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FRIDAY, MAY 16, 1930

THE GOVERNMENT CONVENTION

The provincial election campaign is rapidly gathering momentum all over New Brunswick in spite of the fact that the government has not yet seen fit to announce the date on which the balloting will be done. As the days go by indications grow more and more marked that there is a strong revulsion of feeling against Premier Baxter and his colleagues, and prospect for the return to office of Hon. W. P. Jones, K. C., and his party are daily becoming brighter.

The outstanding political event of the week so far as Woodstock was concerned was the government convention. It was not a bad convention. Not very enthusiastic, perhaps, but then the government supporters in attendance didn't have much to enthuse over. In point of sobriety it did not compare favorably with the opposition convention the previous week. Probably the leaders were too busy trying to tell the people that their opponents were all rummies and bootleggers to keep a very close watch on their followers, with the result that some of them got a little the worse for wear before convention time. One or two became a little boisterous but they were promptly given the bums' rush and deposited outside the building.

The convention itself went off about as per schedule. The ticket was about what people thought it would be. B. Frank Smith gave a long address the purport of which was that Mr. Jones should not tell the people that the bonded debt of the province had gone up \$13,000,000. The debt had gone up all right he admitted but the province had assets to show for some of the increase. Mr. Smith neglected to add that assets that are not paid for and cannot be afforded are a poor excuse for increasing a debt. Many a firm has failed through having too many assets of that kind.

Mr. Hayward was heard in an entertaining bit which might appropriately have been named: "When is a promise not a promise?" Answer: "When Mr. Baxter makes it."

Mr. Squires informed the audience that Musquash was commercially worthless but conveniently forgot to explain just how this could be true in view of the vast amount of commercial good that Musquash has done. Many people who attended to learn just what are Mr. Squires present views of government sale of liquor were disappointed, for he did not mention the matter.

APPROVAL OF THE BUDGET

Approval of the Dunning budget is being heard on all sides. Among the leading authorities which look with favor on the budget is the Financial Times, Montreal, a paper not ordinarily favorable to Mr. King and his government. As a piece of politics the Times characterizes the budget as an even cleverer one than those of Mr. Robb, which preceded it. It points out that in increasing the British preference Mr. Dunning has retaliated upon the United States for their tariff measures in a way which that country can hardly logically disapprove. Mr. Bennett's criticism to the countervailing duties on American goods that the rate is thereby fixed in Washington instead of in Ottawa the Times dismisses as a not very valid objection.

It further points out that the steel industry in the Maritimes and other parts of Canada has received a very material benefit, and it also stresses the fact that the farmers are getting protection without having their own cost of living increased.

Regarding the coming election the Times goes on to say that only once in the history of Canada has a Liberal Federal government been beaten on a tariff issue. That was in 1911 on the Reciprocity question. On that occasion the Times, rightly or wrongly, concluded that the defeat of Laurier was due more to a revolt in the French electorate than to dissatisfaction with his policy.

Coming from the source that it does, and following even more favorable comment from the Financial Post, the tribute to the work of Mr. Dunning is a striking one. He has shown during his short time in his present office that he will prove a worthy successor to even such a financial genius as Mr. Robb.

THAT BROKEN PROMISE

Mr. M. L. Hayward spent considerable time at the government convention on Monday trying to justify the action of the premier in breaking his promise to the temperance people. At the end of that time he had succeeded in excusing his leader's breach of faith to nobody except a few of the faithful who did not need to be convinced anyway.

At the start of Mr. Hayward's address one fact stood out like a sore thumb. Mr. Baxter said that he would make no major change in the liquor laws without an appeal to the people. "That is my considered judgment." At the conclusion of Mr. Hayward's address the same fact stood out just as painfully.

Mr. Hayward admitted freely that his leader had broken his promise. He admitted that he could not explain that fact away. But, he went on, it was merely a case of his changing his mind to meet changed conditions. He was right to do it.

Mr. Hayward overlooked the fact that Mr. Baxter made no proviso as to changed conditions when he made his solemn promise. He overlooked the fact that Mr. Baxter said that any major change in the law must come from the people. He overlooked the fact that if the pledged word of a leader of a great party can be broken at will because he changes his mind there can be no trust in the word of any public man. These are matters which neither Mr. Hayward or any other can successfully assail, and very wisely he did not attempt to explain or condone their breach.

But, Mr. Hayward went on, Mr. Baxter was not the only one who had broken a promise. Peel, he said, had done likewise in repealing the corn laws which he had pledged himself to support. Abraham Lincoln had freed the slaves in the southern states often declaring that there was no legal way in which this could be done. Woodrow Wilson had plunged the United States into war after running a presidential campaign on the plea that he had kept the country at peace.

Admitting just for the sake of argument that these men broke their promises the comparison is scarcely fortunate. The score would stand something like this: Peel broke a promise that he might give food to the starving people of Ireland. Abraham Lincoln broke a promise that he might strike the shackles from a million slaves; Woodrow Wilson broke a promise that he might uphold the sovereign independence and national integrity of the United States after another country had virtually declared war upon her. Mr. Baxter broke a promise that he might legalize the sale of liquor in New Brunswick and add a million dollars to the annual revenue of his government.

The comparison would be ridiculous if it were not tragic. Mr. Hayward had much better have kept still.

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Britton Charles	11.45
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Buck Fred C.	32.50
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Burhoe John C.	5.50
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