

Mr. Holland Fizzles on a "Stink-Bomb"

Prompt Exposure by Prime Minister

UN speaking in the Wellington Town Hall on Thursday evening last, Mr. H. E. Holland, Leader of the Labour Party, launched what had been announced by a lieutenant as a "bomb-shell." It turned out to be merely a "stink-bomb," and, at that, it only fizzled and proved a dud incapable of making even a decent smell, for the suggestion was so extreme as to be ridiculous. The Prime Minister promptly gave the facts, completely disproving the connection sought to be established by Mr. Holland. What Mr. Holland suggested was that the radio loan of £15,000 was granted to the Radio Broadcasting Company as a reward to Mr. Goodfellow for the expression of his views concerning the Labour Party and dairy control. Not only was the suggestion ridiculous in itself, but it is disproved in point of time, inasmuch as the loan was authorised seven months before Mr. Goodfellow took the action for which he is supposed to have been rewarded. What a mind Mr. Holland must have!

ACCORDING to a special message published in "The Dominion," the Prime Minister, in speaking at Helensville on Friday, made a vigorous rebuttal to the allegation contained in the speech of the Leader of the Labour Party (Mr. H. E. Holland) at Wellington on Thursday that there was some connection between the abandonment of absolute dairy control and statements made thereupon by Mr. W. Goodfellow, and the loan made by the Post Office to the Radio Broadcasting Company.

"This is what Mr. Holland calls a charge against the Government," the Prime Minister said. "It was preceded by a hint from Mr. R. McKeen, the Labour candidate for Wellington South, that a bombshell relating to dairy control was to be dropped and that he hoped the explosion would be enough to smash the present Government."

A Pious Hope—and a "Stink Bomb."

"Note the pious hope," the Prime Minister remarked as an aside. "Any old digger will remember what a stink bomb was like, and this so-called bombshell is one of them."

Mr. Coates read the Press Association report in to-day's "Herald." Quoting the whole of the paragraphs devoted to that particular portion of Mr. Holland's speech, he said that as soon as he read the statement he telegraphed Mr. Goodfellow advising him that he would deal with the subject at the earliest possible occasion—his meeting in Helensville to-night—and asking if he cared to make any observations. A message of a similar nature was also sent to the Secretary of the Post Office (Mr. G. McNamara), who was also asked to supply the dates on which the Broadcasting Company applied for the loan, and that on which it was granted.

Grossly Insulting Propaganda.

Mr. Goodfellow had replied as follows:—

"The original contract provided for four 500 watts broadcasting stations. Subsequently, for State and military reasons, the Postmaster-General requested the Broadcasting Company to erect one super-station at Wellington, which was agreed to provided the Government arranged a loan to cover this additional capital expenditure. Mr. Holland's reference that this financial assistance was in any way associated with dairy control, is without the slightest foundation, and nothing else but grossly insulting political propaganda. My statement in the "Dairy Exporter" of May 28, 1927, blaming the Labour Party for the board's failure to establish the council system of election, is strictly correct. The Reform Party were in no way responsible for the failure of absolute control."

Proved by the Dates.

Mr. Coates said that Mr. McNamara's reply was as follows, and he asked the audience to take particular notice of dates:—

"The 'Dominion' report states that the Leader of the Opposition referred to an article signed by Mr. Goodfellow, in May, 1927, for the 'Exporter.' The first application for a loan from the Broadcasting Company is dated October 5, 1926. An agreement was completed on December 16, 1926, but the

money was not paid over till July 20, 1927, the company not having ordered the material from England until the loan was assured. It is not generally known that the Department collects during April in each year the total amount due for licenses for 12 months and pays to the Broadcasting Company only one-twelfth of its share per month. At the time the application was made the Department held in trust for the company £5943; at the time the loan was actually made the amount held was £21,234, and at the present time the Department is holding £24,244, so that apart from the mortgage on the station, the Department is actually holding that amount of money payable by monthly instalments to the company."

"Hot Air."

"There are the whole of the facts in connection with Mr. Holland's charges that there has been an agreement between the Government, Mr. Goodfellow, the Broadcasting Company, and the Dairy Board," the Prime Minister added. "That wonderful bombshell has fizzled. (Applause.) There has been no connivance. (Applause.) This talk that the Government was responsible for smashing dairy control is hot air."

