

# ELOQUENT SPEECH BY CONSERVATIVE LEADER

## Actions of Saunders Government Scathingly Passed in Review

### The Incompetence Which Has Marked the Course of the Present Administration in Practically Every Department of Public Service is Convincingly Shown by the Hon. J. D. Stewart, Leader of the Opposition, in His Brilliant Speech on the Draft Address, Questions of Education, Provincial Subsidies, Prohibition Enforcement and Other Matters Fully Dealt With in Outstanding Address of the Session.

The following speech on the draft address was delivered in the Legislature, March 20th, by Hon. J. D. Stewart, Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker: I am sure it affords me a great deal of pleasure to follow the time honored custom observed not only in this but in all Parliaments, of offering my congratulations to the mover and seconder of the Resolution now before the House; and I do so quite sincerely. It affords me a special satisfaction that the mover of this Resolution (Mr. P. A. Scully) is my co-representative in the Georgetown District. We all listened with a great deal of interest to his comments on trade conditions, especially in this Province. The seconder of the Address (Mr. L. R. Allen) gave us a great deal of curious information on a variety of subjects—on speed, on oysters, and so forth, all very interesting.

I am sure we all agree in the observations made by both of these gentlemen regarding the health of our beloved Sovereign. The great war answered a question which many of our citizens for years before had unconsciously been asking themselves, a question which had obtruded itself upon their minds and consciences. That question was, Have our men become enervated, decadent, will they stand the strain and stress—moral and physical—of war as did their forefathers? The war answered that question and it answered it in the affirmative. The questionings of men have been silenced. But there have been other questionings. Questionings that have been encouraged, doubts and suspicions that have been fed and fanned by communism and sovietism and rottenness with other names. That question was, Of what value is this attachment to the Crown, the Throne the flag. This is a relic of medieval times, a fetish—a semi-barbaric thing. All people are equal. Let us shake off the yoke and have perfect freedom. The illness of our beloved King has, I believe, answered this question. For it has turned out that never since the war has any event caused such general and widespread anxiety and concern throughout the British Empire, even the civilized world. Each day enquiries and assurances were carried by radio and telegraph and telephone over the length and breadth of Great Britain and her dominions. Each day the newspapers were scanned eagerly for the latest bulletins and each day anxious multitudes of citizens waited at the gates of Buckingham palace for news. From this period of national anxiety and worry there has been born the knowledge and assurance that in the great body of our people there is still that strong national bulwark of attachment to the British Crown. In addition to this we are blessed in the personality of our Sovereign, the embodiment of a King, a man of blameless life and personal habits. A man of broad sympathy and understanding one who studies to understand and has succeeded in understanding the national problems in all parts of the Empire. In this the nation is fortunate. For this reason the nation was breathless with anxiety during the period of his illness. For this reason we all are thankful and rejoice that he has been restored to health.

We all concur in the sentiment expressed in the Speech and also in the remarks that have been made by the mover and seconder of the resolution, with regard to the deaths of those noted sons of Prince Edward Island who have passed away since the last session of this Legislature. I heartily endorse the remarks made by the mover of the Address; but—and I say this with some diffidence—I am rather sorry that how I find from Summerside, that Mr. Allen chose to introduce some in his remarks with

regard to the late Ex-Premier Bell. I am perhaps just as fond of a political "scrap" as anybody, but there are times when we all want to forget politics and remember men as men, and not as politicians. It is in that way I want to remember the late Hon. John H. Bell. I want to admire him as a man; I want to forget now that I ever was opposed to him politically. I want to remember him as a man of strong character, a man of many and brilliant parts, and a man of whom we may be proud as citizens of this Province. (Applause).

