

# LENNOX CLAIMS WITHOUT BASIS, DECISION MADE

Public Accounts Committee  
Expresses Confidence in  
Hon. W. E. Raney

## O. T. A. WELL ENFORCED

Despite contentions of W. F. Nickle, Hon. G. H. Ferguson, W. E. N. Sinclair, J. C. Tolmie, and others, that the Public Accounts Committee was an investigating, and not a judicial, body, the Government members, supported by J. W. Curry, K.C., R. R. Hall and W. J. McAlpine, Liberals, carried a resolution in yesterday morning's committee declaring the Lennox charges to be unfounded.

The debate on the resolution raged for three and a half hours, and took precedence over other business which it had been arranged to take up.

### Decline to Cast Votes.

Amendment and amendments to the amendment went down by votes of 24 to 13, and then the main motion, moved by A. T. Walker, U.F.O. member for South Oxford, and seconded by R. R. Hall, Parry Sound, carried by a vote of 24 to 0. Opponents of the resolution declined to vote on the main motion, on the ground that it was entirely out of order, and the proposal to act in a judicial capacity absolutely without precedent. Mr. Ferguson and others contended that such a decision, voted upon by Government followers, could have no weight with the public.

The resolution read:

"That whereas Mr. T. H. Lennox, member for North York in the Legislature, made certain charges on the floor of the House against the honorable the Attorney-General in the enforcement of the Ontario Temperance Act, the main charge being made in the following words, as reported in The Mail and Empire newspaper of April 7, 1922:

### Thugs and Criminals Used.

"With full responsibility as a member of this House, I shall show that not only does the Attorney-General give employment to thugs and criminals, but I say further, with all the emphasis that I can command, that those men were kept and are being kept today by the Attorney-General, assisting him in the enforcement of the Ontario Temperance Act. I can quite understand the administrator of a department being deceived by his officials and servants; that is inevitable. But I cannot conceive nor will the public condone any Minister keeping in his employ men that have been convicted and served terms to his knowledge in the enforcement of the Ontario Temperance Act."

"And whereas we, the members of the Public Accounts Committee of the Provincial Legislature, after hearing the evidence submitted by the member for North York, and by the honorable the Attorney-General, are of the opinion that no evidence has been produced to prove the said charge, but that, on the contrary, the honorable the Attorney-General has proved by his own and other evidence, including the production of numerous memoranda of instructions and letters, that he has taken every precaution to see that only men of good record are employed in the enforcement of the Ontario Temperance Act."

### Confidence in Hon. Mr. Raney.

"Therefore this Public Accounts Committee hereby expresses implicit confidence in the honorable the Attorney-General, and in his administration of the Ontario Temperance Act."

"And this committee hereby authorizes and instructs the Chairman to embody a copy of this resolution in his report to the House."

The fourteen not voting on the motion were: C. H. Buckland, H. H. Dewart, G. H. Ferguson, G. G. Halcrow, G. S. Henry, H. P. Hill, Charles McCrea, J. W. McLeod, W. F. Nickle, J. A. Pinard, W. H. Price, W. E. N. Sinclair, Joseph Thompson and J. C. Tolmie.

### Beyond Committee's Powers.

The two defeated amendments were moved by Mr. Sinclair and Mr. Nickle. Mr. Sinclair's was: "That this committee affirms its position under the rules and precedents as a committee inquiring only into the Public Accounts of the Province, and that it is beyond all well-recognized powers to give a finding upon the evidence as proposed by the resolution." He suggested that, in fairness to Mr. Lennox, the main motion should at least stand until Mr. Lennox could be present.

Mr. Nickle moved, in amendment to the amendment, that the committee, according to precedent, simply transmit its evidence to the House.

When the main motion was first moved by Mr. Walker, Hon. G. H. Ferguson was immediately on his feet protesting at any attempt to give "a certificate of character to the Attorney-General," when, he contended, Mr. Lennox's charges had been mainly substantiated. With as many followers present as apparently the Government had seen fit to call, said Mr. Ferguson, there was no doubt about the carrying of the motion, but he doubted whether the public would accept it in just that way.

### Resents Connivance Hint.

R. R. Hall protested at an inference of connivance with the Attorney-General, and declared his intention of vindicating a man from charges which he considered to be unfounded. It was simply the right and the truth of the whole matter that he wanted established by the committee.

W. E. N. Sinclair, Major Tolmie, J. A. Pinard and Joseph Thompson questioned the proposed course of the committee, the last mentioned arousing the ire of Mr. Hall, from Parry Sound, by referring to him as "the member for Empty Sound." Mr. Hall also came into momentary conflict with J. C. Tolmie, a retired clergyman, when, in reply to Mr. Tolmie's suggestion as to the necessity of getting higher types of men to enforce the law, Mr. Hall said: "We got preachers, and they shot men."

J. B. Johnston, Simcoe, strongly upheld the resolution and invoked subsequent protests from Mr. Nickle and others by referring to a certain "timidity" on the part of some members to state their position with regard to the O.T.A. subject.

### Committee Does Its Duty.

J. W. Curry, K.C., expressed the opinion that the committee would be recreant in its duty if it did not express its convictions, in view of the seriousness of the charges that had been levelled at the Attorney-General.

Mr. Nickle announced his intention of voting against the resolution, although in doing so he did not necessarily accept the charges made against the Attorney-General.

C. H. Buckland, in announcing his intention of refraining from voting, regretted that the committee had fallen so low as to become personal. He objected to the frequent use of Biblical quotations by members in discussions.

At the request of J. A. Pinard, Chairman Edgar Watson ruled on the main motion, and ruled it in order.

Mr. Tolmie thought the Attorney-General would be stronger before the public if he asked for the withdrawal of such a resolution, but Mr.

Raney said he had been taught to "beware of Greeks bearing gifts."

Premier Drury, in a brief comment, pointed out that the Government had not a majority on the committee, as had been argued by opponents of the motion, but a bare equality of numbers. He expressed the undoubted right of the committee to pass and announce its opinion of the evidence.