

The Debate on the Budget Collapsed Unexpectedly

A Division of the Legislature Taken at Midnight—Opposition Amendment Was Defeated by a Vote of 24 to 13—List of Speakers Yesterday Included Mr. Richard (Gloucester), Mr. Gill, Mr. Evans, Mr. Agar, Mr. Scott and Mr. Leger.

The debate on the budget which has been going on in the Legislature since Tuesday of last week collapsed unexpectedly shortly before twelve o'clock last night. The opposition amendment was defeated by a vote of 24 to 13, a majority of eleven for the Government. Leader Dysart, who is confined to his room by a severe cold was paired with the Premier and Mr. Pirie and Mr. Guptill were paired. Two members of the government side, Hon. L. P. D. Tilley, now in South America, and Hon. E. A. Reilly, detained at home by illness, were absent, and Dr. Violette of the opposition was not in his place.

The speakers yesterday included Messrs Richard (Kent), Richard (Gloucester) Gill and Leger for the opposition and Messrs. Scott, Siddall, Agar and Guptill for the government. At 11:30 o'clock Mr. Doucet of Gloucester moved the adjournment of the debate, but the motion was voted down. He declined to go on with his speech with the result that a few moments later the division bells were rung.

The vote was taken first on the opposition view with alarm amendment and it was voted down on the first division of the session. On the supply motion being put it was carried without names being called for.

The House then went into Committee and after passing one item of supply adjourned until this afternoon at three o'clock

THE OFFICIAL REPORT

House of Assembly,

11th March, 1931.

The House met at 3 p. m.

The following bills were read a second time, respecting the profession of law, and to provide for the redemption of one million two hundred and fifty thousand dollars six per cent. debentures falling due in 1931.

MR. ATKINSON submitted the report of the Municipalities Committee.

MR. BROOK submitted the report of the Standing Rules Committee.

HON. MR. BAXTER moved that the bill respecting the profession of the law be referred to the Committee on Law Practice and Procedure; that bill No. 40 be referred back to the committee of the whole House, and that the bills recommend by the Municipalities Committee be referred to the committee of the whole House forthwith.

MR. COLPITTS gave notice of inquiry as to the salaries paid to L. S. Doyle and W. T. Chapman.

HON. MR. TAYLOR submitted copies of correspondence between the Minister of Labor, Ottawa, and the Minister of Health and Labor of New Brunswick, regarding unemployment.

MR. PIRIE presented a petition for a bill to enable the St. John River Power Company to flood certain lands in Madawaska County.

HON. MR. LEGER introduced a bill to enable the funding of certain highway expenditures; also a bill to further provide for permanent bridges and works of a permanent character; also a bill to provide funds for relief of unemployment in towns, cities and municipalities.

Bills Considered

The House went into committee to consider bills relating to the City and County of Saint John; authorizing School District No. 5, St. Leonards, to issue debentures; authorizing the Town of Edmundston to refund debentures; to enable the counties of Carleton and Westmorland to make temporary loans; authorizing Moncton to convey certain lands; authorizing the Town of Grand Falls to appoint a special collector of rates; and respecting the Town of Edmundston.

These several bills were reported to the House, some with and some without amendment and adopted.

The House again went into committee to consider six bills relating to the Towns of Bathurst, Newcastle, St. Stephen and Milltown. These bills were reported to the House with amendments and adopted.

MR. RICHARD (Gloucester) when the Bathurst bill, No. 55, was under discussion, said that as it was possible an agreement might be reached between officials of the Town of Bathurst and the County Council, it might be well to hold the bill in committee until next week.

HON. MR. BAXTER said that he had understood that the representatives of the County Council had no power to make an agreement here, and suggested they would have it perhaps arranged by next year, but he would say it was only a matter of waiting until next week to modify the bill that the House would be glad to pass the legislation this year, and could recall the bill for amendment on matter what stage it had reached.

HON. MR. BAXTER moved that the bill relating to the adoption of Marjorie Tomelius Bullock be referred to the Committee on Law Practice and Procedure. He also moved that Mr. Diotte be added to the Committee on Public Accounts.

