

ATTACK ON HEPBURN BY HYDRO ENGINEER ALLEGED BY NIXON

"Would You Fire Gaby?" Queries Finlayson of Oppositionists

POLL FRONT-BENCHERS

Minister Assails Hepburn for His "Big Parade" Speech

Ranging along Opposition front benches in quest of pronouncements on Mitchell Hepburn's "Fire Gaby" policy, Hon. William Finlayson last night drew the counter-charge that Hydro's Chief Engineer had devoted three pages of a pamphlet to a personal attack on Mr. Hepburn.

"Big Parade."

The Minister of Lands and Forests reached the climax of his violently political speech in the Legislature with quotations from Mr. Hepburn's Saturday address, in which the Ontario Liberal Leader proclaimed that F. A. Gaby would lead "the big parade" of dismissed civil servants when the change of Government came after the election.

Referring to Mr. Gaby as a man who had given his life to Hydro, as "Ontario's finest civil servant," and as "the greatest authority of his kind in the world," Mr. Finlayson first shot the question at Dr. George A. McQuibban, Liberal House Leader: "Would you dismiss Mr. Gaby? Do you agree with Mr. Hepburn's effusion of last night?"

Dr. McQuibban replied: "I never wrote a speech for Mr. Hepburn, and no one ever wrote mine."

"I don't want to embarrass you further," commented Mr. Finlayson. "At any rate you said nothing of the kind."

Mr. Finlayson next directed his query at Hon. Harry Nixon.

Pamphlet Attack Alleged.

"Mr. Gaby gave three pages of his pamphlet to a personal attack on Mr. Hepburn," said the Progressive Leader. "If he doesn't want to be attacked, let him refrain from doing so."

When the question was put to him, Dr. L. J. Simpson, financial critic for his group, responded with another question: "Do you still approve of a \$30,000 salary for Mr. Gaby?" he asked the Minister. Mr. Finlayson, while disclaiming knowledge that such a salary was paid, believed that Mr. Gaby was worth "thirty, fifty or a hundred thousand to Hydro. A few more foolish attacks of that kind, and some big corporation will succeed in getting his services."

Dr. Simpson then declared himself as agreeing that Mr. Gaby should be dismissed if he had made the attack on Mr. Hepburn. Liberal Whip C. A. Robertson did not answer the question when it was put to him.

"Killing Party," He Says.

"Loose, wild talk" by the Leader-at-Large was "killing the Liberal Party," said Mr. Finlayson. He was convinced that the reaction of every Opposition

member to Mr. Hepburn's latest speech was: "He's off again." He had no quarrel with the Leader's announced intention to remove Commissioners Cooke and Meighen from Hydro office. They were active politicians, schooled to the breaks of the game, although he did think it "small potatoes" for Mr. Hepburn to say that Mr. Cooke once had been a cheesemaker at \$20 a week. Dr. Simpson tried unsuccessfully to pin the Minister down to a statement that he had no objections to the removal of Mr. Cooke and Mr. Meighen.

As for C. Alfred Maguire, the other Commissioner who was to participate in the "big parade," no political bias could be charged against him, said Mr. Finlayson. Mr. Maguire represented the municipalities on the Commission, and, so far as he knew, once had belonged to "the other side" in politics. His chief protest against Mr. Hepburn's speech, however, was the threat against civil servants who had given their whole lives to the upbuilding of Hydro.

Retorts on Critics.

Mr. Finlayson, in the course of his two-hour speech, raked over the coals a half-dozen of the Opposition contributors to the debate. He granted that Dr. Simpson, the critic, had been reasonable, but argued that any expenditure on relief was commendable. The Minister agreed that this was a dull session, with a whole series of Opposition speeches centring around "me and my riding," and no appreciation of the wide interests of the Province as a whole. He claimed that the Opposition onslaught had amounted in the main to speeches by T. P. Murray (Liberal, Renfrew North), whose "wild talk" he wished the House Leader would restrain; by T. K. Slack (Progressive, Dufferin), who objected because he had failed to "pass off a shady loan" on the Farm Loan Board; by N. O. Hipel (Liberal, Waterloo South), whose demand for farm insurance revision was "prompted by a desire to sell more barns to the farmer"; by W. G. Medd (Progressive, Huron South), "who finds the school system all wrong because he has a couple of teachers in his family"; by Hon. Harry Nixon, the "big dairyman from Brant, with a tale of woe about the milk industry"; and by J. A. Sangster (Liberal, Glengarry), "whose

Scots soul revolted because he had to pay a fraction of a cent more for the light in his store than the storekeeper across the Quebec boundary paid."

