

MR. FOSTER

(Continued from Page Four) undoubtedly has been a change for the better and the farm price level is coming up somewhat, but it is still distressingly low and we can hope that with the Liberal policy of expansion of trade that the position of the primary producer will improve.

While speaking of the position of the farmer Mr. Speaker, I desire to say a word about the good work that the Dairy Commission has been carrying on in this province. My own constituency is widely known as the "Dairy Centre of the Maritimes" and accordingly we are in a unique position to appreciate the work of the Commission. I do not say that it is perfect—it is very difficult to obtain perfection in anything in this world—but I do say that the Dairy Commission is doing a good job and is gradually reducing the price spread between what the producer receives for his milk and cream and what the consumer pays. The whole problem resolves itself into one of distribution and I feel that in time a more efficient system of distribution will be evolved under the direction of the Dairy Commission than has existed in the past and does exist today.

Now, Sir, there is one most important matter which vitally affects not only our farming districts but all communities in the Province. This is the great Co-operative Movement which is just commencing to sweep this Province as it is sweeping the Province of Nova Scotia.

Not many years ago Denmark, a land not unlike our own New Brunswick, was in many respects in an unenviable position. The public funds were in an unhealthy state, the primary producers were barely scraping a living and the morale of the people was low. Then came the introduction of Co-operatives—first came consumers Co-operatives, both retail and wholesale, and later producers' Co-operatives for the marketing and also the actual production of goods. In a few years Denmark was on its feet again and today is classed as one of the most happy and contented nations of the world.

I submit Mr Speaker, that the Co-operative Movement together with a good healthy Trade Union Movement means the salvation of Democracy. The day of "freebooting" capitalism is done and done forever. If we are going to save political democracy we must have economic democracy. A strong Co-operative organization for primary producers in farming, lumbering and fishing, side by side with a good healthy Trade Union movement means responsible government in industry. Along these roads we must travel if we are going to preserve Democracy. We cannot but deny that Democracy is fighting a losing battle in Europe today. This tide must be stemmed and turned. We may think that Communism and Fascism are far away in this country, but let me say Mr. Speaker that there is a menace here and that menace is much closer than most people think. This is a very fast moving age. Democracy was overthrown in Russia and Germany under the very noses of the People's Parliament. Civil war broke out in Spain shortly after the Government had been elected by a large majority and the tide now seems to be against that Government. Now I do not mean to state that this menace is by any means certain in our Country today, but I do say that if another

depression comes along far reaching effects of this kind can easily develop and take place within a very few years. And so I say that the Government is to be congratulated for forecasting Co-operative Legislation at this Session.

Being good Liberal Reformers the Government also forecasts Labour Legislation, which to my mind, would be an excellent partner for Co-operative Legislation. I would point out that in the field of Labor Legislation we are just doing the fall ploughing. I believe, Sir, in the right of workers to organize and to bargain collectively. I am in favor of Trade Unions and their recognition. Capital organizations for its own protection and so should Labor have that right. Capital is organized along international lines—why should not Labor be? Capital, Labor and Community have always reminded me of a three legged stool. If you take one leg away the whole stool collapses—each leg is necessary for the support of the other two. It is the obligation of Parliament to see that the interests of Capital, Labor and the Community are protected and given fair play.

Our Financial Position The government has a general interest to look after as compared to the particular interest of an individual business. If I may be permitted to say so Mr. Speaker, I do not think that many of the critics always realize this difference between government and private business. Day after day business leaders rise and editorial writers sit down to write that we should slash outlays and expenditures. Where would they slash Sir? Would they cut the interest that is being paid on the bonds of this Province? Would they slash the amounts that we fought for for Old Age Pensions so essential for the needy elderly people of this Province? Would they eliminate health services, only achieved after years of education? Do they desire less educational advantages for their children? Would they stop paying unemployment relief or giving assistance to flood victims? Do they think that the eradication of tuberculosis is not a worthy cause on which to spend money?

Will Stop Payments The Honourable leader of the Opposition says cut expenditures and cites figures from former years to show that we are spending more. Well, Sir, we are spending more because the obligations of the Government are greater. If he is logical in his argument I presume that if the day ever arrives when he does sit to the right of the Speaker as Premier of this Province that he will immediately stop all payments of Old Age Pensions.

Mr. Foster compared the present situation with that which existed at the end of the fiscal year 1924. At that time Capital liabilities amounted to \$35,000,000 and deducting the sinking funds therefrom there was a net capital liability of approximately \$33,000,000.

At that time New Brunswick had the following assets to show for the debt: Railway Investments (including Valley Railway) approx. \$8,000,000 N.B. Electrical Power Company, approx. 3,500,000 Permanent bridges, approx. 8,500,000 Roads, approx. 6,000,000 Housing Act, approx. 1,500,000 Other works, such as Government buildings, and wharves, and also including Deficit, approx. 5,500,000 \$33,000,000

As I have already stated, said the speaker, we have heard much for many years regarding the increase in the public debt since 1924. Let us look and see how much it has increased and for what the money was used and then say what could have been eliminated.

