

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

Legislative Record

OF THE

Eighty-First Legislature

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE

1923

KENNEBEC JOURNAL COMPANY
AUGUSTA, MAINE

HOUSE

Friday, January 26, 1923.

The House met according to adjournment and was called to order by the Speaker.

Prayer by the Rev. Mr. Smith of Hallowell.

Journal of previous session read and approved

Mr. Granville of Parsonsfield presented the following order, out of order, and moved its passage:

Ordered, the Senate concurring, that when the Senate and House adjourn it be to meet Tuesday, January 30 at 10 o'clock A. M.

The order received passage and was sent up for concurrence.

The SPEAKER: The Chair at this time presents, out of order and under suspension of the rules a resolve on its final passage, as follows:

Resolve directing the attorney-general to investigate profiteering under Chapter 76 of the Laws of 1921.

Mr. ROUNDS of Portland: Mr. Speaker, I move that the resolve be postponed until next Tuesday.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Portland (Mr. Rounds.)

Mr. ROUNDS: Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words here in regard to the fuel situation and to in some way put right what has been said about the fuel administration in the city of Portland, relating to one concern, the largest concern in this State. I will read the telegrams first.

"Portland, Maine, Jan. 24, 1923.

"E. E. Rounds,
House of Representatives,
Augusta, Maine.

We are sending copy of telegram to Governor Baxter. Will you not see that we have justice from the Legislature?
Governor Baxter,
Augusta, Maine.

In this morning's Press it appears that your fuel director Lane stated that this firm had interfered a great deal with the Fuel Administration. Will you not inform us immediately how this firm or any representative thereof has in any way, shape or manner attempted to inter-

fere with your Fuel Director? As far as we know it is absolutely false and seemingly malicious. We think in justice this is due us.

Randall and McAllister"

I want to say, first, gentlemen, that Randall and McAllister never put up a bag of coal on this so-called profiteering or eighteen pounds for twenty-three, twenty-eight or thirty cents. I want to say further that they did buy some Scotch coal when they could not get anything else, and bought this at a high price. For this they charged \$2.00 for 180 pounds. That only gave them a fair profit on what they had. I will just show you the way they have done business. A friend of mine was thrown out of his job because he told the truth and would not be bulldozed in a political job. He was thrown right out with a broken leg, and his boy almost dying with consumption—he had no supplies, no home. I did not go to any of the firm of Randall and McAllister, but I went to one of their understrappers, and I asked if that man could have some coal, and he said yes. When I got home—this was since this Legislature has been in session, I found the coal there, and the bill sent to me. The coal was nice chestnut coal, and it was only sixteen dollars and fifty cents, with 4% off and 50 cents for lugging in.

If they had teams, as I told you in the caucus, they could have delivered coal to anybody in Portland; but owing to what has been said in the newspapers about Commission form of government—we have a Commission in that Department—the snow has come on, and the Commissioner of Public Works has taken all the teams that he could hire at a very high price, and Randall and McAllister have been paying \$15.00 a day for double teams, which you know is exorbitant and thus they have been obliged to charge an extra price for the coal. I was in their office, talking over with Mr. Merrill some things you have heard me talk about here—State Pier business—and I heard them offered five thousand tons of Welsh anthracite. Now Welsh anthracite is not like our anthracite here. Welsh anthracite is thirty per cent dust, and that thirty per cent ought to be sold for bituminous coal, for which I have been paying ten dollars a ton, and anybody else

who went to the wharf after it got it at that price. Now, of course, they had to charge more for the anthracite part of that coal in order to make themselves whole. Nobody wants to have anybody do anything at a loss; so they bought this five thousand tons of coal to help out on the coal situation in Maine.

If you remember, I said that the teams were the cause of it, and at a former caucus, I said that the trouble was to the westward. Now as you all know, when a man sends for coal from Maine and sends his vessel out there to the coal forts to get coal, if he has not got it down to tide water, he has to pay an exorbitant price for spot coal. This spot coal is put in and it comes from the operator and he has five or six brokers, and when you buy that spot coal, you have to pay for the different dealers and a commission for everything, which makes it a very high price.

