

New Brunswick Discriminated Against Under Present Federal Conditions

HON. A. P. PATERSON

The Tragedy of the Maritimes --- The Robbery of the I.C.R. From Moncton --- Hon. Mr. Paterson's Fight For Our Rights Was Un-availing --- He Still Fights On

Mr. Speaker:

Since this Assembly last met the Empire has gone through a constitutional crisis. It is a happy reflection that, though the circumstances afford no precedent, the situation was met and surmounted with characteristic British firmness and fortitude.

God Save The King.

To His Majesty's representative in this Province and to members of his family, I extend my deepest sympathy for their recent bereavement.

Of the member and the former Premier and former member who have been called by death since the last session. I need not add to the splendid tributes paid by the speakers who have preceded me. We honor their memory and respect the worthy contributions they have made to the public weal.

Not yet being familiar with all the rules of this House, I was not aware when I heard the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition making statements that I regarded as mischievous and untrue that I had the privilege of interrupting him. When I mentioned to the Honourable the Premier that I intended to make a few remarks next day in reply to the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition, he informed me that it had been arranged for the Honourable the Attorney-General to speak, that the debate on the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne would then be closed and it could not be further discussed in the House.

When I accepted my position with this Government, I did so with the determination to give the people of New Brunswick the best that is in me regardless of political party or any other interest that may arise as an impediment to providing good government for our people.

There have been allotted to me directly, the duties of the President of the Council, the supervision of the Old Age Pensions Board, and since the legislation of last session, the duties connected with the department of Education, Federal and Municipal Relations.

This department is comprised of three branches; the Federal and Municipal branches are entirely new and have to be established from the ground up. The Education branch has to be established to fit in with what has been functioning in connection with Education and for the purpose of remodelling and co-ordinating the whole system along more modern lines. It is unnecessary for me to say that I have been kept busy day and night.

In addition to other duties directly allotted to me, I have endeavored to give some attention of other branches of the service for the purpose of suggesting improvements that would be beneficial. I have also given consideration to the functioning of the leader of His Majesty's loyal opposition. I don't think the people, generally, especially younger people, are aware of the fact, that in addition to his sessional indemnity, the Leader of the Opposition is paid a salary to assist the Executive as well as this House in providing good government for our people.

I understand that when the principle of paying the Leader of the Opposition a salary was adopted, it was felt that it would place him above the sphere of petty party politics and enable him to give more attention to the welfare of the people. In other words, when the Leader of the Opposition accepts that salary he assumes an obligation to regard first the welfare of the people and to assist in providing good government. I have not received a single worthwhile suggestion from the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition, and I believe the same applies to the other members of the Executive Council. I have paid close attention to every statement that the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition has made in this House and invariably, in my opinion, he has shown more regard for the welfare of his political party than he has for the welfare of New Brunswick.

Judging from the political history of this Province, it is to be expected that such would be the tactics of the leader of the so-called Conservative Party. May I make it clear that this is not a personal criticism of the Hon. Mr. Squires. I am simply pointing out what he is apparently obliged to do because of his position in his party.

On the other hand, we have the present Liberal Government obligated by its pledges to the people to advance the general welfare and also to oppose any policy or measure of the Federal Government that may be detrimental to the welfare of the people of New Brunswick, regardless of what party may be in power at Ottawa; in other words, to place the welfare of the people before political party interests. And I think the people appreciate how well this Government is living up to its pledges.

New Brunswick first is the policy of the Dysart Government, "Canada First" or to be truthful the "Central Provinces First" is both the slogan and the policy of the Conservative party and what that slogan and that policy have done to the economic and social life of New Brunswick and of the confederation is shown by the records.

You may think that New Brunswick first savors of sectionalism but I assure you such is not the case; New Brunswick is a member of the British Empire, in a confederation named Canada and as such it is our first duty to protect the rights and interests of New Brunswick as it is the duty of the people of every other Province to protect the rights and interests of their respective Provinces, first, with due regard for justice, fair play and co-operation. I submit that it is only by so doing can there be a sound and permanent foundation to carry the super-structure we call Canada. We should realize that we cannot build from the super-structure downward; but to build successfully, we must build from the foundation upward and certainly the Provinces are the foundation upon which Canada rests. We should realize that unless every Province in Canada is economically and socially sound the whole structure is economically and socially unsound.

In respect of the work of the Department of Federal Relations may I refer to the exclusive use of the Port of Halifax in winter by the Australian-New Zealand line, which was brought to the attention of this House by the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition recently. He stated in effect, among other things, that instead of accompanying a Saint John delegation to Ottawa, I had sent Mr. Conlon in my place.

