

March 6

and me, and I should know what to do about it. I considered these requests so unusual that I did not accede to them and did not mention the subject to you. I am deeply sorry my announcement of the steel company's program should have so incensed Dr. Roberts and proved the cause of so much annoyance to you."

Other Telegrams.

The Prime Minister then read the following telegrams from W. C. Franz, and T. F. Rahilly, Vice-President and General Manager, respectively, of the Algoma Steel Corporation, which, he said, were also "unsolicited."

"In the presence of Sir James Dunn and General Manager Rahilly in Toronto on Feb. 12, Dr. Roberts complained to the three of us that he had not got the medical work at the steel plant when doctors were changed and expected to secure the medical work in connection with the Helen Mine as a result of any development following an increase in the ore bounty.

"W. C. Franz."

"On Feb. 17, in the presence of Sir James Dunn, I was asked by Dr. Roberts if he had not earned by his support of the iron ore bounty the medical work in connection with the development and operation of the Helen Mine. I felt unable to make any commitment to Dr. Roberts.

"T. F. Rahilly."

"So you can readily understand," declared the Premier, on concluding his reading of the wires, "that the animosity so suddenly developed by Dr. Roberts against the Algoma Steel Company does not arise from Sir James Dunn's announcement of his building program, but from the fact that Dr. Roberts was unable to blackmail the company into giving him a job on the company payroll in consideration for his then support of the iron ore bill.

Called Personal.

"Now I'll tell you why all his animosity toward me. It's purely a personal matter. Some time ago E. F. Molleau secured the right to cut timber on Crown lands, operating at Massey, some 140 miles from Sault Ste. Marie. The member for the Sault (Dr. Roberts), using methods I certainly did not consider ethical, secured a contract from the lumber company which he tried to farm out. It was quite clear that he could not give the proper medical attention to the camp, so he first approached the local doctor and tried to make a deal, but the local doctor refused to pay toll, so Dr. Roberts went to another physician in an adjoining township and farmed out the contract. The Department of Health interfered and protested that some local man should look after the men. It did not apparently enter Dr. Roberts's mind that what he'd done was unethical, but to me his methods seemed highly improper, so I very properly rapped him over the knuckles. I repeat he had used methods that were unethical and unbecoming to any member of this House when he secured a contract for his own personal gain and then attempted to farm it out."

A Moment of Drama.

Then came the dramatic moment to which the Premier had been leading up, slowly but surely.

"I have a certain responsibility toward my party and I intend to purge my associates of the influence of a member guilty of this conduct," said Premier Hepburn. "Mr. Speaker, on Monday of next week I am going to ask you to move him to the Opposition benches."

The Prime Minister sat down amid a dead silence.

Dr. Roberts rose a second later. He began a stout defense of his action and declared he had not known the Prime Minister was in conference with Premier King at the time he voiced his criticisms.

"I am innocent of this," he declared. "I did not know the Prime Minister was going to be absent when I rose to speak. The Prime Minister is in error when he says I

went to Ottawa with Sir James Dunn. I did not go with him. I did not see him again after we left the Prime Minister's office until the banquet in Sault Ste. Marie. I have been accused of interfering with the engineer's office. When it was moved from Sault Ste. Marie to Blind River, the reason given at the time was economy of administration. I did not say anything about it at the time.

Claims No Animosity.

"Possibly I have my faults and have made mistakes, but I do not believe I did anything that warranted the office being moved," said Dr. Roberts. "In my remarks to this House I did not show any animosity toward the steel plant or toward the Prime Minister. I did not criticize the Prime Minister. I criticized what I considered was a discourtesy toward me. I have no animosity toward the plant. Why should I have? It is one of the biggest in the North and employs hundreds of men.

"It is true I asked Sir James Dunn if I could be doctor for the Helen Mine. What was wrong with that? There was nothing sinister in my doing so. If there had been, I would not have spoken in front of three other people. I can't see that the company was going to give me anything. I was asking for the position as a practicing physician, not as a member of Parliament."

Dr. Roberts said Sir James Dunn had been apologetic after the Sault Ste. Marie banquet for having made the announcement, and next day at 7 o'clock he was in the office of the Sault Star, trying to get the paper to give him (Dr. Roberts) credit for the announcement.

No Contract He Says.

"In reference to the supposed contract, at Massey," continued Dr. Roberts, "let me inform the House that I had no such contract. Mr. Duval promised me the contract. It didn't cost the Government one cent. It is paid by the men of the camp, who pay \$1 per month each for medical attention. Mr. Duval promised me verbally I would get this contract—"

Premier Hepburn, waving a handful of papers, jumped to his feet and interrupted the Sault member's remarks at this juncture. "The honorable gentleman says he had no contract," he barked. "Well, I have the contract here." He then read to the House the following letter, which he said was signed by Dr. Roberts, and directed to Dr. B. T. McGhie, Deputy Minister of Health, over a Sault dateline of Nov. 27, 1936:

"When Dr. Wallace let it be known that you and your department were partial to getting him a contract, I was appalled as I had never heard of such a stand before. It is quite true that Dr. Wallace is closer to the scene of operations than I, but in order to guarantee the men absolute medical protection I signed a subcontract with Dr. Brownley, who is practically as close to the camp as Wallace. The camps are located thirty-eight miles

from the nearest village and are accessible by a tote road only, so that you can see that Dr. Brownley can take care of the work as well as Dr. Wallace.

"I may say that the contractor is Mr. C. A. Duval, and it is with him that I have the medical contract, while Dr. Wallace is trying to obtain one with the subcontractor."

Another Clash.

"Now realize," emphasized the Prime Minister, on concluding the letter, "that this honorable member has stated to this House that he had no contract."

"Mr. Speaker," protested Dr. Roberts, "I had only an oral contract with Duval."

"I ask him to speak the truth," clicked the Prime Minister. "Let's get this straight. Let me read you a letter from Mr. Duval to the Deputy Minister of Health. It says:

"During the latter part of October last I offered Dr. A. D. Roberts of this city the option of taking the contract for caring for the health and sanitary conditions of the men to be employed in a pulpwood contract which I had taken for the Central Paper Company of Muskegon, Mich. And some days later this was ratified by the company . . ."

Breaking off the communication at this point, Mr. Hepburn barked: "This was ratified by the company. And then the member has the temerity to tell this House he had no contract."

"I didn't say I had no contract," repeated Dr. Roberts. "I said I had only an oral contract. There was no actual contract. I leave it to this House whether I said I had a contract."

There the incident rested, and the orders of the day were called.

Roberts Will Cross House A Man Without a Party

On Monday Dr. A. D. Roberts will have a Legislature seat as far away from the Liberal rank and file as the Government can find for him, without upsetting the seating order of the Opposition.

He will be "a man without a party," as far as the Government is concerned. The Liberals have read him out of the party and the Conservatives won't take him into their fold. The rebel from

Sault Ste. Marie will join the other two independents in the House, Sam Lawrence, the C.C.F. member from Hamilton, and Farquhar Oliver, U.F.O. member for South Grey.

Dr. Roberts will exchange seats with W. A. Dickson of Perth. As these two members now face each other from opposite sides of the horseshoe-shaped seating plan, it will literally mean "crossing the floor" for the insurgent—a forced crossing.