#### Other Tributes

With regard to the late Judge Warburton, I think all that need be said about him is summed up in the fact that he was one of nature's noblemen, and that he gave the full measure of his fine abilities to the service of this Province, first as representative in this Legislature, then as Prime Minister of the Province, as a representative at Ottawa, as Judge of the County Court, and finally as Judge of Probate. He filled all these high positions with great distinction, with credit to himself and honor to the community at large. I think, however, that his outstanding quality, his great characteristic for which we loved and admired him more than for anything else, was his child-like simplicity and genuineness. I do not believe I ever met, in my experience, a man who possessed those qualities to such a great degree as the late Judge Warburton.

I concur also in what has been said with regard to the late Hon. John Agnew, as a man and as a citizen.

There is another whose death has taken place since this Legislature prorogued a year ago. I refer to the late Mr. Lauchlin MacDonald, of East Point, a man whom this generation did not know, perhaps, so well as some others, yet who was actively connected with the political life of his time. I have been told that Mr. MacDonald served in this Legislature when Prince Edward Island was still a Colony, before Confederation. He was a member of the Governments of this Province from time to time; a stalwart of the old school; a big man in every respect.

I should like, before passing along, to say a word or two with regard to an official of this House at the last session, who is not an official now—Mr. Benjamin Rogers. I wish to pay a tribute to his ability and to all the qualities which he displayed in serving this House last year as its clerk. The position is an onerous and difficult one, and Mr. Rogers came to it without any previous training. He had no opportunities of learning the work, and he came in with a new Government. I may say, on behalf of this side of the House, that he discharged his duties with perfect satisfaction to every member. I note, also, that the Government is fortunate in the choice of his successor. I know Mr. Trainor; I know his qualifications; I know that he will fill the position with distinction to himself and that he will measure up fully to the standard set by those officials who preceded him. Indeed, this Legislature has always been fortunate in the selection of its officials.

#### Speech From The Throne

Now, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the Speech from the Throne. It is not my intention to make any lengthy remarks upon this occasion, for several reasons. In the first place this debate, after all, is more or less an academic one. We have not the information, we have not the records before us as to the doings of this Government during the past year, which will enable us to choose to introduce some in his remarks with

informed of these things from day to day during the session, and finally the accounts are submitted and upon the Budget debate everything is before the house for approval or otherwise. The present debate is not of much value in that way. The finances, which are perhaps the most important part of the public business, are practically tabooed on this occasion for the reason that I have mentioned; so that I cannot see that any good purpose can be served by prolonging a discussion, which, as I said before, is really an academic one and tends rather to delay the more important business and legislation for which this House is properly convened.

Another reason why I do not purpose spending very much time on this discussion is that there is not very much to spend time upon. I do not know that I ever read a Speech more barren in matters of real importance to the Province than the present one. I was rather amazed, on reading the Patriot newspaper last night, to notice the Speech described as "an ambitious programme." I must confess, Mr. Speaker, that I cannot find either programme or ambition in this document.

#### Repetition of Plattitudes

On reading the Speech it struck me forcibly that it was largely a replica of the Speech delivered a year ago; and upon comparing the two I find a most remarkable resemblance. There does not seem to be anything new in the present Speech at all. There are observations upon the condition of the Province which are perfectly true for the most part; but they are merely plattitudes. They are the same things that we have heard repeated time and again in newspapers and elsewhere, and they are not such as need entail any prolonged discussion on the part of the members of Legislature.

I may say that I am thoroughly in accord with the sentiments expressed in that paragraph dealing with the Maritime conference in Toronto. I think the movement was a most important one, and I am very sorry that I was not able to attend, that business and other matters prevented me from going on that delegation. In that respect I am more unfortunate than the gentlemen who preceded me in speaking on this Resolution. I quite appreciate what I missed in very many ways; and I am sure there were many things that happened there that I should have thoroughly enjoyed had I been present. But, after all, this proposal is simply carrying out the old Conservative policy of encouraging trade within Canada, of making Canada self-sufficient, of taking care of ourselves and of turning our eyes away from the United States and other foreign countries. So I am thoroughly orthodox in agreeing with this paragraph, which indicates what may be accomplished in matters of this kind by co-operation with our sister Provinces.

