

# PREMIER STEWART VERY ABLY REVIEWS SITUATION

(Continued from Page 4)

friend that the Government has not started work early enough in the season on the roads that it was being done through the summer when it was useless. That at any rate cannot be said of last year, because for the first time in our history a large part of that work was done early and it was effective. (Applause.)

We have also been endeavoring to spend a large proportion of the highway money on permanent work, such as bridges, steel culverts etc., which will be of lasting benefit.

Highway Patrol

Now with regard to our system of patrol: we have been criticised by our friends in Opposition on that score. I do not think I need pay very much attention to such criticism from gentlemen who did absolutely nothing towards maintenance of the highways. We have made an attempt to solve the difficulties because we have no precedent to follow. We have conditions which are absolutely different from the conditions in any other Province in Canada. We have dirt roads—roads which are supposed to be permanent but which are very far from permanent. As a necessary result, the expenditure necessary to keep up those highways is very much greater, than necessary on the old roads where a greater part of the road was covered with sod. On the improved highways that has been removed and we have just a clay surface exposed; consequently a great deal more labor is required to keep them in condition. Moreover, the standard has been raised because of the advent of the automobile and the increased number of cars being used.

Last year we inaugurated a system of patrol which has received from far minded people throughout the Province a great deal of commendation. It is still, of course, to some degree, in the experimental stage. There will be improvements this year along certain lines, which will probably be outlined by my hon. friend the Minister of Public Works. But we have found this, that the Gasoline Tax is not yet sufficient to provide the proper amount of patrol that is necessary. I have dealt with the Gasoline Tax before and I do not think it is necessary to discuss it on this occasion or to show how it is, perhaps, the most equitable tax that could be imposed. We are in this Province levying a tax of two cents a gallon, it is the lowest tax of that kind in any Province of Canada. We purpose this year to raise that to three cents a gallon. We hope, with this, to be able to reduce the automobile license fees. We are still hopeful of doing that, but it is not possible yet, to make the reduction for this year.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, these automobile license fees are pledged for the sinking fund and interest on highway improvement debentures. The highway improvement debentures of this Province are pledged by law, and the Province cannot break that statutory compact with the purchasers of our bonds. We must keep faith and we must keep that fund intact until we know just what our commitments will be finally in connection with this highway improvement scheme. The work is nearly finished, but not quite. When it is completed, and when we can ascertain with certainty just what our commitments will be, what money will be required out of that fund to keep faith with the people whose money we have borrowed,—then if sufficient margin is left to make a reduction in the automobile license fees, that reduction will be made. But until we can ascertain that fact it is impossible to do it. Next year I hope that we will be able to carry that out.

I have already mentioned a reduction of interest. Last year the interest charge was \$66,000, some \$2,000 less than the year before. It is a great deal of eloquence in discussing the condition of the roads and we would be no further ahead. The people themselves are doing better than my hon. friend or myself whether there has been any improvement in that regard. The charges always has been from my hon.

## The Night Schools

Another matter which I might mention is the establishment of Night Schools. In this we were assisted by the technical grade. They have been started in a small way and have increased this year. They can be very successful. Personally I am hopeful of further very favorable results from these night schools because they afford the opportunity to a class that cannot get that opportunity in any other way. We all know the boys and girls, the young men and women who were forced through circumstances over which they had no control to leave school before they could get an education which in any way adequately fitted them for the performance of their duties in life. These night schools afford a second opportunity for people of that kind, where they can go on with their ordinary avocations during the day and receive further education in the evenings when they would not be otherwise employed.

With reference to Pictouwood, I have already mentioned that the expenditure in connection with that institution last year was some thing over \$103,000. The services were adequately kept up and some further repairs were made to the building.

The roof was repaired, and the building is now in very fair condition, as well as the heating apparatus, the sewerage and water connections. We hope to be able to make perhaps a little better showing during the present year, in the way of reduced expenditure.

