

Friday, Feb. 17th

Aims and Aspirations Of French-Canadians Outlined by Belanger

**Russell Member Scores
Talk of "Assimilating"
People Never Disassimi-
lated—Favors Full
Waterways Survey and
Calls for Manion's
Resignation From Liquor
Board**

CENSOR OF FILMS FOR CHILDREN

To the Legislature, yesterday, Aurelien Belanger, French member for Russell, bared the feelings of the French-speaking people of the Province.

With a force and an eloquence, which, at times, stirred even the Government benches into applause, Mr. Belanger pictured the French-Canadian as a far more loyal and more desirable citizen than the Communist-infected immigrant from London; pleaded for a better understanding of his accomplishment and his aims; and urged that the Government extend rather than restrict the present use of French in the schools so as to enable French-Canadian children to obtain the education they required, and to which they were entitled.

"Surely," said Mr. Belanger, in referring to new post-war countries, where minorities were guaranteed the right to teach their children, in their early years, the language of the home, "if people who only yesterday had no desire but to exterminate each other can reach an agreement, what about Ontario where there is no need of a league of peace between us whose fathers shared equally in the honor of laying the foundation of the Province, and whose sons died side by side in Flanders fields?"

Defends Low Standing.

Mr. Belanger displayed a "let bygones be bygones" attitude with regard to Regulation 17; claimed that even where it had been applied conscientiously it had proved a failure; and defended the low standing of the schools and pupils in his county, as stated in the Merchant Inquiry Committee report on the bilingual situation, by charging that lack of departmental support—for instance, the sending out of 17 and 18-year-old girls with third and fourth class certificates—had been responsible for the conditions.

Mr. Belanger also stressed the need of a sweeping investigation into the Hollinger Mine disaster; demanded the resignation of Hon. R. J. Manion from the Liquor Board; and, generally speaking, criticized Government activities. His attack was met forcibly at the evening sitting by Rev. W. G. Martin, Conservative member for Brantford, who denied that Ontario was a bilingual Province; who said that English must be taught—and "no bluffing, either!"—and who implied that Mr. Belanger had trod on dangerous ground with his remarks about London immigrants infected with the virus of communism.

First to Leave.

The Brantford member, amid cheers of his fellow-benchers, said the fact must not be overlooked that it was the English reservist who was the first to leave Canada for battle at the call of war.

Mr. Martin also claimed some of the limelight, when he introduced an amendment to the Sinclair-Mewhinney amendment of last Tuesday. The amendment to the amendment, expressing confidence in the Government's proposal to undertake a survey of the Province before establishing any old-age pensions scheme, was anticipated, and is designed solely to "kill" the effect and aim of the Liberal "want of confidence" move.

R. H. Kemp, Progressive member for Lincoln, the third speaker of the day, warmly criticized the Government in respect of its rural Hydro policy.

Refers to Timmins Disaster.

In graphic language Mr. Belanger referred to the recent Hollinger mine disaster, describing the sorrow and sadness which it has brought to Timmins, and warning the House of the "deeper and wider" effects which might spring from it.

"Advantages," he said, "may be taken by propagandists—by idealists foreign to Canadian character—to stir up social hatred and promote industrial unrest." In this connection he mentioned the statement of a Timmins Labor leader, that the wood which had gone into the victims' coffins could have been much better used in the workers' stoves.

In the face of such an event, and such far-reaching possibilities, Mr. Belanger felt that a duty had been cast not only upon the Ontario Government, but on the Dominion Government as well "to investigate openly and courageously, without fear or favor, and to determine where the responsibility for the tragedy lies," in order that precautions be taken to prevent any future recurrence of the kind.

Mr. Belanger said it was a relief to pass to a lighter subject—"the lightest of them all"—the 1928 Speech from the Throne, which he termed: "weightless, of porous quality, colorless and odorless." (Applause.)

