

March 1

## *Hepburn Plans to Lighten 'Contract Power' Burden?*

"They handed us over bound in chains that they think cannot be broken!"

This sentence, coupled with the general trend of Attorney-General Roebuck's legal analysis of the Gatineau power contract, seemed to lend color in the Legislature yesterday to a Queen's Park rumor that the Hepburn Government has a plan for relieving Ontario Hydro-Electric power consumers of the crushing burden of "contract power."

Premier Hepburn last night resisted all efforts to ascertain if the legality of any of the Hydro's deficit-producing power contracts are to be questioned.

"We are going to lay all the facts before the people—tell the whole story," said the Premier to *The Globe*. "The Government's course of action will be determined after we have completely disclosed the true situation and shown the mismanagement and maladministration to which Ontario's great public-owned enter-

prise has been subjected by the Ferguson and Henry Administrations.

"Our first duties are to the municipalities, the power users and the taxpayers of the Province, and we are availing ourselves of the first opportunity to enlighten them as to the serious state of affairs and give those responsible an opportunity to defend their past deeds, if that is possible.

"All these power-purchase deals were ratified by Order-in-Council, you understand, and we propose to put the responsibility squarely where it belongs."

Declaring his intention to "sit as judge" on the contract power discussion, the Premier declared: "When it is all over Cabinet will decide quickly how best to proceed."

"After Mr. Roebuck has completed his disclosures," he said, "I shall enunciate our policy to the House, and just let a single member of the Opposition vote against it if he dare."