

## For Premier Henry to Face

The Globe has published extracts from numerous Ontario newspapers of all political complexions deploring the bitter opposition of Premier Henry toward investigation of the Aird payment of \$125,000 in connection with the Beauharnois-Hydro contract for 250,000 horsepower. These papers have not changed their views. Herewith are reproduced a few additional comments, in order that the Prime Minister may see, before the Royal Commission assumes its duties, the public opinion he has created, and which he must face in the future if he continues to insist on restricting the inquiry.

(From an Editorial in the St. Catharines Standard.)

The cause of the Government, by failure to include the Beauharnois issue in the Hydro inquiry, will suffer by inferences which will be drawn. There has been no direct charge against any one connected with the Government or Hydro that any part of the money young Aird said he received was given as a bribe, or otherwise, in securing the contract for power from the Quebec interests. It is quite certain that no public man will venture, with the evidence at hand, to make a charge against any one, and could only do so at great risk and legal responsibility. But this will not deter the Opposition from asking questions. And that is a legitimate method in political strategy. As an instance, The Toronto Globe winds up a front-page editorial this morning with the following:

What is wrong? Why the anxiety? Why the commotion? Why the agitated alarm over investigation? What are Premier Henry and his Government determined to conceal? Of what are they afraid?

There are six queries, all on the one issue, and all making an implication which might have been avoided had the Government included the Beauharnois matter in the judicial investigation. The present situation only confirms the attitude of this paper, some time ago, that the Government from its own standpoint would have been wise to have held a wide open inquiry, let the chips fall where they may.

(From an Editorial in the Border Cities Star.)

Ontario has an excellent Government and it deserves well of the people. It is conducting the affairs of the Province, during these trying days, in a manner that deserves commendation. We must say, however, that we believe its handling of the Hydro charges has been anything but wise. For months the Government backed away from the idea of an investigation of Hydro, as demanded by its opponents. For a time there was talk of an inquiry by a special committee of the Legislature. One of the party's chief organs even announced that this had been decided upon. Finally, announcement was made of the appointment of a one-man Royal Commission to conduct a limited probe, only two matters being given to the Commissioner for review. Naturally, the limitations placed on the inquiry have caused a fresh storm of disapproval, a storm that the Premier evidently believed he could squelch by his fiery attack on Mr. Hepburn in the Legislature this week.

From a purely political standpoint we cannot help but regard Mr. Henry's handling of this situation as quite unfortunate. The Government's apparent refusal to be 100 per cent. frank with the people has aroused public suspicion in a remarkable way and has only served to intensify a once small agitation against the Administration. This agitation will not be quelled by the throwing of Government bricks against the agitators, particularly by accusing them of being unfriendly to Hydro.

Before the matter proceeds any further, before it becomes any more involved, we believe that Mr. Henry would do well to give more thought to the situation and to meet it by the only course that will satisfy public opinion, namely, a wide open investigation of any phase of the Hydro situation that any citizen of Ontario may desire to bring forward. Nothing less than this will do.

(From an Editorial in the Brantford Expositor.)

Two of these questions, the second and third, have been referred to the Middleton Commission for inquiry, but for some reason, well known to himself and to the members of his Government, Premier Henry has been unbending in his refusal to expose the Beauharnois payment to the scrutiny of a judicial tribunal. It is utterly impossible for the people of Ontario, at least those of them who are independent in the formation of their opinions, and in their views of public affairs, not to ask why it is that Premier Henry is so determined to keep the lid on this transaction. The heat developed in the Legislature in the course of the discussion on the part of the Premier is a clear indication that he is exceedingly sensitive on this matter, and his refusal to submit this controversial question to the Middleton Commission is, to say the least, a tactical blunder.