May I say, Mr. Speaker, that that statement is not true. Mr. Conlon was in Ottawa attending to the work of my Department some days before the delegation went from Saint John and his being there had nothing whatever to do with the fact that Saint John sent a delegation to Ottawa to discuss the sailings of the Australian-New Zealand line.

I feel that it will be of interest to the House to know something about the work my department did in connection with the sailings of the Australian-New Zealand line. About the middle of last summer, I was advised that the sailings of that line were being considered and I began securing information on this matter because I felt from past experience that if the so-called Canadian National Railways had anything to say about it, the Port of Saint John would not be used. Subsequently, I was informed that the matter had been settled on the basis of a fifty-fifty split between Halifax and Saint John.

After the statement appeared in the press, that Halifax was to be the sole port of call and that a delegation was going to Ottawa from Saint John to discuss that matter, and knowing from past experience that if the sailings had been definitely arranged, joining a delegation to Ottawa would be futile in so far as this season was concerned. I wired Ottawa and secured authentic information.

I was in Fredericton at that time and when I returned to Saint John, I found a letter on my desk from the Common Clerk of the City Council containing a resolution of the Common Council asking me to assist them. I immediately wrote the Common Council enclosing copies of my correspondence with Ottawa on the subject, expressed some opinions regarding the cause of the neglect of the port of Saint John and suggested that I be granted an interview with the Common Council.

In reply I received a letter from His Worship Mayor MacLaren suggesting that I do not take further

action for a time and I subsequently received the following letter from His Worship dated March 4, 1937.

"Further to my letter January 20 in regard to the Australian-New Zealand service.

"In addition to receiving information from Ottawa that all steamers will discharge and load at Saint John and Halifax winter season 1937 and 1938, I have also received similar word from Mr. W. B. Eakin, Director McLean Kennedy Limited.

"The matter is, I think, now definitely settled and I wish to express my appreciation to you for the interest you have taken in the matter."

Mr. Conlon Defended

In as much as Mr. Conlon's name has been mentioned in this House, as I take it, in a slighting way, I feel in duty bound to refute the inference that has been given. May I point out to this House that Mr. Conlon accompanied the delegation that attended the Dominion-Provincial Conference in Ottawa, December, 1935, and because of his familiarity with Federal matters, Federal routine and Federal personnel, his assistance was very valuable. I might say, furthermore, that he was selected as Chairman of the sub-committee on Tourist Travel and National Parks because of his recognized ability and it was due largely to his initiative and his perseverance that the conference passed the resolution providing for a National Park in the Province of New Brunswick and in other Provinces not previously provided with a National Park. The fact that other Provinces have taken advantage of this work while we are still waiting for development gives practical demonstration of what can be achieved by co-operation and a united front and what we are suffering in this Province by divided opinion and sectionalism.

Mr. Conlon has also rendered very substantial and beneficial service in other matters connected with the Federal Relations branch to which I need not refer. Had the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition not been in such a hurry to make political party capital out of something he apparently knew very little about or had the honourable gentleman sought information from me on this subject, which, I submit, his position as Leader of the Opposition not only justifies but obligates him to do, much time of this House and space in the press would have been saved.

Federal Relations

May I draw to the attention of the House the delicacy of the position of the Department of Federal Relations in handling Dominion-Provincial matters. These matters should be treated in the same manner that matters handled by the Federal Department of Secretary of State are handled, which until completed are rarely discussed publicly. May I express the hope that the time is not far distant when every Province will have a Department of Federal Relations and also that the Department of "Secretary of State for the Provinces" at Ottawa be revived, so that we will have a fixed and uniform channel to handle all Dominion-Provincial matters.

The incorporators of Canada were very wise in establishing a department of Secretary of State for the Provinces at the outset. At that time they looked forward to inter-Provincial and Dominion-Provincial co-operation of which we see the need so badly at the present time. In the past I have said very little about the part taken by the two major parties in the Government of Canada.

Many people have said to me that they could not see much, if any, distinction between them and that it is simply a matter of the ins and outs. Listening to the political party tactics of the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition, I feel that it would be in the interests of the people to refer briefly to the fundamental differences between those two parties.

Broadly speaking, the Liberal-Conservative Party, from the time of its establishment has been bent upon defeating the objects for which the confederation was organized while the Liberal party has endeavored to correct the wilful and malicious mistakes of the other party, and to promote the original compact.

That is what political partyism has done with the confederation and explains why the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition and the Conservative party generally are so anxious

to have the truth withheld from the people.

