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JAMES MCISAAC,

Editor & Proprietor.

Please don't delay your Subscriptions for 1907. We need the money, we have earned it and shall esteem it a great favor if you remit now.

More Misrepresentation.

The Patriot perseveres in its course of "hiding the truth and misrepresenting the facts" regarding the increased subsidy. In the hope of covering up the blundering of its friends and masters in the conduct of this important matter, the Patriot has persistently suppressed evidence, distorted facts and generally presented the case in a false light. It is determined to deceive the public on this question, if possible. The delegates to the conference of 1906 were not "denounced" by the opposition for anything they did in connection with the increase of \$70,000 for Government and Legislature. This matter had been arranged by the scale agreed upon at the conference of 1887, and our delegates to the conference of 1906 had nothing at all to do with it. Had they remained at home the result would have been the same. Let our readers bear these facts always in mind and they will have no difficulty in laying bare the sophistry of the Patriot. In an attempt to bolster up its case, the Patriot makes the statement that the amount paid this Province for Government and Legislature is somewhat higher per head of our population than that paid to the larger Provinces for the same purpose. This attempt at argument is not only deceptive but silly. The amounts paid to the different Provinces, under this head, are not on a per capita basis; they are paid according to a graduated scale, increasing with an increase of population of not less than 50,000. The smallest amount paid is \$100,000, to Provinces with a population not exceeding 150,000. Our Province comes in for the smallest amount in the scale, as our population is not 150,000. According to this fixed arrangement we would get \$100,000 if our population was not more than 25,000, and we would get no more if our population was 149,000. Our population is something less than 100,000, and of course anyone can calculate how many cents per head the increase of \$70,000 gives us. But if we were only twenty five or thirty thousand the per capita rate would be very much higher, and if we were one hundred and forty nine thousand the rate per head would be very much lower. It will thus be seen that the attempt to make capital out of a per capita calculation of the increased subsidy is not only misleading; but exceedingly childish and ridiculous. It is a pretense of glorification in the fact that our Province has a small and decreasing population. This grant for Government and Legislature is limited to \$240,000, so that no matter if the population of a Province should go up to 6,000,000 for instance, it would receive no more than \$240,000. The reasonableness of this should be evident to any sensible person. The cost of legislation and government does not vary so very much whether the population is 125,000 or 200,000 for instance. All the machinery of Government

has to be provided in either case. As we pointed out in our article of last week, it was for their failure to safeguard our rights on the per capita allowance and put in special claims on account of our special condition, that the delegates to the conference of 1906 are held up to public condemnation, not in connection with increased grant for government and legislation; with that they had nothing to do. The Patriot, as a last resort, tries to attract a "little attention" by saying that the increased subsidy came from the Liberals. This is not a case of Liberal or Conservative; it is a case of Prince Edward Island against the Dominion of Canada, and the fact that one party rather than another happens to be in office is a mere accident. Let our readers bear all these facts of the case in mind; let them remember that our delegates to the conference of 1906 did absolutely nothing in advocacy of our rights; let them remember that if we have been saved from the unfortunate position in which these delegates left us, it has been in spite of everything done by our Provincial Government and the Federal Government, to leave us in that disadvantageous position.

Sessional Notes.

During the proceedings in the legislature last week, the Premier more than once, gave evidence of the contempt in which the administration holds the electors and made it quite clear that the Government have come to regard themselves as the masters, rather than the servants of the people. Judging by the actions of the Government, they are determined to stifle all legitimate aspirations of the people, through their representatives, to participate freely in the Government of themselves, in accordance with constitutional usages. All idea of representative government seems to be abandoned and despised. This is what we have come to under representatives of the old family compact masquerading as "Liberals."

A most striking instance of the illiberalism of these, so called Liberals, was given on Thursday evening, when the bill consolidating the election law was under consideration, in committee of the whole House. When the clause regarding voting was reached, the Leader of the Opposition asked if the Government had any idea of adopting the system of ballot voting in the Provincial elections. He pointed out that the ballot was now in very general use. It was used in the Federal elections and for Provincial elections in all the other Provinces, as well as in all other parts of the Empire, and in practically all civilized countries, so far as he knew. He could scarcely understand why our Province should lag behind in this respect. The Liberals claimed to be a party of progress; but this did not seem to accord with that idea.

The Leader of the Government declared most emphatically that there was no intention of introducing the ballot. The Government had fully thought out the matter and had decided to leave matters as they were in this particular. Expanding his chest, he declared he considered the open vote the manly, independent British vote and that was the vote the Liberals proposed should continue in our Provincial elections.