#### Agricultural Opportunities

We have heard some observations with regard to quality of our potatoes. I have often said before that nature has given us the opportunity of producing the very finest quality of all kinds of agricultural products, and what we have to do is to build on that advantage which nature has given us. There is not any question that with sufficient agricultural co-operation we can get to a point where we can produce a quality of agricultural products in this Province that cannot be duplicated anywhere in Canada; and I think, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture will thoroughly agree with me in that regard.

selves in apartment houses in increasing numbers from year to year. These apartment houses are growing at a tremendously rapid rate and in cities of from 500,000 to 1,000,000 that market is very important. It is also a market that requires, above everything else, quality. They consider quality very much more than price, because their storage facilities are so limited. They can only take care of a very small quantity of foodstuff at a time; and where foodstuffs in order to attract the market, must be of the very best quality and must be put up in attractive packages. There is no question, as I said, of the advantage nature has given us in the way of producing quality; and with a controllable unit as we have in this Province, in addition to a class of citizens of the very highest type of intelligence, we should be able to get a secure foothold in that market and handle it for ourselves.

All these things being considered, I think the appointment of a Trade Commissioner for the Maritime Provinces in Toronto is an excellent move. I have not had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Burnaby, but I have heard what has been said about him, and I think that a moderate amount of money contributed as our share in this matter will not be money wasted.

#### Federal Subsidies

The next matter is second to none in importance so far as this Government is concerned at the present time. I refer to the claims of this Province for further increase in subsidy from the Dominion Government. Glancing over the Speech from the Throne delivered at the last session of this House, I find the following statement:

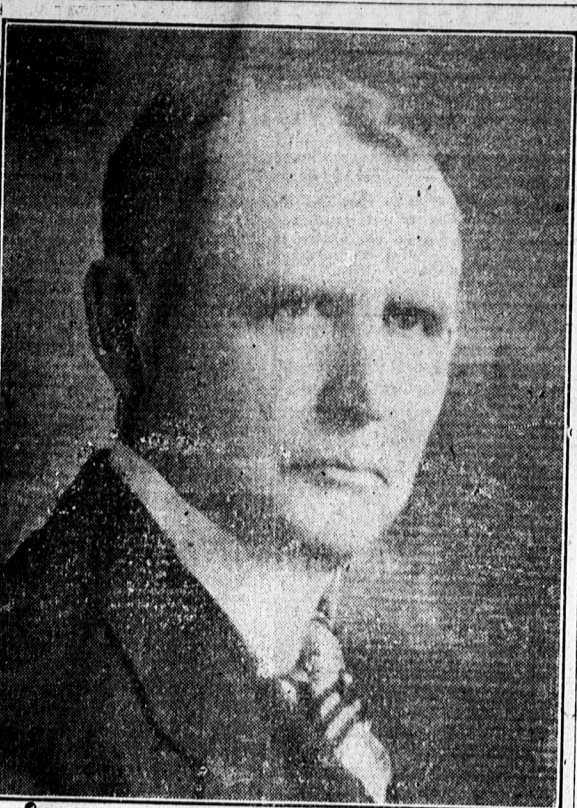
"A conference was convened in Ottawa in the month of November last by the Dominion Government and the Governments of all the Provinces of Canada. As a result of this meeting the Dominion Government this year is continuing the additional money grant of \$125,000 to our Province, and the Government in the very near future to make a complete revision of the financial arrangements, as recommended by the Duncan report. We confidently anticipate that when such revision is made we will receive a very material increase in our subsidy."

What have we this year? We have no mention of the conference or any result that followed the conference. We have instead, a statement that may mean something or nothing at all, but which certainly does not refer to this meeting which was so important a year ago. Section 5 of the present speech reads:

"During the year my Government has been vigorously pressing our claims for a further increase in the subsidy which we receive from the Dominion, and has stressed the fact that, in view of the apparent intention to transfer to the Western Provinces the natural resources within their boundaries, equitable treatment to all the Provinces would appear to call for some corresponding concessions to our own Province."