The Department of Public Works is perhaps the most important department of the Government, as it is directly under the eye of the public. I will leave that to be dealt with, however, by my hon. friend the Minister of Public Works.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition will perhaps repeat his statement that there never were any roads in the Province as today, and I may say there never were such good roads but that does not get the general public anywhere, it is not helpful. We might each of us waste a great deal of eloquence in discussing the condition of the roads and we would be no further ahead. The people themselves are doing better than my hon. friend or myself whether there has been any improvement in that regard. The charges always has been from my hon.



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Another item that has been placed in the Estimates this year under Legislative grants is the sum of \$700, representing our proportion of the payment made by the three Maritime Provinces for the services of a traffic expert. I have

## Legislative Grants

I am now coming to a matter which I referred to in my comparison of expenditures for the years 1921 and 1925, and that is our Legislative grants. They have been increased by the present Government, but I submit that in every case the increases were justified and in the public interest. They were made for purposes which could not very well be delayed. This year, as during the past year, there will be an increase in our grant to the institution of the Deaf and Blind in Halifax. It is not necessary for me to say anything more with reference to that than that the number of pupils have increased. This is a duty that is so sacred, so important, that it is only necessary for me to make that statement to justify the expenditure.

There will be a slight increase this year in the grant to the Children's Aid Society. It will be remembered that when we came into power we practically doubled the existing grant. During the past year \$1,000 was distributed between the Children's Aid Society of Charlottetown and that of Prince County in the proportion of \$750 and \$250. Summerside is a functioning organization; they have been doing splendid work. They have taken care of a great many situations which were very serious and which would not have been taken care of had that society not been operating. They have asked for a small increase, and we feel it is justly due and that it cannot be denied them.

When we began making a grant to the Red Cross, after taking over the Government, I think I can say without boasting that with the exception of the expenditures made by the former Conservative Government it was the first expenditure of government money in this Province solely for public health.

One need only refer to the report of the Superintendent of Education to see there, in the report of the Red Cross nurses, the value of the work that this society is doing throughout the Province. In over one hundred schools, in children have been examined, and that examination points to defects that may be checked in the early stages and the standard of public health immeasurably raised thereby. That is a benefit that we cannot begin to measure.

## Anti-Tuberculosis Society

Another proposition, perhaps one of still greater importance, was made for the consideration of the Government quite recently. The Anti-Tuberculosis Society of Canada is desirous of undertaking a campaign in some part of Canada, in an experimental way, to eradicate tuberculosis among our people. This was undertaken in this Province during the past year with respect to cattle. This will be dealt with more fully by a member of the Government, later on, and he will explain better than can the greater importance and necessity of some such work from the standpoint of prevention of tuberculosis in this Province as compared with other Provinces.

Truly, if we can expend a large amount of money to get our cattle free from this dread disease, we are entitled to spend some money to save our people. We speak of immigrants; but is it not more important to save our own people and to raise the standard of health in this Province, even than to bring in people from other countries to take their place? The proposition made to the Government of this Province was that if this Government would provide an annual sum of \$5,000, the Anti-Tuberculosis Society would provide \$20,000 per year for the purpose of entering upon a five years' campaign for the eradication of tuberculosis. They were anxious to try it here for the same reason that the Federal Department of Agriculture was anxious to establish a disease free cattle area,—because it was an area suitable in size and in geographical situation, and because it is evenly and still fairly thickly populated; suitable, in fact, from every standpoint for carrying out this experiment. The Government gave this matter very serious consideration. We appreciate fully the scarcity of revenue and the difficulty of meeting and dealing with all these matters which are very important to the people of the Province, which will make for better conditions, but, in the consideration of which the financial element must always be taken into account. However, it has finally been decided by the Government to submit this matter to the House, and it is included among the Estimates. I may say that this \$5,000 is inclusive of the \$2500 for the R-1 Cross which is already granted.

Another legislative grant made by this Government was the item of \$1,000 made to the Tourist Association. We believe that this has been a splendid investment of public money, and I do not think that even my hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition will disagree with that statement. The result has told already in the increased number of tourists during the past two years in which the Tourist Association has been operating, and the outlook is promising for a still further increase, which will mean larger additional sums of money spent among our people by these visitors to our shores.