Mr. Mathieson, in short order, punctured the Premier's boast of the "manly independent" manner of voting,

advocated and promoted by the Liberals. He referred to their "manly independent" course when they deprived the Dominion officials of their votes, when a Conservative Government held power at Ottawa. The Liberals then determined to prevent these officials from exercising their manliness and independence. But when the Government at Ottawa became Liberal these same officials were re-infranchised, because now they dare not exercise their manly independence. Here was a record to which the Leader of the Government dared not appeal. Mr. McDonald, Mr. Morson, Mr. McKinnon, Mr. Prowse and Mr. Fraser followed the Leader of the Opposition and poured hot shot into the Government ranks. But they could not draw fire. Hon. Mr. Hughes said a few words of apology for the Government's course; but offered not the slightest argument in favor of their position. Hon. Mr. Gallant made some remarks, and succeeded in making the case of the Government more muddled and obscure than before. Not one of the non Executive members supporting the Government opened his mouth. In fact, they sat up in stark silence scarcely drawing their breath. They were as innocuous for purposes of defence as a lot of mummies with lock jaw. It was only when the debate was over that you could realize they were animated beings. Whenever the tension was removed they began to smile and show signs of life. They surely must have been under great mental strain.

Another case in which the Government set their face against the legitimate and undoubted rights of the people's representatives and accentuated their political doctrine that the Government is the master, and not the servant, of the people, was that relating to the expenditure incurred in rebuilding the Summerside Court House and Jail. Mr. Morson had this matter in hand, and in due time had placed questions on the order paper. After considerable delay and several repetitions of the questions, the Commissioner of Public Works brought down the original contract, specification and some other papers, but failed to produce the tenders. Mr. Morson again asked for the original tenders; but Hon. Mr. Cummiskey said he would not bring those down without an order of the House. Just here we wish our readers to give a few moments most careful consideration to the matter before them, so that they may fully grasp the situation. The Opposition were asking for the original tenders, involving an expenditure of some \$18,000 of public money. The tax payers have a perfect right to know every particular concerning this expenditure of their money. It was for the purpose of finding out these particulars that Mr. Morson was pressing for the original tenders. Well, as we have already said, Hon. Mr. Cummiskey refused to produce these tenders unless by an order of the House. An order of the House means an order passed by a majority vote of the House. Mr. Morson took the Commissioner at his word, and moved a resolution ordering Mr. Cummiskey to lay these original documents on the table. What was the first thing Mr. Cummiskey did? He objected to the resolution as being out of order, and asked for a ruling of Mr. Speaker. In this he was backed up by the Premier. Mr. Speaker asked the Commissioner of Public Works for authority for his objection, and said he would reserve his ruling till the following day. On Friday forenoon Mr. Morson asked for the Speaker's ruling, and the latter asked Mr. Cummiskey if he had any more authorities for his objection. But Mr. Cummiskey confessed he had no valid ground for objections and withdrew those he had made. Thereupon Mr. Speaker declared the resolution in order. Mr. Morson then moved his resolution and spoke to it. Mr. Mathieson, Mr. Prowse and Mr. Fraser followed, taking the Government severely to task for their conduct in this matter. Why did they hold back the information if there was nothing wrong about it? The country had a right to this information, and the Government had no right

to keep it back. This resolution afforded them an opportunity to show they respected the wishes of the people, whose servants they are. The motion was then put by Mr. Speaker and the Government's answer to the people's just request was the defeat of the motion. The vote stood: For the resolution, Mathieson, McDonald, Morson, McKinnon, Prowse, Fraser, Wood, Kennedy. Against the resolution, Hazard, Cummiskey, McNutt, Hughes, Gallant, Smith, McInnis, Richards, McWilliams, Warburton, Arsenault, Agnew, McMillan. Mr. Cummiskey knew when he said he would table the tenders, only on an order of the House, that the order would be refused. But to show how the Government trifle with the people's just and reasonable requests, and how they seek to emphasize and accentuate the idea that the Government are the masters, not the servants of the people, Mr. Cummiskey immediately moved, seconded by Premier Hazard, that he have leave to produce the original tenders. This was carrying duplicity and hypocrisy pretty far. It was fingering an insult in the faces of the people, through their representatives on the opposite side of the House. It was saying in effect, "we care nothing for the people's rights, or reasonable requests; we despise them. But we will bring down the information to please ourselves, because we are masters." But Mr. Cummiskey's and Mr. Hazard's little game did not work. It was pointed out to Mr. Speaker, by members of the Opposition, that the resolution proposed was practically identical with the one just voted down by the Government, and therefore, according to the rules of the House, could not be introduced again this session. The Speaker thereupon ruled it out of order. The Government's policy of concealment carried, and the documents were not tabled; but their little game of double dyed political hypocrisy and duplicity failed, through the just ruling of Mr. Speaker.

