

# House Probe and Arbitration Are Suggested by Heighington To Unravel Hydro Tangle

## Two Engineers in Statement Say They Never Were Informed of Eastern Power Purchases and Did Not Sanction Them — Marshall Produces Also Magrath Letter Asking Gatineau Pact Approval

**C**LIMAXING days of controversy as to the approval or lack of approval given by Hydro engineers to the Quebec power purchases, Wilfrid Heighington, Toronto Conservative, in the Legislature last night demanded the appointment of a House committee to take the evidence of the engineers named in the controversy.

He also claimed the whole question raised by the Attorney-General ought to be settled, either by arbitration or judicial reference. Hon. W. H. Price, with less definiteness, also suggested formal inquiries.

In rebuttal of Colonel Price's contention of Monday that an allegedly "suppressed" minute recorded Hydro engineering approval of the controversial power purchases, Hon. Duncan Marshall, Minister of Agriculture, produced a memorandum signed by T. H. Hogg and R. T. Jeffrey, two of four engineers named in the minute, in which these two engineers denied that they had given such approval.

"Isn't it the plain duty of the Government, if there is conflict," asked Heighington at the conclusion of yesterday's continued power conflict on the floor of the House, "to summon a committee? I don't see why the Government is holding up one minute longer. Let us call Gaby, Hogg, Jeffrey and the other engineers and ask which statement is true."

### PRICE CONTENDS OTHERWISE.

Former Attorney-General W. H. Price continued to hold that the "minute" shows that these engineers had voiced their approval of the (Gaby) report recommending Quebec power purchases. His argument was backed with private memoranda.

In its teeth was thrown the signed statement of the two engineers. Four had been previously quoted to the same effect by Mr. Roebuck, and yesterday Mr. Hogg and Mr. Jeffrey repeated their statements. With it Mr. Marshall presented the original Gatineau letter from C. A. Magrath to Hon. G. Howard Ferguson dealing with the allegedly "secret" clauses in Gatineau.

Whereas Attorney-General Roebuck had declared the power contracts illegal, Mr. Price yesterday expressed to the Legislature the conviction that they were legal and justifiable in any court of law.

T. Stewart Lyon, Commission Chairman, said last night that there was not time for the two others to sign the engineers' statement.

### Price's Claims

Hydro engineers, Hon. W. H. Price maintained yesterday, did back up the Hydro Commission report recommending purchase of Quebec power.

Wielding as weapon the "suppressed" document, the former Attorney-General hammered repeatedly at Hon. Arthur Roebuck's contrary contention. The whole basis of his "friend's" argument, he said, had been that the engineers did not approve of the purchases.

"I'm saying this," said Colonel Price. "I am informed that the engineers did back up the report made by the Commission to the Government."

"I have no brief for the bondholders or the insurance companies, but I have a brief for the public interest," declared Mr. Price. "If you cancel these contracts you will bring suffering to 100,000 citizens who bought these bonds because they were given the stamp of approval. This is not a good situation to be in. It is too important to brook of delay. I am not a politician, not a statesman, but in this regard I am on a par with my honorable friends opposite."

"If you cancel the agreements it will be these small holders who will feel it," he declared. "I hear downtown that some of the big corporations are unloading some of these bonds and that others, who have perhaps better information, are buying them up."

### If Anything Wrong, Prosecute.

"How," asked the former Attorney-General, "are you going to better our position in this country by repudiation? If any one has done anything wrong, prosecute. Bring Gaby, Magrath, Duncan and all the others here on the floor of the House to give us all the information about these matters. Don't fiddle while Rome burns."

Cross-fire and "privilege" crackled in the Ontario Legislature as the for-

mer Attorney-General dwelt on the "suppressed" document. This document, Colonel Price tried to indicate, had proved the engineers' approval of Eastern purchases.

"I pointed out to the Attorney-General," he said in review, "that he had suppressed the minute. He says that he didn't, but that he read the last paragraph."

"Why didn't he read the whole of the minute? I'm going to ask for more documents. I'm going to find out if half things can be read to this House. If a lawyer read only part of a document in court and misled a Judge, I don't know what would be done to him—he'd be thrown out of court probably."

Attorney-General Roebuck raised privilege. The member's remarks were incorrect, misleading—"and reflect on a member of this House."

"There is nothing," said Mr. Roebuck, "that reflects on my bona fides in this matter."

"We're certainly making the Attorney-General do a lot of explaining," Colonel Price commented.

Mr. Speaker asked Mr. Roebuck if there was anything definite which he wished withdrawn. "Yes," said the Attorney-General. "I want him to withdraw the intimation that I am explaining unduly."

### "Unusually Sensitive."

"I was just pointing out that my friend was unusually sensitive," said the former Conservative Minister.

"That's true and you're not."

"I don't need to be. And I hope next time my friend will not charge men all over the country with near-criminality." Conservative benches loudly applauded Colonel Price.

Back to the minute which was being brought up in detail for the fourth time in this Legislative session:

"The Attorney-General didn't read it," Colonel Price charged. "It didn't suit his purpose to read it. It didn't prove his case to read it." Mr. Roebuck, it was held, should have used his position to bring down all the facts for the public good.

Colonel Price went back to the report he was reading, presumably approved by the engineers, according to the minute. The report approved Eastern purchases.

"That's the recommendation that was attached to the minute, and we've read the minute." The former Attorney-General referred to the letters

of offer sent by the Commission and blazoned by Mr. Roebuck. To him they seemed to be those same letters which were referred to in Mr. Gaby's "engineer-approved" report. "Another extraordinary thing—a most extraordinary thing."

"If those letters went out, why didn't the Attorney-General say they were in the approved report. I take it there wasn't much attempt by those opposite to provide the whole picture. The letters were attached to the report. Don't read the letters and not the report."

"These engineers," the Colonel said as he restated his thesis, "recommended adoption of this report—particularly in reference to the figures showing probable power demand. There is a record that when these matters were brought to the Government they had first been brought to the Commission—first to the Hydro engineers. The Government was entitled to believe that the matter had been gone into thoroughly."