr. Eberts—You have heard the motion. The question before the house now is: Shall the chair be sustained.

The chair was sustained on the following division:

Yeas—Messrs. Tatlow, McBride, Bowser, Cotton, Ellison, Ross, Shatford, McPhillips, Thomson, Hunter, Fulton, Young, Taylor, Garden, Macgowan, Gifford, Grant, Behnsen, Manson, Hayward, McGuire, Mackay, Parson, Davey, Schofield—25.

Nays—Messrs. King, Naden, Eagleson, Jones, Yorston, Oliver, Macdonald, Munro, Jardine, Brewster, Williams, Hawthorthwaite, McInnis—13.

Right-of-Way Question

John Oliver (Delta), seconded by H. Jones (Cariboo), moved that an order of the house be granted for a return of all copies of all correspondence in respect to the acquisition by the Victoria Terminal Railway Company of additional rights of way through the lands of John Weaver at Mud Bay. Mr. Oliver stated that in contravention of the Dominion statutes Mr. Weaver, who was a relative of himself by marriage had been deprived of a large portion of his lands in this section by the Victoria Terminal Railway Company with the connivance or assent of the hon. commissioner of lands and works.

They had expropriated the land under an amendment to the railway act, which had been introduced at the last session. The premier had at first seen the far reaching effects of the measure, and he had the bill changed to conform with the Dominion regulations. After his departure, however, the hon. the present attorney-general had introduced an amendment in the premier's absence at the instance of the railway company's solicitor. Mr. Oliver stated that on behalf of his relative he had applied to the chief commissioner for permission to appear before him, and to show reason why the ordinary certification to the plan sprepared by the railway should not be granted. He had received in reply a letter from the chief commissioned dated June 6, giving him until the following Tuesday, June 11, to appear before him and informing him that his assent to the plans would be reserved for that time. This letter he did not receive until Wednesday, June 12. The certificate had by then been granted, and his relative had been done a great injustice.

Hon. F. J. Fulton stated that he recollected the occurrences connected with the incident perfectly. On the receipt of Mr. Olver's letter he had instructed the deputy commissioner as he was leaving for the upper country to find out from the postal authorities the length of time required for a letter from Victoria to reach Delta, and to set a date for Mr. Oliver to make his representations. This had been done and an extra day was given Mr. Oliver to reply. If the letter was not received in time Mr. Oliver's quarrel was not with the lands and works department, but with the postal authorities.

Corporation Ways

Parker Williams (Newcastle) stated that as far as he could remember this railway was asking for more than the usual powers. Perhaps other influences had been at work. Corporations and the agents of corporations were not always too scrupulous in their dealings with private individuals. He would recommend Mr. Oliver to see whether or not this letter had been intercepted while in the hands of the Dominion postal authorities.

Result of Agreement.

Hon. Mr. McBride—In reply to the hon. member, with regard to the bill which was before the house last session, the house should distinctly understand that this measure was placed on the statute book in accordance with an understanding which was reached between the hon. member for Delta and the attorney-general, so there should be no misconception on the part of hon. members in reference to this legislation. Everything that was done was done openly, and with the concurrence of the hon. member for the Delta. The action taken today means substantially a change of front on this question; but at the same time this house must understand that what was done was done with the concurrence of the hon. member (Mr. Oliver.)

I think, sir, that the explanation which has been given to the house by the hon. the chief commissioner of lands and works, was a very frank and very fair one indeed; and when he sent this letter he did as a business man would do in the same situation, he obtained the assurance of the post office officials that it would reach the hon. gentleman in ample time to enable him to appear before the department. Whether his appearance here would have made any material difference is a question which I am not prepared to solve; but I am quite satisfied that the hon. the chief commissioner of lands and works, who had the assistance of his advisers here, as well as of the official of the department at New Westminster, would see that nothing was done except what was right and just in this case. (Hear, hear).

