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## Mr. Abbott Exposes the Weakness of Speech From the Throne

### Thinks the Government Had Much to Conceal and Did It Very Effectively, for the 'Speech' Reveals Nothing of What the Government Intends Doing

MONDAY, April 12th, 1915.

MR. ABBOTT—Mr Speaker, I wish to make one or two brief remarks in reference to the matter now before the House, namely, the Address in Reply. The Speech from the Throne, which he had the privilege of hearing last Wednesday, like other speeches from the Throne hitherto delivered, contained very little that would justify criticism.

In my humble opinion Mr. Speaker, I think His Excellency's Ministers in preparing the Speech took good care not to outline the policy of the Government as it should be outlined. There are many things Sir, which would expect to appear in the Speech which do not appear at all. Judging from its contents, one would imagine that this little country of ours was getting along fairly well and was in a very good condition financially, and the gentlemen that compose the powers that be were doing their very best to carry out their promises formerly made to the people. But this is not so Mr. Speaker, but rather to the contrary. I do not pretend to know what should be the construction of a Speech from the Throne, but the Government of today promise much and performed very little. "Like cats' feet Sir, they showed soft pads but carried sharp claws." They promised faithfully to punish wasteful expenditure, and manage the affairs of the Colony in the very best possible way, and along the most economical lines without any extra taxation. This they did not do for we are awakened to the fact that taxation has been increased to such an extent that the taxpayers are unable to shoulder the burden. I think Mr. Speaker it can be conscientiously said that no Government Party since Britain our noble Motherland handed over to our forefathers the gift of responsible government, has wasted as much public moneys as the present Government since they took charge of the public affairs of our Colony in 1909 up to the present time. I think, Sir, I am perfectly safe in making that statement.

It is said Sir, that cause and effect work together in this world. "That there is no effect without a cause." Well, Sir, the cause for the financial conditions of our colony at the present time is misrule, not war. Bad management not adversity. Government conditions, Mr. Speaker has come about by extravagance. It has come about Sir, by building all kinds of railways to all kinds of places simply to catch votes.

The hon member for Pogo, Mr. Halfyard said in one of his speeches which he made here last winter, 1914, that nearly all of the members of His Majesty's Government were bound together by a golden chain. I think the hon member was pretty nearly right in making that statement. In fact, Sir, I think we must all admit that he was absolutely right when we come to consider the enormous amounts paid for land for railway purposes, ten times what it was worth, and the other useless expenditures that have been made too numerous to mention.

I fall to see Mr. Speaker very much that the present government has done that has been a revenue increasing industry. In 1908 and 1909 the Prime Minister informed the electorate that if he and his Party were returned to power of all the good things they would do for the people. They would open new markets in Central and South America and also in Mexico for our produce; they would give us power to take the place of coals. They would build us five branch railways for \$4,000,000 with no increased taxation. They would erect a number of bait depots to provide bait for the fishermen to help them to catch more fish, and a lot of other things they promised to do. But what do we find when they got the chance to redeem these promises.

There is no markets opened in Central and South America and Mexico. There is no peat to replace the black diamond. The branch railways will cost us only about \$10,000,000. There is no bait depots established to assist more fish, and for what price could our fish be sold, instead of being paid \$5.50, consequently the universal cry from the fishermen in the months of July and August, the two best months in the year for fishermen to secure a livelihood, is no bait. If some of

these promises were carried out the burden of living would be somewhat lessened. I would like to see, Sir, all these promises outlined in the Speech from the Throne so that the people may see that the Government hasn't utterly forgotten all about these good things that they formerly promised to the people.

The former part of His Excellency's Speech, Mr. Speaker refers largely to this awful war that is now overshadowing the whole of Christian Europe, and a part of the Orient as well. I do not profess to know very much about this war or what brought it about, but what puzzles me is that in this enlightened age in this twentieth century that Christian nations cannot settle disputes by international arbitration instead of strife. Great many people say that the cause of this war was due to the assassination of the Austrian Arch Duke. I do not think, Mr. Speaker, that is hardly correct. I think Germany was making preparation for this war for many years. I think, Sir, that the Sarajevo murder was the occasion, and not the cause. The real cause of this war I do not know. The German Emperor said to be the heir of the Austrian throne "you want to get to the Aegean. I want to get to the English. You take Serbia and I will take Belgium."

Serbia is exhausted by two wars, Belgium will not face me. You will of course, have to deal with Russia; you will have to deal with the United States. The box, pop up to very soon pop down again; at the most she will only fame a little, just like she did when you took Bosnia. Little Japan was too much for Russia's drunken army. I will have to deal with France and England. France is a socialistic republic, with no control of her people, and as a military power is decrepit. Britain has a very little pampered toy army, and by her voluntary methods cannot raise more. She has no command over her Empire. I have my Secret Service everywhere. Our armies are equal to the lot, but we will have to stand together and be careful to choose a proper time when some of these opponents are crippled. This was long before the assassination of the Austrian Arch Duke.

Again Sir, our Colony depends almost entirely on its importations. Where could we get the food that we consume and the clothes that we wear and from what part of the world could it be brought if the enemy's ships had charge and overruled? But it is not so, Mr. Speaker. Our ships are in charge, permitting commerce to be carried on as usual. We can take our local papers almost daily, and see the fact that ships laden with our produce leave our shores and cross the Atlantic in safety, and steamships come across the ocean to this Colony as if no war were on.

These blessings should lead us to do our very best to assist the mother country in this awful crisis.

This is no time, Mr. Speaker, for any loyal British subject to fold his arms. This is no time to lean on our oars. We can't do too much Sir, to assist in this great struggle to preserve British Liberty.

