

Price Lashes Out At Liquor Board

Brands Licensed Hotels "Fire-Traps" — Attacks Commissioner Odette

FIRE hazards hang over the "ramshackle fire-traps" in which the Ontario Liquor "Sales" Board is permitting beer sale in Toronto, former Attorney-General W. H. Price told the Ontario Legislature yesterday.

"Disgrace."

The warning of fire danger in old buildings, shops and stores which have been allowed to sell beer as hotels was a climax to a bitter indictment of the Hepburn Government beer regime. The issue of hotel licenses was called a disgrace. Liquor Control Commissioner E. G. Odette was branded "a part-time Liquor Board" and "not the type of man for his job."

Colonel Price finished up his beer-room indictment by producing a list of Toronto hotels which had been listed as restaurants, bakeries and clothes pressers in the 1934 Toronto Directory.

The former Attorney-General began his speech by indicting E. G. Odette in the sharpest attack made on an Ontario Commissioner since 1934.

"The administration of the Liquor Control Act is a farce," Colonel Price said. "With Odette there and with Smith there, the sky is the limit. The act passed under my legislation in 1926-27 was a control measure, and was enforced that way."

"I have in my hands a list of new hotel licenses in Toronto," the Colonel said. He proceeded to read the following list, giving the names of the hotels and the condition of the premises as set out in the 1934 City Directory:

"A. Good Hotel, 570 Bay Street, restaurant; Alex. Hotel, 70 Centre Avenue, no such address; Ambassador (Crown), 355 Jarvis Street, apartment hotel; Avion, 434 Gerrard East, vacant; Avonmore, 276 Jarvis Street, old building, used as boarding-house, never had liquor license; Babloor, 1165 Bay Street, clothes presser; Baltimore, 90 York Street, Baltimore Lunch; Beverley, 240 Queen West, Logan Cafe (Chinese); Breadalbane, 530 Yonge Street, motor supplies; Calarco, 113 Elm Street, grocery; Chateau-Dufferin, 1655 Dufferin, barber shop and apartments; Clyde, 158 King East, fur warehouse; Commodore, 2112 Danforth, men's furnishings; Danforth, 2763 Danforth, Grace Tabernacle; Everene Hotel, 467 Jarvis Street, Hotel New York; Graymar, 29 Jarvis Street, vacant; Jarvis, 101 Jarvis Street, no such number listed; numbers jump from 99 to 105."

The Colonel stopped reading the list.

"No wonder the Rev. Mr. Shields got concerned over all these hotels on Jarvis Street. I hold no brief for Mr. Shields on some things, but certainly he had a right to protest about the hotels clustering around him," he said.

"Noah's Ark, 2780 Danforth Avenue, branch bank; Paramount-Kosher, 309 Spadina Avenue, store and Jewish publishing office; Pine Tree, 650 1-2 Queen Street West, Chinese restaurant; Sheldon, 81 Victoria Street, Strand Office Building, one time Strand Hotel; Stafford, 938 Danforth Avenue, not listed as to business; Star, 150 Dundas Street West, fruit store; Stoodleigh, 72 Shuter, cafeteria and rooming-house; Vil-

lage Hotel, Bay and Elm, butcher shop; White, 71 Queen Street West, Pekin Chop Suey House."

Details Given.

As he finished, the former Attorney-General went into a detailed indict-

ment of the hotels he had mentioned, and of one in the immediate neighborhood of the Broadview Y.M.C.A.

"The White Hotel, 71 Queen Street West, was formerly a Chinese restaurant of poor repute. The building is a fire-trap," Colonel Price said.

"The Piccadilly Hotel, 106 King Street West, formerly the Woodbine, was taken over by one of the most notorious bootleggers in Toronto. The authority first went in the name of George Crowe, but Benny Benai is the owner.

"The Nealon Hotel, 197 King Street East, was closed for years. It is situated in the midst of factories and loft buildings. After dark there is scarcely a pedestrian between Church and Sherbourne Street. The floor show is admittedly used to attract beer patronage.

"The Dennis Hotel, 236 Broadview Avenue, was formerly the Wilton Hotel. It became a branch of the Home Bank, then an apartment house, and later a drug store. Three church bodies, a public school and the Broadview Branch, Y.M.C.A., are in the neighborhood. Protests were made against granting this authority and Mr. Odette rejected the application. Overnight the name was changed from Wilton to Dennis, and two days after Mr. Odette sailed last spring from New York the authority was granted. It was stated that the objections had been removed. The Secretary of Broadview Y.M.C.A., by letter, has declared that the objection of the Board of Directors is still against this hotel."

pared to achieve our end by force of law, because we know that in this policy we would have behind us the unanimous support of public opinion.

"We have no desire to intrude too far into the field of private endeavor, but at the same time we refuse to subscribe to the belief that industry and commerce are sacred and must, at all cost to the public, be kept untainted by the profane hand of Government.

"I have said that I see reason for rejoicing," concluded the Minister. "Things are improving in Ontario. Relief lists are going down and employment going up. Can any honorable member on this side of the House or the other, quarrel with the honest, progressive and fruitful results of our administration? Can any honorable gentleman suggest a better, a more constructive approach than ours?"

BRIDGE CONCERN TO BE TAX-FREE

Exemptions Granted for Period of 10 Years

The Ontario Legislature Private Bills Committee yesterday approved a bill sponsored by George T. Fulford (Liberal, Leeds), respecting the corporation of the Front of Leeds and Lansdowne. The bill concerned tax exemptions for the Thousand Island Bridge Company.

It granted the company exemption from all municipal taxes, including school taxes, for a period of ten years from the date of completion of the bridge to be erected at or near Ivy Lea in the township across the St. Lawrence to a point near Collins Landing.

It will be the only bridge from Canada to the United States between Niagara Falls on the west and Cornwall on the east, said Mr. Fulford, and is the nearest point of entry to New York City.

Although it must be raised every time a boat passes, 65,000 vehicles crossed the Cornwall bridge last year.

The company plans expenditure of \$1,500,000 on the Canadian side, and this will provide work for 600 to 700 men for a year.

The company asks exemption from taxation due to requirements of United States bond laws.

Welfare Minister Croll suggested an amendment, which was carried. It specified the bill should come into effect only when proclaimed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. This, he said, would make it necessary to start work before the company received the tax exemptions.

The committee approved also bills of Colonel F. Fraser Hunter (Liberal, Toronto-St. Patrick) permitting the incorporated synod of the Diocese of Toronto to borrow money on the credit of the corporation.

CASH TO PAY BONDHOLDERS

Payment in hard cash of a part of Ontario's better than half-billion dollar debt, which falls due in a few weeks, is to be one highlight of the record-making 1937 Budget which Premier Hepburn brought down to the Legislature at Queen's Park last week.

The Provincial and Dominion Governments ordinarily pay off debt issues when they fall due by borrowing more money.

An Ontario bond issue of \$12,683,000 falls due on May 2. It has been costing the Provincial Treasury 6 per cent. The Government now has and will have the cash on hand to meet the debt when it falls due without borrowing.

Paying off part of another issue with the first of the year revenues, which were higher than expected, will put the Hepburn Administration another step ahead in its pay-as-you-go program. Debentures of \$10,500,000 fall due on Aug. 30, but it is reported that the Province has already bought in over three and a half million of this issue and will have to meet less than seven million when the debt falls due.