Debate Continued

MR. RICHARD (Kent) continuing the debate, said that it was not his intention to offer congratulations, the duty having been attended to by previous speakers, and he proposed to confine his remarks to other subjects. However, he wished to refer to the death since the last election of Mr.

John Lordon, one of the members for Gloucester, with whom he had been associated for five sessions, and who enjoyed the esteem of his constituency. He wished to extend to the family of the deceased member an expression of his sincere sympathy. He felt that the province had sustained a severe loss in the death of the Dr. Carter, who faithfully discharged the important duties of Chief Superintendent of Education over a long term of years.

The Election

With reference to the last provincial election he thought the opposition by increasing their number from eleven to seventeen members, had made a wonderful showing. In the last House many hon. members supporting the government occupied seats to the left of the Speaker, while on this occasion they were all grouped together on the seats to his right. The County of Northumberland had defeated the Speaker of the last House, the Hon. Minister of Agriculture had met defeat in the County of Albert, and but for the resignation of Mr. Oulton, one of the members for Westmorland, it would have been difficult for the Hon. Minister to have secured a seat.

Was Alarmed

He could recall that when the Hon. Provincial Secretary-Treasurer presented his first budget to the House in 1926, he had been greatly alarmed at the financial standing of the province, apparently believing it to be on the verge of bankruptcy. The Hon. Minister had stated that the government was unable to balance the budget that year by the amount of \$666,334., and that unless there was decreased expenditure or increased revenue conditions would become disastrous. The government at that time had introduced a bill calling for direct taxation, stating that it was forced to do by the then existing situation. While that bill had been repealed, the province was today facing a situation more serious than that of 1926. The Hon. Provincial Secretary-Treasurer had forecasted a deficit of \$437,873. The public debt at the close of the year 1925 was \$32,197,629, while at the end of the last fiscal year it was \$40,240,520.14. But for the sale of the Valley Railway for \$6,000,000, the debt would now be over \$46,000,000, an increase of over \$14,000,000. Then there was the sum of \$3,000,000, which had appeared in the debt statement of 1925 and represented an investment of the Hydro Electric Commission, and which had been shifted to the floating liability column. Actually speaking, therefore, the net debt was now \$49,000,000, or an increase of \$17,000,000 in five years, taking into consideration of the sale Valley Railway.

Interest Payments

He wished to call attention to the fact that in 1925 the interest charge on the public debt was \$961,432.98, while in 1930 it was \$1,874,594.40, an increase of \$913,161.42, which meant that it was practically doubled under the present administration. He wanted to know how it was that scoring to a report of the Comptroller-General the debt had increased 25 per cent, while the interest charge had increased practically 100 per cent during the same period. It was his opinion that increase in debt and interest should be in like proportion.

HON. MR. LEGER said part of the latter amount was for sinking fund.

MR. RICHARD, continuing said that hon. members opposite had condemned the late government for increasing the debt, and had preached economy and retrenchment but had they done anything to decrease the public liability? Instead of improving the situation things were getting worse. While it might be true that other countries had deficits, that was no affair of the province of New Brunswick, as it should attend to its own business. An hon. member for Charlotte (Groom) had blamed unemployment for the deficit of last year, and had claimed that the money expended had been of great benefit to the province. He would like to know if the hon. member would blame the unemployment situation for the deficit of \$437,873, which had been forecasted for the coming year. There was nothing in the estimates to indicate what amount was going to be expended for unemployment, and it was ridiculous to declare that last year's deficit was due to that cause. The money spent in Kent County last year had benefitted only supporters of the government, as Liberals could get no employment on the roads after election.

