

March 29th

# Will Talk on Seaways When Events Warrant, Premier Tells Nixon

**Meanwhile, to Debate Progressive Leader's Resolution Might Be Violation of Confidence Pledged at Ottawa Conference, He Says**

**DEBATE HALTED  
FOR THIS YEAR**

**"I Am in Favor of Improving Transportation," Mr. Ferguson Tells Legislature — Assembly Adjourns Until Thursday to Enable Public Accounts Probe to Continue**

In the face of Premier Ferguson's insistence that any debate on the question might disclose progress that was made—the matter of the strictest confidence at the recent Ottawa power conference—Hon. Harry C. Nixon, Progressive Leader in the Legislature, yesterday withdrew his resolution seeking the expressed opinion of the House that the St. Lawrence development should be undertaken without unnecessary delay, and in co-operation with the United States.

Mr. Nixon's resolution, when called, lived but a few fleeting moments, but sufficiently long, however, to have Mr. Ferguson deliver the assurance that when the point is reached where a public statement can be made on the question he will be one of the first to speak. In this connection Mr. Ferguson declared himself as strongly in favor of improved transportation—by land, water, highway and rail—but indicated that the question of policy came within the Dominion Government field.

**Out of Order, He Says.**

In the first place, Mr. Ferguson mildly objected to debating the resolution, on the ground that it was "quite out of order." Mr. Nixon argued that similar resolutions had been discussed both in the Ontario House and at Ottawa. Mr. Ferguson said he would not stand strictly on the rules of the House, but there was another consideration that he was forced to draw to the Progressive Leader's attention. This, he said, was the recent power conference at Ottawa, and he would not at all feel at liberty, he added, to disclose to the House the trend of the present negotiations. Mr. Nixon said his resolution had been motivated solely to get some authoritative assurance as to progress on the whole St. Lawrence question, but if the Premier was not in a position to "talk" he would not press the resolution.

**Confidential Discussion.**

Mr. Ferguson stated that Premier King had requested that the conference

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deliberations be treated as confidential, and he, Mr. Ferguson, had not mentioned them in any way since, outside of stating that the right of the Province to water powers was being "contended for, and being upheld, as far as it was possible for the Province to do so."

"I am in favor of improving transportation," he added, "and I have no hesitation in saying that. But as to policy—that rests clearly with the Federal authorities.

"This thing has given me a great deal of concern over a number of years, and the moment the point is reached where a statement can be made, I will—you may be sure—be one of the first to give it"

**Committee to Meet Again.**

Liberal Leader Sinclair's expressed desire "to get to the bottom" of the Porquis Junction wages case controversy; his refusal to be "bluffed" by Hon. William Finlayson, Government member of the Committee on Public Accounts; and his sponsoring of a motion that will result in F. C. Richardson, Northern Development Inspector; James McMahon and A. A. Kydd, the two other principals in the case, appearing before the committee for examination on Wednesday next made it impossible for the Legislature to "shut up shop" yesterday, as had been expected.

The House has been adjourned now, to reconvene on Thursday. If the report of the committee is available then and is immediately adopted it may be possible to prorogue the House all in the same day. If not, a next-day—April 4—prorogation is likely.

Mr. Sinclair's motion for an investigation of the Porquis Junction matter was not opposed by the Conservative members, although one or two new members lifted their hands, but immediately dropped them at Mr. Finlayson's peremptory demand of "Don't vote."

**Tories Are Taunted.**

"Haven't you got any rights?" Mr. Sinclair taunted the Conservatives.

"We could vote you down easy if we wanted to," Dr. R. Norman Berry, Haldimand, flung back.

It was perfectly plain, stated Mr. Finlayson, what Mr. Sinclair had wanted to do. To get the Government members to vote the resolution down, and thereby create the impression that the Government had something to "hide" in the affair. "But you are not catching us that way," he chided, and the Liberal Leader, he added, could take all the responsibility for keeping the House in session another week.

"I'll take it," retorted Mr. Sinclair. "You're not going to bluff me," he said, a second time.

"Why, you're the bluffer," clicked Mr. Finlayson.

**Not Satisfied, Says Sinclair.**

The whole verbal storm—the sixth or seventh "blow" which has characterized argument exchanges between Messrs. Sinclair and Finlayson since the Public Accounts Committee was first called—broke when the Liberal Leader claimed he was not satisfied with the investigation to date into the Porquis Junction charges and counter-charges, and that the affidavit of one man (McMahon) against the affidavit of another (Kydd) was not sufficient to dispose of the matter. He thought that the whole dealings with Richardson, the Government Inspector (McMahon now swears that he got Northern Development money for work done on the inspector's farm, and Kydd swears that such was not the case with him) should be aired before the committee, and that the three men involved in the controversy should be subpoenaed.

Mr. Finlayson explained that, while the question was not one of "investigating last year's accounts," he would not stand in the way if Mr. Sinclair wanted to keep the House in session further. It would take four or five days, he claimed, to bring Richardson, McMahon and Kydd to Toronto. It was further argued by the Minister that the Government had investigated the first charges against Richardson promptly; that they were continuing their investigations, and if Richardson was guilty of the charges made he would be dismissed. "But," he added, "if it is merely a case of 'Get Richardson,' as our inquiry to date seems to indicate—"

"I won't take a bluff from anybody," Mr. Sinclair cut in, warmly, "and I don't have to take a bluff from you."

"I don't like my honorable friend calling this a bluff," Mr. Finlayson shot back. "I'm not going to quarrel with you. You can go into this matter this year, or next year. I don't care a rap."

**Resolution Proposed.**

"I'll go into it," said the Liberal Leader.

"Well, move a resolution," said Mr. Finlayson.

"I'll move it," retorted the Liberal Leader.

The resolution, when put to a vote of the committee, found all Opposition members present—seven or eight—in support of it. The Conservatives, on instructions, sat silent.

Later in the day Mr. Finlayson gave an explanation to the Legislature of the situation, and was promptly reminded by the Liberal Leader of his "don't vote" appeal.

Premier Ferguson smiled. "I would have done exactly the same thing under similar circumstances," he said.

"I have no doubt you would have," said Mr. Sinclair.

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