

Conservatives Split On Dog-Deer Issue To Oppose Minister

Despite McCrea's Attitude Favoring Abolition of Dogs, Fish and Game Committee Differs With Him by Vote of 11 to 7 Against

BITTER OPPOSITION LIKELY IN HOUSE

By a vote of 11 to 10, members of the Fish and Game Committee of the Ontario Legislature yesterday disapproved of any abolition of the use of dogs in the hunting of deer that the Henry Government may seek to effect, by way of legislation, before the present session closes.

Elimination of the dogs has been widely mooted since the last Conservative caucus at Queen's Park, when the Cabinet is said to have defined its policy in this regard. At yesterday's Fish and Game meeting Hon. Charles McCrea's attitude was such as to indicate, that the rumored abolition is coming, regardless of protest.

"My department is of the opinion," said the Minister, "that deer preservation will be promoted by eliminating dogs in hunting."

In spite of this attitude, the committee went out and expressed its opinion to the contrary, with seven out of the eleven members upholding the dogs coming from the Government side of the House. In favor of the continuation of the dogs were: T. H. Bell (Conservative, Toronto-Bellwoods), A. Aubin (Conservative, Sturgeon Falls), A. H. Acres (Conservative, Carleton), Coulter McLean (Conservative, Toronto-Eglinton), Duncan McNaughton (Conservative, Stormont), T. P. Murray (Liberal, South Renfrew), William Newman (Liberal, North Victoria), J. F. Reid (Conservative, West Windsor), Austin B. Smith (Conservative, South Essex), Frank Spence (Conservative, Fort William), and J. G. Taylor (Progressive, North Grey). Against dog-running were: W. A. Baird (Conservative, Toronto-High Park), Dr. H. J. Davis (Conservative, Elgin East), Charles R. Harrison (Conservative, Nipissing), General D. M. Hogarth (Conservative, Port Arthur), Earl Hutchinson (Labor, Kenora), Hon. James Lyons (Conservative, Sault Ste. Marie), Hon. Mr. McCrea, T. A. Murphy (Conservative, Toronto-Beaches), and T. P. Lancaster (Conservative, Peterboro' County).

Following the break-up of the committee meeting, argument was carried out into the Parliamentary corridors and opinion was expressed freely on all sides that the end had not been

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heard of the question—that bitter opposition would be restated in the House proper if any abolition-of-dogs amendment should be brought down by the Government.

Discussion on the elimination proposal was opened by Mr. McCrea. "It is a question as to whether the Government, as a Government, will introduce legislation to prohibit the use of dogs," he said. "The main consideration is whether it is in the interest of deer preservation." He explained that the main menace to deer from wolves was in the winter. Nature under certain circumstances allowed the wolves to outwit the deer, or the deer to outwit the wolves. The situation with dogs was different. Except in winter, deer could seek escape from

wolves in the water, but when chased by dogs they were slain by the hunters at the end of the runway.

The number of deer in this Province is slipping, he said, but the herds could be built up. All other Provinces prohibited the use of dogs in hunting deer.

Favor Abolition in North.

A questionnaire had been sent to 20,000 hunters on this matter, Mr. McCrea explained, and 4,000 had replied. A majority of the answers received from Northern Ontario had favored the abolition of dogs, while a majority from other sections favored dogs.

T. H. Bell (Conservative, Toronto-Bellwoods) urged that the Government should await the finding of the Special Committee on Game Resources before legislating on the subject.

"My department is of the opinion," said Mr. McCrea, "that deer preservation will be promoted by eliminating dogs in hunting. The Government for years has been investigating the effect of hunting by dogs. We think we have all the general information on the subject needed."

In any reform of this kind, Mr. McCrea continued, the price had to be paid in a certain amount of disappointment and antagonism. He referred to those who at the previous day's hearing had wanted the members of the committee to go on record so they could be dealt with at the next election. In the last analysis, said the Minister, the Government would have to take responsibility for legislation of this kind, irrespective of the recommendations of committees.

