

DEBATE ON THE BUDGET

COLLAPSED UNEXPECTEDLY

(Continued from page two)

built under an arrangement by which the City of Fredericton paid sixty per cent, and the province forty per cent. The result was that since then till today there was a road instead of the unspeakable trail during the old government's regime.

In Good Company

He was proud of the company he was in in the House, and thought that the government front benches had never been occupied by able men than at the present time. The Premier was undoubtedly the ablest man in the province, and he was inclined to think in all Canada, and he, for one, was proud of him and his whole cabinet. The Leader of the Opposition was a man whom he respected, a good mixer, and good representative, and he thought that party would have got nearer victory with him as leader than under the man whom they had adopted his place. If the opposition would take a word of advice from him it would be that they should show a little more optimism and desire to co-operate in the good government of the country, and not occupy their time with petty criticism and silly condemnation.

MR. COLPITTS

MR. COLPITTS, continuing the debate, said he congratulated the Speaker on his appointment, and the mover and seconder of the Address on their speeches.

To record of the Baxter government was not one to be proud of. First, they had taken Grand Falls from the people as well as the timber resources of the province, and given them both to an American Concern. Had Grand Falls power been developed by the people the revenue received from it for the present generation and generations to come would have been greater on an average than the revenue received from the liquor law. Secondly, the government had promised to enforce prohibition. It broke that solemn promise and gave the people government sale. The government had received a greatly increased revenue by imposing extra taxes which it was wastefully spending among government supporters. Last year it had spent \$7,375,000, on 11,836 miles of road, an amount equal to \$623. for every mile in the province.

He wished to thank the people of Albert County, among whom were many prominent Conservatives, for electing his colleague and himself in an effort to drive this government, the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and a few of his political friends, from public office on account of their broken promises to the people. Since coming to the House he had been busy looking into departmental accounts, and had discovered some of the reasons for the deficit of \$635,000, which had increased the burden of every taxpayer in the

province for 1930 by about \$125.

National Park

He would suggest to the government that they buy land in Albert County and give it to the Dominion Government for a National Park. It would be a good investment and would help the southern part of the province. Its creation would be a great relief to unemployment during the coming summer.

The government claimed that a large part of the deficit and the seven millions increase in debt had been caused by unemployment. When the list of machinery, the cars and trucks which had been bought and the expenses of Ministers and their political friends, was estimated it would be seen that claim was not entirely correct.

Lack of Markets

Agriculture was going from bad to worse, on account of no markets. Western farmers were getting what markets we had, as for instance, the importations of beef, pork, and other farm products. As to expenses in the Department of Agriculture, the amount paid to W. T. Chapman on behalf of fox breeders, was a good sample. He had received a salary of \$3,091.13, with expenses of \$2,136.70. A detailed study of that gentleman's diary last June was of interest. He had not got very far from Moncton in his travels and had been held up several days by repairs to his car, and was on June 19th, the diary said he was at Salisbury on "local work". That was the day he was the right hand man of the Minister of Agriculture at the polls. According to the account he got well paid for his day.

Some Complaints

When he came to the Department of

Public Works conditions were so bad he did not know where to begin. Payrolls were sworn to by supervisors and bridge inspectors for labor at ten hours a day when many of the men only worked six, eight or nine hours at the most. Some payrolls showed the name of men at different places on the same day. In some cases men had as high as thirty working days in a month, besides Sundays. Some men on bridge payrolls as carpenters were nearly ninety years of age. He had these payrolls on his desk, and could read them for the information of the House. A bridge inspector in the Parish of Covendale showed by his payroll that he worked for ten hours on election day, July 28th, on the Havelock Mitton bridge, and on June 19th, he was the only man on his payroll who worked for that day. He had also a mileage charge for thirty miles and meals, 90 cents. Then there was a bill for seven thousand feet of lumber at \$38.00 a thousand, delivered to the Elgin Steel bridge by F. A. Garland. There were other charges involving A. W. Garland, and Alex. Garland. These names, he believed, represented the same men, and they were on different payrolls on the same day. These were some of the reasons why he and other speakers were sitting to the left of Mr. Speaker today. He had tried to get answers to questions which had been refused. He wanted all the payrolls of Albert County and believed he had a right to them. The Department had refused to give them but he was going to get them if he had to stay in Fredericton until next year.