For sixty years or over this firm has done business in Portland, and is one of the most reliable firms in the State, and it is a shame that the word has gone out through this State that they were the ones who were selling this coal for thirty and thirty-five dollars a ton, eighteen pounds to the bag, which they never have done to my knowledge in all the time I have dealt with them, something over forty-five years.

Now, politically, one of these gentlemen I fight at the polls right along and we fight square. We take our medicine when we get beaten, and when the other fellow wins it is all in good part; but for business he is one of the best men I ever dealt with and one of the squarest.

If it had not been for a certain newspaper making all this trouble, I think that there would have been no trouble in the city of Portland, and that everybody would have had coal in their cellars; and if people who could afford it had not thought that coal would later be cheaper and had put their coal in in the spring, there would have been no trouble. That is partly the fault of the people, and is not wholly on the coal dealers. Gentlemen, I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Mr. Rounds of Portland moves that further consideration of this matter be postponed until Tuesday next.

Mr. CUMMINGS of Portland: Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the defense of my colleague, Mr. Rounds. I suppose that it must have been thought necessary to have that put in as a buffer here between the Fuel Administrator, Mr. Lane, and the Randall-McAllister firm. I want to state that Mr. Rounds must have drawn the wrong inference when he assumed in his statement that anything went out from the caucus the other night, charging that the Randall-McAllister firm was a firm that had been selling worthless coal. I am quite sure the records will bear me out that no such charge was made by Mr. Lane or by anyone else. I think it is a question between the Fuel Administration and the Randall firm. I do not see any reason why we should be involved in it at all, and I am opposed to the postponement of the vote on this matter.

Mr. GRANVILLE of Parsonsfield: Mr. Speaker, I want to say that it has been a pleasure for me to serve on this committee with Mr. Rounds of Portland and Mr. Baker of Steuben, and to endeavor to arrive at a conclusion as to what is best to do to relieve the fuel situation in the State of Maine. The consensus of opinion seemed to be that we have this matter investigated by the attorney-general, relative to any undue advantage being taken by anyone in the city of Portland. Now such an investigation ought to reveal the truth and would be the best vindication of any of those under suspicion of unjust and unfair dealings. Now any action that we may take, to be of benefit to the people of the city of Portland, should be taken immediately during the cold weather; and I hope the motion of the gentleman from Portland, Mr. Rounds, will not prevail.

Mr. PHILLIPS of Orrington: Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that perhaps this matter has been handled satisfactorily, and that everybody is well satisfied; and I hope the motion of the gentleman from Portland (Mr. Rounds) will not prevail.

The SPEAKER: Mr. Rounds of Portland moves that further investigation of this matter be postponed until Tuesday next. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Chelsea, Mr. Hayes.

Mr. HAYES of Chelsea: Mr. Speaker, generally a man is consider-

ed guilty until he is proven innocent. If I am suspected of committing some crime, I do not see why I am not liable to be investigated, and it seems to me the Fuel Director ought to be authorized to go ahead instead of being held back. I hope the motion will not prevail.

The SPEAKER: Mr. Rounds of Portland moves that further consideration of this matter be postponed until Tuesday next. All those in favor of this motion will say aye, and those opposed no.

A viva voce vote being taken, the motion was lost.

Thereupon, the resolve having been finally passed in the Senate out of order, under suspension of the rules, and having had its two several readings in the House and passed to be engrossed under suspension of the rules, a viva voce vote was taken, and the resolve was finally passed.

Papers from the Senate disposed of in concurrence.

The following bills, resolves and petitions were received and, upon recommendation of the committee on Reference of Bills, were referred to the following committees:

Agriculture

By Mr. Lamson of So. Portland: An Act providing for the Testing of Meters used to Measure Gas, Electricity, and Water Service.

Appropriations and Financial Affairs

By Mr. Story of Washburn: An Act to promote the production and sale of Certified Seed and to protect the branding thereof; making an appropriation therefor, and repealing Chapter 141, Public Laws of 1917.

By Mr. Brown of Bar Harbor: Resolve granting aid to the Bar Harbor Medical & Surgical Hospital.

By Mr. Nadeau of Biddeford: Resolve in favor of the Webber Hospital Association of Biddeford.

