

Feb. 17.

a solution of the St. Lawrence waterways, little progress had been made because the Government at Ottawa had been antagonistic in 1928. He read a series of letters which had been exchanged between himself and Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, then Premier, in which Ontario had urged immediate progress. The reply received, Mr. Henry stated, was, in effect: "We are not prepared to do anything for you at this time."

Antagonism Alleged.

"That," asserted the speaker, "is the reason we bought power from Quebec, because we had a Government that was antagonistic to it at Ottawa." In reply to Mr. Sinclair, he said: "We had to buy Quebec power or we could not buy our own." "I hope before the House closes," said the Premier, "I will have something to submit to you that will show we have made real progress under the present Prime Minister and Government at Ottawa that is worth while."

Assailing the resolution, the speaker asserted: "Your resolution is a pure fishing expedition, similar to that in 1921 or 1922, when we spent over \$100,000 to say Hydro was all right."

"Public ownership," he continued, "will die a natural death if the public

of this Province is continually fed with suspicions by those who are opposed to it." Referring to the last few years under the regime of Mr. Magrath, Mr. Maguire and Mr. Cooke, the Premier said: "As I have already pointed out, they are men of ability, of good repute and known to have a grasp of the situation, and yet you say we ought to examine every contract made in these years. If we cannot have faith and confidence in the men we appoint to these positions, whom will we get to serve? No business is ever carried on by advertising everything you do out in the market place. All through the life of Sir Adam Beck there was a constant effort to get him—I make this statement that the effort is still on to get the Commission. I will show how closely the members of the Opposition are identified with it. If we cannot have confidence in the men we appoint to our Commission without all their affairs having to be continually investigated, no man with any standing would ever take a position from us."

"The Government has submitted to a Commissioner two purchases of property with considerable assets—an entirely different proposition to the contracts we have made with regard to electric current. These two purchases were submitted to a Commissioner for careful thought because we are loath to turn the whole thing into a fishing expedition and have the whole of the Hydro affairs aired for the benefit of those who are opposed to it. We are going to give you the time of your life in this House. We will expect you to come forward and repeat what you have been saying on the hustings."

Mr. Nixon—We cannot do that. The Speaker won't allow it. The case is sub judice.

Prepared to Take Responsibility.

In asking for the adjournment of the debate, Premier Henry said: "I am quite prepared to take all blame attached to my administration, to my predecessor in office. He will stand out as a man who has accomplished a great deal, and I am proud to have

been associated with him during the years I was one of his lieutenants. We will justify every contract entered into with regard to Hydro to take care of the needs of the people of this Province."

Giving assurance that the Hydro inquiry had not been restricted because of fear on the part of the Government, the Premier asserted: "My concern is for Hydro. I live it in my life and actions, which is more than can be said for those across the way, and of their Leader who is outside. He speaks about being in favor of public ownership and Hydro, but says no word that bears out that statement. Those who are associated with it know that an attempt is being made to besmirch the reputation of the Commission and to suggest there is something of a political character in relation to the activities of the Commission. I challenge you to bring forward any one report that would prove anything in the nature of political interference during the years I have been a member of this House and a member of the Government or since I took office."

Payment to Drury Flayed by Sinclair And Branded Illegal

Back-Pay Remittance to ex-Premier Makes "Economy Talk" of Government Useless, Opposition Leader Declares

SECRECY IS DENIED BY PREMIER HENRY

Branding as "illegal" the recent payment by the Ontario Government of \$8,000 in back pay to ex-Premier Drury, Opposition Leader William E. N. Sinclair, in the Legislature yesterday, said that the "economy talk" of the Henry Administration, under such circumstances, was useless.

The head of the former Farmers' Government had left the money with the Province as a donation, and now had no strings on it. "The payment is illegal," he stressed, "because he gave the money to the Treasury, and abandoned all claim to it. It is illegal because, if a claim existed, it is outlawed. It is illegal because it was paid by special warrant, and not provided for in the estimates or in any vote of the House."

"I have always criticized payments by special warrant," he elaborated. "Payments should go in the estimates or be voted in the House."

Asking why this payment of what he termed "public money" should be kept "secret," Mr. Sinclair wondered how the matter could be hoped to be kept quiet, inasmuch as the despatch of the cheque must have been known to some sources. "This payment," he added, "may well shake confidence in the Government to the breaking-point."

Premier Henry, in explaining the transaction, contended there had been no attempt at secrecy, and that it had been understood by Mr. Drury and himself that the warrant issued would be published in the regular way in the auditors' report at the end of the fiscal year.

"I think," he said, "that the honorable gentleman (Mr. Drury) was foolish in not taking the money when he was in office. He did not appreciate the money he was spending. Because a man is in public life, he does not make money out of his position. From that point, it would be far better for him, in fact, to remain in private life."