The hon. member for Newcastle (Mr. Williams) speaks of corporations, of their greed and grab, and their policy of trampling under foot the rights of the people. All this may be so; but I wish my hon. friend to understand that corporations have never had, and will never have, any assistance from this government in their work in that direction. And as I have already stated on previous occasions, I wish to emphasize again the fact that this administration is not under the control, either directly or indirectly, of any corporation. (Cheers).

Says He Objected.

Mr. Oliver—"I objected to this amendment from the start. I did not insist on my rights, by which I might have delayed though not prevented the passage of the bill, in consideration of the attorney-general including a couple of lines somewhat modifying the effect of the clause.

"But there is another point to which I desire to refer. The chief commissioner has stated that this letter was posted on the 6th. Unfortunately the mark upon the envelope is blurred. I took the precaution, knowing the men with whom I have to deal, of going to the local postal authorities and submitting the envelope to them. They placed it under a strong miscroscope and were able to inform me that the letter was posted, not June 6, but June 7, between 5 and 6 o'clock. It would therefore not have left here until the next day, Saturday, and could not arrive in Delta until the day following the date for which the appointment was made.

"Moreover, though the chief commissioner stated that he would withhold the issuance of the certificate until after Tuesday, June 11, when I was to meet him, I have visited the registry office and discovered that the certificate issued to the Victoria Terminal Railway bears the date of June 6 and is signed in the same handwriting as the letter received by me."

Opposition Applause.

Hon. Mr. Fulton—"I may say to the hon. member for Delta that, as I before observed, I was going to the upper country and that I left the certificate signed with the deputy commissioner. He had instructions to withhold it, however, until my return in the event of good and valid reasons being given by the hon. member. These were not received, and the certificate issued in due course.

Premier Resumes Debate.

Hon. Mr. McBride, who, on rising to resume the debate on the immigration bill, had an enthusiastic reception from his supporters, said:

Mr. Speaker: The ground has been so thoroughly covered by my collegaeu, the hon. the attorney-general, as far as the attitude of the present administration on this question is concerned, that I do not propose to detain the house this afternoon by speaking at any considerable length. But, sir, for reasons that have been very prominently mentioned by the Liberal press and the Liberal politicians of this country, in connection with the immigration of Asiatics into the province of British Columbia, I feel, sir, it to be particularly my duty, that I should on this occasion emphasize, and in the clearest and strongest possible manner, the statements, which I have already made on this subject to the house, in reference to my position. (Hear, hear.)

I wish, sir, to say at once, that I claim that at all times since I have entered into public life in British Columbia, I have acted with unquestionable consistency upon this question. I have always, sir, when I have discussed this issue, advocated the rights of white labor, and called for the absolute prohibition of Asiatic immigration, and I now challenge hon. gentleman opposite to find any facts whatever in connection with my status as a public man in British Columbia that can in the smallest particular justify the charges, which they have made from time to time, that I have attempted to sidestep on this great issue. (Cheers.)

Sir Wilfrid's Course

The facts are, sir, that the policy which has been followed by the Liberal administration at Ottawa on this issue and in particular in reference to the Asiatic question completely turned over the people of this province. And first and foremost, as a reason for these changed conditions, must be found the attitude of Sir Wilfrid Laurier on this question.

Why, sir, during the election campaign of 1896, my old friend, the member for Delta, read a telegram from Laurier declaring that this was a question regarding which, not the views of the East, but the views of the West, must prevail. (Hear, hear.) I can easily fancy that I can still hear the magic voice of my hon. friend, when with splendid effect he told the people of British Columbia on the hustings, that if they would only assist in putting the Liberals in power at Ottawa, everything would be well, as far as the treatment of this vital question was concerned. (Hear, hear.)

Well, sir, those very same promises were repeated to the electors of this country at subsequent elections. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Macdonald—And carried out.

