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## A Record in Public Expenditure.

### Orgy of Extravagance---Squires Government Uses Up \$39,-000,000 in 31 Months.

As had been generally expected, Sir Michael Cashin occupied yesterday's session of the House in delivering a severe censure of the Government's conduct of public affairs since it took office, particularly with reference to the tremendous squandering of the past year.

#### CAT AND MOUSE.

When the House went into Committee of the Whole on Ways and Means, it was evident that both parties were playing a "cat and mouse game," as for fifteen minutes all was silence. The Opposition were naturally expecting the Prime Minister to announce that the axe had been applied, at least, to some extent, while that astute gentleman was waiting to hear the Opposition commit themselves in connection with the Budget. The unusual silence of the august chamber was broken only by the distribution of light literature in the shape of the Advocate, and members were just sitting down to enjoy a perusal of the contents of that champion of the people's rights, particularly the under dogs, when the Leader of the Opposition rose.

#### NOT A WHOLE SPEECH.

The Budget speech, said Sir Michael, was only part of a speech. It was not whole as it used to be. In view of the experiences of the past few years, it was a mass of evasion and misrepresentation. It contained no reference to the burdens imposed on the country by the attack of squandermania which had seized the Government. The Budget speech had no reference to the railway; to the distribution of relief work; to fishery supplies; to ruinous purchase of Labrador fish; to salt; to the housing scheme; or any of the other extravagances which had helped the Government to run the country. The colony would be greatly interested to learn how that money was going to be recovered. From beginning to end the speech was nothing but a falsehood. Sir Michael referred to the year of the Bank Crash, which had been mentioned as the most depressing in the country's history. It bore no comparison to the present situation.

#### SPENDING—YET DESTITUTE.

Sir Michael next referred to the Resolutions passed at the recent meeting of the Board of Trade. They had been endorsed by the whole country. It was not surprising the merchants had been roused. In 2 1/2 years, the Government had spent fifteen millions of dollars over and above revenue collections. Yet they were now completely destitute. They were spending more than the value of our exports. Sir Michael showed that expenditure was equal to revenue by quoting figures which he had prepared in tabular form.

#### REVENUE:

1919-20	(\$10,597,562)
for 7 months	\$6,244,994.00
1920-21 for 12 months	8,441,287.00
1921-22 for 12 months	8,952,000.00

\$23,698,261.00

#### LOANS:—

Surplus Trust	\$3,500,000
1921 Loan	6,000,000
1922 Loan	6,000,000

For 31 months	\$39,138,261
Per month	1,261,266
For 12 months	15,135,192

The expenditure this year would take \$15,000,000. This could only lead to bankruptcy. The railway was not referred to Sir Michael said the Government had relieved the Reids of their responsibility. The Reids may now have a claim against the Government. Sir Michael reviewed the acts of Mr. Coaker at some length. That gentleman is now probably sitting on the verandah of a Brazilian Hotel, with food drinks by his side, and an electric fan at his ear. Yet, he it was who is chiefly responsible for the distressed state in which the country finds itself at present. Pit-props were further discussed and the system by which these were cut for relief purposes was scathingly indicted. The Government refused to avail of the opportunities offering to sell those pit props which had been cut and were rotting on the banks. The returns from the pit props did not yield five per cent.

#### FISHERY SUPPLIES.

Sir Michael next attacked the discrimination which had been shown in connection with the Fishery Supplies of last year. He made some startling exposures in this connection. He said "in some cases, I am told, men were instructed to issue fishery supplies, and the Government undertook to bear the whole cost, while in other cases business men had to carry half the burden themselves. The result of this business is even more startling. Here the Government put out in the matter of fishery supplies about \$430,000 and got back \$20,000, making a loss of

\$410,000. I quote these figures from the Auditor-General's report, and they are to me a shocking confession of incapacity on the part of the Government, that steps were not taken by which some proper returns should have been got. As soon as the people were fitted out for the fishery then began the scandal of work on the roads."

The Road de Luxe received a severe handling but this was a paltry matter in comparison with the huge expenditures on the Deer Lake and Badger Roads. These roads had cost over \$700,000, and had been condemned as unwarranted by the Auditor-General in his report.

#### WHO WAS RIGHT?

The Premier had said that Newfoundland had seen more depressing days than the present. "Yet," continued Sir Michael, the Auditor-General says that never in the history of the Colony was it found necessary to employ 5,000 men at work of this kind during the fishing season. Consequently the Premier stands convicted of either misrepresenting conditions in his Budget Speech or of giving employment last summer to thousands of men when there was no necessity for it, and of spending \$750,000 of money borrowed a few weeks previously, on unproductive works, when the bulk of men engaged on these two roads should have been carrying on the fishery. This work, and road work in the different districts, on which \$75,000 more was spent, carried things along until towards the end of the year. The price of fish was low, depression was widespread, and the outlook was far from encouraging.