Same Bounty for Pups.

"If dogs are to be eliminated," said W. A. Baird (Conservative, High Park), "some more action should be taken to eliminate the menace of wolves. The bounty for wolf pups should be the same as that for wolves."

W. Newman (Liberal, Victoria North) supported this view, pointing out that, if the same bounty were paid for wolves and pups, a trapper might receive as high as \$125 for a wolf and litter.

A. Aubin (Conservative, Sturgeon Falls) urged the Government to find out what the greatest cause of deer destruction was before legislating against dogs. He instanced cases where more deer were killed by still-hunting than by hunting with dogs.

If dogs were eliminated in hunting, settlers and guides would destroy two-thirds of their dogs, declared G. V. Harcourt (Conservative, Parry Sound). Several settlers kept a number of dogs and used them when acting as guides to hunters. Four dogs, he said, destroyed thirty deer. If their use were prohibited, the owners would destroy dogs not needed, and reduce the menace to sheep.

Personal Reasons.

"The arguments advanced in favor of retaining dogs at yesterday's meeting were purely personal," said Hon. James Lyons (Conservative, Sault Ste. Marie), who favored the abolition of dogs. "In the district I represent the farmers have started a petition asking the Government to abolish the use of dogs in hunting."

Brig.-Gen. D. M. Hogarth (Conservative, Port Arthur), noting the different views held in different parts of the Province on the question, suggested a system by which certain districts would be permitted the use of dogs and others prohibited.

"The whole question is one of conservation," replied Mr. McCrea.

The Government was also urged not to make any definite law prohibiting the use of dogs while hunting

until the Commission on Game Resources reported its findings by D. J. Taylor (Progressive, North Grey).

No action was taken by the committee on any of the suggestions submitted to it before the discussion of the dog question, it being decided that any changes in the law should await the study of the entire game resources by the Commission which the Government contemplates appointing at the end of the session. Mr. McCrea said that this Commission would be representative of all parties in the House, and would have outside members as well.

Gun-License Argument.

Long discussion arose over the question of gun licenses, centring on whether the gun licenses should be made Province wide in application, instead of being confined to counties as at present. Among the suggestions that emerged in the discussion were that gun licenses should not be valid, except for use on the owner's own farm, between April and August, inclusive; that the license should cost bona fide farmers' sons only \$1 instead of \$2; that in Northern Ontario the gun license be made to apply to urban dwellers, but not settlers. No action was taken, however, on any of these suggestions, which, with several other proposals, ranging from advocacy of a bounty on bears to a repeal of the law prohibiting shooting between sunset and sunrise, were left for the consideration of the Commission.

FARM GROUP URGED TO SPEND \$25,000

Tory Member for Carleton Seeks Government Appropriation

Appropriation of an additional \$250,000 by the Government, to be spent in furthering the recommendations of the Agriculture Committee of the Legislature, and in, generally speaking, aiding Hon. Thomas L. Kennedy, the new Minister of Agriculture, in improving conditions of the farm and the farmer, was urged yesterday before the Agriculture Committee of the House by A. H. Acres, Conservative member for Carleton.

"You can't do these things without the necessary money," said Mr. Acres. "Let's ask for the money."

A resolution advocating the abolition of hog-grading, the establishment in the Province of three large farms, and the recruiting to the same of graduates from the various agricultural colleges and schools, and a campaign to bring home to the child, through his or her school books, the history of agriculture and its advantages, was filed by Mr. Acres with the committee.

"It's time," said he, "that we got away from these fairytales and this silly literature. In the textbooks of our primary classes, and our higher classes as well, we have got to start to teach what Ontario has to offer. We have got to have pictures of our agricultural fields and our mines and our power developments. With what the youngsters learn now is it any wonder that we have unrest, and the young people going to the cities?"

Mr. Acres also stressed the need of a new system of census-taking with regard to agriculture. In the past 20 years there had not been a proper census reported by either the Province or the Dominion, he contended.