Hon. Mr. McBride—No sir, not at all. Does my hon. friend mean to ask the house to believe that since his accession to office Sir Wilfrid Laurier has faithfully carried out such pledges as were then made on his behalf in this province? Then, I'll take it, sir, that my hon. friend concurs in the completest possible manner with the policy which has been pursued on this question by the Liberal government at Ottawa since their accession to power! (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Macdonald—The telegram to which the hon. the premier has made reference only concerned the Chinese, who were then coming into the province of British Columbia in considerable numbers, and that promise has been carried out by the imposition of the $500 head tax.

Japanese Were Factor

Hon. Mr. McBride—The hon. gentleman says that Sir Wilfrid Laurier then confined his observations to Chinamen, but he knows perfectly well that the Japanese were at that time coming prominently before us as strong competitors in the labor market of this country (hear, hear), and particularly, sir, was this the case in the constituency of New Westminster, where I was seeking election as a member of the Dominion house; where on the banks of the Fraser river the Japanese had already become a most serious menace to the white fishermen (hear, hear); and where, day by day, we saw the boats and nets which had been used by the white men, pass into the hands of their Japanese rivals. My hon. friend shakes his head; but if the hon gentleman will give a few moments to searching through the files of the newspapers of the time, and if he will only moreover look over some of his own speeches he will find that all I am saying on this head is borne out to the letter. (Cheers.. We saw, sir, I repeat, day after day, the boats and nets leaving the control of the white man and going to the Japanese; that minor work—which was being done in connection with machinery—was going to these people; and further, that lines of industry which had always, as it were, been the property of the white man, were by degrees going in the same fashion.

Mr. Oliver: Going over to the Japanese—in 1896?

Hon. Mr. McBride: Yes—in 1896, and year after year, these conditions grew steadily and constantly worse and worse. (Hear, hear.) And agents were continually sending out circulars, asking farmers and employers of labor in this province to consider their offers, and promising to supply them with a very cheap line of Japanese labor. (Hear, hear.) Such, sir, was the situation in those days in regard to the question of Japanese labor, which at the present time has come so prominently to the front in this country. In Vancouver, on the Fraser river, on the Skeena, the Japanese are masters of the situation; and, as far as the labor question is concerned, my information leads me to believe that fully 90 per cent. of the work done in connection with the fisheries industry is in the hand of the Asiatics; while the most profitable part of this portion of that business is in the hands of the Japanese. (Hear, hear.)

Provincial Liberals' Stand.

Wholly apart from this, since Sir Wilfrid Laurier made that promise we have the statements of provincial Liberals on this question.

And I think, sir, that any fair-minded man will find it absolutely impossible to reconcile what has been said on this issue by the Liberals of this country with what has been done by the Liberal administration at Ottawa, in pursuing the policy which they have adopted and carried out since they came into power in 1896. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Speaker, in the year 1896 the Conservative candidates at the Dominion elections stated in the plainest and most forcible terms that this was a white man's country, and in an equally pronounced and emphatic manner advocated the absolute prohibition of all Asiatic races from coming into the Dominion of Canada, and in particular into this province! (Cheers.) And again in 1898, in 1900 and in 1903, as well as in the subsequent provincial elections in which I took a somewhat prominent part, they always and without any exception adhered in the most consistent fashion to the patriotic stand which they assumed on this vital and paramount issue during the campaign of 1896, when I first made my entrance into public life in this province. (Cheers.)

Last Year's Natal Act

Now, sir, the suggestion that I had something to do with the reservation of assent by his honor the lieutenant-governor to last year's bill, and to the sending of that bill to Ottawa to the endorsation of his excellency the governor-general, the representative of his Majesty the King, is, what my hon. friend from Yale has seized upon as having sufficiently strong and well-founded in fact to condemn me in the eyes of the people of this country. I know well, sir, how very glad he would be to do that, how rejoiced he would be if he could send home this charge, and how pleased he would be if it were by any possibility in his power to make good his pretensions in this matter. (Hear, hear.) And it would be a very happy and a very fortunate thing indeed if the hon. the leader of the opposition were able, in the advancement of his political interests, to prove to the people of British Columbia that the circumstances of my being the first minister of the government of this province at the time when the assent of his honor the lieutenant-governor to that bill was reserved, was a sufficient excuse for shielding the government at Ottawa from the charge that they were liable to condemnation, and further that hon. gentlemen opposite as supporters of this province of that government were equally liable to this condemnation. (Hear, hear.)