The Government's policy of concealment, and refusal to grant information to which the people are justly entitled, was most arrogantly exercised in connection with matters relating to the public accounts, and our financial transactions with the Federal Government. The Opposition had asked, in the proper way, what amounts had been paid out for the public service of the Province for the year ending Sep 30, 1907, between the said 30th September and 31st December 1907. This information the Government refused to furnish. The Opposition had discovered some irregularities in the entries in the public accounts, and expressed their conviction that still more serious irregularities existed, which certain information would reveal. In line with this idea, the Opposition asked, among other things, when the \$35,000, the first half of the increase to our subsidy, had been received from Ottawa. This information the Government refused to furnish. The members of the Opposition then concluded the public accounts were falsified and did not hesitate to tell the Government so. The Opposition told the Government that the entry of this \$35,000 in the receipts for the year ended 30th September 1907 was a false entry, because the money had not been received at that date. Not a member of the Government dared to controvert this statement. With the hope of securing some information on this and other matters, the Leader of the Opposition urged, from time to time, the necessity of calling together the public accounts committee. As the chairman and a majority of this committee belong to the Government side of the House, it required a good deal of urging to get them to meet. The purpose of this committee is to secure information regarding our financial transactions, and the committee has power to send for such persons, papers and records as may be deemed necessary to elucidate any matter under consideration. The committee finally met on Friday forenoon, and the Opposition members thereof requested the attendance of certain Government officials, who were consequently summoned. These officials were asked when the first instalment of the increased subsidy was received from Ottawa, and also what amount of the expenditure of the last fiscal year was paid since the 30th September. The officials admitted they possessed the information; but were not at liberty to furnish it, without the permission of the Premier. This permission was asked and was refused by the Premier. This was the information,

Mr. Fraser an Opposition member of the committee, was placing before the House on a question of privilege, when he was suddenly shut off by the Premier. From this it will be seen that the policy of concealment and gag is exercised by the Government in every possible manner. Their arbitrary and tyrannical rulings are enforced to block every avenue to information which the people are entitled to receive. What object had the Government to gain by refusing to make known the date on which the \$35,000 increased subsidy was received? They had, of course, the one great object of refusing and dispising the people's legitimate requests. That seems to be the only reason d'être of the Government. But "the best laid plans of mice and men gang aft a-gley," and the denouement came right on the heels of the Premier's arbitrary refusal to permit the information to go before the public accounts committee. That very day's mail brought from Ottawa the House of Commons debates of the 16th inst, and in that document under "the head of "Questions," we find Mr. A. A. McLean by Mr. Clements, asking "When was the first instalment of the subsidy payable to Prince Edward Island under the amendment to the British North America Act, 1907, paid to the Province?" Mr. Fielding, (Finance Minister) answered that the payment had been made on the 30th of November 1907. Another question asked by Mr. McLean was: "Has any and what part of the Provincial subsidy been deducted in respect of the Hillsboro Bridge? If so, what amount?" Mr. Fielding's answer to this question was that \$19,500 had been deducted. We have here, despite Mr. Hazard's policy of concealment, the authoritative information of the Finance Minister that the \$35,000 increased subsidy, included in the receipts of the last financial year, were not received until Nov. 30, two months after the close of the financial year. In consequence of this disclosure it will at once be seen that the deficit for the financial year ended September 30th, 1907 is increased by \$35,000. Instead of \$21,000, it is upwards of \$56,000. This is how the people's business is carried on. Accounts are falsified, information is refused and the people's rights generally are despised and arrogantly trampled upon by this relic of the family compact, calling itself a Liberal Government.

Mr. Mathieson asked a series of questions respecting the Vernon River Bridge and called for plans and specifications and all particulars regarding its construction. Hon. Mr. Cummiskey said that it would take a good deal of time to prepare the return asked for but he would have it laid upon the table.

