

SMASHING CRITICISM BY OPPOSITION LEADER UNANSWERED IN DRAFT ADDRESS DEBATE

Establishes Government's Incompetency And Dereliction

Case Against The Saunders-Lea Government, In So Far As It Concerns The Issues Relevant To The Motion On The Draft Address, Aply Presented By Hon. J. D. Stewart, K. C., Whose Challenging Questions Re Education And Other Matters Were Ignored By The Premier. Opposition Leader Scores Government's Bungling At 1927 Dominion-Provincial Conference When The Greatest Opportunity This Province Ever Had Of Securing Subsidy Adjustment Was Let Slip.

Following is the full text of the speech delivered by Hon. J. D. Stewart, K. C., leader of the Opposition, in the debate on the Draft Address in the Legislature Wednesday afternoon, March 25:

Mr. Speaker: It falls upon me to perform a very pleasant duty, and that is to tender my congratulations to the mover and seconder of the motion now before the House. I do this unhesitatingly because they have performed their duty well. So far as my good friend from Morell (Mr. Cox) is concerned, of course he has been something of a free-lance. He is always given a little latitude as a humorist; and while there are things he said which I might criticize, I shall not attempt to do so on that account. I assume that he said them as a humorist, and did not consider very much the weight of the words which he uttered.

I was very much interested in the address of the member for the First District of Prince. It was very instructive, and he certainly was justified in saying, as he did in his conclusion, that he had avoided party politics. That, of course, is a rule that should always be observed by those who move and second the resolution now before the House.

Looking back over a period of years, one observes many changes in the political activities of the Province. Men who, a few years ago, were in the forefront of affairs, have passed from the scene. We note these changes year after year, and they give us pause for serious thought.

I want to echo the sentiments of my hon. friend from Morell in expressing regret at the forced absence of my good colleague from the Georgetown district (Hon. Mr. Scully) and the hope that he may be restored soon to his wonted health.

I should like also to tender my sincere sympathy to the hon. members from Abraham's Village (Mr. Darby) and Belfast (Mr. Bruce) in the bereavements they have suffered since this House last met.

A change in the personnel of the Government has already been noticed as having taken place within the past year. When the House prorogued a year ago it was led by the Hon. Mr. Saunders. Now he has passed from the troublesome arena of political strife into the calm and peaceful atmosphere of the Bench, and we all congratulate him upon his translation. He was always an energetic man in political life; we know that he gave his time very strenuously to his work, and we feel quite confident that he will carry that same spirit of activity into his new sphere.

I also wish to offer my congratulations to the present leader of the House. He has taken another step forward in the walk of political life, and he has my sincere congratulations. It may be that at times I shall try to give him a little more worry than he may expect; but after all, it is a part of the duty of the Opposition to criticize the administration. Apart from that, however, I heartily congratulate him upon his attainment of the position which he now holds.

Other Tributes

Reference has already been made to the gubernatorial position in this Province. We have now a new representative of the Sovereign, and I would like to join the speakers who

preceded me in congratulating His Honour Lieutenant Governor Dalton on the attainment of this high position. I am sure we all feel that he has earned it, and I think it is a splendid thing to have that position filled by one who has risen from the soil, as the Hon. Charles Dalton has done. He spent all his life and actively in this Province, and he has served it in very many ways. He has given to the Province perhaps its wealthiest and finest industry, an industry that has brought not only wealth to the people but has advertised the Province itself in every part of the civilized world.

I might also make reference to His Honour's predecessor. For the past four years we have had this Legislature opened and closed by the Hon. Mr. Hertz; and I think I can truly say that while this Province has been blessed with a splendid line of Governors I do not know that any man has ever given more painstaking attention to the performance of the duties of his office than did Mr. Hertz. I am sure we all sympathize with him in the loss he has had recently through the destruction of his magnificent residence. We all have pleasant recollections of our entertainment at Government House during the period to which I refer.

Reference was also made to Lord Willington and his good lady. I have said that we have been very fortunate in the selection of our Governors; that also may be said of the Dominion of Canada. We have had eminent men as Governors General, but I do not know that we ever had one of more outstanding ability than the gentleman who recently took his departure from our shores. During the time that Lord Willington occupied that position he visited this Province many times, and I am sure we all were charmed with his manner, his simplicity, his truly gentlemanly conduct; I am sure also that we were charmed equally with his gracious lady.

