

# Cause of Private Ownership Triumphed Last Night

**U. N. B. Debating Team Victorious over Acadia In Annual Intercollegiate Debate**  
**--Decision of the Judges was Unanimous**  
**---Audience at Opera House should have been larger.**

The debating team of the University of New Brunswick defeated the debating team of Acadia University last night at the City Opera House. The decision of the judges was unanimously in favor of the provincial university. The occasion was the first in six years on which the U.N.B. has debated in Fredericton in the Intercollegiate Series and a larger audience certainly should have been present. The unfavorable weather probably had something to do with keeping down attendance. The U.N.B. students present celebrated the victory in the usual noisy fashion, not forgetting to cheer the Acadia team, which took its defeat in a gentlemanly manner.

Dr. C. C. Jones, chancellor of the U.N.B., acted as chairman, and after the debate announced the decision of the three judges. Each made up his decision independently but all agreed in finding that U.N.B. had won. The judges were Rev. Mr. Keegan of St. John, Hon. W. B. Jonah, County Court judge of Sussex, and Prof. Lerdly of Mt. Allison University.

## Private Ownership Won.

The resolution which formed the subject of the debate was as follows: Resolved, That public ownership and operation of all capital goods except such as are used in agriculture, if adopted by the people of Canada, would be more advantageous than the present system of private ownership.

The Acadia debaters supported the affirmative and the U.N.B. team the negative. The cause of private ownership, as represented by the debaters of the local university, won.

## The Two Teams

The two teams were composed of the following:

Acadia, R. S. Gregg, leader; L. W. Stackhouse, H. F. Lewis.

U.N.B., A. Gilbert, leader; M. McC. Baird, F. C. Cronkhite. They spoke in the order named, the leaders also speaking in rebuttal.

## R. S. Gregg

Mr. Gregg, leader of the Acadia team, opened the debate for the affirmative. He distinguished between Socialism and public ownership in his opening remarks and argued that public ownership was more economical than private ownership. The resolution said nothing concerning any change in the ownership of land. As far as capital was concerned public ownership would merely do away with the private saver, substituting the public in his place. As far as labor was concerned, duplication

would be avoided by public ownership, also unnecessary waste and exploitation of the working man. Public ownership, by placing all men on an even footing, would stimulate individual effort. It was not true that the present system caused greatest productive effort. Under public ownership products would be divided among all and so there would be an incentive to effort which is lacking today.

Co-operation would be aided by public ownership and good management would receive greater recognition.

The speaker then dealt with distribution. Rent, wages and interest were the subdivisions to be considered but as land was shut out by the resolution so must rent be also. Under the present system there was a tendency for the laborer to receive less wages than he should, and also for the consumer to pay more for what he bought. There everywhere was a tendency toward profits greater than the normal. This brought about great fortunes swollen beyond any proper extent. Monopoly was the prime cause of all these.

Interest would be done away with by public ownership because the private saver would be eliminated.

In conclusion the speaker said that all group distinctions would be done away with by public ownership placing all upon an equal social scale.

## A. Gilbert

Mr. Gilbert, leader for the negative, was then called. He pointed out that capital goods must be divided into three classes, first those generally in public ownership, such as canals, postal systems, etc.; second, railways and transportation systems; third, manufacturing plants. It was necessary that public ownership be proven advantageous for capital goods of all three classes.

The negative would deal with the subject from political, economic and financial points of view. He then took up the matter from the political point of view. He urged that public ownership would make larger the field for graft and inefficiency. He gave instances of those things in federal and provincial governments and contrasted them with great successes accomplished by private effort. The affirmative was practically Socialistic at heart. It had excluded agriculture from public ownership but had not explained why that was more entitled to such exclusion than fishing, mining, lumbering.

Mr. Gilbert strongly criticized government management as exemplified

in the various governments in Canada. For years past there had been revelations of mismanagement, graft and inefficiency. Rake-offs had flourished. Under private ownership such did not occur on account of business-like management. The I.R.C. had seven employees per mile of track, the C.P.R. four men per mile. That told the story of the difference between publicly owned and privately owned institutes. Under general public ownership opportunities for graft and overmanning would be increased. Not only would railways show this but all public interests would. The adoption of public ownership would produce the greatest political crisis in the country's history, together with an industrial breakdown.

## L. W. Stackhouse.

Mr. Stackhouse, second speaker for the affirmative, took up the social aspect of the matter. He argued that under public ownership the hours of labor would be shortened, allowing more time for physical, mental and moral development. Another effect would be the elimination of social conflict. This arose from a clash of interests between the capitalist and the laborer. It only could be removed by the abolition of the capitalistic class.

Private ownership, said Mr. Stackhouse, had produced adulterated foods, drugs and other things. Such would be impossible under public ownership. Such a thing as violation of the Scott Act, which he understood, existed in Fredericton as in other Scott Act towns, would be impossible for the public would control both the manufacture and distribution of liquor. Industrial accidents, child labor, employment of women, degradation of labor by low wages, deteriorated morals, all would cease by the creation of a harmony of interests which would accompany public ownership.

