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New Brunswick's Stand On Constitution Given To House

Hon. J. B. McNair Shows Place of Province in Confederation.

New Brunswick has every reason to mistrust greater concentration of power in the Dominion Parliament. This was the declaration of Hon. J. B. McNair, Attorney-General of New Brunswick, before the Legislature this week. He was dealing with the constitutional stand of New Brunswick in regard to proposals to change the constitution of the Dominion. He said that while it might be asserted in some quarters that the provinces would be forced into a new legislative union against their will, such an attempt of tyranny would mean the end of all union. However, he felt that the Imperial Parliament is still British and this fact will be learned if such attempts as are suggested are made.

Mr. McNair reviewed the conditions leading up to confederation. He spoke of the London conference and the agreement made there. He quoted from the agreement as follows: "In the confederation of the British North American Provinces, the system of government best adapted under existing circumstances to protect the diversified interests of the several provinces and secure efficiency, harmony and permanency in the working of the union is a general government charged with matters of common interest to the whole country and local governments for each of the Canadas and for the Provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, charged with the control of local matters in their respective sections, provision being made for the admission into the confederation on equitable terms of Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and the Northwest Territory and British Columbia."

Continuing, Mr. McNair said: "By the agreement that was made, which was sanctioned by the British North America Act, the original confederating provinces transferred certain of their administrative and legislative powers of Government to the Dominion Parliament, which they created, to be used for their common benefit; but control over those various matters which were considered of domestic interest and provincial concern was retained by the provinces for themselves."

"This is the language of one of our western courts which aptly describes the relationships which were established:

"The basic idea underlying the confederation scheme is that there shall be co-ordinate governments, the Dominion on the one hand and the provinces on the other, dividing between all legislative power in Canada, the one not subordinate to the other, but each enjoying sovereign power within its own field of legislative competency as fixed and limited by the B.N.A. Act."

"And here is the language of the judicial committee of the privy council, our highest court of appeal:

"The object of the act was neither to weld the provinces into one, nor to subordinate provincial

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Verdun City Had A Surplus On Its Operation In 1935

Some Comparisons With Saint John and Its Expenditures.

The city of Verdun, Quebec, has been much in the limelight of late because that city completed the year 1935 with a surplus of some \$18,000. This is an outstanding achievement and it is of particular interest to Saint John people because the two cities have many common features. Verdun has a population of some 60,000 while Saint John has around 50,000 inhabitants. Verdun has an annual expenditure of approximately \$1,727,000, which is provided by revenue. Saint John expends around \$2,000,000 annually, which it tries to get from revenue, but the attempt is generally unsuccessful. Verdun gets its water supply from Montreal but maintains its own distribution system, the total for 1935 being \$138,704.65. Saint John owns its own water supply. Water and sewers cost Saint John approximately \$280,000 in 1935, but \$154,000 of that went for interest and \$36,000 for sinking fund.

Public works cost Verdun \$25,384.69 which was met from revenue. Saint John paid about \$155,000 for its public works in 1935 out of revenue, with an additional \$13,000 secured from the Power Company.

There is a vast difference between the expenditures on police and fire departments in Verdun and in Saint John. The Montreal suburb maintained its fire and police departments for a total of \$117,745.41 last year. So far as can be gathered from reports in Saint John the police department cost \$123,000 while the fire department cost \$122,000, or a total of \$245,000. Saint John police salaries total about \$98,000 with firemen being paid \$87,000. It may be noted that cost of uniforms for fire and police departments in Verdun cost \$3,226.64 while in Saint John the cost is about \$3,978.66.

Maintenance of schools in Saint John costs almost \$175,000 more than in Verdun. Some other expenditures in Verdun were: health and sanitation, \$24,716.50; recreation grounds, \$8,459.03; parks, \$8,182.23; treasurer's department, \$21,178.39; city clerk's department, \$7,445.39; board of assessors, \$5,268.39.

ANOTHER RUMOR RAISED ABOUT THE PINBOARDS

The pinboards have dropped from view in Saint John. While not in operation they are carefully cared for in a secluded corner. Citizens are a bit concerned over rumors that this is just a lull in pinboard operation and that they will again be put in operation to lure the unwary nickel from the pocket of the citizen, when the sun comes over the mountain after April 13.

CITY HOUSE CLEANING TIME LONG OVERDUE

Citizens of Saint John Must Take a Hand and Eliminate Abuses which Now Exist in Civic Affairs.

