

# Solid Tory Vote, But Opposition Splits Forces

March 28

**McQuibban and Sinclair Are  
Against Bill, But Nixon  
Is in Favor**

## SEVERAL ABSENTEES

**Attorney-General Asserts  
"We Stand or Fall"  
on New Act**

Second reading of the Government's beer bill was carried on division of the Legislature late last night by a vote of 89 to 9. Voting with the solid Conservative majority were eight Liberals, three Progressives and the Laborite member.

There were no defections from Government ranks on the measure which would enable the sale of beer and wine by the glass.

### Opposition Bolters.

Those on the Opposition side who voted for the measure were: Dr. L. J. Simpson (Liberal, Simcoe Centre), Hon. Harry C. Nixon (Progressive Leader), D. J. Taylor (Progressive, North Grey), T. A. Blakelock (Liberal, Talton), T. K. Stackel (Progressive, Dufferin), T. P. Murray (Liberal, Renfrew South), W. J. Mackay (Liberal, Bruce South), D. M. Campbell (Liberal, Kent East), N. O. Hipel (Liberal, Waterloo North), D. Paul Munro (Liberal, Wellington South), and Earl Hutchinson (Labor, Kenora).

The nine voting against the bill were: Dr. George A. McQuibban (Liberal House Leader), C. A. Robertson (Member for Huron North, and Liberal Whip), W. J. Bragg (Liberal, Durham), W. E. N. Sinclair, K.C. (Member for South Ontario and former Liberal Leader), S. C. Tweed (Liberal, North Waterloo), William Newman (Liberal, Victoria, North), D. M. Ross (Progressive, Oxford North), W. G. Medd (Progressive, Huron South), and Farquhar Oliver (U.F.A., Grey South).

### Those Absent.

Absent from the House at the time of the vote were: R. A. Baxter (Liberal, Oxford South), Arthur Ellis (Conservative, Ottawa South), C. A. Seguin (Conservative, Russell), F. J. McArthur (Conservative, Northumberland), Howard Fraleigh (Conservative, Lambton East), George Oakley (Conservative, Toronto-Riverdale), J. C. Wilson (Conservative, London South).

The Legislature has an official membership of 112, but there are six vacancies. As the Speaker does not vote, this reduces the number voting to 105.

### An Exciting Vote.

Each Opposition vote for the Government measure brought wild acclaim from Conservative ranks, and the scene at division time was one of tumultuous excitement.

Earlier in the day a Conservative caucus had seen the Government party whipped into line for unanimous support of the beer bill. Liberals and Progressives each held caucuses as well, and that of the Liberal group was reported to have been stormy. They emerged with the knowledge that there would be a wide break in party ranks when the vote came, but still in doubt as to how many members would support the Government.

The division climaxed a long day of debate on the issue, capped late tonight by Premier Henry's declaration that the Government was willing to

take its responsibility for the measure and the election was the proper testing time.

The speech of Attorney-General Price led off yesterday's long discussion of the session's most important measure. While two outstanding prohibitionists, Rev. A. J. Irwin and Ben Spence, sat in the crowded gallery, Colonel Price castigated them by name for their activities against what he regarded as the cause of temperance. In closing, he definitely staked the Government's hope of re-election on the success of the bill. "We stand or fall on this act," he told the House.

Before Premier Henry arose as the last speaker of the night, Dr. George A. McQuibban, Liberal House Leader, had made his position clear. In a brief speech, he recalled the gradual progress of beer-by-the-glass movement from the Conservative backbenches to the "seat next the Premier himself," and he regarded the present measure as "just a strategic move" on the Government's part. The Prime Minister, he stated, had promised that there would be no political meddling with the liquor issue, and on this statement messages had come to the House from all parts of the Province last year to support the Premier on his temperance stand.

The Opposition Leader saw no great demand for any change in the law. Plenty of liquor was available at present to those who wanted it. But he realized that the Administration had reached a political crisis, and had to find some major issue to attempt to carry the next campaign through to success.

His stand, said Dr. McQuibban, was that the matter should be left to the private member. Every group in the House had the right to express its political independence. For himself, personally, he was opposing the bill because of the Government's attempt again to introduce the liquor problem into the political life of Ontario.

### Temperance Progress.

"I won't take second place to any one in this Province in the cause of temperance," the Premier declared, as he summed up the debate. Tracing briefly the history of liquor legislation, he testified that there had been real and permanent progress during the Conservative regimes before the war. Any one who is reasonable, he claimed, would admit that things went too far in the steps taken after the war, and in 1926 the people turned from it, as they have turned in the United States during the last year.