Lord Willington is a man who was trained and brought up to what may be called the profession of diplomacy, and he stands today at the top of that profession. I do not know of any man who possesses the qualities of a diplomat so fully and so completely. The proof of this is in the fact that he has been taken away from Canada before his time was up because he was needed in a place where greater diplomacy, greater ability, were required; he was called away to be made Viceroy of India, a most trying position, just when an attempt is being made, after years of trouble in that country, to give some measure at least of self government. I do not know of any greater tribute that could be paid to Lord Willington's ability in his profession than his transfer at this critical time to the position of His Majesty's representative in India.

Heritage Worth Preserving

In speaking of that it seems to me that we should always remind ourselves of the strength we have as a member of the great British Empire. I think it is important that this relationship should be stressed in these days, especially with our children, with those who are growing up and coming after us. It is particularly important when we look at the position of Russia today, when we see how the terrible spirit of Communism seems to be spreading in many

parts of the world. It is apparently a thing that we shall all have to fight; and the best means of fighting it, I believe, is to have our children properly trained and taught as to the value of our own citizenship, of our government and what government in this country means, how it has been built up and what it has done for us and for the civilized world.

Having dealt with these matters I come now to the affairs which are mentioned in the Speech from the Throne and which, I suppose, are more or less controversial in nature. I was very sorry to note that my hon. friend from Morell (Mr. Cox) introduced politics even into that clause of the Speech which refers to public health. That is a matter, I think, that should be discussed in a non-partisan way. However, he gives credit to this Government for reorganizing public health activities. I am not very conversant of the arrangements that have been made, but I understand that this scheme originated with Dr. Woodhouse, who was placed in the position of being able to offer this money to be spent in the Province; money which had been contributed, I believe, by certain life insurance companies.

There are few men to whom this Province owes more than it does to Dr. Woodhouse. He was responsible for the inception of the public health work that has been carried on here for a number of years, and he has done more good than perhaps any of us dream. Now we have another boon at his hands which will be of immeasurable importance to our people, not only in the fight against tuberculosis but in the maintenance of public health generally. We know of how little value we ourselves are, individually, when we lose our health. When the health of a people is lowered the whole standard of the community is lowered. We all realize that. I need only add that we on this side of the House are very glad that the Province is getting this assistance. It is a great boon to us, this work that is being done among the children throughout the school districts; but I am not going to take any more time in discussing it because my colleague from Charlottetown (Dr. MacMillan) is more thoroughly conversant with the matter than I am and he will deal with it when he has the opportunity to speak before the House.

Education

Now we come to the matter of Education. There are just two references to this subject in the Speech from the Throne. One is that the attendance at the public schools is higher than it has ever been. Of course, we have not the figures before the House, but I assume the statement is correct, and if so it is a matter for satisfaction. It can be accounted for in many ways. You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that during the past year we had very favorable weather conditions in the country. That has an important bearing on school attendance. Also, the Province has been exceptionally free from contagious diseases. Those are things to be thankful for, and they are evidenced by the high attendance throughout the schools.

With regard to the improvement in school buildings, I quite agree with the member from the 1st District of Prince (Mr. Gordon) that our Women's Institutes are very

largely deserving of credit. As I have said before on other occasions, the Women's Institutes are doing a great deal of good and in many ways have set an example to the men of the Province by their enthusiasm and initiative.

When we leave these matters and look at the general situation of education in this Province, however, we have nothing for which we can give this Government any credit. I do not know of any advancement or improvement that has been made with regard to education since this Government obtained power.

What has happened, for example, in Prince of Wales College, our most important educational institution and corner-stone of our whole system of teachers' training? You will remember that when the late Government was in power they were fortunate in obtaining a man of exceptional qualifications and ability as teachers' instructor. I refer to Professor Lloyd Shaw. We placed him in charge, and he was an additional employee to the staff that had been there before. He took charge of teachers' training and made a great success of his work. Unfortunately for us, he received a more remunerative offer elsewhere, and left this Province. That situation has obtained for some years now, and yet, so far as I am aware, no one has been appointed to fill his place.

Retrospection, Not Progress

So far as I am aware the teachers' training department is being conducted by some ladies who were formerly model school teachers. Certainly, if that be the case, the situation cannot be as satisfactory as it was under Mr. Shaw. This matter has apparently been neglected by the present Government; and you can readily understand, Mr. Speaker, what an effect that will have on the whole teaching profession in the Province. It is bound to result in retrogression.

