

Big Battle in House Against Tax on the "Penny" Stocks

House Rejects Amendment Moved by Conservatives. Mac Lang, M.P. for Temiskaming South Makes Strong Speech Against Taxation of the Lower-Priced Mining Stocks.

on mining stocks. In reference to this, the effect of leaving the tax as at despatches from Ottawa last week dealt with the matter, and there seemed to be about unanimous opinion that | kaming South, voted against the Govthe proposed tax would prove too high. The discussion in the House is reported as follows by The Ottawa Journal:-

The new tax on sale of shares of stocks again received the endorsation ing. of the House of Commons on Thursday. By a vote of 96 to 58 the House defeated the amendment moved by

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Is it enough?

The people of Timmins and district | Hen. R. B. Bennett, Conservative leadare very heavily interested in the tax er. The amendment would have had

Again Mac Lang, M.P. for Temisernment on this matter.

Following the division the resolutions received the second reading and a bill based on them received its first read-

The leader of the Opposition moved that the resolution be submitted to a committe of the whole with instructions to strike out section four, which deals with the tax on stock transfers.

Speaking briefly to his amendment Mr. Bennett recalled that the existing tax on the transfer of shares had come into force in 1920, and was in effect a war measure. Now that the Minister of Finance had indicated that he had a substantial surplus, the continuation and increase of this tax was unjust. inequitable and unfair.

It was a tax essentially imposed on the products of provincial resources. The Dominion obtained income tax from provincial companies, and this tax should be left wholly available to the

Hon. J. A. Robb, Minister of Finance said there was never a time in recent years when so much speculation had taken place on the exchanges throughout the country than had been witnessthere was a general feeling that the national treasury should profit by this speculation. If men decided to gamble on the market and risk their money. there was no reason why they should not assist the national treasury.

small proportion of the revenue derived from this taxation, which the Opposition proposed to wipe out. The total tax collected by the Dominion Treasury on all shares for 1926-27, amounted to \$282,536. In 1927-28, this amount reached \$615,354. The proportion derived from the mining exchanges, particularly Vancouver, was small. 1926-27, the revenue derived from the Vancouver Mining Exchange was \$1,-672, and in 1927-28 the amount was \$7,-263. The amount derived from the Toronto Standard Mining Exchange during 1926-27 was \$47,393 and in 1927-28, the amount was \$121,114. The revenue derived in 1927-28 from the Montrea! Stock Market was \$280,061, and from the Toronto Stock Market for the same year, \$113,756.

Mr. Bennett interjected that the provinces were imposing taxes on these thought, was to impose this onerous admittedly stiff. He considered howstock transactions, and therefore the Dominion should not duplicate this tax, but should leave this field of taxation entirely to the provinces.



Mr. Robb said that under the proposed amendment the sale of 1.000 shares of mining stock at 50 cents a ed during the past year. He submitted | share, would only carry with it a taxation of \$1.00. He thought this was fair.

Hon. H. H. Stevens (Conservative, Vancouver Centre) declared the Minister of Finance was not meeting the case. Mr. Robb was repeating a stamp tax passed as a war measure and sub-Mining stocks only represented a stituting therefore a "very onerous tax."

"This tax will prove a serious blow to the mining industry of Canada," Mr. Stevens said. The Minister of Finance and the Government had refused this year to assist technical education or the extension of Canada's good roads system. In British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, and practically all of the provinces, the highways were being built by the provincial governments and those provincial governments were being called upon to spend thousands of dollars on new roads for mining dis-

Many of the high-priced stocks today were the low-priced stocks in years gone by, and the proposed tax would take from the mining industry an opportunity to secure capital and carry on operations. What the Minister of finance proposed to do, Mr. Stevens tax, reduce or wipe it out next year, and then go to the country during the election campaign and tell the people as he had done before, how he had reduced taxation

"Don't you think this is good politics?" S. W. Jacobs (Liberal, Cartier) interjected.

"I think it is rotten politics," Mr. Stevens replied.

