

Cheaper Hydro Power Needed for Villages To Survive, Is Claim

A PLEA for cheaper Hydro power for the small towns and villages, to save them from what he regarded as the threat of complete extinction, was uttered in the Legislature yesterday by J. W. Freeborn (Lib., Middlesex North) during debate on the Speech from the Throne.

The industries and the population of these centres, he said, were rapidly drifting toward the cities, and unless some remedial action was taken the countryside would some day be dotted with deserted villages.

Populations Shrink.

He cited the cases of Lucan, which in thirty years had shrunk from a population of 1,100 to 612, and of Parkhill, which in the same period had dropped from 2,000 to 995. And in the same period the Village of Ailsa Craig had lost from her indus-

trial ranks one flax mill, one foundry, two carriage factories and two grist mills—all, he felt, because of the high cost of power as compared with that obtaining in larger centres.

Power cost \$52 per horsepower today in Middlesex villages, he said, and only \$25 in the Niagara district. As a result, village industries in Middlesex could exist only by means of using Diesel engines, and Hydro was thus losing a large potential market. "It wouldn't cost Hydro any more to deliver in Lucan 150 horsepower than it does to deliver the present consumption of 75 horsepower," he argued.

"A system," he concluded, "that discriminates against the weak in favor of the strong should not be tolerated any longer than it takes to correct it."

Mr. Freeborn also advocated the establishment of a farm mortgage board, to be appointed for a period of three years.

PREMIER DENIES PRESSURE CHARGE

No member of the Cabinet and no officer of the Treasury Department called any bank or insurance company and asked them to subscribe to the \$20,000,000 Ontario loan during the bond crisis of last June, Premier Hepburn said yesterday.

The Premier demanded that Colonel W. H. Price withdraw a charge to that effect in the Legislature.

The Colonel accepted the Premier's statement, "but I maintain that there was very great pressure on banks and insurance companies to subscribe."

"There was no pressure brought to bear on banks and insurance companies," the Premier countered, and he challenged Colonel Price to name any such instance.

"There is no doubt," the former Attorney-General insisted, "that depositaries of money came forward to subscribe to this loan because they didn't want to see it fail."

90,000 LEAVE RELIEF ROLLS, CLAIMS CROLL

The number of persons on relief in Ontario has dropped by 90,000 since the beginning of the present year, the Legislature learned yesterday from Hon. David Croll, Minister of Welfare.

The information was offered as a reply to W. A. Baird (Cons., Toronto-High Park), who had charged that the Hepburn Administration had done nothing whatever to alleviate the distress among the unemployed.

"Would it interest the honorable member to know," interjected Mr. Croll, amid Government desk-thumping, "that since the first of the year the relief rolls of the Province have fallen by more than 90,000?"

INCOME TAX BILL CARRIED BY 64-17

The one-man C.C.F. and U.F.O. Parties in the Legislature joined up with the Government yesterday to put the income tax through third reading.

The division on the reading was forced by Premier Hepburn, and it was carried by a Government majority of 64-17. The vote put the Legislature's final approval on the income-tax law, which now goes to the Lieutenant-Governor for his signature.

Conservatives were willing to let the bill pass yesterday without debate and without a division, but Premier Hepburn said the Government desired a record vote. Five members must rise from their seats to force a vote. The whole Liberal majority got up like a Greek phalanx. Sam Lawrence, Hamilton, C.C.F. member, and Farquhar Oliver, U.F.O. member from South Grey, voted with the Liberals on the division.