Take the general attitude of this Government towards education, and what do we find? For a number of years the teachers have been asking for increased salaries. Shortly after this Government came into power the demand became more urgent. We realize the unfortunate financial situation of the Province; but that was where frankness, diplomacy and statesmanship might have been exerted so as to avoid trouble. But what happened? The situation was so badly bungled at the beginning that the teachers were on the eve of a strike. Somebody—perhaps it was the Hon. member from Rustico intervened and made an attempt to use his diplomacy and ability. So the strike was averted for the time being—upon terms. One of the terms was that in order to ascertain what was needed with regard to education generally a Commission should be appointed. That Commission was appointed, and we on this side of the House found no fault with its personnel. The Commission brought in a report, and that, so far as the teachers were concerned, was the end of the matter. Have the teachers of this Province been in any way on account of that report? A certain amount of money has been expended out of the public treasury in Commissioners' salaries; but have the teachers gained anything? It is certain, at all events, that they have not received any increase in salaries.

There were certain clauses in the Commission's report that they required to have implemented forthwith. One, I believe, was the appointment of a new Board of Education. We approved of the personnel of the new Board last year and the Act was passed. Has that Board been appointed? Is it functioning today in this province? As I said, we approved of that Act when it was introduced; but there was a rider to it, a rider very often put in by those who want to placate somebody without committing themselves to action one way or the other; and the rider was that the bill should become law when an order-in-council was made. And that order-in-council, Mr. Speaker, has never been made.

If you examine the Royal Gazette for the past year, how few regulations, apart from the ordinary legal notices, you will find in it. The Government has contributed very little to the Gazette since this House pro-

rogued. And one of the notices which you will find in it is that order-in-council regarding the new Board of Education.

Premier Lea's Negligence

We were also expecting the appointment of a Minister of Education and Public Health. I took the opportunity last year to commend the Government on this proposed appointment, and I think every member did. That also was to come into effect by order-in-council. Of course, it may be said that at the time Mr. Saunders was looking forward to the Bench and he did not wish to make any changes just upon leaving office. But when was there a better time to have made the change than when my hon. friend the present leader came into power, when he was making a new staff? When he was forming his Government, could he not have seized the occasion then of appointing a Minister of Health and Education, thereby giving Education a new start and putting it on the right road, so to speak? But he did not do it. I watched, and watched in vain, for an announcement of that kind in the Royal Gazette. Up to the present moment it has not come. Neither has the order-in-council been published putting that Act into operation.

When the former Government was in power an attempt was made to get the Provinces closer together upon educational matters. I believed then, and still believe, that this was very important. Where this Province is so small, and where the other Maritime Provinces are not so large, I believe the more closely we can co-operate the better, and I think that should be the aim of the Governments of these Provinces on every possible occasion. We had made some progress along that line with regard to education, but I have heard nothing of it since this Government came into power. Perhaps something was done that I am not aware of; if so, I shall be glad to hear of it; but I think it is a serious matter if this co-operation has been dropped altogether. I believe that we can make very great advances, along many lines by co-operation between the three Maritime Provinces.

Temperance Teaching In Schools

There is another matter which I think should engage the attention of my hon. friends on the Government benches. That is the teaching of Temperance in the public schools. We have had a lot of talk in this Legislature and on public platforms last year about Temperance. It is so easy to talk about these things; but it is my impression that if we are going to do anything worth while along that line we cannot begin in any better place than our schools. If you are going to make people temperate you must educate them in that direction, and your education must begin with the pupils in the schools. I am not aware that any special steps have been taken by this Government along that line. If they are sincere—and I am not going to say that some at least of them are not sincere in their temperance principles—then I think that is a splendid way of demonstrating their sincerity by introducing a measure such as I have suggested in the public schools.

We know, of course, that there is some Temperance taught in the schools. There always has been. When I taught school we had a health reader which gave the elementary principles of Temperance. But is there any more time being spent, any more attention being given to the teaching of Temperance in the schools today than there ever was? That is a question which I could like answered.

I do not think it is necessary for me to say anything further on this matter of education. Like many other things, it has simply been standing still; it is being allowed to take care of itself in the best way it can. There is no activity, no life—things that are necessary to make Education successful.

