

DRURY IS VOTED "CONFIDENCE"

ON CHIPPAWA INVESTIGATION:

A prolonged and keen debate, featured by a strong attack on the Drury Government by the Conservative Leader, Hon. G. Howard Ferguson, and engaged in by many members on both sides of the House, occupied the attention of the Legislature

for several hours yesterday afternoon and evening, and continued into the early morning hours. The subject under discussion was whether Chippawa matters should be probed by a committee of the Legislature or by a Royal Commission.

Hon. Mr. Ferguson had put a motion that the inquiry should be conducted by a committee of the House.

In response to this Opposition move, Hon. Manning Doherty, Minister of Agriculture, introduced a motion that the Legislature had confidence in the Government's ability and intention to conduct a full and impartial investigation of the expenditures and estimates of the Hydro-electric Commission.

This was characterized by W. F. Nickle, Kingston, as a shrewd piece of political strategy on the part of Hon. Mr. Doherty.

In introducing his motion, the Minister of Agriculture said the seconder was Hon. W. E. Raney. H. H. Dewart, K.C., objected, on the ground that Mr. Raney was not in the House. Premier Drury stepped into the breach and seconded the vote of confidence in his Government.

Throughout the evening the members listened to various members give their views, and late at night Premier Drury started to speak to the confidence motion.

New Policy on Hydro?

Premier Drury, in his speech early this morning on the debate to appoint a committee of the House to investigate Chippawa, reviewed the reasons why he stood for a Royal Commission.

A commission, he said, was properly the body to investigate matters that would lead to a formulation of what might be a new policy. It would investigate the advisability of closing down some power plants and turning more water into the canal, whether it would be better to vary the present plan of selling power, and if the organization and methods at present were the proper ones to be used in the future.

Danger of Bad Advice.

Premier Drury said the success of public ownership rested on the ability of the Hydro to produce power at prices people could afford to pay. The surest way to ruin public ownership was to have all development proceed on wrongly supplied advice. The present time was an opportune one for investigation. Months ago there was nothing to investigate. The only thing that could wreck public ownership in Ontario was mismanagement, he said.

The Government had moved the amendment to Hon. G. H. Ferguson's motion to know, once and for all, whether it would have the confidence of the House.

The Premier then explained his change of policy. The Government had first accepted a committee of the House, but as the problem developed it became more and more apparent the scope must be greater than a Parliamentary committee could undertake. A Parliamentary committee was all right to investigate things that had happened. But there were many millions yet to be

spent. The Government must know something as to future policy. It would want to know, for instance, whether it would be necessary to close down some of the existing power plants and turn more water into the canal.

Must Have Commission.

It would want to know whether the plan of selling power should be varied, whether the organization and methods in existence now were the proper ones to be used in the future.

The Government wanted to know whether it could depend on the present organization of Hydro. "We want to know, and we must know," he said. They had to form a policy for the future. A constructive investigation was needed, and it could only be carried on by a commission. A committee of the House could not do anything toward properly formulating a policy.

When going into committee it was impossible to leave politics outside. The commission must be constructive, not restrictive. Efficiency and reasonable development were best served by a commission. The commission, he hoped, would be able to give valuable advice.

Dewart Blames Drury.

H. H. Dewart, Southwest Toronto, said that if the Government was not informed of the situation in regard to Hydro, the Premier was to blame. It was his duty two years ago to have known the condition that existed. He recalled the suggestion he had made in December, 1919, to reorganize the commission, giving representation on it to each of the parties and to the municipalities, and to have on it also an eminent engineer. The Premier failed to follow the suggestion.

Hon. Dr. Carmichael said he favored the appointment of a Royal Commission. He reviewed the conditions that led to his former statement, and said that an investigation would show that either these estimates were given in good faith and the money efficiently expended or otherwise.

He said that Hydro was always wrapped up too much in obscurity. He took his responsibility as far as he was responsible. The true enemies of public ownership were those who followed it blindly.

Thomas Marshall, Lincoln, favored an investigation by a committee, in a brief speech, as did Charles McCrea, Sudbury.

At 1.30 this morning Hon. G. Howard Ferguson rose to speak again, in reply to the Government orators. He launched into a vigorous attack on the arguments adduced by the Premier and other Government speakers.

"Out of Order," Says Premier.

Just before Mr. Ferguson started his speech, the Premier said he wished to remark that his resolution was out of order. It was held by rule 33 that no notice of motion was to be prefaced by a recital or preamble. This notice of motion was prefaced by a long preamble, which the Government was not prepared to accept as accurate. The Government, he said, was willing to waive any objection to the motion because of irregularity, but it did not accept the accuracy of the preamble.

Mr. Ferguson, after thanking the Premier in rather ironical terms for his willingness to waive any rights the Government might have, asked him bluntly if the report was true that already the commission had been appointed to deal with the Chippawa development scheme.

"The report is not true," said the Premier.

The Conservative Leader began his speech by reviewing the situation that led up to his motion. He said that about the time the House met,