HON. MR. STEWART said that the Deputy Minister, in answer to the request of the member for Albert, had told him that the department had not the facilities for getting out 250 payrolls during the session, but that he could have them copied with his own help or they would be supplied to him during recess.

MR. SIDDALL

MR. SIDDALL, continuing the debate, referred feelingly to the death of the late John P. Lordon, Dr. W. S. Carter and Ralph St. John Freeze, and expressed sympathy for the members of their families.

He had listened with much interest to the remarks of hon. members opposite, and it had seemed strange to him that three members of the government who had done much for the North Shore counties should have been singled out for attack more especially by an hon. member for Kent. He had no hesitation in saying that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture had done more for the promotion of agriculture on the North Shore than all others who had administered the department since Confederation. He could bear similar testimony with regard to the activities of the Hon. Minister of Public Works and the Hon. Provincial Secretary-Treasurer. Instead of offering petty criticism, he wanted to know why hon. members opposite did not hand out something of a constructive nature. The hon. member for Kent (Richard) had deplored the large amount of money expended by the government, but before sitting down had complained because there was not \$100,000 more expended in his county. He would challenge any hon. member opposite to stand up in the House and show where in one dollar had been expended by the Minister of Public Works in his particular county which was not needed. It was significant that although the Department of Public Works had expended five or six million dollars, the hon. member for Albert had been the only one, after all the talk and harangue, who had been able to point to an alleged irregularity. He would like to know if there was a banking or business concern which could spend five or six million dollars and make as good a showing as the government had made last year. The hon. senior member for Albert was a business man and he would like to ask if he ever had met with any irregularities.

MR. COLPITTS "Not like this".

Good Hunters

MR. SIDDALL, continuing, said that if it was true that irregularities had occurred in Albert County in connection with road work, the amount involved would not represent a one-hundredth part of one per cent. of the total expenditure. He did not understand how men could come to the House, representing constituencies and go hunting about for a few dollars which some poor fellow had either stolen or had made a mistake. If the hon. member for Albert was proud of having won his election, he was certainly not giving any evidence of it by the course he was pursuing.

A Fault Finder

His hon. friend from Kent (Richard) had found fault because no Liberals were employed on the roads in his county. He (Siddall) had been interested in politics for thirty years, and knew that it was customary for the party in power to give the patronage to its own friends. He knew of a case in his own country in 1925, where a Liberal, who was engaged in road work, had hired a Tory for his teamster. Very soon afterwards he was informed by the Road Commissioner that if he could not get a Liberal to assist him to go home and take his team with him. He (Siddall) did not pretend to say that Conservatives would not have done the same thing, but he did not like the hollow and thin attitude of his hon. friends opposite. His hon. friend from Kent had been a Tory and he was an honest man then and joining the Liberal party had not changed him in that respect.

Old Age Pensions

With regard to Old Age Pensions, the government had made a promise and it was going to be carried out. The late Federal government had arranged to pay fifty per cent. of the cost, but the people had hurried it from power and they now had an administration which was pledged to provide practically all the money for that service. Under the circumstances it would be folly for the provincial government to start paying out Old Age Pensions, until such time as the federal government had enacted new legislation. If he (Siddall) was on the opposite side of the House, and could find as little to criticize as the hon. members sitting over there had so far been able to find, he would say nothing. The hon. senior

member for Albert had criticized the government because of the increased expenditure, but had no sooner taken his eyes off his paper when he urged the establishment of a National Park in his county in order to provide employment. Men of ability occupied seats to the left of Hon. Mr. Speaker, but they were inclined to camouflage the issue by talk and criticism. His advice to them was to hand out something besides nonsense to the people of the province. A stranger listening to an hon. member a few days ago had afterwards inquired of him (Siddall) if that was the type of speech which the House had to listen to.