## Prohibition

There is a matter with which I might deal at this stage, and that is the question of Prohibition. We have been criticised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition especially with regard to enforcement of the Prohibition Act. I submit that such criticism from the Opposition is very unfair. In my opinion in no Province in Canada is there a better enforcement of the Prohibition law than in this Province at the present time. We have been charged with dragging this into politics, but the result has proved that the charge was absolutely unfounded. We have a present Commission, composed of fair minded, public spirited business men, and they are dealing with the matter just in that way. The same officials, the same inspectors, who formerly carried out their duties still performing their duties. Nothing in that way has been changed. Nothing has been done to interfere with the effective enforcement of the Act by this Government; and the proof is that during the past year the number of convictions under the Prohibition Act has doubled over previous years. (Applause.)

But the difficulty does not lie there. The Prohibition Commission has done its best, the officials of the Act have done their best; but they have been fighting, they have attempted to keep out the tide with a pitchfork, because owing to the laxity of our Customs regulations in this Province, as elsewhere in Canada, intoxicating liquor has been allowed to flow like water into the Province and has made conditions such that they are absolutely beyond the control of our inspectors, even if we had hundreds of officials to carry out the law. (Applause.)

Seeing conditions as I saw them in that respect during the past year, I felt it was my duty to draw the matter to the attention of the Minister of Customs at Ottawa. I would like to read the correspondence.

Charlottetown, P. E. I.  
August 3rd, 1925.

## Our Liberal Claims

Dear Sir,—I would like to draw your attention to a matter which has caused a great deal of trouble and dissatisfaction in this Province, namely, the matter of bringing intoxicating liquors into this Province in contravention of the Customs regulations.

At the present time, I am credibly informed, there are three or four vessels lying off the eastern end of this Province between Souris and Murray Harbour. These vessels have been there for some time and they are continuously supplying liquor to those of our people living along the coast. The result is that the fishermen have been completely demoralized, and the liquor is being distributed inland through the whole Province. It would seem that no effort is being made to cope with this situation.

I would be glad if one or more cutters from your Department were sent down to patrol these waters at once.

Yours faithfully,  
J. D. STEWART,  
Premier.  
Honourable Jacques Bureau,  
Minister of Customs and Excise,  
Ottawa.

## Depleted Sources of Revenue

With reference to revenue, I mentioned before that some of the sources of revenue of the Province have been shrinking of late years. Take for instance public lands. That source of revenue is down to the vanishing point at the present time. The public lands available for sale in this Province are practically nil, so that we can estimate for the future practically nothing from that source.

The revenue from our office of Registry of Deeds has decreased owing to the fact that the market for farm lands has not been active. That of course reflects again on our conditions during the past few years. However, last fall conditions improved very materially and we trust that this improved condition will be reflected in an increased activity in the movement of real estate, and that the revenue from that source will again increase.

## Anticipated Increase in Revenue

Referring again to revenues, I may say that we are expecting some increase this year from several sources. Last year we amended the Act providing for taxation on Life Insurance Companies. That gives an increase this year, to take effect for the first time. Then in regard to Succession duties, this year we will have the benefit of the new Act on most of the estates, and there are some considerable ones. We expect a considerable increase from that source.

There was an increase last year from personal property and income tax, but very much below what we anticipated. With the facilities we have for carrying out the Act, I believe a very large increase will be obtained from that source this year.

There are other sources of revenue which I am not at liberty to mention, but from which we expect to gain an increased amount of revenue.

Lately the criticism has been made that this Government is going to increase taxation. I think however it is time enough to make that statement when the legislation has been introduced. Taxes can only be increased by the Legislature. I have mentioned the only thing that is considered at all, in the way of increase, and that is on the Gasoline tax. Apart from that there will be during the coming year no new sources of taxation, and to add this, the existing provision for taxation will be carried out equitably and properly, as we hope.