Some Comparisons

He had complained last year that the County of Kent was not being treated fairly with regard to road expenditures. He had quoted figures in support of his contention, but the Hon. Minister of Public Works had denied the correctness and had promised a full explanation. He (Richard) would say that his statement was absolutely correct, his figures were from the Public Accounts, and could not be contradicted by any hon. member. The Hon. Minister had stated that two small tractors had been unloaded at Moncton and sent into Kent at a cost \$46,521, and that gravel from Kings County had been shipped to Kent at an expense of \$10,989.23, and that those amounts had been inadvertently charged to Westmorland County. Even accepting the statement of the Hon. Minister, the County of Kent did not get its share



JAMES M. SCOTT, M. L. A.
Who Delivered a Forcible Speech
in the Budget Debate

of public money expended on the roads during that year. The Hon. Minister had claimed that the County of Kent was getting a large share of money which was expended on bridges. He (Richard) would point out that Kent had more bridges than any other country, and it was the duty of the Hon. Minister to either keep them in repair or replace them by better structures. He noticed by the accounts that in 1929 a permanent bridge named Little Shikithaw, costing \$1,327, had been charged to Kent County. He knew of no such bridge in Kent, but there was one called Big Cove and was in an Indian Reserve. Possibly the bridge referred to had been constructed in that locality, but his information was that it was located in the County of Carleton. Before the Hon. Minister undertook to correct his (Richard's) statements, he should have censured the management of his own department and prohibited the charging to Kent County of work that was done in other counties.

Kent County Roads

For the information of the House and Country, he had prepared a statement showing the amount of money expended on the roads during last year, and also the number of miles of highway in each of the several counties. He had included in the list the expenditures on ordinary roads, patrol, secondary and main trunk, and also the municipal expenditures. The statement would show that Albert County received \$224,304.61, with 519 miles; Carleton County received \$617,505.50, with 1028 miles; Charlotte County, \$478,517.24, with 821 miles; Gloucester County received \$275,072.33, with 897 miles; Kent County received \$225,224.24, with 1008 miles; Kings received \$790,990.35, with 1550 miles; Madawaska received \$251,059.34, with 471 miles; Northumberland received \$525,448, with 974 miles; Queens received \$521,684.23, with 752 miles; Restigouche received \$624,529.07, with 389 miles; St. John received \$366,273.40, with 398 miles; Sunbury received \$299,400.19, with 381 miles; Victoria received \$278,939.79, with 589 miles; Westmorland received \$565,073.59, with 1,052 miles; and York received \$699,326.78, with 993 miles.

Continuing, he said, from the figures he had quoted that the counties supporting the government, with the exception of Albert County, had received the largest amounts, and in Albert County the government candidates had lost their election. The figures he had given for Restigouche, with only 389 miles did not include an expenditure of \$382,559, on the Campbellton-St. Leonard highway, and showed that that County had been very generously treated. To his mind it had cost a large amount of money to elect the Minister in Restigouche County.

Bridge Expenditures

Coming now to the question of bridges, including painting, last year had been as follows, Albert, \$50,622.13; Carleton, \$39,317.53; Charlotte, \$47,427.93; Gloucester, \$45,556.58; Kent, \$45,714.36; Kings, \$52,539.06; Madawaska, \$32,751.34; Northumberland, \$80,613.68; Queens, \$39,211.78; Restigouche, \$106,868.81; St. John, \$30,062.30; Sunbury, \$32,539.63; Victoria, \$32,082.72; Westmorland, \$49,284.69; York, \$138,451.52. Considering the large amounts spent in Restigouche, York, Carleton, Charlotte, Kings and Westmorland, and Westmorland especially, it was no wonder that supporters of the Government were elected so easily.

The member from Carleton (Melville) said the other night that Carleton County was in for another crisis, two years ago he had said the same thing and said the road expenditure there saved the situation. It seemed to him that Carleton should be much richer since this Government came in power with all the money it had received on roads. Now he (Melville) claimed the people had bought new cars and had another financial crisis. In Kent there had not been any crisis; the people there had bought a few cars, but did not depend upon the Provincial Government to give them work to help pay for their cars.

Agriculture

Regarding agriculture he would admit that some improvement had been made but there was room for more, and it was up to the Government to do all possible for this important branch, which all governments had neglected since Confederation. He thought that money being squandered in other Departments should be given to agriculture to give greater speed to its promotion. The credit for recent agricultural progress was not all due

to the government for the farmers had put their hands in their pockets to pay for some. The farmers of Kent County last year bought two clover hullers at a cost of \$850.00 each and as the conditions necessary to get a bonus on them were impracticable they paid the whole cost themselves. There were also two other hullers in the County and a large quantity of seed was being produced, before long Kent county would produce all the clover and Timothy seed it required. The farmers there also bought large quantities of lime and fertilizers which they found was more profitable than buying cars.

