

Has Confidence in University To Maintain All Discipline, Henry Assures Legislature

Students' Council Executive and Caput Put Ban on Student Publication—Nixon, in House, Assails Editorial, But Sinclair Holds They Should Be "Compassionate"

ATTORNEY-GENERAL DEFENDS STUDENTS

After demanding Government investigation of the Varsity's atheist editorial, and suggesting to Attorney-General Price that some of the language of that article might come within the meaning of the Criminal Code's provisions respecting blasphemy, Hon. Harry Nixon, Progressive Leader, in the Legislature yesterday, withdrew his adjournment motion upon the assurance of Premier Henry of proper action by the university authorities, failing which, Mr. Henry said, "this Government will not be slow in taking the steps necessary to restore confidence."

Paper Suspended.

Of equally outstanding interest in the university dispute was the action of the Joint Executive of the Students' Administrative Councils, meeting late in the afternoon at the university, suspending publication of the Varsity. This action was concurred in by the Caput last night.

In the legislative debate the Progressive Leader criticized the continuance of the administration of the Department of Education as a part-time obligation of the Prime Minister, and expressed the conviction that there ought to be a strong Minister given direction as his sole responsibility. Premier Henry, however, while admitting that there might be "some argument" in respect to his own occupancy of dual posts involving the Educational Department, extolled the record of former Premier Ferguson as director of Ontario's educational affairs, and declared that, despite intimations to the contrary, he had never seen any evidence of neglect of educational affairs in Ontario.

Intense Interest.

The customary dullness of a Friday afternoon's proceedings in the Legislature was transformed by the issue of alleged university-created atheism into a session of crowded galleries and interest which was intense. University students, apparently, formed a good portion of the crowd of attending spectators, and some of the staff of the Varsity sat in the Press Gallery throughout the proceedings.

The House itself was all attention, and the drone of back-bench conversation and witticism gave way to earnest attendance on what the speakers had to say. The gallery spectators hung forward in their seats to catch the last word on this newly precipitated issue of the day, and on very frequent occasions the enthusiasm of the on-lookers ran away with their regard for Legislature rules. Their handclapping was easily audible over and above the

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Higher Education

Events affecting the University of Toronto, events which are not listed on any curriculum of study, brought a day of excitement to the undergraduates of the university yesterday.

In the afternoon the Caput met to consider the resolution of repudiation adopted the evening previous by the Board of Governors. Almost at the same time the Legislature started to debate the question whether or not an official inquiry should be held to ascertain whether conditions alleged in the editorial existed.

After long deliberation, the Caput adjourned until evening. Meanwhile the Joint Executive of the Students' Administrative Councils was summoned to convene.

The Legislature debate ended with the decision of the Government to leave the situation in the hands of the university authorities.

The Joint Executive of the Students' Administrative Councils, meeting in the late afternoon, ordered publication of the Varsity suspended for the balance of the academic publishing year—about two weeks.

The Caput, meeting later, approved the action of the Council Executive.

The Varsity editors have called a meeting of themselves for this morning.

There is little time left to attend lectures.

desk-thumping of applauding members.

Plunges Into Debate.

Mr. Nixon wasted not a moment after the House opening, took the first opportunity of pressing his protest, and, in an address limited by rules to ten minutes, suggested that before one dollar additional Provincial funds was voted by members of this House there ought to be some adequate assurance given in the form of authoritative report relative to the disquieting submissions of the now famous Varsity editorial.

William Newman (Liberal, North Victoria) spoke feelingly along the same lines, while W. E. N. Sinclair, K.C., Liberal House Leader, expressing his faith in the young manhood and womanhood of the university, thought too much attention sometimes was paid to editorials, which, he said, after all, were but the expression of opinion of a man powerful enough to own or control a newspaper. Mr. Sinclair expressed conviction—subsequently reiterated by Attorney-General Price and Premier Henry—that with the university authorities themselves lay the proper machinery for probe and penalty.

Editorial in Varsity.

In opening the discussion, Hon. Harry Nixon, Progressive Leader, said:

"Mr. Speaker: I desire to direct your attention for a few minutes to conditions alleged to exist in our Provincial university, and that there may be no question of my being in order I would like to move the adjournment of the House. I would draw your attention, first, Mr. Speaker, to the editorial in the Varsity, the organ of the undergraduates at the university, dated Tuesday, Feb. 24, and to this particular part of the editorial which says that teaching in a good many courses is of such a type as to result in practical

atheism on the part of the students, and I note that A. E. F. Allan, editor-in-chief of the Varsity, stated in a news interview that he accepted full responsibility for the editorial on atheism. It is no secret, he said.

"Now, Mr. Speaker, those who have had experience in college or university life will agree that there are usually two or three chaps in almost every body of students who seem to take pride in calling themselves atheists, and it may be that they have some influence on fellow-students who are constantly in touch with them; but I do not know that such an atheist is much of a menace, or if we, as legislators here, could do much in the matter if they were. But I would say from my own experience that a sharp reprimand from a President to two or three gentlemen that I have in mind, to the effect that they would either cease their propaganda or leave the institution, would have had a very beneficial effect.

Result of Teaching?

"But here we have, sir, a very different situation. The charge, as I understand it, is that in our Provincial seat of learning, the University of Toronto, the teaching of the professors is of such a type as to result in a practical atheism on the part of the students; and, further, 'if they were quite honest,' quoting from this editorial, 'they would be willing to admit that the majority of graduates in arts are practical atheists, and this includes a large part of the students in theology. This is not an indictment on our part; it is a simple, straightforward statement of fact.'

"Now this present Mr. Allan, editor-in-chief, is an individual selected, as I understand it, from 5,000 students, more or less, to carry on the work of editing their paper, the Varsity, and we must surely assume that he was selected for this position because of special attainments and intimate knowledge of the affairs of the uni-