

HEPBURN TELLS DREW IT'S UNFAIR TO SCOLD CROSS

Conservative criticism turned yesterday in the Legislature on Welfare Minister Eric Cross, charging that his declaration on unemployment indicated a lack of appreciation of the situation and drew finally from Premier Hepburn the sharp retort that it was neither fair nor right for Opposition Leader George A. Drew to "scold the Minister of Welfare" on his statement to the House.

The issue was raised by William Duckworth (Cons., Dovercourt) when in the course of a budget debate address advocating early action on unemployment insurance, the Toronto member declared the Dominion Government was spending \$100,000,000 on relief.

"That is quite incorrect," said the welfare minister as he claimed the figure was not at all representative of the share the Dominion paid to Ontario's relief costs. He declared that if there was any basis at all in the amount, it must include debt refunding and other special grants to the western provinces.

Sees Lack of Appreciation.

Colonel Drew immediately charged the minister's statement was "indicative of his lack of appreciation of the situation, as was reflected in his claim, made recently before the House, that there was no state of national emergency in unemployment."

"I rose," said Mr. Cross, "to state that the statement made by the member from Dovercourt was not correct."

"It was correct," said Leopold Macaulay. "He said all forms of relief."

"He was speaking of direct relief," the minister objected. "The statement I made before the House and outside of the House was that so far as transients were concerned, of whom, according to department records, there were about 3,000 in Ontario, the situation did not reflect any serious condition."

Colonel Drew contended that Mr. Cross did not confine his statement to transients, but had referred to demagogues who had raised the unemployment figures to the hundreds of thousands. Then, he added, he had declared his opinion there was not a state of emergency in the unemployment situation. Before the incident closed, Mr. Cross said that he had made the same statement in

London recently and that he had no apology to offer for having made it.

Paying Through Taxation.

Mr. Duckworth, who several times had attempted to secure a place in the argument, said finally that while the Dominion was spending \$100,000,000 in relief of all kinds, the government had failed to move on unemployment insurance. He warned employers, who opposed contributory insurance, that under the present system they were paying dearly in relief taxation.

He claimed the Hepburn and King administrations were "humberging on the unemployment insurance question," by putting the onus of action onto one another.

"Are you aware of the fact," asked Premier Hepburn, "that the Trades and Labor Council petitioned this government to stand back and await action from Ottawa? And that is what we are doing."

While admitting that the taxpayer probably could not afford to pay more, Dr. Duckworth charged that the prevailing food relief scale was insufficient. A sum of \$8.46 for four adults for fourteen days, he claimed, was not enough to raise a healthy race.

"If we have a war," he said, "what kind of soldiers are we going to send? The undernourished boys will be too weak, I say, to carry a gun."