

HYDRO CHAIRMAN DECLINES ANSWER TO POWER QUERY

Withholds Gatineau Details
"in Municipalities'
Interests"

BRINGS OPPOSITION FIRE

Hon. John R. Cooke, Chairman of the Ontario Hydro-Electric Power Commission, declined yesterday in the Legislature to answer the "Gatineau" question of T. K. Slack, Progressive member for Dufferin, on the ground that it was "not in the interests of the municipalities, for whom the Commission is acting as trustee, that the substance of its private contracts should be divulged to the detriment of its business where the same refers to details of its operations not involved in general policy."

Mr. Slack's interrogation, as appearing on the order paper of the House, was as follows:

"(1) Was any power sold by the Hydro-Electric Power Commission to the Gatineau Power Company or any of its subsidiaries in the Province of Quebec during the years 1930, 1931, or up to date this year? (2) If so, what amount, and at what price? (3) Was payment made for this power in United States funds?"

By way of explanation, Hon. Mr. Cooke declared:

"The Commission agreed with one of its customers that it would endeavor to dispose of certain surplus or interruptible power that was available by such customer who found itself unable to use the power for which it had contracted and was obliged to pay the Commission to make such credit to the customer as the Commission felt justified for any power that it was able to dispose of to sources not already available to the Commission. In this connection certain quantities of such power have been sold through the Gatineau Power Company to the International Paper Company, and has resulted in certain reliefs to the customer and additional revenue to the Commission."

Opposition members disagreed with Mr. Cooke's answer, whereupon Mr. Henry suggested that Hon. Harry Nixon, Progressive Leader, who framed the query, had promised to redraft the question and hadn't. Mr. Nixon rose to his feet, indignant, and said: "I said, Mr. Speaker, that I would redraft the question, and I have done so. There it is."

Liberal Leader Sinclair also jumped into the momentary passage-at-arms with the statement that the Government need no longer charge the Opposition with asking unintelligent questions regarding Hydro, when such an unintelligible reply as Mr. Cooke had just made was furnished to the House.

HOUSE VOTES "NO" ON BATTERY BILL

Premier and Highways Minister Give Their Support

TO AID GARAGE MEN

George Oakley's "battery storage bill," designed ostensibly for the better protection of garage owners who are engaged in the business of renting storage batteries, came to a sudden death in Ontario Legislature yesterday when, after brief but split-group opinion as to its merits, the Speaker called for a standing vote of the House on the principle of the measure.

Premier Henry and Hon. Leopold Macaulay, Minister of Highways, who sponsored a similar bill last session, voted for the bill, but other Cabinet Ministers turned "thumbs down." Opposition groups were practically solid against it.

Explanatory notes on the bill said, in part:

"The return of their property cannot be enforced under the present laws of the Province of Ontario. They cannot remove their own property from an automobile without the consent of the owner without becoming liable to certain penalties, and as a result large sums of money are lost by the garage owners annually through the illegal retention of their property by certain automobile owners. Additional sums of money are lost annually through the non-payment of rental charges. As the result of these conditions the operating charges of these stations are tremendously increased.

"Under the present law a Magistrate cannot issue a summons or a warrant, and the only remedy is to sue in the Division Court. This is costly and the delay so great that the expense is seldom worth while. In other words, under the present law, automobile owners may deliberately keep a battery which they have rented."

BAYLY BILL PROVED EXPENSE FOR TRIP

Public Accounts Committee Looks for Beauharnois Relationship

The cost of a trip to Ottawa was covered in the item of \$49.65 paid to Edward Bayly, Deputy Attorney-General, it was learned yesterday at the meeting of the Public Accounts Committee at the Legislature, which met to question this payment, appearing under the heading of expenses in the Beauharnois accounts, and also that of \$712.15 for "legal fees" to F. D. Hogg, K.C., of Ottawa. Questioned by W. E. N. Sinclair, Liberal Leader, Mr. Bayly stated that he recommended that Mr. Hogg, a member of the firm of Hogg & Hogg, at the Capital, be given a watching brief to care for the interests of the Province; this recommendation, he said, was given following interviews with the Chairman and other members of the House of Commons Committee. The payment to Mr. Hogg will be investigated next Tuesday.

HENRY CHECKED UP ON POWER DEBATE

Why Should Ferguson Discuss Export When It Was Not Disputed?

FREQUENT NEGOTIATIONS

Refuting the statement of Premier Henry the previous night that the purpose of the visit of former Premier G. Howard Ferguson to Montreal was to negotiate with Premier Taschereau over the export of power from Quebec Province to Ontario, W. E. N. Sinclair, K.C., Liberal Leader, in the Legislature yesterday claimed that such a proceeding would have been totally unnecessary, since on June 23, 1928 the original lease given by the Quebec Government conferred on the Beauharnois Power Company the right to export power. Mr. Ferguson's visit was paid a year and a half later.

In view of this fact, Mr. Sinclair said that a further explanation by Premier Henry was desirable.

"There have," Mr. Henry replied, "frequently been negotiations between the former Prime Ministers of Ontario and Quebec. I presume the Province thought that a definite Order in Council was necessary.

"Your explanation is absolutely different from that which you gave last night," Mr. Sinclair came back.

"Not at all," Mr. Henry said.

"Oh yes, quite different," Mr. Sinclair insisted.

FOREIGN AGENCIES REGULATED IN BILL

Collection Businesses Must
Be Licensed in
Ontario

Asserting that it had become a great abuse that a large amount of the money never reached the people of the Province, Attorney-General W. H. Price introduced a bill providing for the registration of foreign collection agencies.

He stated that various collection agencies had been operating in the Province, with headquarters in New York, Detroit and Chicago. By the terms of Mr. Price's bill the phrase "collection agency" is taken to mean "an individual, firm or corporation carrying on the business of collecting debts for other persons in consideration of the payment of a commission or otherwise, and not having the head office of such agency in Ontario."

The agency must, the bill prescribes, be licensed in Ontario, and a fine of not less than \$50 and not more than \$200 will be levied upon such agencies which carry on business in Ontario, either by written or verbal demands, without being duly registered. A similar fine will be incurred by those who employ collection agencies not so registered. If an agency is found to be violating any of the terms of the act, its license shall be cancelled, the bill declares.

By the terms of final section of the act, the making of returns by collection agencies is required, and the bringing of an action in any Ontario court by any agency to which the act applies is prohibited.