

THE DAILY MAIL

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What I said November 9, I repeat now: "We shall never sheathe the sword, which we have not lightly drawn, until Belgium—and I will add Serbia—recover in full measure all and more than they have sacrificed; until France is adequately secured against aggression; until the rights of the small nations of Europe are based upon an unassailable foundation, and until the military domination of Prussia is wholly and finally destroyed."—Premier Asquith

MR. PINDER'S GROUCH.

Our old friend, Mr. J. K. Pinder, who for more than a year has been telling his friends "that he was all done with the Government and would let them know what he thought of them on the floors of the House," succeeded in getting the ear of the Speaker during the closing hours of the session, and read a lengthy type-written statement. He strongly resented some criticisms by this good journal of the home, condemned Mr. E. S. Carter, the highly efficient Opposition organizer, and handed out a few diatribes with respect to the notorious Southampton Railway, of which he was the promoter and chief beneficiary. The most charitable view that can be taken of Mr. Pinder's outburst is that he entirely failed to do himself justice. In other words, he made the worst of a very bad case and it would have been far better for him if he had held his tongue and allowed the criticism of his opponents to remain unanswered.

Mr. Pinder takes great credit to himself for cleaning up the Public Works Department of the Government. The very fact that a clean-up was necessary shows that the solemn promises which Mr. Pinder and others made when in opposition have not been carried out. They promised to give the people an honest and business like administration of public affairs, and they have not done so. If proof of this statement is wanted it can be found in a speech delivered by Mr. Pinder in the House a few days ago, when he condemned the Public Works Department in all the moods and tenses. Mr. Pinder has developed into a common scold. He condemned the old government and he condemned the present government, yet he gave a staunch support to every government measure brought down during the session of the Legislature just closed. That the Government has little use for Mr. Pinder is shown by the fact that he had not sufficient influence to secure the appointment of a personal friend in his own parish to the office of chairman of the board of revisors. He induced the same man to give up the position of game warden, yet the Government refused to allow him to name a successor. He pocketed the double insult and allowed the session to pass without once referring to it.

The main object of Mr. Pinder's outburst of Friday evening last was to place on the records of the House a statement regarding the Southampton Railway. This was a most unfortunate enterprise for the province, and Mr. Pinder, had he been well advised, would not have referred to it. The railway was built largely for his personal benefit and the province is today paying the interest on the bond guarantee, amounting to \$155,000. The whole transaction was investigated by a royal commissioner appointed by the Conservative Government at Ottawa, and his report was to the effect that some \$40,000 of public money voted towards the cost of the road could not be accounted for. The royal commission was appointed largely on the strength of a statement made in Parliament by Col. H. F. McLeod, M. P. for York. Here are Col. McLeod's words as taken from Hansard:

But I think I ought to say that Mr. Johnson, the engineer in the case, when he made such a report as he did make, made in having been deceived as to the actual facts of the case. I believe that that report is not in all details a correct statement of the cost of the specific items that went into the construction of the road. I have been familiar with the construction of that road since its inception, and I do say from my own personal knowledge gleaned by living on the spot and by talking to the men whom my hon. friend (Carvell) has cited to-night as having given evidence in the case of Stewart vs. the Southampton Railway Company, I am in a position to know that these items are PADDED ITEMS, and these items which Mr. Johnson has accepted and upon

which very probably the Department of Railways, accepting his statement, paid the subsidy, are not true and correct statements of fact in regard to what went into the construction of that railway. MR. PINDER IS NOT A GOOD BUSINESS MAN, MY HON. FRIEND WILL ADMIT THAT. MR. PINDER BUILT THAT ROAD IN A SLIPSHOD WAY. HE DID NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS TO BUILD THAT ROAD IN THE MOST ECONOMICAL WAY IN WHICH IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN BUILT.

In addition to the above we have the views of the Fredericton Gleaner, the organ of the Government in this city. In an editorial on the Southampton Railway published in its issue of February 12th, 1914, it said:

In the trial of the action some weeks ago, Mr. Pinder in his evidence under oath figured out the cost of the road at the very outside at \$15,500 per mile, including everything, allowing in this \$23,000 for interest and discount on the bonds. This then, on the evidence of Mr. Pinder under oath, fixes the total cost at \$208,750. As we have said above, the revenue from public resources was \$248,000. It will be so observed from this—and this is one of the serious features of the situation—if Mr. Pinder's evidence under oath is to be accepted, Mr. Pinder personally and also as a member of the Legislature, must have misled the Government and the members of the Assembly when he represented to them that he would be ruined if he did not get further assistance from the Government; for, deduct the extra \$2,000 per mile which the Government were induced to give him under the belief that they were giving it to him to complete a work that would otherwise become bankrupt, and Mr. Pinder has still a profit of \$16,500; and he has all that profit from the public moneys without himself having put a dollar into the work or involving himself in any personal financial responsibilities.

Mr. Pinder in his speech Friday attacked the finding of the commissioner and endeavored to show that he was all wrong. He went on to say that the road had cost more money than the commissioner had said it cost, and that a great injustice had been done to him (Pinder).

In reply to Mr. Pinder we will quote some observations of the Gleaner on the cost of the road taken from its issue of July 10th, 1914, during the progress of the enquiry by Commissioner Pringle. Here is the way the Gleaner sized up matters.