He could tell hon. members that governments were never defeated by an opposition, but it was done by their friends and hangers-on. He thought his hon. friends opposite would get along much better if they were to endeavor to get on a higher level.

Where the Blame Rests

The Hon. Minister of Public Works had been criticized for expending too much money. If he had done that, those who were largely to blame for it were his hon. friends opposite, and in that he did not include the little Jones children who had only recently come in. A reference to the debates would show that the older members of the opposition had constantly complained because the government did not spend sufficient money in their counties. The junior member for Madawaska had recently accused the government of extravagance, and had wound up by condemning it for not building another bridge in his county. The government and the Ministers were not to blame but the blame should rest upon the private members.

Roads Improved

In referring to the road expenditure he said that when he came to the House in 1925 the County of Westmorland had some fairly good trunk highways, but that could not be said of the secondary and by-roads. If the people were to be kept on the farms good roads were a necessity, and they could only be provided by the expenditure of money. He would like to know what good the province would be without a public debt, and it was certainly better to have one than to have things as they were in 1925. At that time many people were about ready to throw up the sponge, and the return to power of the present government was their last hope. Money had been expended not only for the improvement of the roads but for the betterment of conditions throughout the country. Now that the roads were in good shape it might be possible to reduce the expenditure on them. There were other departments, however, such as education, agriculture, and public health on which there could be no curtailment, as those services had to be maintained in the interests of the rising generation.

Hydro Development

He was very sorry that the Chairman of the Hydro Commission was not in his seat, but all were glad to know that his health had greatly improved and he expected to be able to take his place in the House within a few days. Much money had been expended in hydro development and he considered the province was one hundred per cent. better off because of that expenditure. The people had been given the benefit of cheap light and power and good value had been received for every dollar expended under the direction of the present Commission. At present economic conditions were not right, but he had seen hard times before and realized that they could not last forever.

The Election Law

Referring to the election law, he noticed that some hon. members had advocated a change in the form of ballot. Personally, he had had considerable experience with elections, and could testify to the great improvement which had been brought about in comparison with the old days. When an election was on both sides were anxious to win, and no doubt they often went to extremes. The present law was good, but was capable of some improvement. As for the ballot, he considered it superior to that used in Dominion elections, as it was more secret. If a person were to have a ballot placed in his hand before entering a booth he could drop it on the floor, pick up another, and no one would know how he voted. He was strongly in favor of retaining the present form of ballot.

Bootleggers Active

Referring to the election of June last, he said that the government candidates in Westmorland had the bootleggers and rum runners lined up solidly against them. They turned out with their cars and had hauled many voters to the polls. At Shemogue, where he (Siddall) had stood during the day, an influential dealer in liquor declared that he wanted to put out the Baxter government because it had put him in goal. The bootleggers had worked hard against the government candidates and while they took twenty-two votes away from them at the Shemogue poll, he was glad to say that twenty-two good temperance Liberals had voted for them. The rum runners were all against the government candidates. They were also opposed by the Temperance Alliance, which was simply a side-show of the opposition. One clergyman who had worked against them at the last election was more of a politician than a parson. That gentleman in a previous election had been a wonderful supporter of Hon. Fred Magee, who, when a member of the House, had always advocated Government Control. In 1924 Rev. Mr. Bell, who was Field Secretary of the Alliance, had visited Port Elgin and in the course of his speech said he was ashamed of the politicians who had advocated Government Control. The pastor to whom he had referred thought he meant Hon. Mr. Magee, and so journeyed to the home of that gentleman and tendered his apology. At the next meeting of the Presbytery that clergyman had a resolution adopted, expressing regret at the language used by the Rev. Mr. Bell, a copy of which was forwarded to the President of the Alliance, Donald Fraser, and also to Premier Veniot. At the late election that clergyman had supported the Lib-

erals and had attacked the Baxter government for having adopted Government Control.

The Alliance Scored

He could say that in spite of the activity of the Temperance Alliance about ninety per cent of the clergy of Westmorland had supported the government ticket and it also had the support of the W.C.T.U. and many temperance people. In other words, the friends of true temperance were with them and he could tell them that that support was greatly appreciated. As long as he was a member of the House he would stand for temperance, but not for the Alliance, which was more for politics than for temperance. He wished to say that he had known the W.C.T.U., for nearly fifty years and had the very highest regard for members of that organization.