## M. McC. Baird.

Mr. M. McC. Baird, second speaker for the negative, followed Mr. Stackhouse, and dealt with his subject from an economic point of view. Public utilities were of such a nature that there could be no argument that Canada should take over more than she had already. Public ownership in Russia, Great Britain and Australia had not been the glowing success painted by the Affirmative. The greatest failures of public ownership had been in countries most similar to Canada. (The management of the Intercolonial Railway by the dominion government resulted in a deficit of \$11,500,000 in one year. Edmonton and Toronto contained examples of public and private ownership. Edmonton was begging private persons to take its municipality-owned electric railway off its hands, whereas the privately owned railway in Toronto was paying \$1,500,000 in taxes to the city and was being operated successfully.

Commercially, Canada, under pri-

vate ownership, had become the fifth nation of the world. Under it she had developed great leaders in industry. A Sir Thomas Shaughnessy or a Sir Frederick Williams Taylor, surely were worth the continuation of private ownership. As a matter of fact, Canada, under public ownership and competing against countries with private ownership, could not hold her prominent leaders of industry.

Mr. Baird proceeded to argue that Canada did not need another system of distribution. It was not likely that a system under which Canada was developing would be cast aside for a mere hazardous experiment.

## H. F. Lewis

Mr. Lewis, third speaker for Acadia, followed. He proceeded to outline a plan of government under public ownership. Under that the dominion government would own and operate all capital industries. Superintendents would be chosen from among foremen and the latter from among the laborers. Dominion superintendents would be over all capital goods in provincial or municipal government. The "recall" system could be used to remove incompetent officials. A simple system would take the place of the haphazard methods and duplication now in existence. Mr. Lewis proceeded to describe in detail the system which could be used under public ownership. A permanent industrial commission would have the control. Scientific research would be expended to an enormous extent.

Mr. Lewis argued that corruption, both private and public, would become impossible under public ownership. Non-political corruption would cease and political corruption would be greatly reduced.

The speaker pointed out that the great war in Europe had shown what could be done under public ownership substituted for private ownership.

## F. C. Cronkhite

Mr. F. C. Cronkhite, third speaker for the negative, took up the argument for his side from the point of view of finance. He said that liabilities amounting to two billions of dollars would have to be assumed by the dominion to put a scheme of public ownership into effect. In New Brunswick \$16,000,000 would be required. Where could these enormous sums be obtained? The province of New Brunswick could not even finance the building of the St. John Valley Railway. Taking the cities, the adoption of the idea in St. John would require an outlay of \$4,000,000.

Mr. Cronkhite stated that private owners would not be willing to invest in government bonds to aid in the public financing of the scheme proposed by the affirmative, governmental management in the past having been so inefficient. Outside capital would not come in for similar reasons. No stock could be issued, for that would entail private ownership. Bonds or debentures would be required for the entire scheme. Canada would be the only country in the world under such a system and would have to compete with countries as advantageously situated and with the added advantage of private ownership.

Mr. Cronkhite argued that the great war would make necessary redoubled efforts in the attempt to secure commercial supremacy and that any great attempts should be along that line rather than attempting some visionary scheme. Public ownership would result in a political crisis and industrial breakdown, it would be economically fatal and financially impossible.

## Mr. Gilbert in Reply

Replying, Mr. Gilbert, for the negative, stated that the affirmative had argued on abstract grounds while his own side had advanced facts. Politicians were responsible for the corruption and not the great privately owned industries. Because Germany had succeeded in public ownership, Canada need not. Germany had not succeeded or she would not find herself in the situation she now is. Even in war time, public ownership had not succeeded in Great Britain and it was the leaders of privately owned industries that the country had called to her aid in time of need. It was not true that capitalists did not contribute to public wealth. That was the class which was assisting the British empire in its present time of need.

Mr. Gilbert argued that land was less widely distributed in ownership in New Zealand under public ownership than in Canada under private ownership.

Monopolies had been criticized by the affirmative but they themselves argued in favor of the highest monopoly of all.

## Mr. Gregg in Reply.

Mr. Gregg, replying for the affirmative, denied that his side was arguing for Socialism. Under public ownership the leaders of the great industries would act in private capacity as they did in private ownership and their services would not be lost to the people. Public ownership would not result in greater corruption because there would be greater safeguards. He admitted that industrial initiative had produced the prosperity of the country but the

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feeling of altruism would supply the necessary incentive under public ownership. The argument that Canada could not finance the taking over of all capital goods was outside the resolution as the debate had nothing to do with the inauguration of the system. Social evils were caused by private property and would be re-

## CONSTABLE MEANT BUSINESS.

Speaking at a recent dinner of country constables and other troopers that beset the motorist, Congressman George White of Ohio, told the following story as an appropriate illustration.

One evening just at dusk a city party drove through a backwoods village in a handsome car equipped with all the latest appliances. Hardly had he gone a square before a country constable arose mightily in the middle of the road.

"See here, young feller," authoritatively exclaimed the official person, "you will have to light them lamps of yours."

"All right, old pal," was the happy reply of the cheerful motorist. "Just as you say about it."

With this he touched a button and instantly the powerful light gleamed forth. For a moment the cop was stunned. It was his first experience with auto electric lights, but he soon recovered.

"Look here, you city bug," heatedly exclaimed the officer, moving closer to the car, "don't you try to get gay with me. When I tell you to light your lamps I mean for you to step out an' light 'em."

moved when that was destroyed. Public ownership would not be a government monopoly but a people's monopoly, which would give all its benefits to the people.

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