In the opinion of Commissioner Pringle there was "a colored gentleman" concealed in the Southampton Railway Company's woodpile. Mr. Pringle need not have been afraid to challenge contradiction if he had said that there was more than one. The story of corruption, as it is further unfolded, becomes more shameful with the testimony of each succeeding witness; and the finishing touch was put to it this morning by the government engineers, who declare that \$12,500 per mile is the outside value of the road instead of \$23,450 per mile, as certified to by Mr. Pinder's engineer. * * * THE WHOLE STORY IS ONE OF A DELIBERATE CONSPIRACY TO DEFRAUD THE GOVERNMENT, CAREFULLY CONCOCTED BY MR. PINDER AND AIDED IN AND ABETTED BY THOSE TO WHOM HE MADE IT WORTH WHILE. The road was built largely in his own interests and for the benefit of his own business, and one would have thought that with the Government providing him with the necessary financial assistance he would have been only too glad to give the right of way and his own services, and anything else that he could, gratis. Instead of doing this, he charged up those items at a most extravagant and extortionate rate; and on top of that represented that he had paid for other items amounts varying from twice to five times as was actually the case. THE AVERAGE MAN WILL LOOK UPON THIS SORT OF THING AS A DELIBERATE AND INTENTIONAL STEAL."

Mr. Pinder's effort to "square himself" with the public on Friday evening may have been due to the fact that he had knowledge that the portfolio of public works was soon to be vacant. Mr. Pinder aspired to this portfolio in 1908, and boasted to his friends on the Nackawick that he had a cinch on it, but Hon. Mr. Hazen turned him down. He probably thinks that he may be more successful this time. He probably thinks also that the public have forgotten the following certificate of character which the Fredericton Gleaner gave him on February 12th, 1914:

There lies today an unsettled balance for his stumpage as far back as 1911 of \$65, and an indebtedness for

stumpage dues for the year 1912 of \$494, a total of \$559. Could there be anything more disgusting in the position of a public man? Has the Government not been exceedingly forbearing and very lenient? It is because of this evidence of Mr. Pinder's gross abuse of trust, of his determination to trade in public affairs for his own personal aggrandizement, of his lack of honor and lack of appreciation of responsibility in his dealings with public business, that he has not been and cannot be taken into the executive. Mr. Pinder may whine and protest, but he must also face the fact that no leader of a Government can afford to take into his cabinet a man with such a reputation as Mr. Pinder unfortunately has.

The Mail has had occasion to criticize Mr. Pinder in the past, but its criticism was mild in comparison with the extracts quoted above. The Gleaner, when it stated that "no leader of a government can afford to take into his cabinet a man with such a reputation as Mr. Pinder unfortunately has," was no doubt voicing the sentiments of Mr. J. K. Flemming, the then Premier. If Mr. Pinder was unable to measure up to the standard set by Flemming, what possible chance can he have with Premier Clarke or the Premier-to-be, Hon. Jas. Murray? Possibly Mr. Pinder is not aware of the fact that the Government ring in this county—the men who handle the patronage—have made all arrangements to consign him to the political bone-heap at the next election. With all due respect to the veteran of York, it does not at this distance look as if he can come back. The time is rapidly approaching in this country when there will be no place in public life for men of the Pinder stamp, no matter what their affiliations may be.

A CONTRAST.

Is it not about time to produce Col. J. B. M. Baxter's war record—or rather his military record? He was a resplendent figure in gold lace and uniform in peace time, but since war broke out and the best and bravest in Canada have gone to the front, Col. Baxter's uniform has not been seen. He doesn't even make a recruiting speech. Yet he was always a flag-flapper and empire builder. Loyalty was his election watchword when he wanted ballots for his party, but he forgot the true meaning of loyalty when bullets began flying. Unlike many men who have gone to the battlefield, leaving dear wives and children behind them, Col. Baxter is a bachelor, and if reports are half true, a rich bachelor. There is nothing to prevent him from doing his duty so far as the public knows, save perhaps a little weakness about the stomach and chilly feet. He can, however, stand in the House of Assembly and talk, and talk, and bring in bills to make registration effective, so as to get more recruits for overseas and the Empire's call. He votes in favor of conscription, and shivers at the thought. He derides and insults a political opponent who is unfortunate in his lameness, and refers particularly to him "dragging his foot about the corridors of this House," but he will not take a chance to fight for his country and risk either leg or arm for that purpose. By reason of a simple ankle accident Mr. E. S. Carter is lame, but with his only two sons fighting for Canada and the Empire in France, he has greater honor in the eyes of the people than his slanderer—who is not only a colonel but a shirker.

Hon. J. B. M. Baxter, the Attorney General of this province, is the principal director of the legislation introduced in the Legislature. By claiming credit for the prohibition bill, he hopes to make it appear that the Government tried to do something during the session just closed. But how can he claim credit for that measure? It was prepared by a committee of the Dominion Alliance, and drawn up by S. B. Bustin, a lawyer in St. John and a most prominent member of that organization. True, the Government paid him for his services, but that is all the Government, or Mr. Baxter, had to do in preparing the legislation. Time will tell how perfect or faulty the act is. It must be judged on its merits.

Good for you, John Morrissey! We love such a fighter. People may not always agree with you, but they will take their hats off to the man who resents such treatment. Premier Clarke when he writes another such letter will not leave himself so open. John Morrissey spares no words in his statement published today in answer to the request for his resignation. In the words of E. S. Carter in the Telegraph, he "flays the Premier from crown to heel." Time and space prevents us from giving his answer the consideration it deserves today. It will keep.

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