Murray Attacked.

Mr. Murray claimed, said Mr. Finlayson, that there had been a "\$100,000 hand-out" from the Forest Department in a township, and now the Minister found that the timber lands in that township were under license to Mr. Murray's firm, which was in arrears to the department and had received Government assistance. Calling on Dr. McQuibban to silence his follower, the Minister said: "He's saying either too much or too little." Mr. Murray was not in the House last night.

The "bad loan" which Mr. Slack had tried to "foist on the Government," said the Minister, had been in connection with an estate the Progressive member was "trying to wind up in a hurry so that he could get his fee as executor." Mr. Slack protested strongly against the charge.

Mr. Finlayson also retorted to Mr. Slack's charge that Government assistance was being withheld from the Barrie Co-operative packing plant. An ex-member of the Legislature wanted to "let his whole family camp on that plant," said Mr. Finlayson, and the Government had found its affairs in a deplorable state. He recalled that Miss Agnes Macphail had "told the late Prime Minister of this Province what she thought of the whole proceedings."

On the whole, said Mr. Finlayson, the Opposition, with few exceptions, had contributed "ugly, malicious speeches, wasting hour after hour on petty, local things."

Congratulates Stevens.

Affirming his endeavor to make constructive suggestions to the Government, S. C. Tweed devoted his contribution to the Budget debate to comment on present and proposals for future Provincial action. The Liberal member included in his speech congratulations to Hon. H. H. Stevens, Dominion Minister of Trade and Commerce, for the present investigation, particularly into the furniture manufacturing industry, of which, after referring to high pressure sales campaigns and big store buying methods, he stated: "I suggested to the Government at that time (March, 1933) that the high-powered sales and advertising methods, instalment selling, and the offer of credit through public advertising, are a detriment to this Province."

Mr. Tweed's main fire on the Government was relegated to a paragraph in which he stated that the real reason for the alleged surplus was the depreciation of the American dollar. Estimating that depreciation had saved the Province from one to two million dollars in exchange, the Liberal member claimed that approximately 75 per cent. of the bonds calling for New York payment are held in Canada by Canadians, "who had no moral right" to the exchange. He suggested that the Government should seriously consider discontinuing New York payment to bondholders who are Canadian residents.

The member for Waterloo North was dubious about the trans-Canada Highway advantages and critical of Northern development expenditures.

The Liberal member repeated his claim that relief costs could be reduced one-third by handling all activities on the wholesale or warehouse

plan. The management of relief should be taken out of the hands of the Municipal Councils, he said, claiming that at present "the average person on relief is subject to the whims of the various members of the Municipal Councils."

For the permanent solution of unemployment, Mr. Tweed suggested a Province-wide program, which would place 10,000 families on small farms in Old Ontario during the coming spring and summer.

He advised an expenditure of \$2,000 per family, holding that it has been established in recent months that the Province could borrow the necessary money at a low rate of interest. Lumber companies in arrears for timber dues should be permitted to pay lumber in lieu of the amounts owing, he suggested.

A tax on hotel accounts, meals and hard liquor was again recommended by the Liberal member.

In conclusion, Mr. Tweed praised the Minister, whom he described as "in charge of the least political department of all the Government's activities, the Minister of Agriculture." Credit for the export of bacon, in turn increasing the price of hogs, was ascribed to Colonel Kennedy.

A. H. Acres (Conservative, Carleton) called for further assistance to agriculture. Cattle testing, he said, had raised the standard of Quebec butter to the point where it was acceptable to the British market, while Ontario was lagging in this respect.

The Eastern Ontario member criticized Opposition failure to cooperate for the good of Ontario, and challenged Mr. Nixon to name any one constructive policy he had advocated in eleven years.

Touching on the relief problem, he advised the Government to stimulate the construction industry. In advancing a loans conversion plan, he believed bondholders would be willing to accept a reduction in their interest rate. "There must be a reorganization of the money interests," said Mr. Acres. He advocated bimetalism, with a hint of adding nickel to the currency bases.

J. A. Sangster, Liberal member from Glengarry, moved at midnight for the adjournment of the debate and will be first speaker Thursday.