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# Honorable J. D. Stewart Replies Effectively to Premier's Budget Speech

## Reviews the Financial Situation Proving Conclusively That Government Has Spent Money Extravagantly Wiping Out the Surplus Inherited From the Past Administration And Creating a Very Large Deficit.

Following is the speech delivered by Hon. J. D. Stewart, Leader of the Opposition, in the Budget Debate, which began on Wednesday evening, April 11th.

Mr. Speaker, I am very sorry that I am not able to congratulate my hon. friend, the Leader of the Government, on his initial effort in making a Budget Speech. To copy his own phrasing, he is running true to form. It has often been said that my hon. friend is a wizard at figures. I might go further and say that that mania of his seems to be a sort of auto-hypnotism with him—he becomes so auto-hypnotized that he not only loses himself but everybody listening to him becomes lost in that bewildering maze. He invited the Opposition to take down his figures. I am not a shorthand writer, Mr. Speaker, and even if I were I doubt if I could keep pace with him. And I think it the most merciful course for all concerned that I should leave to him to make his whizz! I attempt to deal with some of the matters referred to in his speech.

So far as the Budget is concerned, it is not a very promising outlook. For the first time in my recollection a deficit has been forecasted in a Budget speech in this Province. I give my hon. friend credit for his candor; but for nothing more. Judging from his speech tonight and from his other statements, I very much fear that the difference between his revenue and expenditure will be considerably greater than he has estimated.

I might begin very close to where my hon. friend left off. He has undertaken to lecture myself with regard to some remarks I made disparagingly, he says, of the hon. Minister of Agriculture. I think that in that, as in other things, my hon. friend is dreaming a little. I did not make any disparaging remarks about the Minister of Agriculture. I would not have any such remarks to make. Personally I have every respect for the Minister of Agriculture, and I believe he appreciates that as well as everyone else. But such criticisms do not come with a good grace from a gentleman who, within five minutes after, referred to the Opposition as being "idiotic."

I do not think that any remark I have ever applied, not only to the Minister of Agriculture but to any gentleman in this House, has ever gone quite that far. I would not have referred to those proceedings in the House except that the matter was referred to by the Leader of the Government. And why does he call it idiotic? Because forsooth a newspaper in this Province reports what happened in this Legislature and makes some comments thereon; therefore, the Opposition is "idiotic." I am going to refer to some of those things, and I think I am safe in saying that if it had not been that the Opposition had carried out its duty and pointed out those things, there would have been no such legislation that would be forever a disgrace to the fair name of the Province.

**Faulty Legislation.**

I may say that I have been in this House for ten years, and have been more or less closely in touch with the legislation that has gone through. I have taken part in putting through a great many private measures myself, and I have never seen legislation introduced in such a disgraceful state as that introduced at this session. My hon. friend referred to one or two of those statutes. He mentioned the statute providing for the borrowing of money for the gravelling of highways which made the borrowing a first charge upon the automobile license fees. I pointed out to my hon. friend, and he knows it as well as I do, that there was already a first charge; and how could there be two first charges on the same fund? He knows that when he goes out into the money markets of Canada or elsewhere to borrow money, these lenders will lend the money will first examine the validity of the statute; and if that legislation had gone through as introduced they would have found a fatal defect. That was one mistake which the Opposition pointed out, and as a result the statute was amended.

There were other instances. My hon. friend wished to change the name in two statutes of the Assistant Provincial Secretary Treasurer, to that of Deputy Assistant Provincial Treasurer. And what did he do? Any person at all conversant with or having any knowledge whatever of legislative drafting would ever put through very short amendment, simply changing the one word for the other. But my hon. friend did not do that. He repealed both statutes and substituted two new ones, just for the sake of changing one word. Those are a few instances; and he complains, when we object to those things, that we are being picky.

My hon. friend and his Government have been charged by the people of this Province with preparing, introducing and passing legislation. They do not look to the Opposition to pass the legislation; it is the duty of the Government; that is what they are there for, and that is what my hon. friend is paid his salary for.

As it is a late hour I shall not go into any detailed discussion of the finances, or any of the main matters mentioned by my hon. friend, but I shall refer to one or two things that have come up from time to time and which, it seems to me, should be dealt with.

**A Challenge to Mr. Saunders.**

First I want to deal with a statement which the Leader of the Government has made concerning myself; that is, that the people—and he himself—have become accustomed to discount what I say in this House to the tune of seventy-five per cent. That is rather a serious statement for any hon. gentleman to make. One would assume that when a member of this House, and more especially the Leader of the Government, makes a statement of that kind with regard to another member, which if he put it in other words, would be unparliamentary—that he would have very good grounds for making it. The ground which my hon. friend gave for making that statement was that I had said that he had discontinued criminal proceedings in the Supreme Court on behalf of the Crown against three or four persons during the last Term of the Court. I am very sorry to have to drag this matter again into the arena, and I would not have done so except for the manner in which my hon. friend has made that statement.

