

March 21

# Political Sensation Promised by Cox, Answering Acres

## Port Arthur Member Replies to Suggestion of Irregularity in Timber Dealings

**I**NNUENDOES directed against the business dealings of Charles W. Cox, Liberal M.P.P. for Port Arthur, in the Legislature on Thursday night, by A. H. Acres, Tory member for Carleton, when he demanded Mr. Cox's resignation, were given a full and detailed answer at yesterday's session.

### Will Query Acres.

Mr. Acres, without making any direct charges, had implied that irregularities existed in the cutting of timber and ties on three Indian reserves in Mr. Cox's riding, and had asked "what the Indians got out of it, and what Mr. Cox got." The Port Arthur member was not present when Mr. Acres made his speech Thursday night, and Mr. Acres, likewise, was out of his seat when Mr. Cox offered his reply yesterday.

Three reserves were mentioned by Mr. Acres—Longlac, Gull Bay, and Lac Seul. And Mr. Cox, in one phase of his reply, told the House that the Government had received more dues and revenue from one 38-square-mile tract of land owned by himself in Gull Bay than from the entire 13,000 square miles sold by Ontario Governments in the past twenty years.

Furthermore, in retaliation to Mr. Acres, the Port Arthur member promised that, when Mr. Acres was back in his seat next week, he would ask the Tory some questions in return.

"And if he will go out and get the honest answers to those questions, and deliver them here," added Mr. Cox. "I promise you the greatest political sensation since Confederation."

### Deeply Resentful.

Mr. Cox at the outset expressed surprise at the nature of Mr. Acres's remarks, since they had, he said, no possible bearing upon Provincial affairs, and the circumstances were not the concern of the Legislature.

He then reviewed his purchase of timber tracts in the three areas named by Mr. Acres. The Long Lac reserve timber rights were sold to him eight years ago for \$10,000. Since then a gross business of \$1,000,000 had been done there. The Gull Bay reserve timber rights he bought ten years ago for \$2,000, paying the usual dues. And as for the Lac Seul Reserve, it was almost inaccessible, and all the timber had not yet been removed, but he had already paid into the Department of Indian Affairs at Ottawa more than \$50,000.

"I deeply resent," he said, "the implication that there was anything irregular. I am not ashamed of my business record. It is an open book. The records are available for thirty years back. If the Province had made as good a deal when it sold its timber in the same area as I did, the Province would have benefited to the extent of \$41,000,000."

As for Mr. Acres personally, he said, the Conservative apparently knew something about bulls, but nothing whatever about business. "He should either hang his head in shame," said Mr. Cox, "or else come over to this side of the House, as I did."

"The member for Carleton doesn't have to go over to that side," interjected Russell Nesbitt, Conservative member for Toronto-Bracondale. "The difference between the two of you is that he was able to get the Conservative nomination."

This sally roused Mr. Cox to further indignation.

"During the last election campaign I was asked to accept the Conservative nomination for Port Arthur," he declared, "but knowing as much as I did about the ramifications of the things the Tories were doing in the Thunder Bay district, I refused to have anything to do with either the nomination or the party. I couldn't be a party to that organization and have any self-respect." Mr. Cox then reviewed his own record of many years in public life. He might even have been able to carry Port Arthur for the Tories, so successful had he proved to be as a candidate.

Then came his promise to ask Mr. Acres some questions that would prove the sensation of decades in Ontario political life, if the answers were forthcoming.

# REFUSAL TO PAY TRAFFIC FINES IS CENSURED

## "Not Acts of Good Citizens," Says Roebuck of Cleric, Business Man

The much-publicized cases of the two Western Ontario motorists—a clergyman and a business man—who have declared their readiness to go to jail rather than pay small fines for driving without a tail-lamp, finally reached the Legislature yesterday.

The matter was brought up by W. A. Baird, Toronto Tory, who asked Attorney-General Roebuck for a statement. The Rural Dean of Tilbury and W. H. Moody, whom he described as an executive officer of the St. Thomas and Elgin Motor Club, were both reputable citizens, said Mr. Baird.

"When a citizen is brought before the courts and penalized," explained Mr. Roebuck in reply, "and a fine is levied, the Attorney-General or an executive of the Crown can do little. He has no authority to interfere, except perhaps to remit the fine when the charge comes under a Provincial statute. These charges were laid under the Highways Traffic Act. It is not necessary under this section of the act to prove that the operator knows his tail-lamp is out. It is a blanket section, making it positively and inescapably illegal to drive without a tail-lamp burning—or without the three lights all burning, as required under the act.

"But," he proceeded, "when a fine has been levied, the prosecuted driver has several alternatives. He may appeal to a County Judge and have the case retried. He can pay his fine. He can sit quietly, and, in due course, an officer of the Crown will come and sell something from his effects to meet the fine. Or he can go to jail and serve his term, if that gives him any satisfaction.

"Or finally," concluded Mr. Roebuck, "the citizen can petition the Legislature to change the law, if he feels that it is unjust. However, to merely protest the fine and carry on an advertising campaign is not the action of a good citizen."