Mr. Robb had increased the sales tax from three per cent. to four per cent. and then up as high as six per cent. After the minister had increased it as high as six per cent., Mr. Stevens continued, Mr. Robb proceeded to gradually reduce this tax and tell the country that he was reducing taxation, although, the Minister himself, had increased it. The spread proposed by the Minister of Finance as between the taxation of high and low priced stocks, was altogether out of proportion.

Advocating an ad valerem tax sys- not gamble on the mines, they would do tem, and declaring that the small stock carried the burden of the heavier priced investments under the system suggested by the Minister of Finance. than the new one. The chief com-Malcolm Lang (Liberal, Temiskaming plaint against the new one was that it South) declared that he could not find justification in any of the arguments put forward by Mr. Robb.

Mr. Lang showed by calculating up- 020 investment in Kirkland Lake. This on the basis of a single day's turnover was an unfair method of taking money of the exchange of the proportion of from the pockets of the people. tax paid by the low-priced shares was considerably higher than that paid by Esling) had pointed out that \$1,000 inthe more expensive stocks.

"There is not a vestige of fairness to anyone in a system such as that," Mr. \$1,000 was invested in a five cent stock. Lang asserted.

shares were bought by the wealthy peo-Mr. Robb had explained that the naple, and the so-called penny stocks by tion had a right to tax speculation. the small people who could afford a That was not so. Such a policy would little "flier." The whole effect of this only hurt the mining industry in its tax would be to hit the small man, for primary stages; injure the prospector the poor citizen could not afford any who gambled his small wealth and his life in an effort to discover new miner- \$500 stocks. Yet it was he, investing in al fields; and discourage the investor low-priced issues, who financed new who was willing to "take a chance" on mines. Some were profitable, others an unproven property. It was only through this so-called speculation that Canada's development had been made Parkdale), declared himself opposed to

this taxation whether upon the penny possible. The Minister had quoted several stocks or otherwise. It was simply another way of interfering with business; mining authorities the other night as it was a nuisance tax; it was establishbeing favourable to his new proposal, but Mr. Lang contended that the quo- ing a vicious principle. Some nuisance tations used had not been apropos of taxes had already been abolished, and the new taxation, but of something en- he thought it was the intention of the tirely different. Authorities in the Government to eliminate them all. The mining industry were entirely opposed present Government would go down as to the new tax. It was not fair to im- the "gold digging" Government. It was pose a higher tax on the low-priced taking money out of the pockets of the shares, thus handicapping the investor people, throwing it into a great melting of restricted funds, while lightening pot, and wasting it. At the same time the taxation upon the higher-priced the Government was making the people shares and upon those with extensive believe it was reducing taxation. J. Earl Lawson, (Conservative, West financial resources.

Mr. Lang pointed out that the Bri- York), asked the Minister of National tish Columbia mining industry had Defence if his suggestion that the combeen built up through the sale of the panies with lower priced stocks should be re-organized, could be made to apply cheaper stocks.

Sir George Perley (Conservative- to the 100 or more mining companies,

Argenteuil) said if Mr. Bennet's amend- whose shares sold under one dollar. ment was accepted, it would leave the Col. Ralston replied that his reference present tax in force. He urged that was to those which according to Genthis be done in order to give time for eral Clark, sold at one-sixteenth of a more mature consideration than had cent. He suggested that the par value evidently been given by the Minister should be issued in larger denominaof Finance in his proposed tax. The tions. It was the 50 cent stock and not resources of Canada would have to be the dollar stock that was complained of. developed by men who were prepared What stocks, he asked, of bona fide to take chances. They should be en- companies, were selling under 50 cents? Mr. Lawson said he could give him a

General J. A. Clark (Conservative- list of many stocks. He was proceeding to ask the minisday's sales sheet from the Vancouver ter another question when Dr. A. M. Stock Exchange, It had on it the tax Young (Liberal, Saskatoon), protested against this as a violation of the rules collectable on each transacton under the present law, as well as what the of debate. Dr. Young's protest was upheld by the Deputy Speaker. tax would have been had the new law

Vancouver Burrard) produced a one

been in effect. Whereas the total tax

under the existing act, was \$20, under

the proposals of the Minister of Fin-

ance, this would have been \$800, he

Minister of Finance wishes to increase

The new tax would force mining

companies being promoted in British

panies to develop the mineral resources

of British Columbia which the new tax

Intimation of the effect the proposed

tax would have upon British Columbia

mining promoters was given by Leon J.