He said that the Prime Minister in his speech last Tuesday had upbraided the Opposition Leaders for their "caustic, carping" criticism—and their failure to offer, as he had alleged, any "constructive" suggestions.

Full-Time Job.

"Well, I have an important suggestion—a constructive suggestion to make," said Mr. Belanger, in referring to the "strong and efficient administration" advertised for the Liquor Control Board. "I would ask the Prime Minister to see that the administration is as strong as it is possible to make it, and to see that Hon. Dr. Manion gives full time to his duties. I don't see why Dr. Manion should have to keep his position in the House at Ottawa. The Winnipeg convention is past, and there is no need of keeping a seat open in Ontario for a prospective Prime Minister. Mr. Manion should be asked to give his whole time to his job, or he should be made to resign

from the board, so that some man may be put in his place who can give all his attention to the board."

Mr. Belanger pricked the deep interest of the Legislature, when in speaking of the St. Lawrence deep waterways question, he expressed the view "that in his humble opinion the people of this country, whether they belong to Ontario or to Quebec, do not desire that the Government of Canada should enter into a venture which would cost hundreds of millions of dollars without first making a complete survey of all the features connected with it."

In this regard, he said that Premier Ferguson's "straffing" of Ottawa for alleged delay in the development came "with ill-grace."

Loyal to Ontario.

Mr. Belanger next turned to discussion of the ideas and aspirations of the French-Canadian citizens of this Province. Picturing those 300,000 French-Canadians in various parts of Ontario, he dramatically declared that, speaking for them, speaking for the French-Canadian members of the Legislature, he could say: "For every one of us there is only one Province to which we are loyal to the depths of our hearts, and that is the Province of Ontario."

There was, said he, too much reference to the French-Canadian citizens of the Province as if they were different from other citizens, "too much talk of assimilation, as if we were disassimilated."

There was talk of the melting-pot, "though," he added, "what is to come out of that melting-pot I don't know." And there were certain fetishes with which orators stirred up racial hatred.

What, he asked, did those who talked expect in the way of assimilation? The real theory for this country, said he, was the theory of parallelism, not the parallelism defined in the school geometries as two lines that never met, but transcendental parallelism—"bound to meet somewhere."

"Matter of the Heart."

"Assimilation," he declared, "is not a matter of the tongue any more than patriotism, but is a matter of the heart." And in patriotism for the Province, he continued, the French-Canadian would not cede one iota to any other citizen.

Belgium, said he, was an example of a country which was strong in unity despite the fact that its citizens spoke different languages. And Switzerland was another example.

"People who ought to think, and can think," Mr. Belanger went on, "should give these questions their best thought. And when they are approached by any one suggesting the assimilation of the French-Canadian, shove him to the wall and ask in what respect he'd want the French-Canadian to be assimilated any more than he is at present? The French-Canadian is assimilated because he was never disassimilated."

There was, said he, more divergence in thought between the French-Canadian in Ontario and the Parisian than between the French and English speaking citizens of this Province.

"And the French-Canadian," he declared, "even if he is incapable of speaking the English language, is

closer to you gentlemen than the immigrant from London, who comes into this country infected with the virus of communism. The French-Canadian is closer to you than those English-born who ape and admire the customs in the country to the south."

Mr. Belanger strongly condemned lack of provision in the Province's cinematograph law, at the present time, for protection of children against the "evils" of the motion pictures. There was no greater danger to future citizenship than the picture industry. Many clearly immoral films were passing the Censor Board—not immoral perhaps from the point of view of the adult, but unquestionably so from the child's point of view.

Censor for Children.

He forecast a bill, which he will introduce to the House later in the session, in which he will ask that on the Censor Board "there be appointed a man in full sympathy with the children of the country—whose particular business it will be to revise films from the point of their effect on the schoolboy and school-girl. The bill also will advocate that films fit only for the consumption of adults shall have stamped on them, "Not to be exhibited to children under 16 years of age," and that no child, under that age, unless attended by his or her parents, shall be admitted to theatres showing films lacking the official stamp.