Fears of 1926 and 1927 were not well founded, the Prime Minister said, and the Administration in power in those years had been overwhelmingly endorsed very largely on its administration of the Liquor Control Act.

Switching to the current legislation the Premier declared that the Province was not going to abandon the control of liquor and that under the proposed measure hotel operators would be vendors under the board.

"It is not the opening of the flood gates to a flood of beer," he stoutly maintained.

"My record as a man of temperance thought and temperance principles is enough justification for the statement that as long as I am Prime Minister the Liquor Control Board will control."

The Premier agreed with Mr. Tweed's contention that there was an abuse of drinking of hard liquor in hotel rooms, but contended that this was not the time to deal with it. "It has been pointed out that you cannot legislate a people into sobriety," he remarked, and suggested that the consumption of beer in diningrooms would tend to reduce hotel room drinking.

Premier Henry referred with pride to the Rockefeller Report, which held that Ontario legislation could be considered a goal toward which to move. "Local option," he pointed out, "as it was maintained in 1916 is still in force," mandates which existed prior to the passing of the Ontario Temperance Act remaining intact. We have respected that in the location of stores and warehouses, he said, and will still respect it.

### Critical of Nixon.

The Prime Minister twitted the Opposition, referring in particular to the absence of Hon. Harry Nixon, whom he nominated as first lieutenant of Mitchell Hepburn, in view of Dr. McQuibban's attitude. "He's not usually silent," the Premier commented, adding that Mr. Nixon usually claimed his rights, both as a lieutenant and as a leader of a group. The Progressive group received additional criticism for their continued silence.

Noting a suggestion that the matter be left to a vote of the people, the Premier declared: "We are leaving it to a vote of the people in a general election." A proper attitude, he insisted, when Government responsibility was involved. Declaring his readiness to assume the responsibility for legislation which will discourage the consumption of hard liquor, the Prime Minister promised forward progress year by year and amendment of the law to fit conditions.

Other speakers of the day were W. E. N. Sinclair, K.C., former Liberal Leader, who opposed the Opposition "acquiescence" statement and announced his intention of voting against the measure in the interests of his constituents; William Morrison (Conservative, Hamilton East); S. C. Tweed (Liberal, Waterloo, North); Hon. James Lyons (Conservative, Sault Ste. Marie); Marshall Vaughan (Conservative, Welland), and F. G. McBrian (Conservative, Toronto-Brockton).

Redirection of the public's taste was the prime object for the change in the law, said Colonel Price, after a review of liquor control in Ontario from 1928 on. But there were other reasons. To the west of Ontario lay Manitoba and to the east Quebec, both with freer beer sale, while to the south lay a country with such a loose liquor law that it threatened to swamp the Province with bootleg liquor. Canada had protected prohibitionist United States for years, a "prohibitionist country that drank more than any country in the world. And we had men like Ben Spence trying to tell the people of the United States what a terrible lot we were up

here, with wide-open sale, just as Hon. E. C. Drury told them up at Crown Hill about the drunks in Toronto's streets."

Returning to the Dominion's ban on liquor shipments to the United States, Colonel Price noted that there had been no move by Washington for reciprocal action, now that the situation was reversed. He warned the House that there was "more alcohol being run through the Province today than ever before, and these people are selling it in competition with the Liquor Control Board. It's highly profitable for them to dispense it at \$3 or \$4 a gallon. We have to protect ourselves on the south, east and west. In the United States they will have steadily more opportunity to move liquor into Ontario.

"Across the border, liquor is being sold at every pop shop and soda fountain. We have to exercise more control than ever, to give the workingman, the traveller and the tourist the opportunity to have a cheap glass of beer, but have it under the proper regulations and control. We don't intend to throw things wide open; this Government is pledged to temperance, sobriety and control. We are not afraid to formulate an honest policy and go to the people on it."

### Demands for Cheap Beer.

Colonel Price stated the Government's intention to meet the demands for cheap beer of "the great stretch of Northern Ontario and the great laboring class, who have had some complaint, it is true, and one which we hope to satisfy."

Another motive for the change was the extension of home-brewing. While there were 350,000 liquor permits held, there had been granted from Ottawa 175,000 home-brew licenses in Ontario, over which the Government had no control. It had been said that the