It would be a very good thing, sir, if the hon. member for Yale (Mr. Henderson) would justify to the country the position in which he has placed himself by his utterances on this question in holding up before the electorate the members of the present administration as being responsible for the reservation of assent to the bill of last session! (Hear, hear.) For I am quite satisfied that this hon. gentleman has seized upon our pretended inconsistencies simply in order to protect himself.

Mr. Henderson: No.

Stand of Liberal Press.

Hon. Mr. McBride: The hon. gentleman says no! But if he reads the leading organ of the Liberal party in this country, the World, of Vancouver, or that other leading journal, the Times, of this city, both of which are outspoken in their defense of Liberal principles, he will certainly find that all kinds of statements have been made by prominent Liberals in this country, to show that, owing to the fact that his honor the lieutenant-governor reserved his assent, and that I at the same time continued to be the First Minister and his principal advisor. They have said, sir, that no liability can possibly be attached to the Federal authorities at all; and that the provincial government and the provincial government alone is the responsible party to which the people of British Columbia should look in regard to this matter.

Result In 1896.

Now, sir, what happened in 1896—12 years ago—when it was proven during the election campaign, beyond peradventure, that the Conservatives at Ottawa had been very lax in their handling of this question? Why, sir, the Conservatitve candidates here went down and out; and, as far as British Columbia is concerned, constituencies which had been Conservative strongholds, because, and simply because, the Conservative government which was at that time in power at Ottawa had failed to do its duty on this issue. (Hear, hear.)

And I now, sir, venture, and with the utmost confidence, to predict that at the next Federal elections, first, such a general landslide as that which took place at the last elections, will occur in this province of ours (cheers); and that instead of sending a solid seven—consisting of Liberals—to Ottawa, we will send a solid seven composed of staunch supporters of the Conservative government, which I trust will on that occasion be brought into office in the capital of this Dominion. (Cheers.) And, as far as the province of British Columbia is concerned, this change in the political complexion of the members who will represent this province in the house of commons will be due, and almost solely due to the fact that the government, of which Sir Wilfrid Laurier is premier, has failed, and utterly failed, to adopt and pursue, the only right and proper policy which should be adopted on this important question. (Cheers.)

Mr. Macdonald—You made the same prediction four years ago.

Hon. Mr. McBride—Well, sir, perhaps I did; but if I did so, all I can say is that I was wrong on that occasion. I do not, sir, like the hon. gentleman opposite, claim to be infallible. But, sir, it is quite apposite to remark at this juncture that I too heard some predictions which were made a year ago this month by a certain hon. gentleman. (Hear, hear, and Conservative laughter). And when at that time I took up the morning papers perhaps the very first thing that would be brought to my notice would be an account of an interview with my hon. friend from the Delta; who had just come in from the field, after perhaps having taken a turn or two on the hustings and who gave in the strongest possible manner expression to his views that the Conservatives were down and out; and had not the slightest chance of success at the elections. (Hear, hear). And the very same predictions expressed with the same unalterable degree of confidence I am quite satisfied will be found at that time in the papers, which reflected in this province my hon. friend's political opinions. (Hear, hear). So, sir, we are perhaps not always correct when we make these forecasts.

