

LIBERAL LEADER ON POWER PROJECT

Hon. Mr. MacKay Declares
Position of Opposition.

STORMY SCENE IN HOUSE.

The Premier's Allegation Was
Promptly Challenged.

Leaders Clash Over Ugly Accusation
and Premier Abandoned Position—
Cries of "Withdraw" Followed Ap-
peal to the Speaker—Power Pro-
ject the Cause of the Interchange
—Splendid Address by Liberal
Leader.

"I yield to no one—and I voice the spirit of Liberalism in Ontario—in the approval and support of the great project of cheap power for the people. The project is a sound one. It is the privilege and duty of the Government to act as an advance agent for the municipalities. It is the privilege and the duty of the Government to give to the municipalities the strong right arm of the Province in this great undertaking. In so far we are at one. Liberalism is in thorough accord with the movement.

"But, Mr. Speaker, we are not in accord with some of the methods used. We say that the Government and the commission have failed to go about the securing of the land easements in a fair and equitable way. We say that their agents have failed to mete out decent treatment to the farmers and land-owners en route. We say that these men have not been treated as citizens of this Province have a right to be treated. This is our criticism. We make it, and we prove it. For the main project we have repeatedly declared our support."

Liberal Leader's Position.

Amid vigorous applause Hon. A. G. MacKay, the Liberal leader, thus bespoke the position of his party at the close of the Budget debate in the Legislature last night. He firmly refused to be forced into a position of seeming hostility to a public project which he deemed to be in the public weal. The inauguration of the movement, he pointed out, had taken place under Liberal administration, and the present enterprise, improved and expanded, he admitted, was the natural evolution of the policy originated in 1903.

A Stormy Interchange.

The declaration of the Liberal leader was followed later, during the address of Sir James Whitney, by a stormy scene. Despite the clearcut utterance of Hon. Mr. MacKay, the Premier sought to cast discredit upon the position of the Opposition. He was promptly challenged, and amid cries of "withdraw" and general uproar, the first Minister was obliged to abandon his position.

"It's all very well to dissemble your love, but why did you kick me downstairs?" quoth Sir James, who stated that he had little use for the kind of support volunteered by the Opposition leader. "The Opposition," he proceeded, "has allied itself with the Electrical Development Company, the Electric Light Company, and other interested corporations in their effort

to do all they can to kill the great power project."

"I deny the allegation," put in Hon. Mr. MacKay promptly.

"And I'm going to repeat it," retorted the Premier. "I say that for a year past members of the Opposition have been in alliance with these hostile corporate interests, not financially, of course, but to all other intents and purposes."

"I distinctly deny it," repeated the Liberal leader, rising.

The Premier kept on. "They have been hand and glove," he was proceeding when Hon. Mr. MacKay again interrupted, addressing the chair.

Appeals to the Speaker.

"It is manifestly beneath the dignity and tone of this House," he observed, "to proceed in this way. I deny the allegation and have denied it several times. I direct your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the rules."

"My hon. friend is very tender about it, and so is the gentleman next him" (Mr. McDougall, East Ottawa, who had exclaimed "Withdraw") retorted the Premier. "I do not accuse them of entering into the alliance for corrupt purposes, but for political purposes. Last session the leader of the Opposition was in almost daily consultation with Mr. Henry O'Brien, the solicitor for these interests, and —"

"This is a question of veracity, Mr. Speaker," put in Mr. MacKay in another appeal. "I deny being consult-

ed."

"Does the hon. gentleman deny that during the past two days he has been in similar consultation with the solicitor in the Felker case?" was the Premier's retort.

"I do," was the prompt response of the Liberal leader.

"Then where did you get your papers?" queried Sir James.

"From the members in the ridings where the people reside," declared Mr. MacKay. "I am prepared to table here and now every document, even to my notes. I will not be misrepresented in this way. Who is solicitor in the Felker case?"

Cries of "Withdraw."

"The hon. gentleman is very slippery—," began the Premier again.

"I deny being slippery. I deny the statements the Premier is persisting in making, and I ask a ruling by the speaker," said the Liberal leader, warmly, rising amid cries of "withdraw" and general disorder.

"I have been twenty-two years in the House, and I have never withdrawn yet," the Premier continued, "because I have never placed myself in that position."

Mr. McDougall continued rapping his desk and calling "Withdraw."