It being six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair to resume at 8 p.m.

Evening Session

MR. HARRISON on the House resuming after recess, moved that the Public Accounts Committee be authorized to require the attendance before said Committee of Arthur King, Road Supervisor, of the Parish of Rogersville, Northumberland County, and other witnesses, to testify regarding certain irregularities, and that papers and records relating to the matter be produced; the said Committee to advance the necessary conduct money to entitle them to attend.

MR. SIDDALL, continuing the debate, said that he desired to make further reference to the work carried on by the Hydro Electric Commission. In that connection he would point out that a considerable portion of the money expended by the government had been devoted to hydro extension in the rural districts, and of course had meant an addition to the public debt. The Hon. Minister of Public Works could not very well be blamed for that expenditure.

According to a despatch of the Saint John Evening Times-Globe, charges had been made before the Public Accounts Committee of irregularities in connection with road expenditures. It was even claimed that somebody had carried liquor to the men employed on the roads. It was surprising to him that hon. members opposite had not given more attention to matters of that kind prior to 1925. He knew of a case in Bayfield, Westmorland County, where thirty or forty men employed on a government job had been supplied with liquor daily by a man brought in from outside to supervise the work. They had used eight or ten bottles a day, and it was not government liquor, but bootleg whiskey. He had been told at the conclusion of the day's work the workmen were enticed into a poker game and robbed of their money. Now the opposition were complaining because a road commissioner in Northumberland County had a bottle of whiskey, which went to show that they were becoming virtuous. If the story was true, he hoped the Hon. Minister of Public Works would get after the man and put a stop to it. It was easy for hon. members to make charges against public officials, but they should be able to back them up with the evidence.

An Ill-Advised Slur

The hon. junior member for Albert had made some statements reflecting on the conduct of public officials, and he should be prepared to back them up. The hon. senior member for Albert had complained that he was unable to get possession of public documents. As a matter of fact, both hon. members had been searching every nook and corner of the departmental building for the last two weeks in quest of information and had even entered a vault where they were not supposed to be. He thought that those hon. members should at least keep within the bounds of decency. When an hon. member entered a vault and suggested to an old and tried official that he might change the payrolls, it was about time to draw the line. He did not wish to hurt the feelings of the hon. junior member for Albert, but he could tell him that he had been ill-advised when he tried to slur the Hon. Minister of Agriculture because he was defeated at the polls. Bigger men than those now representing Albert had failed of election in days gone by, and it was no reflection on Hon. Mr. Smith for having met defeat after having served the county faithfully for thirteen years. He wished to say that all were glad to welcome the Hon. Minister of Agriculture to the County of Westmorland and they appreciated the action of the Liberals in permitting him to be returned by acclamation. He was sure that ninety per cent. of the farmers of the province wanted Mr. Smith to continue as Minister of Agriculture.

Sales Past and Present

Referring again to the late election, he said that he had made the statement that in 1924, the last year of the Veniot Government, more liquor had been sold by vendors than had since been sold in one year by the Liquor Commission. True, not as much money had been made out of it by the government, as the profits had been divided with the vendors and doctors and been paid for issuing prescriptions. The Veniot Government had also issued no less than eighty beer licenses without the sanction of the people, and many of them were secured by people who were the proprietors of dives. He (Siddall) had, as a prohibitionist, voted again Government Control, but had no hesitation in saying that Government Control was superior to prohibition under the old government.

