

versity. This is further borne out by a report in this morning's paper in which he says that his editorial was the inevitable outcome of several years' familiarity with the subject.

"It seems to me we have an issue before us of the gravest importance. I know for a fact that this matter has caused, and is causing, keen anxiety and dismay in the minds of the parents of the students of our university throughout the Province, and I demand of the Government, on my responsibility as Leader of this group in the House, on behalf of parents throughout this Province who are greatly exercised over the situation and have sent their sons and daughters here at great expense and sacrifice, and also on behalf of this great institution with its good name and high reputation, that it may be freed of the stigma and suspicion that this matter has brought upon it, I demand this: that the Government at once take the necessary steps to have the whole matter investigated and a report placed before this Legislature before honorable members are asked to vote a single dollar for the further maintenance of the institution.

Investigate Whole Charge.

"I would suggest that some one be commissioned to investigate this whole charge—some one fully qualified to go into the matter—whose name and prestige would be such as to ensure public confidence in his report, whatever it might be. This individual, I feel, should not be in any way connected with the Department of Education or with the Board of Governors or the university. I say if we as members of this Legislature are voting the good money of the Province to pay the salaries of professors who instil atheism into the minds of our sons and daughters, then we want to know it, and I am satisfied we will be able to act accordingly if we have this information.

"I may say, further, that there is a feeling abroad that affairs at the university are running rather at loose ends, and I fancy a taste of the strong-arm methods that my good friend the Provincial Secretary has used to such good effect in dealing with the institutions of reform in this Province might be used with equally good effect in this institution of learning.

"Let me say, further, that I feel that what this Province needs in connection with our whole educational system is a strong Minister to devote his full time to the affairs of the department.

"Now, I note in this morning's papers that at a special meeting of the Governors of the university they passed a resolution, moved by T. A. Russell and seconded by Major Eric Armour: 'This board unanimously repudiates the article appearing in Varsity on Feb. 24, suggesting the students of the university and a majority of the graduates are largely atheists, and that the professors and staff are teaching atheism to the students, which statements are entirely contrary to the fact and totally misrepresent the university, its staff and the student body.' And while I am glad to see this on the part of the Governors, still I do not feel, Mr. Speaker, that the general public will be entirely satisfied with this statement, nor am I convinced that the Governors themselves are entirely satisfied, because I note also in this morning's Mail that one of the leading members of the Board of Governors said 'it would be a good thing if the Legislature had the whole thing cleaned up.'

"Expelled, if Not Jailed."

"Now, let me say, no one hopes more than I do that an investigation will bear out this declaration of the Board of Governors, because I say, Mr. Speaker, that those who are responsible for this editorial should be expelled, if not jailed; that this disreputable sheet should be finally and absolutely suppressed.

"If I have another moment let me read to the Attorney-General one section of this editorial. I will ask your forbearance, because I am rather proud to admit many of these words are foreign to my vocabulary."

After reading from the editorial, Mr. Nixon proceeded: "I would seriously ask the Attorney-General to consider if such matter does not come very close to blasphemy as it is defined in the Criminal Code, and therefore liable to action of the officers of his department."

A ruling by Speaker Kidd that the mover of the House adjournment should place in writing with the Speaker his reasons for so doing brought polite disagreement from William E. N. Sinclair, K.C., Liberal House Leader, and discussion was interrupted by the suggestion of Premier Henry that the debate be allowed to proceed while Mr. Nixon fulfilled the desired formality.

Liberal Leader Speaks.

William E. N. Sinclair, K.C., Liberal House Leader, then took up the debate as follows:

"Mr. Speaker, the honorable member for Brant (Mr. Nixon) has brought this matter before the attention of the House on the orders of the day and as an alumnus of the University of Toronto, and one who has followed the history of the university for some years, I feel I possibly can say something on this question this afternoon. And the question is: What is it all about, and apparently it is about an editorial. What is an editorial? My definition of an editorial is that it is an opinion of one man big enough to own or control a paper, not necessarily public opinion at all. It is written on the editorial page, and one might easily be classed as an atheist these days in editorials at any rate, because I feel there are very few of us take them at face value when we read them, because we realize they are written by human beings limited in their experience and possibly in their point of view.