We have it, sir, from my hon. friend the leader of the opposition that he is quite satisfied that Sir Wilfrid Laurier has done everything in his power to settle this question in a satisfactory manner, and I now affirm that every fair-minded man, whether he be Conservative or Independent or Socialist, who makes the attempt will find it absolutely impossible to reconcile the policy which the hon. gentleman has said he will support at the present time, and the policy of enquiry without any effective outcome that has been throughout carried on by the Liberal authorities at Ottawa. (Hear, hear.)

Tried to Avoid Party Question.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I wish to devote a few moments to pointing out two or three little incidents by the way which go far to emphasize the great importance which the people of British Columbia attach to the early and satisfactory settlement of this question.

I say, sir, that the Conservatives have never tried at any time to make of this a party question; that they have never endeavored to make the people of this country believe that it was through the agency of the Conservative government and through that agency alone that they could get the full and adequate protection from the inflow of this steady stream of Asiatic immigration which they required. (Hear, hear.) We have always, sir, tried to treat this question, not in a party way, but in such a manner as would enlist, and should have enlisted, the support and sympathy of the Liberals as well as of the leagues that exist in this province. (Cheers). These leagues, sir, which have been formed all over British Columbia, are made up of Conservatives as well as Liberals, and I think, moreover, that the perfection in the way of organization to which these leagues have attained show very clearly how strongly the people of British Columbia feel on this question, as has been demonstrated by their votes. (Cheers.) Now, sir, my hon. friend charges that we have tried to make of this a party and not a provincial question. Sir, there is absolutely nothing in that charge. (Cheers.)

Forced to Do It.

Mr. Macdonald—What do you call the hon. attorney-general's speech, delivered the other day, on this bill?

Hon. Mr. McBride—My hon. friend was clearly forced to take the line of argument that he has adopted simply because the Liberal newspapers of this province during the last nine or ten months have been incessantly abusing this government and trying to make the people believe that responsibility for the present situation of affairs belongs to us.

Mr. Macdonald—You are responsible for what happened last year.

Hon. Mr. McBride: Not at all! I followed the hon. gentleman's speech very closely the other day, and I think that I have made a very complete answer to all the charges, which in this as well as in other respects the Liberals have levelled against us. (Cheers.) My hon. friend will on investigation find, that from the first time, when Hon. Mr. Tatlow then a private member, brought a bill on this subject, before the parliament of British Columbia and tracing the work of this legislature upon this issue, from that period all the way through and right down to the present time, that the entire history of the case plainly discloses the fact that we have all along acted as one man in connection with this paramount question. (Cheers.) But when it came to the point that the Liberals and the Liberal press in this country were endeavoring to convince the electorate that the local government was trying to sidestep and avoid the responsibility, which attaches to them, as responsible ministers of the crown, then, sir, I say that my hon. friend, the hon. the attorney-general, was acting quite within his right, in assailing as he did the other day, in his speech on this bill, the Liberals of British Columbia. (Cheers.) I maintain, sir, that we have always sought to make of it a provincial and not a party question; and I submit that our speeches, which have been delivered on the hustings as well as in this legislature, fully bear out this statement. (Cheers.)

Present Situation

Now, sir, what is the situation which we have to face at the present time? We have to face, sir, the existence of a very considerable population, composed of Japanese, which have come into this province. The report of the royal commission, which examined into this question a few years ago, is directly in opposition to the influx of these people.

Then the report of Mr. Mackenzie King, made only a few weeks ago, runs pretty well along the same lines. While the voice of our people has been overwhelming and clearly demonstrated by the unanimous legislation of this parliament on this subject. (Cheers.)

