

The Marketing Bill Put Through Committee Stage In the House Yesterday

Was Cordially Approved by a Number of Members—Leader Dysart Explodes Some Fireworks in the Budget Debate—Hon. Mr. Stewart Will Reply This Afternoon.

The Legislature had a real busy day yesterday sitting both afternoon and evening. Leader Dysart held forth during the afternoon on the budget summing up for the forenoon hope party that he is privileged to lead. During the course of his speech, because of reckless statement she clashed with Premier Tilley, Hon. Mr. Leger and Hon. Mr. Stewart, and there were some lively exchanges. In the opinion of the opposition leader everything which the government had to do had gone wrong. Bonds purchased for the sinking funds had slumped while those sold by the province had appreciated; there had been favoritism in awarding contracts and as a grand wind-up he declared that the province had been bled to the tune of \$200,000 in the purchase of road machinery in comparison with purchases made by Nova Scotia. As forecast by the Mail Mr. Dysart wound up by moving an amendment to the supply motion.

Hon. Mr. Stewart moved the adjournment of the debate and will explode some fireworks this afternoon in the direction of Leader Dysart and his followers.

In the evening the House went into Committee and agreed to the bill to promote the Marketing of Natural Products, after considerable discussion. The opposition members opposed the bill and may divide the House when it comes up for a third reading. A few other government bills were agreed to.

THE OFFICIAL REPORT

Assembly Chamber,
March 8th, 1934.

The House met at 3 p.m.
An Act respecting automobile was read a third time.

The following bills were read a second time: respecting forest operations and woodsmen; respecting the withdrawal of the balance to the credit of the province with the government of the Dominion of Canada; respecting settlement of the poor.

HON. MR. REILLY presented a report of the standing Rules Committee.
HON. MR. COCKBURN presented a report of the Corporations Committee.
MR. TWEDDIE gave notice of enquiry with reference to an answer relating to crushed stone at Dalhousie located on lands of W. S. Montgomery; also with reference to an enquiry relating to the county line road (near upper Gagetown).

Question of Privilege

MR. AGAR rose to a question of privilege. He said he had been reported in a paper to have said, during his speech on the budget, that government back benchers were paid to admit they were loyal supporters. What he had said was the government back benchers were proud to admit that they were loyal supporters.

HON. MR. TILLEY asked for leave of absence for Hon. Lewis Smith on account of illness.

LEADER DYSART

MR. DYSART, resuming the debate on the budget, at the outset, extended his sincere congratulations to the Provincial Secretary-Treasurer for his capable presentation of the budget from his point of view. They had heard the hon. gentleman delivering the budget since 1925 and each year he seemed to bring in a new crop of happy explanations for budgeting de-

ficits. The matter of budgeting ought to give the government more or less concern. In looking back over the past few years, he said, he knew of no administration that was wider of the mark than the present government in balancing budgets. Last year the Provincial Secretary-Treasurer had budgeted for a deficit of \$87,000, but, at the end of the year he had to admit a deficit of over \$400,000, and as a matter of fact it was well up to a million, and if proper classification of accounts had been made, the deficit would be substantially in excess of the latter amount.

Ottawa Deposit

An item that had caused some discussion was the amount that had been withdrawn from Ottawa. This amount had stood there to the credit of the province for some time and had been withdrawn and thrown into a fund, but no one knew just where. This transaction had resulted in the government defaulting on the sinking fund last year. In his budgeting and manipulation of figures, the Provincial Secretary-Treasurer gave one the impression that he was skillful in a game of poker.

As to Budgeting

Those who had heard the former Premier (Hon. Mr. Baxter), in 1926, lay down certain principles in regard to budgeting, thought they might go far to improve conditions. He had stated that his doctrine was to live within our means and have balanced budgets. Those pledges, however, were made only like the German scrap of paper, only made soon to be forgotten. The debt loan today demanded something over sixty percent of our revenue to carry it, yet gentlemen on the government side of the House hailed the budget as something we should be proud of. During the debate some comparisons had been made with respect to the former administration and the present. He also would make a comparison and take the seven years between 1918 and 1925 and the years between 1926 and 1932. During the period between 1918 and 1925 the total revenue was \$22,117,000. During the latter period, from 1926 to 1932, the total revenue was \$39,794,000, an average yearly increase of \$2,575,000. In addition the government had been relieved of the Valley Railway which had a carrying charge of a quarter of a million dollars and also a like amount in carrying the bonds. The government had no value to show for the greatly increased amount of money that had been expended. The Provincial Secretary-Treasurer said they had a sinking fund to show for the increased expenditures. There had been an increase in the sinking fund of \$2,000,000, but there had also been a much larger proportionate increase in the public debt. The only thing to our credit was the Hydro but this year that department had also gone behind \$120,000.

Sinking Fund

The matter of the sinking fund was very important, but things were not as they were made to appear by the Provincial Secretary-Treasurer, who claimed that the country was in safe hands because they were looking after the sinking fund. The Provincial Secretary in his statement had given an account of the sale of one bunch of bonds and the purchase of another for the sinking funds. The bonds that he had sold were payable in Canada, New York and London, while those he had purchased were payable only in New York and Canada and were less valuable than the ones that had been disposed of. The bonds that had been sold at .95 were today quoted at 1.04.