Provincial Police

The next subject mentioned in the Speech from the Throne is the establishment of the Provincial Police. When that Act was passed last year the Opposition approved of it. The principle, of course, is common to all the Provinces. But I am afraid I discussed this matter very much in the House for mentioning it again. The people of the Province knew very well why that school ceased to operate. My hon. friend from Morell knows it very well. It was because the Liberal Government at Ottawa deprived this Province of the agricultural grant and, finally, the technical grant, as well. The agricultural grant was first taken away and we succeeded in having the technical grant readjusted so that we could use it to some extent for agriculture and educational purposes. If my hon. friends were in power at that time, the probabilities are that there will be other opportunities, before the House

comes, for me to say whatever I see fit to say on that subject. I have only this to add so far as the Provincial Police are concerned, that in my opinion it is not a good arrangement by which this amalgamation was made. Their duties are now apparently divided into two parts, to see that traffic on the public highways is regulated and enforced, and, secondly, to carry out the provisions of the Prohibition Act. I do not think these things should be mixed. I do not think it is working out. As a matter of fact my experience leads me to believe that it does not work out.

Another thing we shall be interested to learn later on is the cost of maintaining this Provincial Police Force. If it were not for the unfortunate condition of bootlegging in the Province, apart from the taking care of the road traffic I do not know that we would be in very urgent need of Provincial Police. In the early days we got along very well. Occasionally it is necessary in the Department of Justice to investigate some matter of criminal offense that requires expert ability and experience; that requires, in other words, a detective. The police officers, of course, cannot do that kind of work; so that we shall still require that kind of expert assistance from outside.

Many Traffic Fatalities

With regard to the traffic on the roads there is not any doubt that more attention is required. Never in the history of this Province have we experienced so many traffic accidents as last year. Take the number of people who have lost their lives on our public highways. It is an experience that is new to us, and yet, apparently, we have had the Provincial Police. Perhaps they were not organized in time. I do know that the Act was very late in being put into operation after the House prorogued.

As I said, I do not intend to go into the question of Prohibition enforcement, any more than to say that their policy in that regard is pretty much the same as their policy in other regards; it lacks sincerity. Insincerity is stamped on the face of it. We have not had the enforcement of that law which we were led to expect we would receive when these gentlemen took the reins of power. I make that statement deliberately. It was an election dodge, and those things generally never succeed very well. That is the reason for the situation we have had in this Province during the past summer especially with regard to illicit liquor.

Agricultural Training

The matter which comes next in the Speech from the Throne was referred to by my hon. friend from Morell. I refer to Paragraph 8, which reads as follows:

"In November last a conference of Provincial Ministers of Agriculture was called by Hon. Robert Weir, Federal Minister of Agriculture, at which a national agricultural policy was discussed. The Minister approved of the establishment of Agricultural Schools and offered the services of the various Experimental Stations for this purpose. Negotiations have since taken place between my Government and the Federal Government concerning this important matter."

From that paragraph it is very difficult to know just what is meant. We shall await with interest the explanation of the leader of the House. I may say, however, that it is the policy of the Federal Government to restore the agricultural grant for educational purposes which was taken away by the late Federal Government. If that is what the paragraph means, of course it is a splendid thing. It was the intention of the late Provincial Government, if they had been returned to power in 1927, to establish classes in agriculture along the line mentioned here, to be carried on in connection with the Experimental Farms. But my hon. friend from Morell has taken the trouble to refer to the old Technical and Agricultural School. We must tread that out so many times that I really feel like apologizing to the House for mentioning it again. The people of the Province knew very well why that school ceased to operate. My hon. friend from Morell knows it very well. It was because the Liberal Government at Ottawa deprived this Province of the agricultural grant and, finally, the technical grant, as well. The agricultural grant was first taken away and we succeeded in having the technical grant readjusted so that we could use it to some extent for agriculture and educational purposes. If my hon. friends were in power at that time, the probabilities are that there will be other opportunities, before the House

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Fortunate Conditions

I quite agree with the statements made as to the fortunate conditions in this Province as compared with many other parts of the civilized world. I have been told that here in this city, during the past Christmas season, the mercantile trade was fully up to the average of previous years. I think it is safe to say that there is not another city or town in North America to which that statement would apply. It is a wonderful commendation of our people and of our situation in this Province economically.

It is quite true that our farmers have to suffer with very low prices. We are passing through a very difficult time. I am not going to refer to the remarks of the member from Morell on this subject, because I do not propose to discuss Dominion politics except in so far as they trench directly on matters which we have before us in this House. So I need only repeat that, comparatively speaking at any rate, we have much reason to be thankful for the economic condition existing in this Province at the present time.

Reference was made to the importance of continuing mixed farming. We have always followed that method of farming and I presume we always will, because it is the only system that suits this Province.

Exhibitions

There is reference in the Speech to our Exhibitions. I am sure we are all very pleased to know that they have been so successful. We are informed also that "the excellent display of roots and vegetables—harvested in the middle of August—was a striking illustration of the possibilities of early growth and development for export of this valuable cash crop."

