

# MR. J. H. BUNTAIN SPEAKS ON DRAFT ADDRESS

Following Mr. Dennis in the debate on the Draft Address in the Legislature on Thursday, March 19th, Mr. J. H. Buntain, Conservative member for 2nd Queens, modestly professed himself to be a farmer and not a practiced speaker. He was in full accord with the complimentary remarks passed upon His Honor Lieutenant Governor Hearst and with the eulogies bestowed upon the late Senators Yeo and Murphy, as well as Sir Louis Davies. He wished also to refer to the late Hon. J. H. Cummins, who had done a great deal in the interests of this Province.

As a representative farmer, Mr. Buntain acknowledged the boquets which had been "handed out" by speakers of other professions in regard to the industry and ability of the people making up our farming communities. There will come a time, however, when this sort of thing may be carried a little too far. We have no industries to speak of here and the farmer is the principal factor in provincial affairs. He regretted that in this Legislature composed of thirty hon. members, there were only three or four farmers. The people of the country were themselves to blame largely for this, in not electing men of their own type. Our farmers today are not in the same position as the hon. members of other professions. He did not wish to criticize unnecessarily, but in looking over the Speech from the Throne, he noted the expression: "It is with a sense of gratitude and satisfaction that we note the gradual return to normalcy of world economic and trade conditions from the destruction and dislocation brought about by war and post war disturbances." He felt, in reading over that paragraph, that our farmers are not yet back to pre-war conditions. In the present state of the money market, probably we are not able to be in that condition. But when other professions are considered, it would appear that our lawyers, doctors, professional men and merchants, in many cases, are ready to exact the almighty dollar from the farmers for any work they do. Perhaps he was using language a little too strong but what he wished to point out was that to members of every other profession the farmer has to pay about a hundred percent more than in 1914, while the buying value of the dollar to the farmer is not as great as before the war. Previous speakers had remarked upon the progressive spirit of our farmers and had congratulated them upon how well they were doing. Mr. Buntain could not see it. He did not wish to be pessimistic, but he believed in being fair. The farmer today is scarcely able to make ends meet. Why should that be? The whole trouble with our farmers is that we are not in a position to grapple with the conditions as they exist. Taxes have increased. The farmers today have lost a little confidence in the public affairs of the country and that confidence was largely lost through the hon. members now in Opposition. When the present Chief Justice was premier, he was in the same position that Premier Stewart is in today. He was short of funds. But he did not do what the Bell Government did; he did not proceed to levy taxes on the people. He went to Ottawa and secured \$100,000 for the benefit of the people of this Province. Mr. Bell told the people that he could make revenue and expenditure meet, that he could pay the teachers a larger amount of money without additional taxation. Hardly had they gotten into power than they broke faith and today that stigma is as deep in the hearts of the people as it ever was. When they got back to the electors again, the reply will be "You betrayed us and we want no more of you."

The Liberal members have raised a great hubbub about the poll tax and the trouble it has been to collect the arrears. Let them ask the men who are being sued for non-payment of the arrears, and the answer will be that the cause of all the trouble was the Bell Government which had imposed the law in the first place. That tax has been

appealed by the present Government, in compliance with the promise made to the people. MR. SAUNDERS: What about the indemnity? Mr. Buntain replied that he would come to that subject, if the Leader of the Opposition had patience. He wished to point out, with respect to our farm products, that we are not getting the prices we should. A previous speaker, Mr. Blanchard, condemned the National Policy as killing our Province. The speaker did not pretend to know as much about public questions as the hon. gentleman, but he did remember reading one great speech by Sir John A. Macdonald when he inaugurated that policy shortly after Confederation, and the thousands of people who listened to that speech took the great Conservative statesman at his word. It was the National Policy that built our railroads and brought our people home to live and stay forever, but unfortunately the Free Trade bugbear came into prominence. What is the result today? We know that we are handicapped. Trade embargoes are put up against us by the United States and our own tariff is so small that American producers can crowd us out of our own markets. The speaker instanced the situation in pork and eggs.

During the years between 1911 and 1915 taxes were not high; only about twenty cents on the hundred dollars. The Province did not have a very great revenue, but we were getting along nicely. What happened when the Bell Government came into power? After telling the people that they could make revenue and expenditure meet they deliberately imposed taxes nearly five times greater than the Conservatives were charging. The people of the Province resent that worse today than ever before. In regard to the gasoline tax of two cents a gallon Mr. Buntain did not believe the farmers generally were bothering to collect the rebate due them, it was so small a matter. The Government is refunding the amount of the tax to the farmers and fishermen, and that is quite proper. One man received a cheque for twenty cents, the amount of his rebate, and laughed very heartily over it. The tax does not affect the farming community, but every car owner is well satisfied to pay because he is receiving the value of the tax by virtue of the better roads. If there was one individual who grumbled at the gasoline tax, it must be the Leader of the Opposition himself. The hon. gentleman probably knew as much about cars as the speaker did, perhaps a good deal more.

MR. McARTHUR: That is very little. MR. BUNTAIN: think I could do as well as he did. I could run it in the ditch any time. (Laughter.) An hon. member had raised the question of the sessional indemnity, and it was claimed that the Conservatives promised to reduce it to what it was before the Bell Government took office. That has been referred to last year by the Leader of the Opposition. The Liberals had raised their own salaries to \$500 a year, and placed a big additional tax on the people to pay it. Now they have the audacity to say that the Conservatives, after reducing the indemnity by \$100, have not lowered it enough. He would venture to say that if the Liberals are again returned they will again raise the amount to \$500. The men who were opposing him in his district during the last election said "We are worth that \$500; we are big men, and we think the people ought to pay us that." MR. SAUNDERS: What was your answer to the platform? MR. BUNTAIN: My answer was that we would follow the platform laid down by our party, and that was to reduce the indemnity. MR. SAUNDERS: Down to two hundred. MR. BUNTAIN: No sir. We on this side can face the people of the country. There never was a time when the people were so satisfied. The only ones you hear grumbling are our Liberal friends, and they

are the men about whom the people say "You did perfectly right to sue those men, because they are the ones who voted to put that tax on. They kept it on and they want to do the same when they are returned to power again." Gentlemen, you will never get there! (Applause.) MR. SAUNDERS: Might I ask a question?