"I will proceed, in spite of the pounding of the learned pundit from Ottawa," Sir James spoke up shortly. "I say that such an alliance—"

"I cannot allow it to go on, Mr. Speaker," the Opposition leader persisted. "I will be generous. I will presume that the Premier is misinformed. We have made charges in connection with the methods adopted to secure the easements. Give me a committee of inquiry and I will undertake to prove every one of them." (Applause)

The Premier availed himself of the courtesy of the Liberal leader, and, abandoning the matter which was the *casus belli*, proceeded with his address.

Hon. Mr. McKay's Fine Speech.

The long-drawn-out debate was concluded last night by the leaders. Hon. Mr. MacKay never spoke to better advantage, and his telling utterances were enthusiastically received. He briefly covered the whole gamut of a discussion that has wandered far afield, and got back to essentials. He exposed the actual condition of the finances, riddled the educational jumble, and scored the system under which the publication of the Public School Readers were handed over to a departmental store as a huge advertisement. He enunciated the position of Liberalism towards the power policy, but condemned the inequitable methods of securing land easements, and the arbitrary legislation in connection therewith. He concluded by offering a resolution on the lines outlined, precipitating the first division of the session.

Sir James Whitney, in reply, rehearsed the record of his administration, defended the educational policy and the awarding of the school book contract, and devoted the balance of his address to an exposition of the power question. He denounced the

opposition of interested corporate campaigning, and concluded with the significant statement that, his present utterances were a mere instalment of additional revelations which he proposed to give the House before the end of the session, showing the character of the corporate campaign which had been waged against this project.

The First Division.

The division resulted in the amendment of the Opposition Leader being defeated by 71 to 17, a majority of 54. The amendment was as follows:

"Moved by Mr. MacKay, seconded by Mr. McDougall, that all the words in the motion after the first "that" be struck out and the following inserted:

"This House regrets that, when a proper classification of current, as distinguished from capital receipts and expenditures has been made, it clearly appears that the current expenditures for 1909 exceeded the current receipts, and this House therefore regrets that the Government is gradually depleting our forest wealth, while doing nothing by way of re-forestation or otherwise, to make this large source of revenue continuous and abiding.

"This House further regrets that because of the abolition of the Model Schools, and of unwarranted and undesirable changes in regulations, the result is that about ten per cent. of the Public Schools of this Province are without qualified teachers, and there is confusion generally as to text books and their supply.

"This House further regrets that, after the Government had spent a large amount of the moneys of the Province in making the necessary literary selections for the public school readers, in furnishing illustrations, plates, electro-plating, and in actually setting up the type, etc., that it should have handed the printing of the said readers over to a Toronto departmental store at a price which does not at all represent the whole cost of the said readers, while regulating prices so as to induce the public generally, to deal direct with the said Toronto departmental store, to the detriment and injury of the whole retail trade, in all lines, of this Province.

"This House says that the said readers are inferior to the old readers, both as to contents and make-up, and the primer is entirely wrong in conception, absolutely unfit for use in primary classes, and should be immediately withdrawn.

"This House further regrets that no practical steps have been taken by the Government to establish a system of Technical Schools throughout the Province, in which the mechanic and artisan may receive training supplemental to his practical training in the workshop.

"This House, while hereby approving of all legitimate means of supplying cheap power to the municipalities, further regrets that the Hydro-electric Commission, in securing easements for a transmission line, did not pursue any systematic and equitable plan for the purchase of said easements, but practised a system of brow-beating and dickering entirely unworthy of this Province, and one which has led to absolutely inequitable results as to the amounts paid the farmers for the said easements.

"This House views with disappointment and alarm the denial in recent enactments of the fundamental right of the subject to access to the Courts of Justice for the determination of matters in controversy between subject and subject, and between subjects and the Crown.

State of the Finances.

In opening, Hon. A. G. MacKay congratulated the Provincial Treasurer on his rapid recovery. The leading characteristic of the financial statement was that the current annual expenditure exceeded the current annual receipts. He was not an alarmist, but only by looking at a defect fairly and squarely could a remedy be devised and applied. Over one million dollars credited to current revenue were fairly attributable to capital receipts. It was but fair to say that this was offset to some extent by capital expenditure, but a just analysis went to show that last year there was a deficit of \$250,000. If this were the case, and he submitted that it was, it was time for the Government to devise ways and means to deal with the situation.

Need for Forestry Policy.

"How long will our timber wealth hold out if the present policy of gradual depletion con-