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**What Premier Saunders Promised.**

Resuming the debate on Thursday afternoon, Hon. Mr. Stewart said:

When the debate adjourned last night, I was referring to the attitude of the Leader of the Government regarding the matter of reduction of taxation. You will remember, Mr. Speaker—at least those who were in the House last year will remember—the almost startling statement of my hon. friend on an occasion when it was not very fitting that he should make such a statement—during the debate on the Draft Address. His statement was very clear and unequivocal, that the policy of the Liberal party would be a downward revision of taxes generally, and more especially with regard to the motor vehicle fees. It was absolutely unqualified, and he wound up his statement with these words: "I make this statement and repeat it so that there will be no mistake about it." Those are his words as quoted by the Patriot newspaper.

Afterwards, when the proper time came, when the finances of the Province were under consideration in this House, the Government made its announcement with regard to reduction of taxation—the reduction to which my hon. friend referred last night in his speech on the resolution now before the House. After we had made our announcement he chided us because we were poor imitators; we were simply following his platform, and that he had been the first to announce a reduction. He had done this, he said, for two reasons: first, because of the increased revenue that would accrue to the Province because of the increased Federal subsidy; and secondly because the Liberal party, of which he was the leader, had a tradition for economy. He referred to the Bell Government; how they handled the affairs of the Province with so much less revenue than the Government then in power, and the general reputation which Liberal Governments have had for economy. On these two grounds, having the increased revenue and having placed upon his shoulders the responsibility of living up to the so-called Liberal tradition, he was going to reduce the taxes, and we were simply imitators of his policy.

My hon. friend did not do that. He repealed both statutes and substituted two new ones, just for the sake of changing one word. Those are a few instances; and he complains, when we object to those things, that we are being picky.

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# Dr. W. J. P. McMillan Speaks on Draft Address

Continued

**Examinations at P. W. C.**

The hon. Premier, too, said he was utterly opposed to the policy of sending home students from the College who failed in the Christmas examinations; and he went on to give me a long lecture on the subject. When a boy or girl fails at the Christmas examinations so that there is no chance of getting a diploma or license in the Spring, the parents should be so advised; and it is up to the parents whether they are to send that boy or girl back to College or not. The history of that institution goes to show that quite a number of those who fail at Christmas are going to fail at the end of the year. I believe that the entrance examinations should be so difficult that once they pass those and get in, they are reasonably sure of getting their license.

My hon. friend from Summerside spoke about one of the entrance examinations and said that it was humanly impossible to do. I would be inclined to agree with him about some of the problems. Of course, I suppose I am getting old and rusty now; but I used to know something about teaching and about examinations. There are some problems that are certainly difficult to understand. I see that there are some amendments proposed to the School Act. I hope they will be in the interests of education, that they will improve conditions; but I have no faith in the Premier's announcement that the appointment of three additional inspectors is going to improve the training. I cannot see it, Mr. Speaker. We have had inspectors in the past, as many as there are in operation now. I might say that the idea did not originate with my hon. friend; that he had made arrangements whereby our staff of inspectors should be increased. We had made arrangements whereby the Dominion Government whereby the salaries of those additional inspectors could be paid out of the technical grant. There is no special credit coming to my hon. friend for this movement. I believe the appointment of additional inspectors will be a help, but I believe also, as I have pointed out, that there are other ways by which education can be helped. The appointment of a full time man in the Prince of Wales College to direct agricultural activities would be a move in the right direction. I know that the man who is there now, who is devoting his time to normal training, is improving the course and will get results; but if agriculture is a good thing, and if agriculture is a good thing, I do not see any reason why there should not be a full time man in the public schools, and at least in the Prince of Wales College, a love for the land—why they cannot be persuaded to stay at home. I believe also that the Summer schools for teachers are a good thing. At any rate, the Premier will find, if he makes any move to better educational conditions in this Province, that we will support him in it.

**Public Health.**

There is another matter which is very closely connected with education, and upon which I wish to make a few remarks. That is the matter of public health. The Speech from the Throne has reference to it: "It will be regretted that so little is being done for public health in this Province, especially in regard to the prevention and treatment of the dread disease of tuberculosis, now so prevalent here; but I am glad to announce that my Government is making a step forward in securing the services of a full time expert chest diagnostician."