## The Estimates to be Submitted

The Estimates to be submitted will show a public expenditure this year of \$721,275, while from the sum of \$729,331. But it has been said before, and I think it is recognized by everyone that in this Province we have really to still ourselves in many of our public services; that what we call practical economy, if we are going to make revenue and expenditure meet must come very closely if not altogether into the region of penuriousness.

That leads me to a matter which has been debated before during this session—the question of our claims against the Federal Government for increased subsidy. So far as we can see now, if we are going to get any relief along the line of increased revenue for this Province,—if we are to get sufficient revenue to enable us comfortably and properly, without extravagance, to provide for the absolutely necessary public services,—we must get relief from that source, and we are entitled to it.

## Inter-Provincial Conference

In previous cases these Inter-Provincial Conferences have been called by the Premiers of Quebec and Ontario. Personally I have taken the matter up already with these gentlemen and I have asked the other Premiers of the Maritime Provinces and they have assured me that their co-operation will be given. I have had a reply from one of the Premiers of the two Central Provinces, stating that he is willing to have this conference within the next two months, and that he was communicating with the other Premier. I have had replies also from the Premiers of the Provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia stating that they are indorsing my request; so that it looks as if the conference will be called at an early date, and that this matter will be one of the subjects brought up.

One can readily see that at such a large conference, with all the Provinces represented, any readjustment of subsidy agreed upon will have very great probability of success with the Federal Government much more so than each Province made its representation separately.

At any rate, I do not think there is any more important matter for the people of this Province at the present time, economically or financially; for even with the utmost economy, with the revenues we have, we cannot carry on as we should do. We cannot, even with proper economy, give the service that should be given with the revenues at our disposal.

## The Reply which I received is dated 10th August

Ottawa, 10th of August, 1925  
Honourable J. D. Stewart,  
Premier of Prince Edward Island  
Charlottetown, P. E. I.

Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter of the 3rd of August calling my attention to the fact that you are informed that there is rum-running around Prince Edward Island.

Most of our fleet is now kept patrolling the coast of Prince Edward Island and from representations I have had, lately, understand the situation has improved considerably. These representations are from residents of your Island, men who had made complaints to me and who have written expressing their satisfaction.

Yours faithfully,  
JACQUES BUREAU,  
(quote reply)

I would like to know the name of the man who expressed to the Minister his satisfaction with the conditions along the coast of this Province at any time during the past summer! I would certainly like to meet him! And I would like to see the fleet of cruisers they had around these shores during last summer. I do not believe any one could find them with a spyglass or a microscope! (Laughter) As a matter of fact as far as I could ascertain there were no cruisers on the eastern shore of this Province.

I was down there myself and made special inquiries, and no attempt, so far as I could discover, was made to patrol that coast. That statement contained in the letter I have quoted is absolutely incorrect. That is the condition with which I have had to cope; yet the blame is put upon the Prohibition Commission and not enforcing the law. Is it candid,—or is it simply political propaganda? (Applause.)

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we should stand with a united front, because, after all, in supporting this measure we are standing for the future salvation of this Province. We are all anxious, as loyal citizens, to carry on as part of the great Confederation of Canada. Our forefathers have done their full share in the past, we are proud of the part they have taken in building up this great Dominion. We are ambitious to carry high the torch they have handed us. But we must have our rights. We cannot exist as we have been doing. We must have our rights. If we are going to do our part, and if we present a united front we will receive our dues and that we will be able to carry on as an integral part of our Canadian Confederation. (Loud applause.)

The Parting of the Ways  
It may be said: Why not show your political courage by levying more taxes? But there is more to the matter than that. It is not a matter of courage. We are at the parting of the ways in this Province. We have been losing our population at a rate that you hesitate to calculate. When we are in this position it takes so little to turn the scale that a very slight increase in taxation might have very serious results on our future. For that reason we will not resort to further taxation on the people of this Province. That is another very strong argument in support of increased Federal subsidy.