Old Age Pensions

Although the government had found millions of money to spend last year they could not provide for old age pensions as they had led the people to expect. Their promises in this regard were but a blind to wind votes. They now claimed to be waiting for the Federal Government to act and he hoped that action would come quickly.

MR. SPEAKER said that according to the rules, one member must not refer to another by name in debate, but as the Hon. Senior or Junior member for the constituency he represented, or the Hon. Member, who spoke at some stated time.

MR. J. M. SCOTT

MR. SCOTT, continuing the debate said that it was his first attempt to take part in debate, and he asked the indulgence of the House for any mistakes he might make. He congratulated Mr. Speaker on the honor conferred upon him, and regretted the deaths of Mr. Lordon, Dr. Carter and Mr. Freeze. The late member for Gloucester had been in the same line of business as himself and he knew him well and favorably. Dr. Carter was a man who did his work well as also did Mr. Freeze.

Party Politics

The speech from the throne had been hauled and overhauled and this debate brought out a lot of discussion, which he did not see much in but party politics. He thought every one, especially the younger members of the House, should remember the figures which had been repeatedly placed before them. He was especially interested in the lumber business, and he could assure the House that a man in that business today had his difficulties. He was sorry to hear of wages as low as some of the speakers had claimed. In this part of the country the range had been from \$35.00 to \$40.00 per month, and he had found it hard to get men for some jobs at that. He was sorry for those that were unemployed, but felt that it was to some extent their own fault. The Fraser Company last year had made extensive preparations to get out pulp, built camps, put in supplies, and could not get enough labor to carry out their intentions. The hon. member for Sunbury (Atkinson) had told him that he had been in the same position as Frasers. Charles Price, of Canterbury, was another man who could not get enough help. The reason given was that men were working on the roads.

Long Term Leases

It had been stated that long leases were a great mistake, but they had observed that the man with the long lease who paid mileage yearly and all the other expenses had not such a fat proposition and the province was making a better income than if the lands were not leased. These leaseholders must have a fat year some times or they could not exist. There were also areas under lease like the Fraser lands on the Southwest Miramichi from which it took two years to drive the lumber that could not be operated today if the operator got a bonus of \$5.00 a thousand and free stumpage. He was opposed to lowering stumpage, however, on lands that were easily got it. He had sent a cruiser to report on some lands that he was thinking of cutting on, and the report he got was that it would be a shame to cut this land as the pine was growing at the rate of a half-inch diameter per year, and thus in a few years would make double the cut as at present.

He had seen some of the Russian pulpwood importations at South Brewer, Maine, and as had already been stated, this wood was clear stock, smooth as lead pencils, and in the thirteen cord shipment that he saw, not a stick under five inches in diameter. He had expressed the opinion to the purchaser that it might be all right to grind this imported wood and ship the pulp back to Russia, but it was a mighty poor investment for United States consumption as it was depriving the men of their own country and their neighbors of work. He had, however, learned one point about the Russian wood, and that was that only thirty per cent. could be used in combination with American wood, as it contained either a gum or some other substance that prevented its use exclusively.

He thought the name of Grand Falls should be changed before it was entirely worn out by constant use by hon. members opposite.

Election Matters

Regarding irregularities in elections, these had always been noticeable and probably always would be. The men who had the most brains apparently benefitted most, and the opposition could not have had that qualification or they would have won out. As to promises, he knew of three sheriffs being appointed, and a lot more road supervisors than there were places for, by the opposition before the election. To get rid of irregularities the perfect man would have to be found. He was sure such did not exist among the opposition—perhaps not in the government either. They were probably above.

Before the election of 1925, in making his canvass out at New Maryland, he was told that the government members had promised the people out there a thousand dollars to be put on the road into Fredericton. He told them he couldn't make any promises, but if he were elected he would do what he could to have a road built no matter what it might cost. After the election he had secured the interest of the present Minister of Public Works who sent an engineer and after the survey the estimate was that the road would cost nine thousand dollars. The road was

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