Some Cross Firing

HON. MR. LEGER—"What are ours quoted at?"
MR. DYSART—"Yours are quoted at 1.02 1/4."

MR. DYSART, continuing, said that in connection with this transaction the Provincial Secretary-Treasurer was seeking to begot the public mind and his want of frankness in dealing with that sale and purchase of bonds was unworthy of the hon. gentleman. As a result of his methods he (Dysart) would class him as a second Ponzi.

HON. MR. LEGER—"Mr. Speaker I demand that the hon. gentleman retract that statement."

MR. DYSART said he would withdraw the remark.
Continuing, he said they were led to believe that the character and value of the bonds bought back into the sinking fund were of the same character and value as those disposed of, but that was not true.

HON. MR. LEGER—"It is true."
MR. DYSART—"It is not true."
HON. MR. LEGER—"We will deal with that matter later."

MR. DYSART continuing, said that the bonds in question placed in the sinking fund were payable only in Canada and New York. Bondholders, he said, claimed it was essential to have as wide a spread as possible in the matter of where the bonds were payable.

Swan Songs

The members for Charlotte (Groom and Cockburn) had been singing their swan-songs, aptly named the Fundy warblers, chiefly about the political meetings last summer in Charlotte and he (Dysart) was indebted to them for spreading the word that the opposition had difficulty in getting adequate press reports for its speak-

ers. The member for Kings (Fairweather) by the tone of his speech the other day, had evidently regained his good nature, which he lost after the cabinet shuffle, by the prospect of other chances of preferment. His reference to comparing the choice of a premier with the choice of an axe-handle was apt, but he would suggest to the hon. gentleman that he, personally, better see how the axe was hung. Knowing the hon. gentleman's high moral qualities, he scarcely expected him to commence the government for breaking faith with the municipalities and the boys and girls of the province by reneging in the matter of the grant to vocational schools.

MR. FAIRWEATHER—"I think the hon. gentleman quite misunderstood my remarks."

Free School Books

MR. DYSART, continuing, said his hon. friend gave credit to the government for depriving children of free school books, yet he had been glad to use the free school book policy as a means to get elected. He (Dysart) further thought that he (Fairweather) had lowered the dignity of debate by referring to committee room proceedings.

MR. FAIRWEATHER—"I brought up your statement in committee to prove that your statement in the House was contradictory to your previous attitude."

A Pine Dream

MR. DYSART, continuing, said he had been surprised at certain members on the government side going out of their way to get a fling at a certain gentleman who had not a seat in the House, but who would be here if the government had the courage to call a bye-election in the county of York. Mr. McNair, he said, was associated with the Liberal party, and he (Dysart) was proud that he was, and to be associated with him. He was a young man giving his life to uplift the citizenship of the province and he would be carrying on until better government was secured. He was connected with the Liberal organization and was sometimes around the House, but was that any worse, he asked, than to have the organizer of the government party on the floors of the House as a member, and another man with a seat on the floor, not a member but who was organizer in York and a sort of traveling investigator for the government.

The Ottawa Deposit

The argument of the hon. member for Saint John in trying to justify the placing of the fund at Ottawa in the current year for sinking funds was not conclusive. The Port Royal pulp transaction, while perhaps justified of itself, was not counterbalanced by giving direct relief to Northumberland, because Saint John had received nearly as much relief. Various members had stated that the deficit incurred had been due to the large amount of money spent on direct relief, which could not be any excuse because the relief money had been charged to capital accounts. He agreed with the hon. member for Saint John (Agar) that tariffs were important, but he could not reconcile that statement with the way the hon. gentleman voted in the recent decision.

Some Delusions

The Attorney-General, when he made his contribution to the debate, had stated that he was going to dispel all the illusions which the hon. member for Gloucester, he claimed, had created. He had rushed to the defence of P. S. Ross and Company, but members of the opposition still thought that in inserting their notes in the auditor's report they had written their names to the little game of politics; what they had stated was clearly written to bolster up the government and not in keeping with the repute of that firm. He (the Attorney-General) admitted a very rapid falling off in the value of the Crown Lands, from sixty millions to twenty-one millions. His estimate, as received from the Crown Lands Office, was apparently incorrect, as it did not agree with the Comptroller-General's report.