#### HALF GIVEN TO REIDS.

"To meet the conditions which were evident at the last session, to finance all these and other undertakings, the Government had to raise a Loan at the last session of \$6,000,000. More than half of this money was given to the Reids, who were denounced by the Premier in his Manifesto and from every platform he addressed in the last election, as incapables, bluffers, and triflers with the business they had in hand, and denounced them bitterly two years ago when he introduced the first railway legislation. When winter was approaching it became necessary to find other work and then it was decided to undertake a lot of improvements to the railroad. Accordingly it was decided to change the line of track at Irving Station, near Topsail; at Kelligrews, and at other places; and according to a statement furnished here within the past day or two the amount of \$192,000 was spent for this purpose. If you add this to the \$400,000 previously spent on the Argenta terminal you begin to realize the reckless management and utter waste that has characterized every feature of the operations of this Government since taking power. I know that here, again, I will be told that Sir George Bury recommended these expenditures, but my answer to this is that the Railroad has been running in this country for over thirty years, and surely, if the track at these places served for all that time, it could have lasted a few years longer until the country got on its feet again, instead of spending thousands of dollars for this purpose."

#### SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPLY.

Snow shovelling was severely criticized by Sir Michael. This year thousands were spent on clearing the streets white last year when it was impossible to move about. The only money that could be found for snow shovelling was expended in Harbor Main where a bye-election was being held. Dealing with the question of supplemental supply, Sir Michael said, "in the Premier's Budget Speech last week he claimed that my estimate last year of the amount he would need to spend on Supplemental Supply was actually spending only about half my estimate, which was somewhere about a million and a half dollars. He takes great credit for having kept the amount of Supplemental Supply so low, but, of course, it is easy to see how he did it. He charged enormous sums against the Loans and cut them out of Supplemental Supply altogether. Here is an example. In answer to a question tabled by me a few days ago, a statement was furnished last Friday week, March 21st, showing the amount expended for poor relief in the various electoral districts from the first of July, 1921, up to date, \$147,615, and the Commissioner of Public Charities estimates that the amount which will probably be required to be spent for this purpose on the electoral districts for the rest of the fiscal year, will be from fifty to fifty-five thousand dollars.

In other words, during this year there will have been spent in the Districts the sum of \$200,000 for Poor Relief over and above the grants for the purpose, and yet in his statement of Supplemental Supply put on the table to-day, the Premier shows that he is asking no vote for the Department of Public Charities at all. As I say, he charges this amount against the Loan and consequently does not show it in Supplemental Supply."

#### JUGGLING WITH FIGURES.

"Another striking example of this sort of thing is found in one of the early paragraphs of the Budget Speech in which he deals with the condition of affairs for the fiscal year which ended on the 30th of June, 1921. That Budget Speech was delivered on May the 26th last year, within five weeks of the closing of the fiscal year on June 30th. Then, on May the 25th he estimated with the concurrence of the Auditor-General, that the amount to the credit of the Surplus Trust Fund on the 30th of June would be \$3,001,186. I would ask the House to carefully note the amount—slightly over three million dollars. The Premier comes in this year and in his Budget Speech, he tells us that the amount to the credit of the Surplus Trust Fund on 30th June last was only \$2,671,483, or \$438,703 less than he estimated a year previously."