Mr. Wood asked the Commissioner of Public Works to lay on the table all vouchers and accounts in the possession of his Department in connection with the item on page 131 of the Public Works Report—\$494,555, showing how the same is made up, was any of the work let by tender? If so lay all the different tenders on the table and also all contracts in connection with the same. Hon. Mr. Cummiskey replied that the amount was made up by the salaries of two gate keepers for the Hillsboro Bridge and by the coal used in the little houses occupied by them. Mr. Fraser asked the Commissioner of Public Works to lay on the table a statement showing in detail how the item appearing in the Public Works Report for last fiscal year at Page 22, viz. W. W. Jenkins, Son & Co. Lumber, iron, etc. \$703,76 is made up. Hon. Mr. Cummiskey replied that a statement would be submitted. Mr. Prowse asked the Commissioner of Public Works if the construction of the New Infirmary at Falconwood was let by tenders? If so, also to lay on the table of this House all tenders that were offered to do the work; also all contracts and correspondence between the Government and contractors in connection therewith; also to state what payments have been made on same, the amounts and dates of payment. Hon. Mr. Cummiskey replied that he would have a statement prepared. Mr. Prowse also asked the Commissioner of Public Works to lay on the table a statement showing (1) The amount of fire insurance in force on the following public buildings, namely—Government House, Provincial Building, Prince of Wales College, Hospital for the Insane, Court House Charlottetown, Court House Georgetown. He also asked the Commissioner to lay on the table all vouchers and accounts in the possession of his

Department in connection with the item of expenditure on page 131 of the Public Works Report—\$1458,56, showing how the sum is made up. Was any of the work let by tenders? If so, lay the tenders on the table. Also to lay on the table all contracts in connection with the same.

Mr. Mathieson asked the Commissioner of Public Works whether any and how much of the coal purchased for the public buildings of this Province during the year ending 31st December, 1907, was purchased by tender; (2) if so how were the tenders called for, how many tenders were received, for whom respectively and at what prices; (3) will the Commissioner lay on the table the said tenders or copies thereof; (4) what quantity of coal and at what aggregate cost was purchased without tender during said year. Hon. Mr. Cummiskey submitted the papers. Mr. Kennedy asked the Commissioner of Public Works to lay on the table the several tenders received for supplies to the Hospital for the Insane during the last fiscal year other than for coal; also a statement showing the quantity, kind and price of supplies not purchased by tender with the names of the persons from whom the same were purchased in each case. Hon. Mr. Cummiskey said that he would have them brought down.

Hon. Mr. Hazard moved the second reading of the bill to amend the act respecting the oyster fisheries passed last year. He said that it was contended by the Dominion Government that the bill, as passed, might be construed to mean that control by the Provincial Government over public harbors. Unless this were removed the assent of the Governor General to the Bill passed last session would be withheld. Considerable correspondence had passed between the late Leader of the Government and the Minister of Justice and the Lieutenant Governor of this Province advised by Mr. Peters, had undertaken that an amendment should be submitted setting forth explicitly that nothing in this act is intended to effect off any public harbor.

Mr. Mathieson said that he would like to have a better understanding of the matter. It never was the intention of the Provincial Legislature to interfere with the right of the Dominion Government to navigation of public harbors. He could not see that planting oysters would interfere with such use of the public harbors. If we exclude all public harbors from the operation of the bill the cultivation of oyster fisheries in this province will be very greatly restricted. No oysters areas can be leased in Charlottetown, Georgetown, Summerside and other public harbors. He was afraid that the amendment proposed would render the act almost worthless.

Hon. Mr. Hazard said that he could not see that the passage of the amendment would endanger the position of the Provincial Government.

Mr. Prowse said that he thought every harbor that a vessel could enter was public harbor; and if so the right of the Provincial Government to every harbor in this Island for the purpose of producing oysters would be given up by the passage of the amendment.

Mr. Mathieson pointed out that there was no before the Legislature any definition of what a "harbor" is. We ought to be careful about the passage of this bill. Every time we make a mistake we are held by the Dominion to the letter of the bond. Does the Dominion Government own the soil under all the public harbors. We ought to be careful not to admit any right of the Dominion Government which the Dominion Government may not possess. He would suggest that the bill be amended by providing that nothing in the act should prevent the Dominion Government the use of the public harbors. Mr. Morson suggested that the amendment should read in this way: "Provided, however, that nothing in this act is intended to effect the right of Canada in any public harbor."

Mr. Agnew suggested that the bill stand over for further consideration. House went into Committee. Mr. McWilliams in the chair. After some time progress was reported. The House then resumed consideration of the elections bill. Mr. Mathieson objected to the clause providing that only "freeholders shall have the right to administer the oath to the returning officer," and moved that the word "freeholder," be struck out and the word "elector" be inserted. Mr. McDonald strongly supported the motion, but after some discussion it was voted down on a strictly party vote, 13 to 8.

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