MR. BUNTAIN: Certainly. MR. SAUNDERS: I would like to know if the member stated on the public platforms of his district that he would see that the indemnity was reduced to two hundred dollars, or he would resign, or some words to that effect. MR. BUNTAIN: I want to tell the Leader of the Opposition that I never made the statement, and that he cannot get a man in the Second Electoral District, or any other place, to come before this House and make that statement. (Applause.) He cannot get one responsible elector to prove it. I am as willing as any man to reduce the indemnity still lower, but I never made that statement, and I do not think he has a right to insinuate that I did. Let him produce, if he can, a single responsible man to prove it.

MR. SAUNDERS: It was made in the public press. MR. BUNTAIN: It may have appeared in the Patriot. (Laughter.) But that is taken for what it is worth in the country. Since the Leader of the Opposition has raised the question, I would like him to bring before this House one responsible man who can swear that he ever heard me make that statement. I will promise him right here, that if he can do so, I will never receive the nomination again. Come now, will the hon. gentleman take the offer? THERE IS NOT ENOUGH IN POLITICS FOR ANY MAN TO BETRAY HIS HONOR FOR A THING LIKE THAT! (Applause.)

Mr. Buntain concurred in the remarks of previous speakers, that our public roads present one of the most difficult problems confronting any government in this Province. This is the where the greatest amount of money is being expended. He wanted no greater authority on the subject, than the present Mr. Justice Arsenault, who before a large audience at Rustico, said, "Gentlemen, the roads belong to you; it is for you to take a pride in them. We should take such interest in our roads, that a half day's labor spent in repairing a bad place occasionally would not be begrudged." The speaker referred to a piece of road near his own home which for upwards of twenty-five years they had repaired, and he doubted if the bridge there during the past fifty years had cost the government more than three or four dollars for upkeep. The people there, felt that the road belonged to them because they used it most every one with the interests of the Province at heart should take a pride and interest in our public roads.

An improved highway was started two years ago, under the Liberal Government, in the speaker's district. It was evidently started for the purpose of gaining a few votes. They did about two miles of road, and were working on it for two or three months. In that project they never built so far as I remember one cement or steel culvert. During the past year the Conservative Government undertook the work again, they put in some twenty-three culverts. These roads will be finished this year, greatly to the satisfaction of the people of the district.

Mr. Buntain explained that in his section of the country there is mud digger in operation which works all the year around, driven by a gasoline engine. It digs an enormous amount of mud and the people are anxious to procure this commodity, which is the cheapest fertilizer available. The Government, he suggested could assist by placing the mud in various sections of the country where it was needed.

The agricultural situation today is a difficult one. Our farmers, with the high prices they have to pay for the goods they buy, and the low prices they receive for their products, together with the high freight rates, are not in a position to hire help, and the consequence is that many farms are vacant, the people having gone to the United States or Western Canada. The fault does not lie with the Govern-



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**Strike In Boston**

BOSTON, April 2.—Approximately 1,000 members of the local plumbers, lathers and electrical workers unions went on strike this morning to enforce their demands for higher wages rather than sign a three-year wage renewal contract with the Building Trades Employers' Association.

The quality of island cheese, as one member remarked, is second to none in the world, but it is regrettable that last year this quality was not up to standard requirements. We must at once rectify this, our our cheese industry will go the way some of our other industries have gone. Owing the depreciation in the quality of last year's cheese production, the Province lost some thousands of dollars. This condition must be remedied before another year.

The speaker noticed a letter in one of the city papers yesterday, to the effect that there was some rumor of a change in the Prohibition law. He did not know what the attitude of the Government or the Opposition is on that question, but he believed he knew the attitude of the Province, and that, he thought was in favor of the present law. He trusted that before any change is contemplated the matter will be given serious consideration. He hoped that every measure enacted during the session will be for the benefit of the people and the Province generally. (applause.)

**WINSTON AND THE LAMBS**

WINSTON: "I'll have their tails 'bobbed' next year!"

—News of the World.

**ICE REPORT**

HALIFAX, April 1.—The following ice report was received yesterday by the Board of Trade from the Agency of the Marine and Fisheries Department in Dartmouth:

Magdalen Islands, 490—Clear northwest Grindstone, Pleasant Bay, West Point, and Old Harry, no ice in sight. Grosse Ile close packed ice. Stang Du Nord broken ice.

Port Hood—Foggy, calm. No change in ice conditions.

Souris, P. E. I.—Clear and calm. No ice to be seen outside harbour.

St. Paul's Island, 545—Raining, northwest. Little scattered ice in shore.

Money Point, 546—Cloudy, northwest. No ice in sight.

Point Tupper, 551—Cloudy, northwest. Loose ice.

Flat Point, 593—Cloudy north. Heavy open ice.

Cape Race, 835—Hazy, north. No ice in sight.

Montreal to Quebec.

Ice Conditions—Sorel, Richelieu River clear down to St. Ours.

St. Jean, open spaces of water increasing in size.

Les Ecouvilles, batture opposite to Church and balance of others between Cap Sante and Pte aux Trembles broke away during night.

Open ice passing down between Grandines and Quebec.

**Critical Times in Woman's Life**

Mrs. James Muir, Anton Mills, Ont., writes:—

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