"Now, there is this paper known as the Varsity, which has been published from year to year and the other day an editorial appeared in it. While to my mind let me say the editorial is pure nonsense—I cannot use the words I would like to use in characterizing the editorial on account of the rules of the House—but why is there all this ado about this editorial? Is it for the welfare of the University of Toronto or is it for the sake of getting some publicity? I fear that the latter features more than the welfare of the great institution across the way here.

Mr. Nixon—Is that reference to me? Let me say, Mr. Speaker, as I understand the rules of the House, my honorable friend is not in order in imputing the charge to me. I deny the charge and ask him to withdraw.

Parents and Children.

Mr. Sinclair—I am very glad to accept my honorable friend's word. My honorable friend cannot escape, however, what appeared in the paper this morning, advocating that parents send their children to other universities. Surely he doesn't wish the University of Toronto to have to go to Hamilton or some other city, like McMaster.

"Now this is purely a university affair as I see it, and this Province gives money to the University of Toronto, and it gives it to the university for the purpose of higher education in this Province, and not for the purpose of any religious education or anything of this kind. There are no strings imposed on the money which we grant, and right in the University Act there is this section: 'No religious test shall be required of any professor, lecturer, teacher, officer or servant of the university or University College or any student,' etc. This Legislature has laid down the broad principle that the University of Toronto is non-denominational, is a public university to which

one goes for the purposes of higher education.

"Further than that this Legislature has given the University of Toronto its own internal machinery, and has set it up in the University Act, and we have delegated all our powers to bodies over at the university. First, there is a Board of Governors. The Government appoints twenty-two and the Alumni appoints twenty-two, and there are some ex-officio members of the Board of Governors. The powers of the Board of Governors are set forth in the statute. Then following that we have the Caput, and that is provided in Section 77 of the act, with its powers laid down there. Sections 84 to 87 of the act relate to discipline within the university, which is in the hands of this Caput.

Governing Bodies.

Now, sir, this Legislature has delegated these powers to the governing bodies at the university, and right at the present time these governing bodies are handling this particular situation

which has developed at the university, and it does seem to me that until, at any rate, the university has failed within the limits of its powers laid down, this Legislature certainly should not intervene or ask for an investigation or anything of that kind. Investigate what? How can a man investigate as to whether a student is an atheist or not an atheist? And I don't see just what else there could be to investigate at the present time. My point is this: This Legislature has delegated its powers and authorities in regard to the internal management, discipline for professors and students and all others at the University of Toronto by virtue of the Toronto University Act. I may say that I do not fear for the future of the student body at the University of Toronto or the future citizens of this Province. Not many days ago I heard a sermon from the Rev. Stuart Parker which came back to my mind with this very question when he took for his text, "Abraham pitched his tent where it was at the beginning," and he pictured in that very situation the very situation of the young man and young woman's viewpoint on life. But as they pass on to more mature stages of life, having gone through this experience in life, they pitch their tents where they were before, and go back to the viewpoint of citizenship throughout the length and breadth of the Province.

Too Much Noise, He Claims.

"Now, I probably have said more than I intended to say, but my view is that altogether too much noise has been made about this episode. At the present time people are apt to believe because some one says so and so that it is so and so, but I have more faith in the young men and young women who are our own sons and daughters. I have more faith in them than to believe for one moment there is anything whatever in the editorial which appeared in the Varsity the other day, and until the university authorities have exhausted their investigation within the powers conferred on them by this act I would suggest that this Legislature hold its hand and take no part now, no action whatever. I am rather surprised that my honorable friend from Brant would suggest that the editor be jailed and that the Attorney-General have him up for blasphemy. It seems to me we should take a compassionate view of this young man, or whoever he may be; take compassion on him for the views he holds and which he thinks other people hold because he has the wrong conception entirely on life. He hasn't figured out the thoughts of most of the rest of the students of the University of Toronto, but, as I said, he happens to hold the responsible position of an editor, and therefore is able to say things which you and I are not able to say with the same force of authority."