Of course, I would suggest to the Minister of Agriculture that that condition last year simply happened. The season was a very favorable one for the early development of our vegetables. Generally speaking, however, the preparation of vegetables in this Province fit to show in the middle of August is a very problematical thing. You may succeed in some years, but as a business it is pretty unwise.

Our fruit products are not mentioned in the Speech, and I do not think the Minister of Agriculture has any great preference for them. The only time I heard him say anything about them was when he spoke a year ago on the subject of cranberry culture; and that was unfortunately a rather pessimistic utterance. He has not given the fruit industry in this Province very much attention since he assumed office.

A fruit show in the middle of August in this Province is an absolute impossibility, as the results have shown. It was rather pitiable to look at the fruit shown at the Provincial exhibition last year. In fact, fruit raising is rather discouraged by an exhibition at that time. It leads others to believe that we cannot grow fruit in this Province, and I think it would be very much better to have no fruit show at all than to have one that will discourage everybody who would care to look at it.

It is not necessary for me to say anything with regard to the fox industry, because it has been dealt with already by one of the masters of this business, the member from First Prince, and it may be dealt with by others who are engaged in that industry. It is producing, as I said before, a great deal of wealth to the Province and I believe it will continue to do that not perhaps in as great a measure as obtained in the past few years, but as the member from First Prince said yesterday, as an im-

portant adjunct to the farming industry.

Perhaps the most serious phase of the fox industry today is the problem of disease; the difficulty of conquering existing diseases and the new diseases that are appearing from time to time. I think the biological aspect of the fox industry requires more attention and more money to be expended upon it than anything else perhaps, at the present time.

A Welcome Windfall

Reference has been made to unemployment. It is curious what things will become a blessing sometimes. One would never think that unemployment would become a blessing to this Government. Yet it brought some money to them from the Federal Treasury; and goodness knows what sort of a showing they would have made without that money! The curious part of it is that these very gentlemen who were so delighted to get it, who tumbled over themselves in accepting that offer, were the very gentlemen who, throughout the last federal campaign, travelled all over the Province condemning this very policy. (Applause.) There was not any unemployment, they said. This was all "moonshine!" These gentlemen, who should have been at their work, who should have been taking care of the governmental business of the Province were travelling about, day after day, taking part in the federal campaign on this very matter. I do not know how many days and nights the leader of the House and the hon. Minister of Public Works spent in that way.

HON. MR. LEA: Not many; not days.

HON. MR. STEWART: I would like to ask my hon. friend if he could start at night and get to those meetings in time, and travel the distance he had to travel? And he generally got there on time, too. He didn't miss any opportunity of making a speech. I can tell you; for he does like making speeches. (Applause.)

I had the pleasure of meeting the Minister of Public Works at one of those meetings, and do you know what he was doing? He was delivering a lecture on the subject that I am going to touch upon in a few minutes—our claims upon the Federal Government for subsidy readjustment!

As I said, they have received this unemployment money, and it is being used by the Province. I do not know that there is very much for us to say about it here, until we have the report as to how it is being used. We will get that, I assume, in the Public Accounts. If not, we shall have to ask questions until we do get it. But it has certainly been a great boon to this Government. No doubt they welcomed it, although they did condemn it when they were travelling about the country during the federal campaign.

Confederation Chamber

Among other things, I believe, they have used this money for the renovation of the Confederation Chamber. That, I think, is an excellent thing, and I am very proud to see that done. I am afraid that we have not paid as much attention to that Chamber and the history connected with it as we should. In this connection I might make a suggestion. Since the advent of the automobile nearly every one throughout the country has a car. We have had farmers' picnics at the Experimental Farm—an excellent practice—and we find the farmers' associations and I believe also the Women's Institutes, coming in from the different sections of the Province and having their picnics there. It struck me that it might be a splendid thing, when the car roads are favorable for motor traffic, if excursions of that kind were organized by two or three schools, to come in here, not for picnicking purposes but simply on an excursion, and visit the Confederation Chamber. They would have the opportunity of hearing of the early history of this Province, and of the formation of the Dominion of Canada from people who can properly describe these events. Right here in the very room in which the Confederation Fathers met, surrounded by historic associations of the period. They would then be able to visualize the history of Canada. That is one way of educating our children as to our constitution and government, and the importance that attaches to them. I would like to commend that suggestion to the Government for their consideration.

I also wish to commend the Government for having this room placed in the condition in which it is. It can still be used for many purposes, and I am sure it will be. (Continued on page 11)