Ottawa's Dismal Failure

But, sir, despite all these convincing facts, the Liberal government at Ottawa has made a most dismal failure in the way of doing anything that would satisfy the general convictions and the general sentiment of the people of this province upon this question. (Hear, hear.) Now, sir, something has been said in respect to imperial interests, and I contend that there is a great deal indeed in these imperial considerations to which so much attention has been given by some speakers in this house during this debate. For it is quite true, sir, that in the scheme of government under which we live, imperial as well as federal and local considerations are concerned (hear, hear), and it may be that the authorities in England have entered into some bargain or other with Japan that might in some measure at least retard the parliament of this province from going the full length that it would naturally desire to go in dealing with this matter. But I think, sir, that the hon. the attorney-general has most successfully shown that so far as this particular issue is concerned nothing has been done and no policy has been determined upon by the imperial government that would in any way stay the parliament of Canada from going the lengths to which the parliaments of Natal, of Australia, of New Zealand and of the Transvaal have gone in their treatment of this same identical question. (Cheers.)

What Fairer Argument

Now, Mr. Speaker, what fairer argument could be adduced on this problem with regard to the Imperial authority than that which the hon. the attorney-general has proffered to this house, when he declared that if this law is to be denied to the people of Canada it must also be withdrawn from those other and important sections of the world, which own, equally with ourselves, allegiance to the old and home land. (Cheers).

I think, sir, that this is an unanswerable argument, and I am quite satisfied that if the people who are in power at Ottawa today were able to show any evidence in the way of any direct action on the part of the colonial office in the event of this legislation being permitted to become the law of the land, that would prevent it remaining in force, it would be immediately forthcoming. (Cheers.) And I say this because, in the first place, this would form part of the documentary evidence in the case at Ottawa, and in the next place because if any such document existed it would then be up to the Liberal administration at Ottawa to take the province of British Columbia into their confidence, so that we may know precisely where we stand. (Hear, hear.)

Transvaal's Strong Measure.

In addition, sir, to what the hon. the attorney-general said on this subject the other day, it is interesting to note that the legislation which has been enacted in the Transvaal parliament in this relation, and which, moreover, I believe has recently received the concurrence of the Imperial house, is of a much more drastic character than our Natal act. (Cheers.) From all that we can discover, sir, this legislation in the Transvaal parliament during the past year was far-reaching in its nature, because it practically excluded Hindus, who are British subjects, as well as the Japanese and other Asiatic races. And as far as this stringent enactment is concerned, the colonial office has done absolutely nothing to destroy the complete effectiveness of that legislation. (Cheers.)

Mr. Macdonald—Word has come from London that it is proposed to modify that law. Hon. Mr. McBride—I thank my hon. friend for his correction, but I think he will also remember that nothing in that information went so far as to represent that the colonial office had said to the Transvaal government and to the Transvaal parliament, "You must not pass that legislation (cheers) on this question." (Cheers.) Hon. gentlemen opposite appeal to us as Britishers and as loyal subjects of the King to take different ground upon this subject by reason of Imperial considerations, and I say in reply to those statements that if this is the correct position we are then in duty bound to ask the Imperial authorities whether the situation is accurately represented by these hon. gentlemen. And if so that some substantial evidence should be given us that what these gentlemen pretend should be done must be the policy which is to be carried into effect through legislation in this country. (Cheers.)

Now, sir, I leave this phase of the situation with this observation, that there is absolutely nothing in existence in the way of a mandate from the Imperial authorities either to stay the hand of the Liberal administration at Ottawa from acting in this matter or to deprive the people of this country from enjoying exactly the same protection which other and most important sections of the Colonial Empire at present and with the utmost freedom and latitude enjoy. (Cheers.)

Federal Aspect.

Now, a word, sir, on the federal aspect of this case! I think that some hon. gentleman has said in the course of this debate—I believe it was the hon. member for Chilliwack—that in his opinion the reason why some adequate legislation has not long since been enacted on this question was simply because the people of Eastern Canada have not been educated up to the proper pitch to enable them to grasp the situation as it now exists in this province.

Mr. Monro: I think that I stated that this question had been made a party football in the west.

Hon. Mr. McBride: I followed the hon. gentleman's remarks closely, and I clearly understood him to say that the people in the east were not yet sufficiently educated on this question to legislate upon it intelligently, at least from our standpoint. (Hear, hear.)