#### Methods of Approach

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not purpose wearying the House with a dissertation upon the merit of those claims. My colleague from the Georgetown District mentioned one of them—the subsidy for want of public lands. There is not any question about the justice and equity of that claim. There is not any question at all that it has not been implemented. Neither is there any question that this is the psychological time to press for its implementation. We can go over other claims which we have, and the same statements will apply. We have claims in conjunction with the other Maritime Provinces because of the transfer of lands and natural resources to those Western Provinces, as well as for the extension of the boundaries of the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec from lands which properly belonged to every province in the Dominion. All those claims have been discussed, and they have been made the subject of elaborate briefs. I think perhaps the most elaborate and most comprehensive brief with regard to those particular subjects is contained in the presentation of the Government of Nova Scotia before the Duncan Commission. But I need not take up further time describing these matters. There is not any question as to our right to further subsidy; but the question is, What has this Government been doing? What form has their activity taken in this matter? We are informed that they have been "vigorously pressing our claims," but one can exercise a great deal of vigor and absolutely waste it. One can use very much less vigor, and with a little judgment and discretion may secure much better results. The question at the present time is, in what manner has the Government approached the subject. It is not satisfactory to say merely that the



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Leader of the Opposition

claims have been vigorously pressed upon the Dominion Government. For my own part, I think that it would be absolutely waste of time for a delegation from this Province to press, at this time, for additional subsidy to this Province alone. I believe it would do the whole situation more harm than good by following a course of that kind. As I said, however, we are absolutely in the dark; we have had no pronouncement from the Government. I tabled a question today, seeking an answer on that very matter, and I presume, in due course, we shall get the information.

#### The Duncan Report

The House will remember, however, that the recommendation of the Duncan Commission with respect to subsidies for the Maritime Provinces to the effect that an interim subsidy should be paid—\$125,000 to the Province of Prince Edward Island. That was termed an interim subsidy, why? Because the recommendation of the Duncan Commission contained this further statement, that as soon as possible the Federal Government and the Provincial Governments should decide, by some means which was not outlined in the recommendation of the Commission, upon making a complete revision and readjustment of the subsidies of all the Provinces of Canada. These interim subsidies were simply paid to the Maritime Provinces as temporary compensation until this final adjustment should be made. There was not any question at all that upon a final adjustment this Province should, and undoubtedly will, receive a very large increase in subsidy; an increase sufficient to enable whatever Government may be in power to carry on and to perform the necessary public services without so much embarrassment as has been experienced by every one in the past.

A pilgrimage to Ottawa at the present time, however pleasant and enjoyable, will not bring us anything if we go for the purpose of getting an increased subsidy to this Province alone; because the present Federal Government adopted the recommendations of the Duncan Commission. Some of these recommendations, they have implemented, and some they have not; but they have adopted them entirely; and from this it necessarily follows that no further subsidy will be given to any one Province until the final adjustment is made.

#### The Proper Course

What is the proper course to take under these circumstances? The course is very obvious: it is simply to press for the appointment, the organization, or whatever you choose to call it, of the machinery for adjustment of those subsidies. I do not think that this is a matter that can be dealt with by a Federal Parliament; I do not think it can be dealt with by an inter-provincial conference. My own personal opinion is that it can only be done by a commission of experts, and then they will have a very large order, because they will have to take the relationship of the Provinces from the time of Confederation; they will have to study the matter and go into a great deal of detail, and look at it from a great many different angles. These things cannot be done either at an inter-provincial conference or in Parliament. It is proposed

work of experts in constitutional law, in finance, in trade and the relations of trade between the Provinces and the Federal Government. For instance, we know that the subsidies were given primarily to the Provinces because the Colonial revenues that were taken away and given to Federal Government at the time of the organization of the Dominion of Canada. The great source of revenue which this Province had before that as a Colony was Customs and Excise. That was taken away; it was given to the Federal Government, and as a quod pro quo, and we were given assistance to carry on the affairs of government because, before that we had carried on the government of the Colony largely upon that source of revenue.