As at October 31, 1937 the end of the fiscal year we find that Capital liabilities total \$96,000,000, less Sinking Funds of approximately \$10,000,000 or net Capital liabilities of approximately \$86,000,000. How is this made up:

Railway Investments, approx.—\$1,000,000; (a decrease from 1924, The Valley Ry. having been taken over by C.N.R.).

N. B. Electric Power Commission, approx. \$8,000,000 (an increase of approx. \$5,000,000 over 1924).

Permanent bridges, approx. \$12,000,000 (an increase of approx. \$4,500,000 over 1924).

Roads, approx. \$47,000,000 (an increase of approx. \$41,000,000 over 1924).

Housing Act, approx. \$500,000, (a decrease of approx. \$1,000,000).

Other works such as Government Buildings, etc., approx. \$11,000,000.

Deficit, approx. \$6,500,000 (an increase for other works and deficit of approx. \$13,000,000).

Total, \$86,000,000. Now, Sir, look at the items of increase. Would anyone say that the increase of \$5,000,000 insofar as the New Brunswick Electric Power Commission was concerned was not a necessary Capital expenditure in order to further the liberal policy of extending the Hydro lines throughout the rural districts of this Province so that the farmers might have electricity in their homes and barns?

Capital Expenditure The increase in the debt mainly boils down to Capital expenditures on roads and these Sir have been necessary and have been demanded by the public and now that the present Government has gone ahead with the hardsurfacing of the highways of this Province, we will find that this large investment in highways will be providing even greater returns by way of tourist traffic, gasoline taxation and motor vehicle fees.

In conclusion on these matters of finances, I would simply point out that the increase in public debt and the increase in governmental expenditures mean that the dignity and comfort of human life have been very greatly increased. Old Age Pensions, Hydro, Good Roads and many other things coming through government agencies have made for a better and happier life and a higher standard of living for many of the people of the Province. This item should weigh heavily on the asset side of the ledger.

Educational Strides Before closing my remarks I must refer to the educational awakening which is taking place in this Province. It has been said in this House many times that New Brunswick was the most illiterate Province in Canada at the time the last census was compiled. The Minister of Education and the Government are certainly to be commended on the excellent work which is being commenced for the reformation of our educational system. Members are aware of the great

activity that there has been during the past year in the educational field. Led by the Department all citizens of the Province are now carefully considering educational matters. I was very interested the other day Mr. Speaker to gather from the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition that he also has evidently become a Reformer liberal in matters of Education. What a vast change his mind has undergone in the past year.

Opposition Leader Satisfied

Last year when he spoke on the same subject he seemed very satisfied with our old system and in true Tory style he defended the so-called bulwarks of the past and ridiculed our proposed changes. But in the interval, like his honourable leader in the Federal House in 1935, he apparently gave some study to new ideas and as a result realized that the Liberal policies were the only ones designed to meet the rapid changes taking place in our now rapidly moving social system.

This year he cries for action and speaks on 'crying needs' in the educational field. He states that the whole system of examinations for school children as at present constituted is wrong in that it destroys originality. Well, Sir, I am glad to have him agree with us because this is what we have been saying ever since we came into power and we are now moving to remedy these abuses together with taking other steps forward.

Adult Education

Just let me point out the advances in adult education that have been made in this Province in the last two years and we have only just touched the fringe. There is much work to be done in this field in the near future. Much has also been done in the field of Youth Training, both by the Department of Education and by the Department of Agriculture.

Carleton County Benefits

He must know that in his own County at the Carleton County Vocational School there is a goodly number of boys taking a six months complete agricultural course under the Youth Training Scheme. And there are also industrial courses going on at the present time training boys for work in motor mechanics, radio, welding, electrical and wood working. Before Christmas a course for leaders and teachers was established at the Normal School so that those receiving instruction may go out and conduct courses teaching weaving and dressmaking. In this respect the first local centre was organized early in February at Florenceville. So the three members of the Opposition from Carleton County need not go far to look for benefits of this work.

In addition to the courses which I

have already outlined there have also been agricultural short courses for unemployed and nebbishious youths between the ages of 18 and 20 years. These courses have been given and are being given at Fredericton. The instruction is of the most practical agricultural nature. In February a similar class was opened for girls in Sussex in my own good County. They are receiving instructions in prac-

tical household science. Also, I understand that in the rural sections of the Province it is the intention of the Department of Agriculture to put on between fifty and sixty, one and two day short courses. The attendance at these courses may easily be from 4,000 to 6,000 persons. Accordingly, when my honourable friend the Leader of the Opposition says that nothing has been done he is fall-

ing far short of the mark and let me tell him that those young people deprived of work as they were during the depression years and apparently thrown on a world which had no place for them appreciate the actions of a friendly government which is doing and which will do all within its power to find a place for them so that they may carry on useful work in happiness and contentment.

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