Ladner (Conservative-Vancouver Cen-

tre), when he read a telelgram from a

communication stated that the com-

pany, which for 15 years had been pro-

moting mining enterprises, would with-

draw from that phase of business were

the tax to pass. Mr. Ladner urged that

the Minister of Finance reconsider his

Hon. J. L. Ralston, Minister of Na-

tional Defence, pointed out that the

first issue of any stock was not subject

to the proposed tax. That provision

under the former act had not changed.

Questioned by members of the opposi-

tion as to the effect of the tax upon

underwriting firms, Col. Ralston said

in the case of underwriters handling a

stock, they were, to all intents and pur-

poses, the ordinary public. Conserva-

tive members shook their heads in dis-

The proposed tax of a third of one

cent on shares of a value between \$1

and \$3, and of a quarter of a cent on

shares of the value of between 50 cents

and \$1, could not ruin the mining in-

dustry, Col. Ralston thought. Nor

could a tax of a tenth of a cent a share

on stock of a value of 50 cents and under

as low as 1-16 of a cent, the tax was

ever, that such low-priced holdings

were rare, and that interference with

their sales would not hamper mining

development greatly. He was not much

impressed with any threat that mining

promotion would be discouraged by the

proposed taxation. Canadians could

take care of the development of their

Hon. R. J. Manion (Conservative-

Fort William) protested against what

Mr. Jacobs interjected that more money

had been lost in the Northern Ontario

mining ventures, than had ever been

Dr. Manion asked if Mr. Jacobs

meant that this tax would stop mining.

Mr. Jacobs replied: "Yes, to a certain

"That is just what it is going to do,"

said Dr. Manion. The Minister had made

some reference to gambling, but gambl

ing could not be stopped. If people did

so on horse races, and for his part he

would rather see them speculate on the

mines. The old tax was more equitable

was unfair. It had been shown that it imposed a \$30 tax on a \$54,000 invest-

ment in Noranda, and a \$10 tax on \$1,-

The member for Kootenay West (Mr.

vestment on two shares of Smelters

was taxed eight cents, but if the same

the tax would be \$20. The expensive

were not they could not all be so.

D. Spence (Conservative, Toronto-

he termed the inequity of the tax.

own natural resources.

taken out of them.

do any great harm. Where shares were

prominent firm in Vancouver.

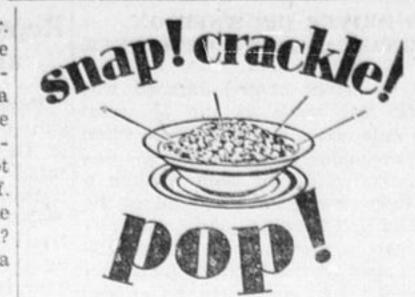
would cause.

"Can it be possible that the

J. F. Pouliot (Liberal, Temiscouata) declared that the seller of these stocks should also be considered. It had often happened in his part of the country that the promoters of mining companies on a small scale were nothing more the taxes on mining stocks 4,000 per than swindlers.

Mr. Robb reiterated his belief that the tax was fair and equitable. The

Columbia to do their financing at Spokane, or some other United States' New York World: - "Jails, hospitals point. The tax of one-tenth of a cent reformatories, asylums are necessary would make the shares of many com- in the community, but the less the need panies in the promotion stage absolute- of them the better. Every agency of ly unmarketable. It would result in intelligent guidance that will help the ordinary trading in stock being young citizens in their formative years transferred from Vancouver to Spok- to grow up physically sound and mentane, and while that would be unfor- ally clean is deserving of support, totunate, he was even more concerned day and every day of the year." with the difficulty in promoting com-



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