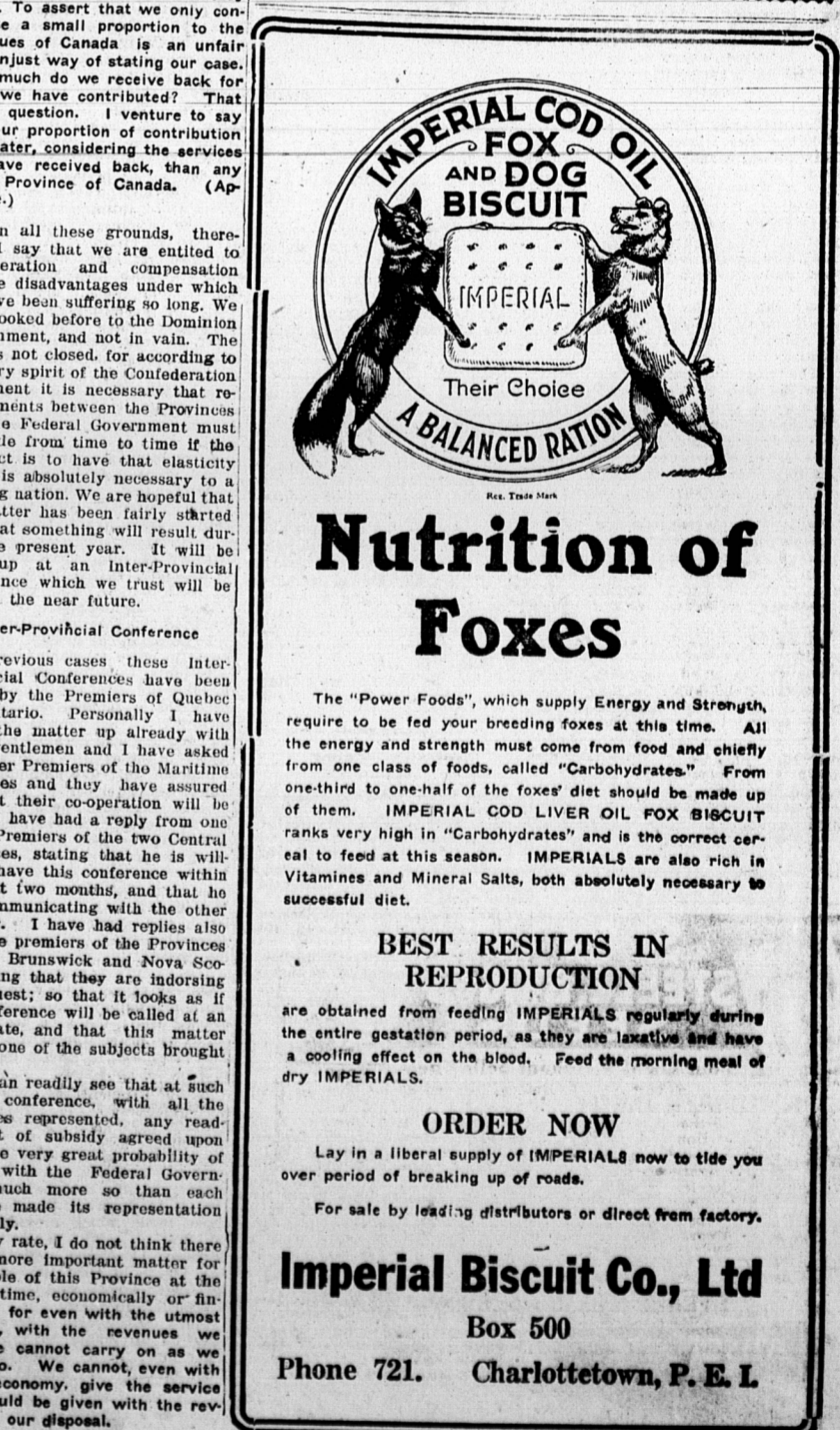
I was very pleased that my hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition should second this resolution. This and important part of our Canadian spirit should permeate us all, and

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