

March 26

ONTARIO SHARE IN GRAND RIVER PLAN GUARDED

**Legislature Changes Bill to
Ensure Federal Quota
Will Be Forthcoming**

WILL NOT "HOLD BAG"

**Provincial Secretary Says
Dominion Often 'Welshes'
on Joint Projects**

Until definite assurance is given by the Federal Government that it will lay on the line its 37.5 per cent share of the cost of the Grand River conservation and flood control project, Ontario will hold back its like contribution under a declaration of policy made yesterday by the Provincial Legislature.

Moved by the stinging charge of Hon. Harry Nixon, Provincial Secretary, that the Ottawa Government had left Ontario "holding the bag" on every major scheme during the past twenty years in which there had been joint interests, the House lopped from the conservation bill the provision that it was to become lawful on the day it received Royal assent and in its place inserted a clause that ruled it would come into force on order of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

Through this safeguard, it was emphasized, Ontario would not be committed to spend one cent until the Ottawa agreement was signed and delivered. On that day and upon receiving the assurance required, the order could be passed that would place the scheme into full swing.

Would Protect Province.

Mr. Nixon emphasized that every municipality in his riding lay in the Grand River watershed. He urged that a definite clause be put in the act that would protect the Province and the municipalities from expenditures "until we have assurance from Ottawa that it is going to participate and moreover to stick."

"I have seen a good many of these joint schemes and in every one of them, when we were up to the neck, they pulled out. I recall the housing scheme, the good roads scheme, the Trans-Canada Highway, the technical schools, the works program, and last but not least the relief problem, and in every instance Ontario and the municipalities have been left 'holding the bag.'"

The bill, which yesterday was reviewed by a committee of the whole House, was not reported by suggestion of Premier Hepburn. It will again be brought forward in amended form. Premier Hepburn led a recommendation that would place a restriction on the salaries that the Commission members, yet to be appointed as a body to administer the project, could name for themselves. On his motion, an amendment ruled that no salaries could be paid without the approval of the Municipal Board.

Plan Involves \$2,000,000.

In brief summary of the project, it was pointed out that the scheme called for the expenditure of \$2,000,000 within the next two years and, aside from the Government contributions, municipalities were to be assessed for 25 per cent on a basis commensurate with the value they received. Two initial dams are to be constructed, one at Waldemar, west of Orangeville on the Grand River, and one at Hollen on the Conestoga River near Drayton. A third and small dam is to be constructed on the creek that drains the Luther Marsh, declared to be the best natural water reservoir in the Province and the chief source of the Grand.

Hon. Colin Campbell, Minister of Works, in guiding the bill through committee, emphasized that flood control was secondary to water conservation and that it was the first time such a project had been attempted in this country.

William Duckworth (Cons., Dowercourt), native of the Luther Marsh district, first demanded assurance that Grand Valley, his home hamlet, would not be flooded by the Waldemar Dam.

Wants Rights Safeguarded.

Ross McEwing (Lib., Wellington North), in whose riding both main dams are to be erected, declared that neither dam would flood a municipality. He commended the Investigatory Commission's work, but urged the Government to safeguard individual rights and the rights of municipalities. Drayton, he believed, should be protected from relief squatters, who might be attracted by the labor prospects. He said he would like also some assurance that the people living below the dams would not be endangered by the possibility of a dam break.

Hon. Leopold Macaulay, Conservative House Leader, urged the Government to change the section which refused to persons whose lands had been expropriated, any right of appealing from the ruling of the Municipal Board. Mr. Macaulay believed there should be appeal from Municipal Board decision on points of law.

Adjacent Structures Barred.

Aside from sections providing for the administration and development of the project and for the expropriation of lands and payment of land damages, the bill among other things prohibits any person from erecting structures over or adjacent to the Grand, Conestoga, Nith and Speed Rivers without the consent of the Commission, and takes full notice of the possibility that the Commission might require the use of cemetery lands.

Provision is made for the removal of a cemetery if such action is found necessary. It also gives the Ontario Hydro-Electric Power Commission full right to use any water-power that may be created.