Commissions Were Exhaustive.

Well, Mr. Speaker, with regard to this phase of the case, I think that my hon. friend's argument is at once answered, when we turn to the reports of the two commissions which examined into all these matters some four or five years ago. (Hear, hear.) Why, sir, the first commission and a very costly one indeed it was, went very thoroughly into the whole situation (hear, hear) and the report which was made by it to the government at Ottawa treated this question in every detail, and so if the members of the House of Commons took the course which is taken by members of parliament in the consideration of ordinary subjects and which should certainly have been taken by them on so very important an issue as this most certainly is and had simply turned over and read the pages of this very exhaustive report they would have found an abundance of evidence that justified in the fullest possible manner the stand which has been unswervingly and most firmly assumed by the people of British Columbia upon this important issue. (Cheers.)

Mr. Clute and his fellow commissioners went from one end of this province to the other. They collected evidence from all quarters and they spared themselves in no way, in order to give to the people at Ottawa all the data that they could secure in British Columbia. (Hear, hear). And I take it, sir, that in these circumstances the education of the people of the east, or at all events of their representatives in the House of Commons, the legislative chamber, on this question, has been already and fully completed. (Cheers).

Excuses No One.

When I am speaking, sir, of the dilatory methods pursued at Ottawa in the treatment of this question, I do not wish to be understood as excusing in any way the conduct of any Conservatives, who acted with the Liberals upon the occasion when this matter was under discussion on the floor of the house. (Hear, hear). I have read speeches, made by Conservatives who did not have a sufficient knowledge of the situation, and who did not understand the arguments which were advanced by those who came directly from the seat of war in British Columbia, and I am offering no excuse, absolutely no excuse, for these gentlemen, and I would not have this house, or the people of this country believe for a moment that I would attempt to apologize for their attitude on this question. And I further say, sir, there can be no question in the world as to this fact, that to the mind of any fair-minded man in this province no excuse whatever, no reason whatever, and nothing at all in any respect whatever can be advanced that would in any way justify the attitude of the government and parliament at Ottawa upon this issue towards the province of British Columbia. (Cheers). The whole thing, sir, is to me a mystery, something that can never be properly explained; and moreover, it is something, sir, that the members which represent this province in the House of Commons must keep on probing until some adequate satisfaction is given. (Cheers).

Mr. Lemieux's Appreciation.

Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Mr. Lemieux, in the course of his long speech the other night, so eloquent indeed in its phrasing, spoke of the Japanese as a great people, and of his high appreciation of the manner in which he had been received in that country, but he signally failed, at least from my point of view, to give to the people of Canada the slightest evidence on which they can rely, that the exchange of correspondence which has taken place between the Japanese minister and himself has led to any satisfactory settlement of this question. (Hear, hear.)

Now, sir, will the hon. gentleman opposite seriously attempt to lead this country to believe that the letter in question, and the correspondence which has developed, can for a moment be considered as so amending the solemn treaty that exists between Canada and Japan, as to protect us against this influx of Japanese immigration! (Hear, hear.) I do not think, Mr. Speaker, that these hon. gentlemen can ask this house and this country to consider this matter at all seriously! (Cheers.) Why, here, sir, is a treaty, a solemn bargain, that has been entered into between England and Japan! And does any hon. gentleman in this house believe that this beautifully worded letter transcends in importance this solemn and binding treaty, which has been placed upon the Canadian statutes! Why, sir, I do not think that any sane man can for one moment entertain any doubt as to the views he should hold on this feature of the case.

Liberals Are Satisfied.

But from what I have read in the Liberal papers, the Liberal party in British Columbia is quite satisfied that the Hon. Mr. Lemieux's mission was a success.

Mr. Macdonald: Certainly it was.

Hon. Mr. McBride: And this letter is seriously given us as the safeguard, which we desire to secure in the present circumstances.