A GRAND house-cleaning is overdue in Saint John. Conditions here are far from ideal, as practically every citizen knows, and nothing much is being done to right matters. Many of the problems of the city could be solved if the Common Council worked as a body to bring about the necessary reforms, but, these reforms can never come through mere individual effort. The Common Council must be the spearhead of action and it must be backed by a safe and sane citizenry, the members of which will be guided by their conscience, having a strict regard for the laws which have been adopted for the government of the city. The citizens must study civic problems, vote during elections and see that good candidates are in the field.

There is a tendency to blame civic troubles on world conditions when in reality the faults are due to loose-thinking and loose-acting on the part of too many people. These faults can be eliminated by the citizens who will have the courage to face the facts.

Last week this paper pointed out some of the conditions in Saint John that demand attention. Since that time one phase of civic affairs has been taken into court and comment in that regard would be untimely at the present.

There must be improvement in Saint John before this city will be halted in its backward slipping. Safe and sane leadership is the need of the hour. Such leadership only can be given by those persons who have real regard for the rights and privileges of others and have a true conception of constructive criticism.

Newspapers too have certain functions to perform in every community. They generally are concerned with good government and it is the duty of papers to place before the people facts, even when such action is not approved by those who would have facts suppressed. Usually papers have no particular quarrel with individuals. They are concerned with creating interest in public affairs and generally they aim to show the people where irregularities exist. They have no quarrel with individuals in any government but they do stand against despotism and other abuses which take away from the people the right to govern themselves. Good papers will continue to produce constructive criticism when and where they see the need.

The Mayor and Commissioners of Saint John were elected to conduct the business of the city according to the established laws and in accordance with the expressed will of the people. Candidates for office must always remember that they are offering themselves as servants to the people and when they fail to carry on in the best interests of all the people they leave themselves open to censure, which should be freely expressed.

The people must be free to vote for whatever candidates they may choose. They should not be influenced by any job they may hold. Civic employees and all others holding jobs should be free citizens, voting as their conscience may dictate. They should weigh the calibre of the candidate offering for positions in the City Council and they should vote only for those they consider the best qualified to conduct the city business.

Citizens of Saint John, your government will be only as good as you make it. You will have the privilege of voting on Monday, April 13, for a Mayor and two Commissioners. You are those who must take the responsibility for the selection of representatives and the proper conduct of civic business. But you must not let down after casting your ballot. You must continue to interest yourself in civic affairs and by your advice and guidance help to bring Saint John out of the morass in which she is sinking.

Gossip from Far and Near

CIVIC affairs are topics of conversation in Saint John these days. Some of the problems will probably be settled by the courts. But there is much heard concerning the proposal to change the form of government. One citizen pointed out that had the proposed system been introduced when the commission form came in, the city would have saved in salaries alone more than \$400,000. He was counting interest in this. So he figures that there would be no overdraft today if the system had been adopted instead of the commission form.

MANY cities, especially in the United States, they must take drastic action to save themselves from financial disaster. It has been found that in many instances city business can be run on lines that will permit of balancing the budget and giving the services that are essential to good cities. It also is claimed that graft has been practically eliminated from civic government.

MAYOR Brittain was attending the conference of Dominion mayors in Ottawa early this week. He spoke over the radio, along with other mayors, on Sunday evening. The conference was called to deal with relief problems of the cities of the Dominion, the aim seemingly being to get the federal authorities to assume the unemployment relief burden.

ONCE AGAIN attention must be drawn to shunting operations across Mill Street. Persons who are compelled to use Mill Street have about come to the conclusion that the railways do their shunting mostly in the busiest hours when traffic is the heaviest in that street. Almost every noon and supper hour traffic is held up by the shunting operations. It would seem that the city and the railways could get together in this matter and make some arrangement whereby shunting would be carried on when Mill Street is not full of citizens hurrying to and from work. There appears to be no real reason why some co-operative plan could not be arranged. Of course the viaduct would do away with the inconvenience of the shunting across a main thoroughfare. Why not get the viaduct?

THIS civic election campaign seems to be taking on more life. Ten candidates are in the field for the two commissioner posts, and while they may all hope to win, there is only room for two. The next best thing to being a good winner is being a good loser and it is hoped that the eight men who are left behind at the polls on April 13, will prove themselves good losers. They must remember that some one must have worked for them and given them some support and govern themselves accordingly. After all, even if a man thinks he will make a good commissioner, he must bend to the will of the voters and it only makes it harder to be a poor loser. While candidates must be opponents they can still be friends, for in reality the fight is among the electors and should not be between candidates.