Our protection by the British Navy, Sir, is something beyond our estimation. We can thank God today that the British dreadnoughts, cruisers, and submarines are our safety in this awful crisis. The heroism of the men, Mr. Speaker, is something surprising. Take for instance the engineer and firemen who go down into the bowels of these ships and stay there for hours in a temperature of 120 degrees, almost naked, black as Ethiopians, piling in coals and forcing the ship to its utmost speed. These men Sir, in many cases win the naval battles.

It is said, Mr. Speaker, that the best of history has never been written. It never has. I feel like writing the words of a certain poet, who said:

"Just fancy a fireman down below, In the awful heat and torture of the fires that leap and dance In and out the furnace doors that never close. On in silence he must work, For with him there's never a chance On his brow to feel the outer breeze that blows."

For they have locked him in a room down below, In a burning, blazing tomb down below. Where he cannot see the sky, cannot learn in time to fly When destruction stalketh nigh down below.

"Though his name is never mentioned, Though we see or know him not, Though his deeds may never bring him worldly fame, He is a man above the others, And the bravest of the lot, And the hero of the battle just the same."

He is the man who does the work down below, From the labour does not shirk down below. He is shovelling day and night, Feeling flames ablazing bright, Keeping up a killing fight, down below.

Heroism indeed Sir!

Hitherto, Mr. Speaker, England has been fighting our battles, and we as a Colony have been doing nothing. We have not done or paid a proper part. Not a man, not a dollar has the Colony contributed to the upkeep of this great Navy which has been doing so much for us.

We have accepted all our former blessings, so to speak, without even saying thank you, and the benefits with contribution. We acted real mean, Mr. Speaker, and consented to be recipients at the expense of our fellow Britishers on the other side of the water. Our former actions as the eldest daughter of the noble Motherland, reminds me of an old story which I read some time ago of an old man, his wife, and a bear. I guess many of you have heard or read the story; but for the benefit of those who didn't hear or read it, and by way of illustration I will give you the benefit of it. The story runs thus:—An old man and his wife were in their kitchen quietly enjoying themselves with the door open. Unexpectedly a bear walked in. Naturally you expect the man to assist in getting the bear from the home, or at least you'd expect him to lead in the fight, but, Sir, in this case it was otherwise. When he saw the bear he ran for the chimney corner and climbed upon what the old folks called the pot-sticks, and left Betty, his better half, to fight the bear alone, but courageous Betty got a rifle, aimed, fired, and killed her enemy. After the bear lay dead on the floor, after the victory this man on the potsticks, that played the coward, shouted out to the top of his voice: "Glory be to God, Betty and I killed the bear."

After the victory was won you see the man that played the coward seemed to want an equal share of the work poor Betty accomplished single handed. Now, Mr. Speaker, in my humble opinion, we have been doing something similar with Britain. While the dear old Motherland has fought and won previous battles, Newfoundland, her eldest daughter, has played the coward, acted the man on the potsticks. But now, Mr. Speaker, the scene is changed, and Newfoundland

is expected to do her duty, and she is in great peril. This is the greatest crisis that we have ever seen. As an Empire our very existence is at stake. England needs our help. A message comes over the water to the effect: "Your King and Country Need You, and Newfoundland, Sir, is nobly responding to the call. She is letting the outside world know that part of the British Lion is on this side of the Atlantic. We ought to be proud of the beautiful sacrifices they have made. Mr. Parsons, the hon. member for Hr. Grace, in seconding the Speech, gave us the number that has gone from his District. I don't exactly know the number from Bonavista District, but in Bonavista town where I live, we have contributed about 80 for the Army and Navy. One father there, Sir, has given his two boys, his only boys. They were fitted out for next summer's fishery, but the two boys went to fight for King and Country and British freedom, and left their father behind to paddle his own canoe. Beautiful sacrifice for the preservation of British Liberty. Other young men have gone and left only mother in the home. Words fail to express, Sir, what these mothers feel in parting with their boys.

I wish to say, Mr. Speaker, that I am not a believer in war, but rather the contrary. I feel like classing myself with Wellington, who said: "The military profession"; with General Sherman who said: "War is hell"; with Martin Luther, who said: "Cannons and firearms are cruel and murderous machines"; with George Fox who said "There never was a good war or a bad peace"; with John Wesley, who said, "War is the business of hell"; with Moses in the Decalogue, who through Almighty God, said: "Thou shalt not kill"; with Jesus, the Peacemaker, the carpenter of Nazareth, and the Saviour of the World, who said: "Take not up the sword, they that take up the sword shall perish by the sword." But, Sir, although war is horrible, cruel and

devilish, I believe Britain is justified before God and man, in the action she has taken in fighting to defend the weak "and to stop the ideals of the Corsican from obliterating by force of arms the ideals of the Man of Gallies."

I sincerely hope and trust, Mr. Speaker, that Britain will win in this battle, and when the time will speedily come when the universal brotherhood of man and the universal fatherhood of God will be more fully recognized, and that forts and warships will be beaten into ploughshares and appears into pruning hooks, "and the wolf will dwell with the kid," "the leopard will lie down with the lamb," and "the calf and young lion and lambing together, and a little child shall lead them."

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A. CLIFT, Treasurer.

St. John's, April 26.

The Pope has sent to Cardinal Mercier \$5,000 for the Belgian sufferers from the war. Accompanying the donation was a letter expressing the pleasure of Benedict XV, that relief committees for the Belgians had been formed in various countries. The Pope also sent \$5,000 to the Bishop of Cracow for the Polish sufferers.

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