#### Problems to be Considered

Are we in this Province in the same position as other provinces with regard to duties paid for which we should receive credit? In the larger Provinces the exports come in directly. Take Ontario and Quebec, for example. Practically all their exports come in directly, and the duty is paid directly at ports within these provinces. But how much of the duty to which this Province is entitled, as a credit which the people of this Province pay, is paid at ports within this Province? Our merchants and traders know how they get their wholesale goods: the duty is paid at Montreal, Halifax, or elsewhere. How are we going to ascertain how much we pay and for which we should get credit in an adjustment between the Provinces? That is just one of the many difficult aspects that would have to be considered in an adjustment.

As I said before, the only way, to my mind, that this adjustment can be made is by a commission of experts, or at any rate by a commission under very expert advice. There has not been any move made to get this machinery provided and put in working order, and as a consequence we are suffering in the meantime. We need the revenue, and there is no question that the money is due us. All that is necessary is that the machinery be provided and the amount ascertained.

#### Western Claims

There have been two debates on the floor of the House of Commons with regard to this matter, and there was absolute unanimity as to the propriety of the Western Provinces receiving their natural resources. There never was anything else. The only question in dispute was this. We say: "You have a right to these resources; but you are now getting subsidies from the Federal Government because you have not got these resources. If you get your natural resources you must either surrender your subsidies or we must get an additional subsidy to balance up." This contention the Western Provinces seem to deny. But there is not any question, in Parliament or elsewhere, with respect to the propriety of the Western Provinces receiving their natural resources. The moment that is done—and there is no reason why it should be further delayed—we are ready for the final adjustment. It is therefore a matter of passing our claim to the Federal Government.

#### Why the Delay?

Why, then, has this not been done? Why this delay in applying for the one remedy provided under the Duncan Commission? There is no reason that I can see, Mr. Speaker, though my hon. friend, the leader of the Government may say that this is a matter that is in the hands of the Federal Government. My experience, however is that if sufficient pressure is brought to bear in a matter of this kind, where everybody is agreed there will be no doubt of the Federal Government complying, if the approach is made through the proper avenues and the matter is dealt with diplomatically. That is all we want to know—what this Government has accomplished during the past year in order to bring about this matter and secure this final adjustment so as to provide the revenues which we all know are most necessary. That is the question to which I am seeking an answer, and I hope that we shall get it. Politics apart, this matter is one which we should all get behind; it is vital to the carrying on of public affairs in this Province.

I suppose it will be said that the Federal Government is delaying this matter. Let me read a short extract from Hansard with regard to that. As we all know, not very long ago a resolution was introduced in Parliament by Dr. Edwards, M. P. to the effect that natural resources should be given over absolutely to the Western Provinces. The resolution evoked quite a debate, and among the speakers was Dr. Murray McLaren, of St. John, who said in the course of his speech:

"I would make this suggestion to the Prime Minister, that before this question of the return of the natural resources is finally dealt with, he calls a conference of the premiers of the various provinces of this Dominion, and have their views put forward."

RT. HON. W. L. MacKENZIE KING: May I just say to my hon. friend, in reply to his last suggestion, that that is precisely what took place the year before last. We had a conference of the premiers with the members of the government, and it is as a result of that conference that the Dominion has proceeded to deal more liberally with the western provinces than it was prepared to do heretofore. MR. MACLAREN: Yes, but was it not at the same time suggested that an opportunity should be given to certain of the provinces to put forward their claims of compensation? MR. MacKENZIE KING: No one is denying that opportunity. MR. MACLAREN: But so far only the western provinces are being dealt with. Why not the other provinces? MR. MacKENZIE KING: My hon. friend said a month ago that he was not in a position to present their claims. For some reason or other the claims have not been put forward by the provinces.