The people of New Brunswick especially should be of one mind in support of the party that has tried and is trying to have the agreements of confederation carried out.

The so-called Conservative party, was originally a coalition party comprised of both Liberals and Conservatives as its title Liberal-Conservative shows. It was organized in this Province to promote the welfare of New Brunswick in Federal matters and as a whole to carry out the compact but it soon fell under the domination of Montreal, Ontario and United States capitalistic interests and has persistently betrayed this Province. Every serious economic handicap from which our people are suffering in our Federal Relations, was initiated by the Conservative party.

Under those conditions one can understand why the conservative party so strongly opposed the pledge of the Dysart Party to establish a department of Federal Relations when elected and the desire of the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition to criticize it.

No doubt if the Conservatives ever get into power again in this Province, which I trust the intelligence of our people will prevent, they will do away with the Department of Federal Relations. The records show clearly that the Conservative party does not wish New Brunswick to profit from her Federal Relations if they in any way conflict with interests of Montreal, Ontario, and certain interests in the United States.

Non Partisan

May I draw the attention of the House to the fact that the matters handled by the three branches of my Department are non-partisan subjects and I will be pleased at any time to give any member of this House information regarding the working of the department reserving the right to do so in confidence when necessary.

May I say, Mr. Speaker, that so long as I am in charge of that Department I will not allow political partyism to interfere with its workings.

The Leader of the Opposition referred alluringly to what he termed "The perusal of the archives of the past" by me. This was rather a surprise to me coming from a former school teacher who should know that if we are intelligently to deal with any subject we must know its history from its origin.

My study of the authentic records pertaining to the origin and functioning of this something we are pleased to call Canada was practically completed before I made any public statement on these subjects.

My efforts to tell the people of New Brunswick the truth disclosed by these records immediately met with opposition from some supporters of the Conservative party; at that time I knew so little about political partyism in this Province that I did not realize that a New Brunswicker could stoop so low that he would betray his native land to promote his standing in a political party, but I soon learned that there were some such people in this province. One of the arguments that has been used to prevent people being interested in the true history of Canada, as I suggested, is to the effect that I am interested only in Ancient History that has no value in modern times, which evidently was the impression that the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition wished to create.

I am not interested in these documents or archives from an academic standpoint, but I am interested in their practical application. For many years I was of the same opinion that I have heard innocently expressed by some in this Province, because I also was duped and deceived by accepting opinions and texts published in Ontario without questioning the knowledge and authority behind them. It would be my advice to those who have been so deluded, that they will profit by delving into these archives to find out what is right and what is wrong.

Any member of the learned professions must recognize that it is unsound to accept opinions and advice when the facts are available. Especially is this true in the present instance as I know adversely that many of those opinions are wrong and in some cases maliciously so.

May I suggest to New Brunswickers students of the constitution and history of this confederation that they do not believe the statements on these subjects published in Ontario without verifying them as they are liable to be inaccurate and misleading, and sometimes untrue. It is pathetic to hear some uninformed New Brunswickers repeating propaganda that has been manufactured in Ontario for the benefit of that province, especially when it can be proven that such propaganda is circulated to secure support for Ontario from beguiled people in the other Provinces.

We should not blame the people of Ontario for this. They also have been deceived and deluded by their own propagandists. Until recently I received more support from the people and press of Ontario in my efforts to arouse interest in the true history of Confederation than I received in New Brunswick. In fact, I

received strong opposition in New Brunswick from places where it was least to be expected. And I subsequently found such opposition was from Conservative sources. If any people are to blame, it is the people of New Brunswick because they had more information on this subject and it was more generally discussed here than in any other Province.

Wilmut and Fisher especially were undoubtedly the best informed delegates on governmental and constitutional subjects attending the London conference. Our delegates far surpassed the delegates of old Canada in this respect. They had lived and had fought for better Government during the period when the greatest advance was made in the Empire governmentally and socially, starting from the Reform Act of 1832.

Many believe that Sir John Macdonald was the inspiring force that produced the confederation, but our New Brunswick delegates were in the dominating position and arranged this confederation largely as they wanted it.

Confederation

The objects of the confederation are well defined, but its abortion was well expressed recently by an Ottawa newspaper, which stated, in effect, that the western and eastern Provinces have been exploited for the benefit of the Central Provinces. That is the cause of practically all that is wrong with this Province economically and socially, and practically all that is wrong with Canada.

Many people are of the opinion that Canada is the name of a country or land division of the Empire divided into Provinces which is not the case. British North America is the name of the major land division. Hence the British North America Act. We seem to have lost sight of the fact that we are British North Americans.