Mr. Macdonald: There is no contention that a treaty was made by Hon. Mr. Lemieux, as I understand it. What he did was to conclude a diplomatic arrangement by which the Japanese government has agreed with the federal government to fix the number of immigrants which shall be permitted to come from Japan into this province.

Hon. Mr. McBride: But we cannot forget that an agreement of the same kind was previously made with the government of Japan through the agency of Hon. Sydney Fisher; and that it was utterly without effective result. So much for the statement, and so much for the mission which the Liberals have commended to this house. And I think moreover, sir, that one experience of this kind might and should have been sufficient for the Federal government; and further that they should not rest at all satisfied with the arrangement which was effected by the Hon. M. Lemieux. (Hear, hear.) And I do not see how my hon. friend, the leader of the opposition, can possibly take the ground he does, in the light of our past experience! (Hear, hear.) Why, sir, if the letter which was written on this subject years ago, on the part of the government of Japan, could not be relied on at all, and was of so little use, what reason in the world can be successfully advanced for believing that the result of hon. Mr. Lemieux's mission will be any better! (Hear, hear.)

Probing the Questions

I am now, sir, looking at this question in a very serious way, and with a view, sir, of probing this situation right to the very bottom. (Cheers.) My hon. friend from Chilliwhack would have this house believe that the people of Eastern Canada have taken the position, they have taken on this matter owing to the fact that we have made a political football of it. But, sir, we find that when representative men come here from the East, and are brought into close contact with the situation they speedily come to a proper realization of what the presence of these most objectionable immigrants, the Japanese, mean to the people of this province. (Cheers.) But perhaps apart altogether from the report of Mr. Clute and his two fellow commissioners, there exists abundance of other material, from which, from an educational point of view, the members of the federal government can and could learn everything that we know on this question. (Hear, hear.) And I think, sir, there can be no question at all but what people who have been brought right face to face with the presence of the Japanese, as well as of the Chinese, in this province have always very quickly and very readily realised what a very, very serious menace these people are to our social system, and in many other respects to this country. (Cheers.)

Alarming Statistics

Now, sir, this is a most serious question, for I find that at the present time there are no less than 25,000 Asiatics in this province, and in addition approximately about 75,000 white males, and I think, sir, that we must all at once admit that these are certainly a very alarming set of statistics. That is to say, that for every three white men that we find in the province of British Columbia we find one yellow man (hear, hear), and if, Mr. Speaker, this condition of affairs were to continue, when we have attained a population of half a million—or perhaps one million—we would have a very large percentage of yellow men indeed in this province (hear, hear), and we feel, sir, that we have more than a right to complain of an increase in that part of our population, which might, moreover, easily increase perhaps as much as tenfold its present proportions. (Hear, hear.) And that, too, sir, an increase in a population which will not and cannot assimilate themselves to our requirements and conditions. It has been shown conclusively, sir, since this question has been a live problem in this country, that these people can never by any possibility make desirable citizens, and that they can never form part and parcel of the community, as a good citizen would do. While we are mindful of the fact that wherever the yellow man has made his way in this province the white man, who is his competitor in the field of labor, has been, and is, compelled to stand aside and practically to step down and out. (Hear, hear.)

Unity Should Exist

And I feel, sir, that in the face of all these circumstances there exist the very strongest and the most overwhelming reasons for holding that there must be, on the part of all of us, complete unity of action and a strong endeavor to keep this question alive, until it is solved according to our reasonable wishes and inalienable rights, and moreover in such a way as will be in the most full and in the most complete sense of the words satisfactory to the people of this great province. (Cheers.)

Conservatives Consistent

Now, sir, as far as the present Conservative administration is concerned I claim that upon this question we have always acted consistently. (Cheers.) Such a bill as the present measure has been passed by the legislature of this province on four different occasions (cheers), and it has been disallowed by the Liberal government at Ottawa, on four dif-