#### Evident Neglect

There, Mr. Speaker, is where the responsibility lies, according to the utterance of the Prime Minister of Canada on the floor of the House. (Applause). The provinces have neglected to present this matter, to see that this is put through; and I think I have shown very clearly to the House that this is the only avenue of approach so far as these claims for readjustment are concerned. It is simply a waste of time, it is simply holding ourselves up to ridicule, to go to Ottawa begging as an individual Province, when the interim subsidies were adopted by Parliament to be in full until such time as this final adjustment was made. And in order to get that final adjustment, we need the co-operation between the Provincial Government, to make a concerted effort to impress upon the Federal Government the importance and necessity of having this machinery provided and take the proper steps to have those subsidies adjusted; and then we shall get them. It should not be a difficult task, and yet nothing seems to have been done. It is simply a matter of neglect, and apparently Premier MacKenzie King, in his reply to the House of Commons, places the blame where it belongs.

There never was a more psychological time. My hon. friend from Georgetown mentions a subsidy received some years ago. We received a large general increase then and the door was opened to get more, but the War intervened, and then we had the financial stringencies following the War. We had a tremendous War burden to deal with. Our railway problems and other things took all the revenue that Canada could afford to give. But now the situation has changed. We have abundant revenues, vast expenditures are being met and undertaken in the other provinces of the Dominion, but our revenues are not. Taking these things in conjunction with the subsidies granted by the Western Provinces

and I say it is the psychology of the moment which will give the financial relief which it is the only method, source from which we can get that relief for which we irrespective of party politics

#### Agriculture

With regard to Agriculture, I remember that I remarked to my friend the Minister of Agriculture that we were going to expect things from him. He came off with a splendid report, was the "white hope" of the party in this Province; and I am saying that he does not deserve a tribute. But then he took a special course at the expense of the Province, he embarked on a trip to Europe and saw a great many things, of which we were told at the last session of the Legislature. Let us see what was about him in the Speech from the Throne last year:

"The Minister of Agriculture under my Government has recently returned, with members of the Canadian Farmers Marketing party, from a tour of the British Isles and Denmark. The purpose of this visit of seventy leading agriculturists from different provinces in Canada was to learn at first hand the requirements of that great consuming market, to investigate the progressive measures adopted by the Danish farmers, and to look into the immigration possibilities of suitable overseas settlers to this Province. I am pleased that the minister has secured valuable information, which should be beneficial to our Province."

Of course, that is very fine; but I might suggest that the hon. gentleman was not gathering these facts for his own information alone. The question is, how much of that information will be reflected in the advancement and improvement of agriculture in this Province.

#### Decline in Horse Breeding

We have some other sections dealing with agriculture in the Speech of the last session of this Legislature which might be worth recalling:—"I regret to note the decline in the breeding of Island horses (once the pride of the Maritime Provinces) and the large amount of money required to replace from Western Canada the farm animals that could be better and more economically raised at home. The Department of Agriculture has under consideration measures for the assistance of this industry."

Of course, my hon. friend the Minister of Agriculture is a very modest man. He does not talk loudly or long; and I suppose that accounts for the fact that we find no word in the present Speech of what he has done with regard to assisting the horse breeders of this Province. I assume that he would not put anything in the Speech from the Throne that he did not intend to carry out; so we may take it that that paragraph has been implemented. If I am wrong he can put me right.

Hon. Mr. Lea: Correct. Hon. Mr. Stewart: Nevertheless, I have not been able to ascertain any particular policy that has been developed with regard to the encouragement of horse breeders during the past year. I do know that already carloads of horses are beginning to come again from the West. However, I am not going to criticize my hon. friend until we hear his explanation. I do not want to be unfair. He may have done a great deal during the year to encourage horse breeding and I may not have heard of it.

#### Compulsory Grading

There was another paragraph in the Speech of last year which struck my attention. It was this: "The adoption of voluntary grading of bacon hogs has resulted in a higher percentage of 'selects' being marketed in this Province than in any other. Compulsory grading will further improve and promote co-operation which has to our fair share of such efforts to encourage the industry."

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