The Provinces are countries or land divisions of the Empire and Canada is the name of a Federal legislature, and administrative institution, vested with certain legislative and administrative authority in the Provinces and according to the conditions agreed upon by the provinces and supported by the Imperial Parliament as required by the Provinces.

Canada is almost invariably referred to as "the country" or "this country," which is simply Ontario propaganda. To think of Canada as one country is good for Ontario, and very bad for New Brunswick. The Provinces could not be merged into one country by confederating. Any doubt on that score may be dispelled by the documents pertaining to the incorporation of Canada and, further, by the decision of the Imperial Privy Council in the Maritime Bank Case which has been twice quoted in this House in this session—"The object of the Act was neither to weld the Provinces into one, nor to subordinate Provincial Governments to a central authority."

May I quote an extract from the Speech from the Throne in the Imperial Parliament, 5th of February, 1867?

"Resolutions in favour of a more intimate Union of the Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick have been passed by their several legislatures; and delegates duly authorized and representing all classes of Colonial Party and opinion have concurred in the conditions upon which such a Union may be effected. In accordance with their wishes a bill will be submitted to you, which by the consolidation of colonial interests and resources will give strength to the several Provinces as members of the same Empire, and animated by feelings of loyalty to the same sovereign."

The British North America Act of 1867 also declares that the Provinces are parts of the Empire. The Confederation documents should remove any doubt that may exist as to whether New Brunswick is a land division of the Empire or a land division of Canada. New Brunswick is still an independent member of the Empire.

If the people continue to be deceived it may do great harm, because in thinking of Canada as one country it naturally follows that they make the mistake of thinking of Canada as a democracy to be governed by the will of the majority; while, in fact, if governed justly, it must be governed in accordance with the terms of the confederation compact for the mutual advantage of nine democracies.

The Federal Parliament should legislate for the benefit of the provinces regardless of population and in accordance with the several agreements.

I have yet to meet one member of any provincial legislature, one member of the House of Commons, or one newspaper editor in these confederated countries who has studied all the documents that make up Canada's constitution or realized the wonderful wisdom and foresight that are written into those fundamental laws of government laid down for the guidance of the federal governmental institution.

years it has been definitely established by the Imperial Privy Council that Canada is a compact and that the government and parliament of Canada are circumscribed by the terms of that agreement.

New Brunswickers have three Kings, as the term is used in one Sovereign, handling their governmental affairs. We have the King in this Province, the King in Ottawa, and the King in London to protect our rights and interests.

As I stated in this House last session political partyism has been a curse to this province especially since this house divided against itself on federal party lines. It is incredible that an intelligent people would so divide against themselves as to permit the substitution of political party policies for the principles of confederation.

The King's authority in Ottawa has been misapplied because of the influence of capitalistic and other interests in Montreal and Ontario and, very largely, in the United States.

The primary reason for our country's agreeing to confederate with the country formerly named Canada was to save that country for the Empire. About twenty years ago there was a revival in Ontario of the element that sought to break their imperial connection and we saw its influence at the Dominion-Provincial Conference in 1935.

When history reveals in its true light the stand taken by the Dysart Government at that conference, people will realize that this government halted an irrevocable step that might have shattered the very ties that hold the Empire together.

In this connection may I quote from Burke's immortal speech on "Conciliation with America."

"My hold of the colonies is in close affection, which grows from common names, from kindred blood, from similar privileges and equal protection. These are times which though light as air, are as strong as links of iron."

"Let the colonies always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your Government, they will cling and grapple to you, and no force under Heaven will be of power to tear them from their allegiance. But if it be once understood that your government may be one thing and their privileges another, these two things may exist without any mutual relation, the cement is gone; the cohesion is loosened and everything hastens to decay and dissolution."

"As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom, they will turn their faces toward you. Deny them this participation of freedom and you break the sole bond which originally made, and must preserve the unity of the Empire."

This confederation of British Provinces was a political act which carried into practice those words of Burke, yet there are some who would break that Imperial connection which should be so earnestly cherished.

Some Ontario propagandists argue that the British North America Act should be amended; possibly so, in some respects. But the instrument for doing so is already at hand. The B.N.A. Act may be amended when the Provinces ask to have it amended.

What those Ontario propagandists are aiming to do is not primarily to amend that Act but to destroy the Compact of Confederation and change Canada from a confederation to some hybrid form of government to their own liking, and to the permanent detriment of New Brunswick.

