

APRIL 6

Stress Empire Loyalty In Expediting Log Bill

The Ontario Legislature acted with almost complete unanimity yesterday to permit the export of hardwood logs to Great Britain, for use in the manufacture of aircraft parts.

Government and Opposition members agreed in principle with an amendment to the Timber Act which would permit export of logs without fulfilling required "manufacturing conditions," but they bickered for almost an hour over its application and the measure was not sanctioned until Premier Hepburn cut short debate by announcing that a large trial shipment of logs, consigned to a British industrial group, was being held up awaiting passage of the bill.

Premier Hepburn stressed the patriotic purpose of the measure after argument over one of its clauses threatened to develop into a verbal storm of major proportions.

Expressing his keen desire to "keep any red tape from standing in the way of permitting the Mother Country full access to any of our raw materials," the Premier smoothed ruffled feelings which sprang up between Colonel George A. Drew and Hon. Peter Heenan. He conceded the justice of arguments advanced by the Leader of the Opposition and agreed to hold the bill over until passage could be re-drafted to convey their intended meaning more clearly.

But the Premier, irked at a criticism of George H. Challies (Con., Grenville-Dundas), withdrew his gesture of appeasement and sped the bill through committee by making an amendment to the contentious clause himself.

The debate on policy, which sud-

denly developed into a question of intra-Empire loyalty, was broached by Leopold Macaulay (Con., York South), who called attention to the fact that the Timber Act forbade export of logs unless certain "manufacturing conditions" had been fulfilled, and that the amendment under consideration would waive that stipulation.

"It says here that logs can be exported whole at the pleasure of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council," he said. "I believe that we either should remove the restriction altogether, or have exceptions made only with approval of the entire House."

"The honorable member still insists on beclouding the issue," retorted Hon. Peter Heenan as he defended the clause.

Fears Bureaucracy.

"It may not be your wish to have absolute power over these export contracts," Colonel Drew said. "But this amendment will give you that power, and while you may use it intelligently, your successor may not be disposed to do the same. There is a tendency to place bureaucratic powers in departments which can be exercised without the knowledge of the House. The time has come to resist that tendency."

As the issue threatened to become strained, Premier Hepburn rose to "pour oil on troubled waters."

"Perhaps this House does not appreciate the reason for the amendment we are now discussing," he said. "I was approached by members of a British mission, representing manufacturers in Great Britain who are supplying aircraft parts for the British Government. They wanted to know why it wasn't possible to buy hardwood in Ontario and export it to England. I won't let any red tape stand in their way and I cannot agree with my friend's suggestion that the House be required to vote on the question every time it comes up."