I am very glad that that is a move in the right direction, and I will give the Government credit for it. They are co-operating with other organizations, and we hope that the result will be that there will be a full time expert chest diagnostician. I do not know whether that means a full time health officer or not, but I think with the right direction, and with conditions such as they are, that that would be the logical direction in which the Government would devote its energies.

On more than one occasion in this House I have had the opportunity to say something on this matter; to point out our public health conditions; and it is a matter which will be repeated, because our record in this respect is not an enviable one. I gave the result of the figures of the expert who came here under the auspices of the Red Cross Society the other day. The result was very much the same as you have heard it in this House; that the last examination revealed seventy active cases; that for every active case there are ten contacts; the result of actual, proven figures. So that you may reckon on 700 cases of tuberculosis in this Province. It is all very well to have an expert chest diagnostician, but these cases have been diagnosed already. The problem is, what are we going to do with them?

**Need of Sanatorium.**

It has been said that the Stewart Government did nothing in respect to public health. The Premier was a little more generous; he gave us credit for the grant of \$3,500 to the Red Cross Society, and it was owing to that grant that the Red Cross Society has been able to function here and that this result of the examinations is now made public. Of course, that is not a new thing to my hon. friends in the medical profession. I think every one of us, whenever we had the opportunity, have endeavored to tell the people of this Province that tuberculosis is rampant, especially in certain sections, and it would seem that we should always get an outsider to come here and tell the people these things before they begin to wake up. We have been endeavoring to do what we could; we gave the Red Cross the money, they asked for, and we were willing to increase the amount up to \$5,000 for a period of five years, and to work in conjunction with the Canadian Anti-Tuberculosis Association for the betterment of public health in this Province. But we were up against the very same problem which this Government is up against now, and that is, that in order to get anywhere, certain of these tubercular cases must be isolated. We must have some place in which to look after them; some sort of Sanatorium. Otherwise, you may go on diagnosing the cases and telling them what to do, and it will be of little avail. The incipient cases must be taken care of somehow, and the hopelessly incurable cases should be taken care of also, because they spread infection among others.

In view of these facts it does seem a pity, Mr. Speaker, that the Dalton Sanatorium was allowed to go by the board. Hon. gentlemen speaking on the Draft Address, have said: "Well, it was not my fault, and it was a mistake that it was ever turned over to the Dominion Government." But we know that there was a possibility of having that building changed, and that some negotiations went on about it. It is quite true that during the war it was turned into some sort of a convalescent home and that in that condition it was not suitable for the purposes of a Sanatorium. But some arrangement might have been arrived at. I trust that we shall hear Minister of Agriculture comes to speak, because I understand he was a member of the delegation that went to Ottawa to discuss this question with the Dominion authorities. I am not sure but that the Minister of Agriculture did not lose an opportunity on that occasion, because even if they found the building unsatisfactory and the site not what it should be—notwithstanding the fact that the site was selected by the expert in that particular line—he might have asked for a cash settlement at that time, and I believe the Dominion Government would have given it to him.

**Alarming Situation Re Tuberculosis.**

Do not think that I can give any advice. If there is any in which I can help in the fight against tuberculosis I will do it, and I believe every member of the House will do the same. It is a tremendous proposition. I have given the Government credit for what it has done in procuring the services of a chest diagnostician; it is a step in the position today that we must do something in the way of treatment of these cases. If we cannot do anything, we had better get out of the House and let someone else try. There is no evading the figures now which are staring us in the face. Experts are coming here year after year, and they are telling the same story. We know that there are one hundred of our people laid away every year in the grave from tuberculosis. My hon. friend the junior member from Summerside told us just what it meant in dollars and cents. Prince Edward Island has the highest death rate from tuberculosis of any Province in Canada, and we are spending the least money to fight it. The Western Provinces, blessed by Providence with such healthy climate, are spending the most to fight tuberculosis; and yet their death record is 44 to 1,000, where ours is up to 128 or something like that; I do not remember the exact figure, but it is desperately alarming.

**Women's Institutes.**

I might very well say that the Women's Institutes are interested greatly in this matter. I forget what hon. member made the statement that the Women's Institutes are the finest organization in the Province. I agree heartily with him. Before I go any further I want to express my personal regret, and I think the regret of every member in this House to the hon. Minister of Agriculture, on the fact that that splendidly talented and capable young lady who is at present Superintendent of the Women's Institutes of this Province is in very serious health. I have learned of it with deep regret. We all hope that she reports, because as head of that great organization she has been doing a splendid work.

