

## Hepburn Refuses to Add Former Minister to Committee and Move Voted Down in House

### BITTERNESS FLARES

## Inquiry a Joke Without Him, Says Roebuck — N.Y. State Authority's Charges Ignored

Premier Hepburn and his followers refused yesterday in the Legislature to add former Hydro Commissioner Roebuck's name to the special House committee investigating Hydro contracts of present and past, or to consider the recent charges of the New York State Power Authority as sufficiently important to bring them within the scope of the probe.

The Prime Minister's resolution, authorizing the investigation, defining its scope, and naming the committee personnel under the chairmanship of Attorney-General Conant, was adopted with but scattered dissent from the Opposition benches, but only after Hon. Leopold Macaulay's amendment, providing a place for Mr. Roebuck on the inquiry body, had been overwhelmingly defeated.

#### Bitterness Boils Over.

The long-reported bitterness between the Prime Minister and his former Attorney-General and chief Hydro adviser boiled well over as the latter argued that any Hydro investigating committee without his presence thereon was little more than a "joke," and Mr. Hepburn labelled the contention, and the further Roebuck argument that the Power Authority allegations should be investigated, as sheer "bunkum and villification," and possibly "more St. Lawrence propaganda."

In formally objecting to having been left off the committee, Mr. Roebuck declared that there were three different views on the Hydro question; first, that taken by the Government before the reconstitution of the Hydro Commission; second, that taken by the Government after that reconstitution; and third, that taken by the Opposition. His own view, he said, coincided with that taken by the Government before the Hydro Commission had been reorganized. Any committee to investigate the situation, on which he did not appear, was a "joke," and the general public, he felt, would agree to that.

#### Words Exchanged.

"I am not surprised to hear my honorable friend challenge the integrity of this committee," said Mr. Hepburn, in reply.

"I didn't question the integrity of any member of the committee," said Mr. Roebuck. "And the honorable the Prime Minister must not put such statements in my mouth."

"You said that the committee, without you on it, was a joke," the Premier shot back. "And if that isn't reflecting on the members of the committee, I don't know what it is."

Mr. Roebuck, submitted the Premier, could not possibly sit on the committee and at the same time be in a position to pass on his own actions. The principle was all wrong. It was not in line with British practice.

"I have yet to recall an occasion when a man has sat as a judge of his own administration record. It is highly improper," claimed Premier Hepburn, "and unusual and I don't think there is any precedent for such a thing."

Hon. M. M. MacBride, Minister of Labor, said that he was associated early in the Hydro work with Sir Adam Beck and that its cause was dear to his heart. He was confident, he said, that the public would be satisfied with the findings of the committee named by the Premier. He regretted, too, the attitude taken by Mr. Roebuck.

#### Macaulay Agreeable.

Mr. Macaulay emphasized at that point, "I made the suggestion that the honorable member from Bellwoods be added to the committee the last day the matter was under discussion in the House and it was not made in any derogatory way. I have no objection to adding his name to the committee."

He pointed out that when the question of the personnel was mentioned, the Premier indicated that he desired two Liberals to each Conservative, and on that basis he

recommended four from his party to make up the committee of twelve.

"If he (Mr. Roebuck) wants to amend the motion that his name be added to the committee, I would be agreeable," he said.

Colonel Fraser Hunter (Lib., St. Patrick) agreed with the position taken by the Prime Minister. "You can't have a member of the committee judge and jury and prisoner-at-the-bar, all in one."

A. H. Acres (Cons., Carleton) felt that not only Mr. Roebuck, but his one-time Hydro associate, Hon. T. B. McQuesten, both should be named to the committee, in order that they could be examined at any time by other committee members.

#### Held Highly Improper.

Attorney-General Conant called the committee "a semi-judicial body," and held that it would be "highly improper" and "impossible" to give Mr. Roebuck a place on it.

At this juncture, Mr. Roebuck introduced the subject of the recent report of the New York State Power Authority, suggesting that the committee resolution be left stand until copies of the report could reach the House, and members could decide whether the charges it contained should be also reviewed in the investigation. They were "exceedingly serious charges," he maintained, implying that private power interests were in league to thwart the St. Lawrence development and to make Ontario and the State of New York entirely dependent for future power on private interests' production and supply.

"It is useless," said he, "to say that this Power Authority body is of no importance. Its power and purpose and direction are the same as the Hydro Commission's, aside from its achievements. The charges they have made are too grave to overlook. I think they should be taken into consideration by your committee at the same time they are examining the contracts. As for my stand with regard to the committee itself, let me say that I am not one to seek position. When I spoke, as I have just done, I spoke not for myself, but in the interests of the general public."

#### Called Bunkum.

"The bunkum that has emanated from my honorable friend," snapped Premier Hepburn, "is possibly just some more St. Lawrence propaganda."

"Point of order," shouted Mr. Roebuck, rising to his feet. "Bunkum is not an expression common to the deliberations and procedure of this honorable House. And I don't like it."

"I have heard my honorable friend use worse language than that," snapped the Premier, and continued, saying that Mr. Roebuck was using an argument based on a report that came from an organization of which no one knew the management or its status.

He pointed out that there had reached the Government's ears recently word that the Village of Michipicoten had taken formal action toward secession, and that upon investigation it was found that the movement was backed by only three persons. Investigation might reveal something of the same condition regarding the New York State Power Authority's report, and he emphasized that the resolution as far as he was concerned, would stand as it was.

"My honorable friend (Mr. Roebuck) can go in and make another nine-hour speech if he wants to," he added.

The Premier said that he was not going to be swayed from his belief that the St. Lawrence development plan was uneconomic. He said it was unfortunate that some one had not blocked the Hudson Bay Railway scheme, and emphasized that the Dominion was already losing \$1,000,000 per day on the National Railways system. He charged that Mr. Roebuck was attacking him "with his bunkum because I take an opposite economic view" of the St. Lawrence project.

At the conclusion of Mr. Hepburn's remarks, Mr. Macaulay again entered the fray. He didn't want anyone to get the impression, he said, that he had prevented Mr. Roebuck from being named for the committee. He didn't think it

should be necessary for the House to take a vote on the point, but he did think the resolution should stand for a day or so until all aspects of the situation could be further considered.

"The Government has no intention of naming any member for the committee whose own administration may be under investigation," said Mr. Hepburn.

"Oh, I don't know," said Mr. Macaulay.

"Oh yes you do," said Mr. Hepburn.

"The present Attorney-General," said Mr. Macaulay, "is in no better position than the former Attorney-General. He gave you advice on how to proceed in the recent contracts settlement, and yet he is sitting as chairman of the committee that is being appointed."

"You agreed to the committee," Mr. Hepburn said.

"Yes," said Mr. Macaulay, "and now I'm trying to get you to agree to let the member for Bellwoods (Mr. Roebuck) be added."

"I'm not going to do it," declared Mr. Hepburn.

Later, Mr. Macaulay proposed his amendment covering Mr. Roebuck's inclusion. "It's not acceptable," said the Premier, and the vote followed.