Since the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition mentioned my study of the history of the confederation, may I refer, Mr. Speaker, to why I studied that history and, in part, to what the authentic records pertaining to Canada's political history disclose.

In doing so I trust you will not accuse me of egoism. I am simply trying to give this House the benefit of my study.

For about fifty years I have been closely associated with the commercial and industrial life of this Province.

Our Trade Destroyed

During the years of my commercial life I saw among other things, the import and export trade of this Province being destroyed; our secondary industries of which we had many being crushed out or reduced to a skeleton of their former size. I saw the canned vegetable factories on the Saint John River, the first in British North America, crushed out by Ontario competition. I saw this Province changing from being an agricultural exporting country to the agricultural importing country it now is. I saw the loss of our great shipping industry because of the neglect of the Federal Parliament to protect that industry as it is constitutionally obligated to do; our great fishing industry neglected by the Federal Parliament—another neglect of constitutional duty. I saw the national freight rate structure that at the outset was based on the Maritime seaboard, as it should be, gradually changed to a sectional freight rate structure based on Montreal. I saw the management of Intercolonial Railway that was pledged to us in

consideration of our assent to the union, transferred from Montreal, first to Toronto and subsequently to Montreal. I saw the control of our banks transferred to Toronto and Montreal. I saw our people made to contribute to guaranteeing the operation of a group of railways and other commercial enterprises in some other Provinces and in the United States now known as the Canadian National Railways that were then on the verge of bankruptcy and now are unable to earn the interest on the private capital invested in them.

I saw an actual loss in the Anglo-Saxon population of this Province and for a time an actual loss in the population of Saint John when every other comparable seaport city in the world was making substantial gain, in all respects. I saw the Vocational School in Saint John, the first in British America if not in all America, forced to close for lack of funds to carry on.

I do not need to paint more details of which there are many, into this appalling commercial, industrial and social picture. Many of our people are aware of them.

When the war started I began for the first time to take notice of the functioning of the Federal Government and Parliament and needless to say, looking at it from a commercial viewpoint some of their policies and measures were staggering. Then it began to dawn upon me that all the appalling commercial, industrial and social handicaps from which the Province was suffering were the result of federal policies and measures. Eventually I learned that Canada, the confederation of which I was taught to be so proud, as it has functioned, is New Brunswick's chief economic handicap and that the so-called Canadian National Railways is New Brunswick's economic enemy number one.

The I. C. R.

The Intercolonial and National Transcontinental Railways were constructed to promote the objects of Confederation. They are Government owned, have been paid for, and there is no interest chargeable against them.

The C.N.R. is an international corporation with wider interests in the United States than in these Maritime Provinces. Its head office is in Montreal and it is functioning for the benefit, primarily, or interests in Montreal, Ontario and the United States and greatly to the detriment of this Province.

It is conceivable that an organization so constructed as the C.N.R. could or would operate the Intercolonial and the National Transcontinental Railways in accordance with the documents of confederation—the purpose for which they were built? Certainly not! and just as long as these treaty railways continue under C.N.R. domination just so long will they be used to our detriment rather than to our advantage.

If Canada were functioning as intended and these two railways were being operated as intended, our economic problems would soon be solved. In the meantime I turned to some prominent leaders of both political parties for advice as to what might be done to save our people and I found that the leaders of both parties were quite familiar with the injustice and they all made the same reply to the effect that this Province was in the confederation and there was nothing could be done about it.

This was rather staggering to me because I had some traditional knowledge about Confederation and also I had been taught to believe that I was living in a British country where such injustices would not be tolerated.

That is what convinced me that I should turn to what the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition was pleased to term "the archives of the past" to see if I could not find protection for our people. I had great faith in the ability of our political leaders of 1866 and felt they would not have led us into such a trap. I found that my faith in our leaders of that day was fully justified and that they did provide protection for us. To secure full advantage of that protection we must stop being a people divided against ourselves. We must do the work of correction. We cannot expect the Ottawa Government or the people of any other Province to do it for us. It is not the confederation that is wrong; the fault lies with the human element that has mishandled the confederation.

The present federal government is in no way responsible for the fact that the inter-provincial compact to which the B. N. A. Act gives effect has been cast aside and pro-Montreal, pro-Ontario and pro-United States policies substituted for it. Such are the policies of the conservative party. It was the conservatives that debauched the confederation and prevented its accomplishing the chief objects for which it was incorporated. If there ever was a time when the people of this Province should throw party politics and selfish interests into the discard it is now. And I hope the press and pulpit will unite in supporting this Government in its fight for New Brunswick.

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