Attention was drawn to the fact that some reference to the work of the Women's Institutes might well have been made in the Speech from the Throne. They have done more to bring up school conditions in the Province than any other organization that I know of. You have only to take the report of their activities last year, which shows that \$10,000 was spent in improving school grounds, getting trees planted, erecting fences, getting hardwood floors, supplying maps and globes, and repairing flagpoles, and work of that nature. Anything that the Women's Institutes undertake they do well. Now, it is said, they have interested themselves in this matter of public health, and that they have already waited upon the Government. I am very glad to hear that, because if they get behind this movement, if they support it, it is a fairly good guarantee that something will be done.

I am sorry that my hon. friend the member from Rustico is not in his seat, because he said the Women's Institutes of this Province waited on the Government the other night as they had waited on the Stewart Government on several occasions. I would like to correct my hon. friend from Rustico. I do not know whether he said that intentionally or not, but he gave the authority of a citizen of Charlottetown for his statement, and I would like to have some further explanation from him. Every member of this Government knows or should know that the Women's Institutes never waited on the Stewart Government in regard to this matter of public health. I can say that with the authority of one of the members of the Stewart Government. Probably the hon. member was just mistaken; but he should be a little careful in making a statement of that kind, because he will be corrected every time.

**Government Grants.**

The statement of the Premier on the subject of public health did not give us anything more definite than I do not know whether I should make the suggestion or not; perhaps the Government is considering some explanation of the securing of the Opposition drew his attention to the fact that the Government is only paying one-third of this man's salaries, and the Leader of the Government says: "Well, we were only asked to pay one-third. Wouldn't it be foolish to pay the whole thing?" I don't think there is anyone finding fault with the Premier in that respect, but it is rather a coincidental remark when we consider the marks of my hon. friend from the First District of Prince on another subject which has a bearing on this matter of Government grants. That hon. member touched on a grant of \$5,000 which the late Government had voted in order to develop and promote another line of business, the fox industry. He said that \$5,000 was wasted, that the foxes were no good that were there for experimentation and, as I understood him, it was an unjustifiable expenditure. Now I do not know whether the hon. gentleman is aware of the history of that grant or not. It is quite true that the Stewart Government voted the money, because we had representations from the fox breeders of this Province that the location of that fox station should be shifted, and that we could get it down into this Province; that there was danger of it being elsewhere, and very serious danger. Negotiations reached the point where it was necessary for the Government to put up \$5,000 to secure the site. We believed that was a good thing, and we put it in the Estimates and I do not think the item was questioned. But after that money was voted negotiations went on still further, and an offer came from the progressive fox breeders of Prince County to the effect that they would put up the \$5,000 required for equipment if the experimental fox station would be built in Summerside. Now some differences of opinion had existed on that; there had been applications and negotiations for some time asking that the station be placed in Summerside because it was the centre of the fox industry of the world. There were more ranches in Prince County, more progress in the industry going on there, than elsewhere, and Summerside was right in the centre of the arguments.

The Government considered that when the Dominion Government established an experimental farm here it was near the capital, that it was established, and they decided to follow that example in establishing an experimental fox station. However, when this offer came from those men who were prepared in order to get the station in Prince County to put up the \$5,000, some negotiations went on, and the opportunity was given the fox breeders of other parts of the Province whereby they might come up to that offer in order to relieve the Government of any financial responsibility. Those negotiations fell through, the experimental fox station went to Prince County. The Prince County men paid that \$5,000 to their credit, and they did better than that. Some one has said that he did not know what happened; that cheque for \$5,000, that he hoped the Province was not any worse off. No, the Province was not any worse off. The money was never expended; that is the history of it. The Stewart Government saved that \$5,000. We had voted the money, but we never expended it. I suppose I may say, like the Premier: Why should we spend that \$5,000 when we could get out of it?

But my hon. friend from the First District of Prince says it was no good anyway. He said some other notable things, among them the fact that there was a wonderful banquet at the Victoria Hotel on the 15th of May last year, and that if it had not been for that banquet we would never have discovered the hon. member from the First District. He said to himself: "If it hadn't been for that banquet he would never have run in election, and look what we would have lost!"

He doesn't agree even with his own side of the House, so we do not expect him to agree with us. He found fault with the Bell Government for raising their own salaries first. I do not think he was far astray in that, but when he tried to blame the Opposition of that day for voting with the others, then he was just a little off. I have never heard that there was a vote to increase the sessional indemnity in which the Opposition concurred with the Government. We know that there was a vote to increase the sessional indemnity in which the Opposition concurred with the Government. We know that the sessional indemnity was raised, and let the Government take the credit of it. It did not matter to them whether the Opposition wanted it increased or decreased; because the Stewart Government take the credit of having decreased that indemnity, and we did not particularly care what the Opposition had to say about it when we did it.