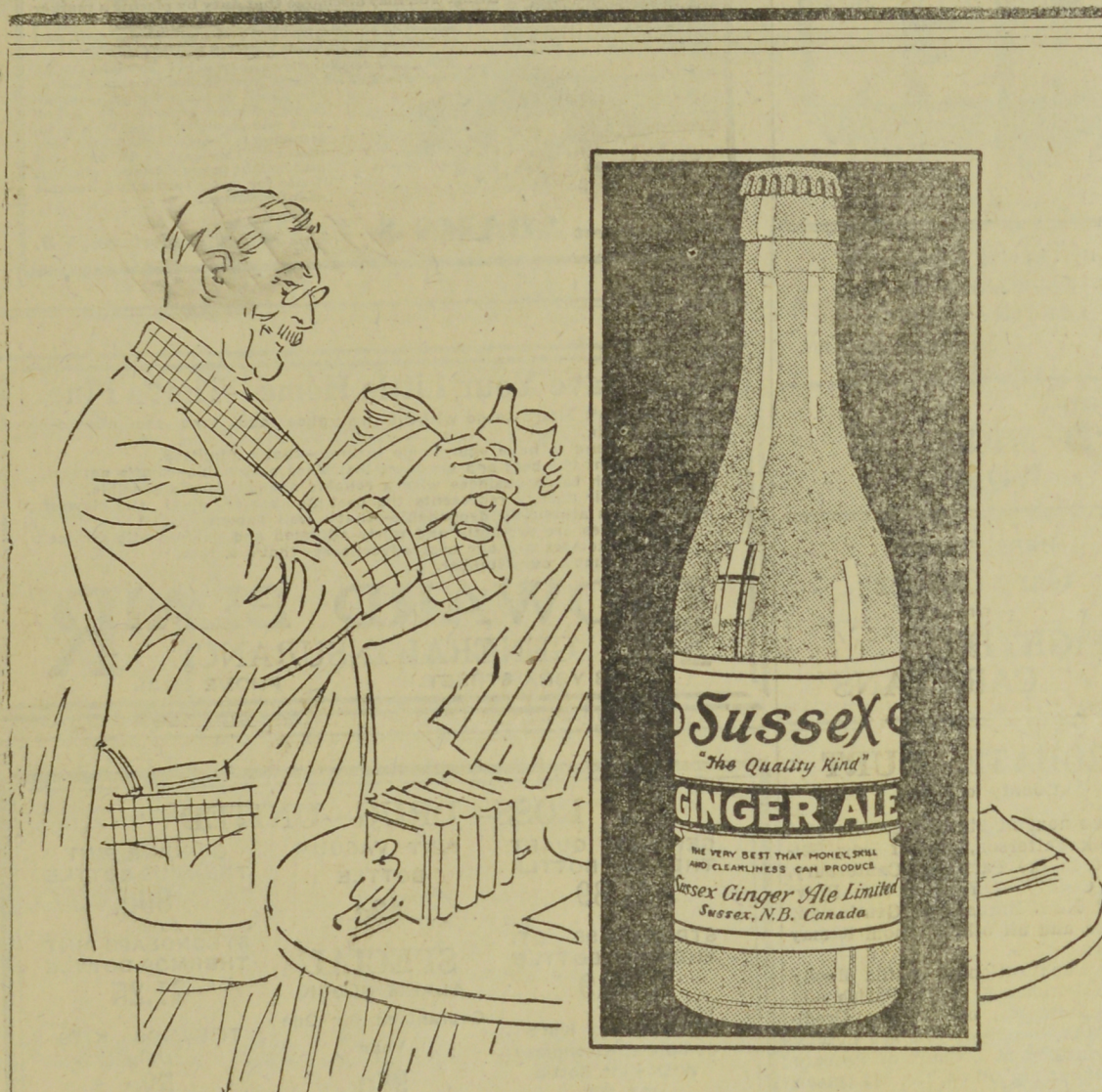
The National Park

An hon. member for Albert (Colpitts) had made mention of the proposed National Park, and had urged that it be established in his county. He (Siddall) believed New Brunswick should have a National Park and that Albert County could provide an ideal site for it. The hon. junior member for Albert had made a statement that moose were being depleted, and he (Siddall) would like to know who it was that killed them off and fed the carcasses to the foxes.

MR. COLPITTS said that he wished to deny the statement by the hon. member that he (Colpitts) had been in the vault.

HON. MR. SPEAKER said that he

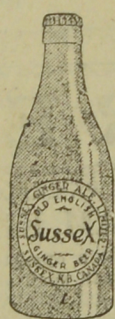
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