

Roebuck Reveals Hydro to Develop Own Cheap Power

Future Needs Will Not Be Supplied by Private Interests, Attorney-General Tells Legislature; Denies Any Power Shortage

CLASHES IN HOUSE

Emphatic denial that a power shortage exists in Ontario, coupled with the definite intimation that future power needs would be supplied from within the Province, and not from private interests, featured Attorney-General Roebuck's three-hour address in the Legislature yesterday.

Denouncing the Conservatives as "insincere and unpatriotic," the Attorney-General scored "this stock bunkum of a power shortage." Confining his attention solely to the Niagara System, Mr. Roebuck wound up the first instalment of his "marathon" speech by revealing that the Hydro Commission has set the stage for a power development program within Ontario.

He told of the steps already taken to ensure a plentiful supply of electrical energy in the future, and he summarized the details of half a dozen Provincial developments by declaring:

How the Wind Blows.

"I mention these details of things actually accomplished in order to indicate the direction in which the wind is blowing. It is not blowing toward Beauharnois, as the gentlemen opposite so keenly desire. It is blowing, in each instance, toward public ownership of the sources of supply, toward propositions the cost of which is so low as to make a joke of the former Government's \$14-per-horsepower purchases.

"The time is not yet ripe for the announcement of the Commission's plans," said the Attorney-General. "Nor is there any obligation to reveal them to those whose only object would be to block them. To those in the House and in the country who are in favor of public ownership, and the development of our own resources, I say, have patience."

Withdrawal Made.

The Attorney-General clashed frequently with the Opposition. When he accused Wilfrid Heighington Cons. (St. David) of being "deliberately mischievous" in connection with a statement on Hydro and possibilities of a shortage, the Conservative member called upon the Speaker to ask for a withdrawal of the term, together with the words that his statement "lacked in common honesty." The retraction was made, though the Attorney-General remarked to his opponent that "you know what I think of such statements."

"There has been no power shortage either in municipal or Provincial systems during this past winter, nor at any time for many years in this Province," the Hydro Commissioner continued. "And the attempt to dupe the reading public by such arrant nonsense should be resented by those who view the Hydro problem as one of public importance."

Details Withheld.

The Attorney-General hinted at the Commission's plans for Provincial development of power by stating that he would tell some facts and "let the House draw its own conclusions." The time was not yet

ripe for announcement of the Commission's plans, he said, and he, for one, refused to be "stampeded by those who are obviously fighting the battle for the power barons."

An attentive hearing was given as the Minister outlined what the Commission has done in the way of providing for future power developments. The Ogoki River surveys had been completed and 120,000 horsepower could be developed if the water was passed through the Queenston plant, based on a flow of 4,000 cubic feet per second.

Preliminary surveys are already in progress with a view to diverting the waters of Little Long Lac from the Northern watershed to Lake Superior. The flow is estimated at 1,200 feet per second, and if used at Decew Falls would develop 30,000 horsepower.

Pact With Dominion.

As part of the general scheme to render Ontario independent of privately owned power the Attorney-General revealed that the Provincial Commission was completing details of an agreement with the Dominion Government with respect to the use of water from the Welland Canal at Decew Falls. The Dominion's charges were now cut in two, he said. Instead of \$150 per cubic foot per second the charge in future would be \$75 per cubic foot for water delivered to the Commission's weirs at Allanburg. There was a prospective increase in capacity at the Decew Falls on this account of some 20,000 horsepower, he pointed out.

"Those of you who care to speculate may find significance in the fact that the Dominion has further agreed to carry in the Welland Canal, to its capacity without injury to navigation, other water which may be made available at \$50 per cubic foot per second," continued Mr. Roebuck.

Basis for Speculation.

"A cubic foot per second is the equivalent of approximately 25 horsepower at Decew Falls, at 100 per cent. load factor. Gibson Lake on the escarpment above the Decew Falls affords unique facilities for the storage of water for use during peak hours. A cubic foot is the equivalent of 100 horsepower at 25 per cent. load factor. Let those with imagination speculate on what the Commission may be able to accomplish with, say 1,000 cubic feet per second delivered through the Welland Canals at Allanburg. "Surveys were completed this summer preparatory to the development of the Madawaska—the estimated capacity of which is 85,000 horsepower.

"We have just completed an agreement with the Dominion Government by which the Commission has secured complete control of the power resources of the Trent Valley, other than that already alienated to private parties, and this summer we purchased three plants of the Canada Cement Co., for \$225,000, giving us added capacity of 4,200 horsepower.

"Surveys were completed this summer for a development of 10,000 horsepower on the Muskosh River which flows from Lake Muskoka to the Georgian Bay. This new power will replace the 2,000 horsepower purchased from Orillia this summer, and will release the 7,000 horsepower which is delivered from the Niagara System through a frequency changer at Hanover.

"And do not forget," reminded the Attorney-General, "that there are many thousands of horsepower

still available from the mighty flow at Niagara without injury to the river's scenic beauty. Do not forget, too, that the Commission owns the Ontario side of the Carrillon power on the Ottawa River, within a capacity of 20,000 horsepower, and that the Des Joachim and associated powers on the Upper Ottawa are within 100 miles of the lines of the Georgian Bay System.

"And remember as well," went on Mr. Roebuck, that Ontario's share of the undeveloped horsepower on the St. Lawrence is 1,000,000 horsepower. It is not possible of immediate development, but it has an interest in the far future.

"The Niagara System is surrounded with undeveloped power. The problem is not in finding sources of supply, but rather in choosing the source which lends itself to the cheapest and most advantageous development—in selecting the proper moment in which to proceed and in effectively carrying through to completion.

"You will know quite clearly some day why we limited our purchase contracts to ten years," said the Attorney-General, apparently hinting once more that at the end of this period the Province would be independent of outside purchases."