By Mr. Downing of Bangor: Resolve providing for Sanatorium Treatment by the Bangor Anti-Tuberculosis Association in Bangor, for persons who are in need of the same and are unable to pay for it.

By Mr. Crafts of Greenville: Resolve in favor of Charles A. Dean Hospital at Greenville.

By Mr. Melcher of Rumford: Re-

solve providing for Medical and Surgical Treatment and Care of Indigent Persons by Rumford Hospital Ass'n. at Rumford.

By Mr. Gardiner of Gardiner: Resolve in favor of the Gardiner General Hospital.

Claims

By Mr. Heal of Weston: Resolve in favor of the town of Haynesville for School Fund.

By Mr. Lord of So. Portland: Resolve in favor of the American Realty Company, Portland, Maine.

By Mr. Johnson of Brownville: Resolve reimbursing the town of Brownville for money expended for support of paupers.

Education

By Mr. Leland of Sanguerville: An Act to amend Chapter 185 of the Private and Special Laws of 1823 relating to the Limit of the Endowment Fund of Foxcroft Academy.

By Mr. Boulter of Kittery: Resolve in favor of Robert W. Traip Academy at Kittery.

Inlands Fisheries and Game

By Mr. Archibald of Houlton: An Act to amend Section 10 of Chapter 129 of the Revised Statutes, relating to Dams, Canals, Mill Machinery, Ponds, Engines and Electrical Fixtures; obstruction of bridges and ways.

By Mr. Hayford of Mechanic Falls: An Act to amend Chapter 42, Private and Special Laws of 1921, relating to fishing in Moose Hill Pond, in East Livermore.

By Mr. Keene of Belfast: An Act to amend Section 22 of Chapter 219 of the Public Laws of 1917, as amended by Chapter 174 of the Public Laws of 1919, and by Chapter 178 of the Public Laws of 1921, relating to Pollution of waters of the State by sawdust and other mill waste.

Judiciary

By Mr. Nichols of Portland: An Act to amend Section 72 of Chapter 211 of the Public Laws of 1921, relative to penalty for Reckless Driving, going away without stopping after an accident, using motor vehicles without authority.

(500 copies ordered printed)

By Mr. Bartlett of Waterville: An Act to amend Sections 59 ad 60, of Chapter 18 Revised Statutes, relating to Registration of Veterinary Surgeons.

Legal Affairs

By Mr. Granville of Parsonsfield: An Act to amend Chapter 216, Private and Special Laws of 1911 relating to Incorporation of Parsonsfield, Kezar Falls Village Corporation.

Ways and Bridges

By Mr. Johnson of Brownville: Resolve appropriating money for improvement of road in the town of Parkman.

By Mr. Bradbury of Newport: Resolve in favor of the Town of Newport to aid in building Durham Bridge road.

By Mr. Gardiner of Gardiner: Resolve in favor of the Gardiner and Randolph Drawbridge.

By Mr. Hallett of Ashland: Resolve in favor town of Ashland to aid in repairing bridge.

ORDERS

On motion by Mr. Granville of Parsonsfield, it was

Ordered, that the use of the hall of the House be granted to the Maine Automobile Association for the evening of February 7.

On motion by Mr. Brewster of Dexter, it was

Ordered, that the use of the hall of the House be granted to the directors of the Port of Portland, Tuesday

evening, January 30, to address the legislators on the question of the State Pier.

First Reading of Printed Bills And Resolves

House 11: An Act to revise, renew, amend and extend the charter of the Lubec and Machias Railway Company.

Orders Of The Day

Mr Crafts of Greenville: Mr. Speaker, on the bill, making a closed time in York and Cumberland counties, referred to the committee on Inland Fisheries and Game, may 300 copies be printed.

The SPEAKER: The Chair will ask the gentleman if he knows just where the bill is at this time? The Clerk thinks it is not with us.

Mr. CRAFTS: I do not know.

The SPEAKER: If the bill is not physically present, the Chair would suggest that it be done in the form of an order. Does the gentleman wish the Chair to await the writing of an order?

Mr. CRAFTS: I think it may just as well be done on Tuesday.

On motion by Mr. Hayford of Mechanic Falls,

Adjourned until Tuesday morning Jan. 30, at ten o'clock.