

SPLIT FACED 1934 ONTARIO, SAYS HEENAN

Liberal Win Averted Secession of North, Says Forests Minister

If the Ferguson-Henry regime had not ended when it did, Northern Ontario would have seceded from the rest of the Province, the Legislature was told yesterday by Hon. Peter Heenan, Minister of Lands and Forests.

The veteran member from Kenora bitterly assailed the Conservative Administration, particularly in reference to Northern affairs, and declared that the present solid Liberal representation from New Ontario was evidence that the people shared his views.

Sees Revenge in Charges.

Mr. Heenan followed, in the debate on the Speech from the Throne, Wilfrid Heighington, Toronto, idol of the Young Conservatives, who scored C. W. Cox, the Port Arthur member, for his hints of forest arson, which electrified the House late last week. There was "revenge" in the Cox charges, Mr. Heighington claimed.

The Toronto Tory's hottest fire was directed against what he termed "the Liberal Party's vaccuuming of all Conservative closets" at this stage of the proceedings.

"In the name of good government," he flared, "why don't they accept our challenge of last year? If you've got anything, make your charges and bring the men before the Bar of the House. We're not here to defend rascallions.

"If you haven't got anything — get on with your government."

Then Hon. Mr. Heenan rose to the defense of the Administration. The Opposition, he noted, had asked what the Government had achieved.

"We have turned the Department of Lands and Forests from a deficit to a surplus," he said. "We have decreased the costs of administration by \$400,000, and increased the revenue by over \$800,000. All this despite the Bennett policies down in Ottawa that have been strangling trade.

"And whatever we have done or may do," continued Mr. Heenan, "I have the consolation of knowing that we couldn't do a worse or more rotten job than was done under the former Government."

As Another Land.

Recalling his own campaign in Kenora, Mr. Heenan said: "I didn't know at the time that the Government had sent out a paid spy, in the form of a reporter, in Conservative hire, to jot down all the rotten things. I remember that I said at that time, in telling the electors to vote as they liked: 'But if you vote Conservative, you'll be voting for the biggest gang of political thugs in the history of the Province.'

"Not one Conservative member was returned from the North. The people of Northern Ontario regard those of Old Ontario as foreigners. And if the Tory Administration had remained much longer, there wouldn't have been any such thing as Northern Ontario. It would have seceded.

"The pulp and timber areas of the North were not disposed of or distributed in a sound or economic way. If ever there was a gentleman who manoeuvred Northern Ontario for political gain it was George Howard Ferguson. If ever a Premier misrepresented the affairs of the Province to the people it was that man, who travelled around in Government aeroplanes at the people's expense.

"He even entered into a conspiracy with my old friend, E. W. Backus, to close up a pulp mill at Fort Frances a few days before he arrived there, so he could promise the people that, if they voted right, he would be able to have their mill reopened."

He concluded with the explanation that Mr. Cox had been speaking for Thunder Bay District alone in his speech, and he added that, in return for the work they did, Northern members should, in his opinion, receive double indemnity.

"We Northern members represent vast territories, which we tour by aeroplane, canoe and dog-team, while the Southern members sit around hotel lobbies and hatch mischief," concluded Mr. Heenan.

Dislikes Innuendo.

"Charges by innuendo" were assailed by Wilfrid Heighington when the young Conservative member opened fire on the C. W. Cox arson suggestions shortly after the opening of yesterday's Legislature.

The big Conservative fire-fighting expenditures were the follow-up to the bad fire year of 1929, Mr. Heighington said. Today they stood for the fire protection expected by the timber-country towns and for permanent equipment which was ready to provide that protection.

The Toronto member said an arson charge was hard to prove, but safer to make in the Legislature.

"In defense of the good name of the people of that area," he said, "the House should go on record to the effect that the making of such a violent charge is a breach of the privileges of Assembly."

The protest against the arson hints was part of a lengthier attack on the Cox charges of timber waste and corruption, which was summarized with the counter-charge that the Port Arthur member "had reached heights

of misrepresentation and concealment of fact."

The Toronto member started to tear into the Port Arthur member personally, but stopped short with the suggestion that this attack was checked because Mr. Cox was not in the House.

Party Happy.

The Port Arthur member, he said, had sought the Conservative nomination at the last election and voted Conservative ("The Conservative Party is glad to part company with him") from 1919 to 1929. He had not always been successful in the timber field, Mr. Heighington ventured—"and perhaps with the iron in his soul, had used the Legislature to libel the people of the North country and to allow the impression to go abroad that conditions exist as he has portrayed them."

Mr. Heighington went over the timber leases which were analyzed last week by Mr. Cox. Timber had not been cut, he admitted, but the decline in markets had been a material factor in that failure. And the companies, said Mr. Heighington, had built mills according to the requirements of their timber concessions.

"All these mills are still there," he said. Some are still working. Others are ready for future development.

"Not a penny was paid to the Treasury," Mr. Heighington quoted from the Liberal member's summaries of various contracts. Mr. Heighington said that \$1,366,000 had been paid in Crown dues and ground rent.

"Not a stick had been cut," the Toronto member quoted. He found that 481,000 cords, or about 2,646,000 trees, had been felled in the debated area since 1926.

"I say the statement is 2,646,000 times unreliable."

Mr. Heighington said the charges were a poor picture of the North for possible United States and British investors.

"The whole picture in the North country is not going to be helped by smudging it. It has to be fostered," he said.