#### MORE PRETZEL FINANCE.

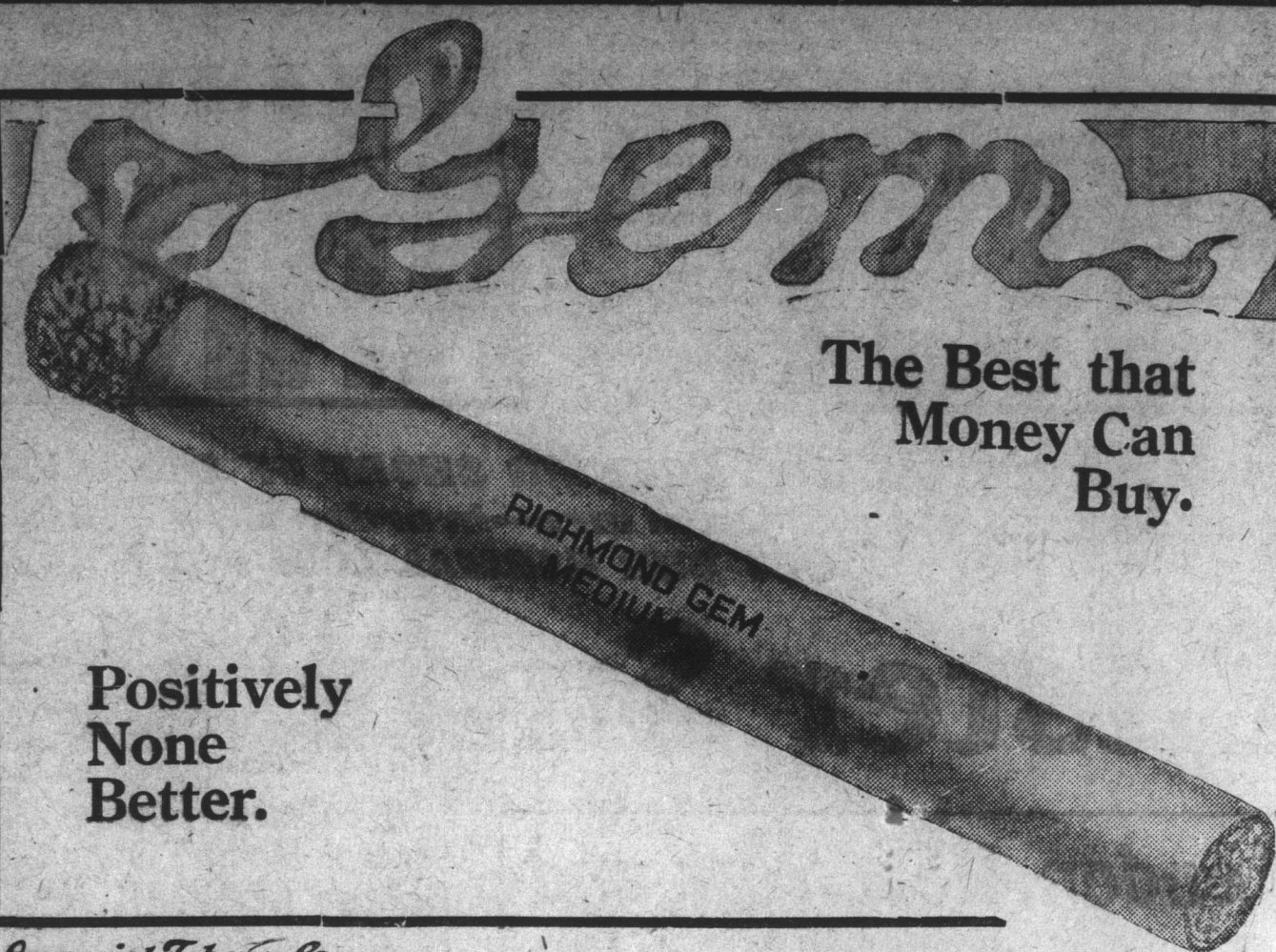
Now, the point I want to impress upon the House and the Country is that in the five weeks of last year, between the 25th of May, when the Budget Speech was delivered, and the 30th of June, when the fiscal year closed, \$428,000 of the Surplus Trust Fund disappeared. It vanished and there has been no explanation given of what became of it. I can tell the House what became of it. A whole lot of amounts that should have been included in the ordinary expenditure of the Colony, and which if they had been so included would have left the Premier with a deficit were charged against the Surplus Trust Fund which was reduced by this much, and then the balance was put in to the credit of the ordinary accounts of the year so as to enable the Premier to show a Surplus of \$138,000 from his Surplus Trust and Revenue. In this sort of financial juggling the Premier is an expert. We have seen numerous instances of it in this House, and I only quote it here as another proof of how utterly unreliable this Budget Speech is, of the actual condition of things existing in regard to the country's financial affairs."

Sir Michael concluded up to adjournment, dealing with every mistake the Government had made, in a manner which was anything but pleasant for the occupants of the Government benches. The speech carried the House into a night session and Mr. Bennett moved the adjournment at 10.40 p.m. moved the adjournment at 10.40 o'clock.

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## Within the Half Hour.

Editor Evening Telegram.

Dear Sir—Your issue of yesterday's date contained a note addressed to me signed "Interested" asking for the correct time of the arrival of the S.S. Ranger from the sealfishery. The S.S. Ranger arrived on Tuesday April 4th, between 12 and 12.30 o'clock a.m., St. John's official time. I may also say that when the seals were off St. John's in 1880 that Captain Joseph Barbour was master of the "Walrus" and not Captain George Barbour, as your note of yesterday stated, as Capt. George did not take charge of her till 1893. In 1880—the "Walrus" Capt. Joseph Barbour arrived on March 21st, with 13,500 seals, on April 5th she arrived from 2nd trip with 9,679, and on May 1st again arrived from 3rd trip with 1,652 seals.

Sincerely yours,  
L. G. CHAFFE.

April 11th, 1922.

## Object to Nine Hour Day

RELIEF LABORERS THREATEN STRIKE.

Beginning yesterday the men engaged on relief works were notified that a nine hour day would be enforced. A number of the men refused to work longer than 8 hours and proposed to strike. The Men's Committee inter-

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viewed Hon. Dr. Campbell and members of the Citizens Committee during the day in connection with the matter. It is thought that the kickers will agree to work the extra hour as he majority are not inclined to join in the strike.

Est MRS. STEWART'S Home Made Bread.—apr4,emo

TOOK FIFTY SEALS.—The tug John Green which was hired yesterday by Mr. J. R. Chalker and several other men from the Battery to go seal hunting returned to port last night with some fifty seals. The tug went about 10 miles east of Cape Spear before meeting the ice.