Constellations

The hon. member for York (Jewett) had waxed enthusiastic in talking about the thousands of stars of achievement to the credit of the government. He (Dysart) would suggest he might add a few stars more. What about, he asked, their achievement in regard to economy; in regard to the avoidance of deficits; what about their breach of faith with the municipalities regarding vocational education; what about the withdrawal of free school books, and the imposition of extra charges upon municipalities; the reduction of agricultural appropriation depriving the people of elementary agriculture in the schools; loss of support to butter and cheese factories, lessening the encouragement of horticulture and stockraising, and the abolition of all aid to exhibition, to say nothing of dropping land-clearing bonuses, and yet with all this lessened activity, the sum paid in salaries was as large as ever. He would especially condemn the withdrawal of the bonus for land-clearing and the mismanagement of the funds while the policy was in operation. Then, Old Age Pensions and Mothers' Allowances had been thrown in the discard; they were useful policies for an election, and the people, though expecting them, had to be content with broken promises. There had been no prosecution as promised for road supervisors who stole public money. Perhaps an outstanding achievement was the purchase of the Montgomery rock pile, locally named "Les Roches de Stew-

art". In answer to an inquiry last year, he had received information in regard to that famous rock pile which turned out to be not in accordance with the facts.

Smith Foundry

HON. MR. STEWART—"Mr. Speaker, I ask that that statement be taken down."

MR. DYSART—The Smith Foundry purchase was another achievement by which a considerable sum of money was turned over to the gentleman who is generally reported to be "the boss of the government." Another achievement was the reckless purchase of millions of dollars worth of road machinery, lying today in various garages throughout the province and outdoors "waiting, rotting, rusting."

A Rock Crusher

He charged the government with maladministration when it used \$24,000 of the relief fund to buy a rock crusher when six out of the nine rock crushers in the province were idle. Yet this had been done, while the Premier in Montreal had stated that thousands of people in New Brunswick were starving. He noticed in the financial statement that Mr. H. Clair Mott had been paid in the last year upwards of twenty thousand dollars, for professional services. In looking over the Public Works reports, he noted that in 1930 \$8,563,000, had been expended for roads. In 1933 for the same amount the expenditure was \$1,571,000. Yet the salaries of the departments had gone on at practically one hundred per cent. In last year's Public Works report under the head of permanent accounts, it was stated that five contracts had been given, totalling \$136,000, with \$55,000 for extras. He did not say that there was anything wrong about this expenditure or with the contractors, except that there was grave suspicion of collusion. One thing that was peculiar was that the average cost of the gravel used upon these widely spaced jobs was on the average \$2.25 per yard. The Minister of Public Works on page 170 of the synoptic report of 1932 in speaking about the cost of gravel stated that from 1922 to 1925 the cost per cubic yard had been \$1.79, and from 1926 to 1931 the price had been reduced to \$1.33. Why then he (Dysart) would ask with modern machinery and cheap labor, should gravel cost nearly a dollar per yard more than the minister had quoted last year. He would ask the hon. gentleman to explain.

Will Explain

HON. MR. STEWART: "We will do that."
MR. DYSART said he would also ask him what happened at the conferences which were held at the time these contracts were given.
HON. MR. STEWART: "I can tell the hon. gentleman I know of no conferences."
MR. DYSART: "Did the hon. Minister not have a conference with certain contractors?"
HON. MR. STEWART: "Positively no."

Point Of Order

MR. DYSART asked then if the Minister would not acknowledge there had been round table talks.

HON. MR. TILLEY rising to a point of order, said that the hon. leader of the opposition under the rules of the House must accept a member's denial.

MR. DYSART, continuing, said there was something wrong when these gravel contracts had cost last year \$78,000, more than the work could have been done for according to the Minister's own figures a few years ago, and he believed that even men sitting behind the government would not condone such flagrant waste of the people's money.

Road Machinery

There was another matter that he felt he should touch upon before concluding his remarks, and it had to do with the purchase of road machinery. A statement by the Hon. Minister of Public Works appearing in the Synoptic Report showed that he had purchased road machinery and equipment or various kinds to the total value of \$539,000. Of that amount \$936,000 had been charged to permanent roads and practically all of the balance to ordinary roads and patrols.

HON. MR. STEWART: "Where did you get the patrol, as that means ordinary roads?"

Says Province Bled

MR. DYSART said that he had on more than one occasion dealt with this matter and he had always been under the impression that the province was paying too much for its road machinery and he believed that the Hon. Minister was sticking to his guns, as he had once stated that when he had road machinery to buy friends of the government would have the preference. He had apparently adhered to that plan and it was a matter of sorrow and regret that he had paid the highest prices. When he (Dysart) had made that charge on a previous occasion, the Hon. Minister had given it an emphatic denial, but he did not think he could do that on the present occasion. He had no hesitation in saying that as a result of the policy pursued by the Hon. Minister, the province had been bled through the purchase of road machinery and no self-respecting government should put up any longer with such a condition of affairs, but should immediately call for an investigation by a Royal Commission. He would add that he made that statement without the slightest fear. Quite recently he had the matter checked up in an adjoining province and had procured the figures on the cost of road machinery from a friend of the government. He had learned the important fact that the same kind of road machinery had been sold to the Harrington government of Nova Scotia at a lower rate than paid by the Hon. Minister of Public Works.

HON. MR. STEWART: "Go on and make your statement, I will deal with it later."
Nova Scotia Prices
MR. DYSART, continuing, said that was what he intended to do. The Hon. Minister had purchased in 1930 something like thirty leaning wheel graders at a cost of \$2,500 each and the (Continued on page three)

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