If this payment was honorable, and manifestly in the public interest, and one that would be universally applauded by the people of Ontario, Premier Henry ought to be the first to let the details be known. His controversy with Mr. Hepburn is apparently a desperate effort to subordinate the main issue. The latter can be depended upon to defend his own speeches, and that is no concern of the electors of Ontario. It is, however, a matter of supreme interest that the transactions of the Ontario Hydro Commission should be indisputably removed from all suspicion. If the acceptance of \$125,000 by Aird, as alleged in the evidence given at Ottawa, for securing a contract with the Hydro, was a master stroke of financial acumen, and one that, when the facts are fully known will win universal commendation, then by all means let the whole truth be published.

(From an Editorial in the Peterborough Examiner.)

What is worrying thousands of friends of Hydro is the ever-growing cloud of suspicion that is enveloping the public ownership organization, and that is not being dissipated by the attitude adopted by the Government.

Premier Henry's failure to deal with the Aird payment was disappointing.

Many people hoped that the head of the Government would advance a reasonable explanation of why it was not considered necessary or desirable to have that transaction probed by Mr. Justice Middleton.

That failure will create fresh suspicion that something decidedly off-color is being kept out of sight.

## LOSS OF INDUSTRIES CHARGED TO HYDRO

### South Renfrew Liberal Says County Has Suffered From Commission's Policies

### SHAFTS OF IRISH WIT

With a blunt directness that his Irish wit often failed to mask, Thomas P. Murray, Liberal member for South Renfrew, took the Ontario Hydro-Electric Power Commission and the Henry Government to task in the Legislature last night, charging that the people of his county had suffered more from Hydro's "sins of omission and transmission" than any one else in the Province; that industries had been lost to his section through the transportation to Toronto of power that should be used "at home"; and that the Hydro—now that it had acquired the Madawaska power properties—apparently did not know what to do with them, for rumors were about that it did not intend to develop them.

Mr. Murray appeared in various roles, he said—as a son of one of the oldest Renfrew pioneers; as an old baseball catcher; as an ex-railwayman; as a lumberman, and as a full-fledged M.P.P. Speaking in the vernacular of these several professions, he convulsed the House and galleries at times with his references, but always predominant was his determination to go "agin' the Government" because of its handling of the trans-Canada unemployment relief project; its affiliation with the present Tory Administration at Ottawa, and its policy of dispensing patronage—especially in Renfrew.

#### Transformation of Hydro.

In speaking of "Hydro-Electric" he wondered if it represented private ownership, public ownership or political ownership.

"Would you like me to answer that?" put in Premier Henry.

"I'm speaking now," retorted Mr. Murray.

While he didn't know if there was anything wrong with Hydro, he felt certain that were Sir James Whitney and Sir Adam Beck to "return to earth" today they would likely walk into the "Hydro Temple," down on University Avenue, and remark: "My

house has been a house of service. Have you made it a den of thieves?"

Mr. Murray said briskly that he understood that M. J. O'Brien had "put it over" the Government in selling the Madawaska power properties. Opposition members shook their heads, but Mr. Murray went on: "Well, M. J. is a smart fellow, and drives a hard bargain. He wouldn't need any bunco man like John Aird to help him. If the Hydro isn't going to develop the Madawaska, as it is talked now, I would like to know why."

#### Power Sent to Toronto.

The main regrettable thing about Hydro administration, he averred, was that Chats Falls power—"just next door" to Renfrew County—should be sent right past them to Toronto, and that Toronto power users should be required to pay only half the rates that the people of

Arnprior, for instance, are now paying for service.

Taking exception to sarcastic references of the Government supporters to the Liberal leadership, Mr. Murray recalled, in baseball vernacular, that Mr. Hepburn may have made some errors, because any one who "works fast and covers a lot of ground" is apt to make errors.

"But," he said, while the Conservatives jeered, "show me the ball player who doesn't make any mistakes, and I'll show you a dead one."

As the "Pepper Martin" of Provincial politics, Mr. Hepburn was destined, the speaker submitted, to show the Tories "how to hit."