

January 28

Painless to Taxpayers.

"We have evolved a plan that will ease the housing shortage, give employment to men on relief, and at the same time be painless to the small taxpayer, whose problem is not providing homes for others, but saving his own from the bailiff.

"The relief outlay of municipalities this year will be less than last year, and even with some reduction in the levy for their share of the relief cost, there will be funds available for another purpose," continued Mr. Croll. "These funds will be used for purchase of the necessary materials for the houses to be built under the housing policy. Not a cent of Provincial relief money will be used for purchase of materials. We will, however, contribute at our usual rate to the wages of mechanics employed on construction.

Enthusiasm Seen.

"We have consulted the supervised municipalities and they have been enthusiastic," continued the Minister. "We are prepared to go further. To the other municipalities of Ontario there is the open door. They are at liberty to participate in this scheme. I am not suggesting that this is a complete and all-embracing housing policy. It isn't. What I will say, though, is that it is a definite step forward and a logical sequence to the beginning we made last summer."

The Welfare Minister complimented Mr. Heighington on his contribution toward housing and slum clearance and recalled that it was a resolution from the member for St. David several years ago that helped awaken public and official sentiment on the question.

Mr. Heighington expressed the hope that the City of Toronto would do something concrete, now that the way had been opened. The city's housing bill was "utterly disappointing," he declared.

Says Speech by Roebuck "Six Hours of Rhetoric, Four Minutes of Relevance"

Colonel Fraser Hunter Declares, However, That He Supports Completely Power Legislation of the Government

Labelling Attorney-General's Roebuck's recent marathon address on the Hepburn Government's new power legislation as "six hours of rhetoric and four minutes of relevance," Colonel Fred Fraser Hunter (Lib., St. Patrick), admitted to the Legislature yesterday that not until he had dug up Dicey's "Law of the Constitution" had he been able to free himself of certain misgivings he had entertained as to the constitutional legality and correctness of the Government's attitude.

"And I got hold of a lot of the wrong books before I got hold of the right book," the outspoken military member further revealed amid the uproarious laughter of the House.

"Seriously, I did attempt," said he, "to clear legal doubts in my mind by listening attentively to the debate, particularly to the Attorney-General's speech. In all friendliness, and not for a moment intending offense to an old and valued friend, I cannot resist the temptation of plagiarizing the Premier's description of the recent decision of the Supreme Court concerning the 1935 Hydro legislation, by saying that in my search for legal advice, I listened most attentively to his (Mr. Roebuck's) long discourse. But perhaps due to my own limitations, I could discover little in it other than a hog's head full of Jack Horner, and a thimbleful of law."

Sees Public Support.

Parliaments in law represent and express the will of the people, submitted Colonel Hunter, and if there was any doubt in the mind of anyone in the House as to the will of the overwhelming mass of the people of Ontario "concerning these iniquitous power contracts," they had only to go into the homes of the common men and women who pay their Hydro bills today.

"They will learn," he said, "that the legislator who attempts to enforce these contracts has no future in any Parliament in these days. He will learn that this legislation is not a case of flaunting or repudiating the courts, but of obeying and representing the sovereign will of the overwhelming majority of the people who constitute our society today.

"To some," continued Colonel Hunter, "this bill may seem harsh, arbitrary and expropriatory, but the fraud upon the people of this Province which it is aimed to repudiate and render harmless to the citizens of this Province was so shameless and full of iniquity that for the present protection of the public, heroic methods had perforce to be resorted to. The right of eminent domain, or universal right in the public over property, is definitely embodied in the laws of every civilized nation. Every civilized Government has the right to expropriate private property, the public possession of which the Government considers to be in the public interest. This legislation does, in fact, make Hydro sacrosanct so far as public ownership is concerned and, if I read the signs aright, that is the will of the people."

Answers Heighington.

Wilfrid Heighington (Cons., St. David), questioned Col. Hunter's use of the term "fraud" and demanded proof that such fraud had been perpetrated. The one-time doughty commander of the Bengal Lancers took refuge behind the suggestion that when the present bill had been passed the Legislature should go farther and bring in some amendment to the legal code, so as to broaden the scope of admissible evidence, "to include some form of sworn hearsay or documentary evidence."

"Thus, possibly," he added, "would we strengthen the hands of our courts in their efforts to punish such fraud as that which we're told was perpetrated by the so-called iniquitous power barons and their Hydro and Government accomplices. It is this fraud and not this legislation which constitutes a disgrace to this Province today."