The Prime Minister said that the Government had submitted two names to the Dairy Board, and they had selected Mr. S. Paterson as the Government representative in the London agency. Mr. Coates said that he had found there were serious difficulties amongst members of the board in England and Tooley Street was alarmed. All he had done was to send a cable to the board in New Zealand setting out the position as he saw it. As head of the Government it was nothing less than his duty to have done so.

Mr. Holland and the £15,000.

SINCE Mr. Holland has again raised the question of the Government, through the Post and Telegraph Department, authorising a loan of £15,000 to the Broadcasting Company for the provision of a super-power station at 2YA, it may be as well to recapitulate the facts concerning that transaction. It is difficult to see why Mr. Holland should take such exception to an action which has been of such service to

broadcasting, but it may be that he is compelled to seize any imaginary grievance to disguise his lack of real "ammunition."

The facts concerning the £15,000 loan are that the Radio Broadcasting Company, by its original agreement, undertook to provide 500-watt stations at the four centres. After progress had been made with 3YA and 1YA, and when the company was contemplating action with 2YA, Mr. A. Markman, then secretary of the P. and T. Department, on September 15, 1926, approached the Broadcasting Company with a view to having a larger station erected in Wellington than that called for in the company's contract. Again, on September 23, 1926, he further stressed the urgency of the matter.

UNDER date September 21 and October 5, 1926, the company replied to the overtures of the Department, and offered to install a 5 k.w. station at Wellington, subject to the Department loaning it the difference between the cost of the size of the station originally contracted for (excluding land and buildings, which ultimately cost the company a further £8000), and the size of the station proposed, namely £15,000, on a first mortgage debenture. This offer was accepted by the Department on October 19, 1926, and legal agreements subsequently entered into.

The views expressed by Mr. Goodfellow were published on May 28, 1927—nearly seven months later. The "connivance" suggested by Mr. Holland, therefore, proves to be ridiculous on the face of it, and a tribute only to Mr. Holland's own offensive imagination.

The details supplied by the present secretary to the Post Office, in his telegram to the Prime Minister, published in this article, shows quite abundantly how fully the Government is protected not only by the first mortgage debenture, held as security, but by the method of paying over listeners' money in instalments. This method ensures that the Government is fully protected, and, as a matter of fact, is able to make its cash balances interest earning.

Checking Interference

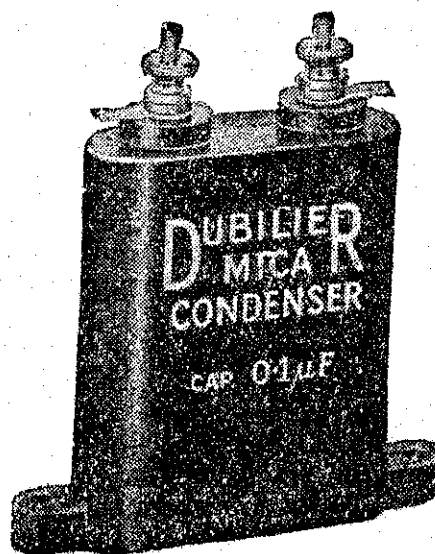
WE are happy to be able to record a sympathetic action on the part of the Railway Department in the matter of checking interference to radio listeners caused by a 10-volt crossing bell. We recently received advice from a Te Kuiti listener to the effect that considerable interference was being caused by a certain crossing bell in that town, and asking whether something could be done to adjust matters. We passed on to the General Manager of the Railway Department, Mr. H. H. Sterling, this complaint, and are happy to advise that we have now been informed that the department has made arrangements to instal condensers across the bell contacts, which measure

should obviate the disabilities complained of.

It may be of interest to radio listeners to know that Mr. Sterling is himself interested in radio, and when in Hamilton, held a wireless receiving and transmitting license, his station number being 1AI.

Taranaki Proposal

THE establishment of a broadcasting company in New Plymouth is being considered by the North Taranaki Radio Society, and Messrs. E. J. L. Payne, J. Pigott, and F. H. Huggard have been asked to report on the proposal. A 250-watt station has been suggested, and it is believed there would be no difficulty in obtaining the necessary talent both on the technical and entertainment sides.



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