

MOVE TO STOP CREATING TITLE BY HOUSE ACT

**New Rule Will Be Drafted
as Result of Disapproval
Voiced Over Conferring
Legal Status by Statute**

BELANGER BILL PASSED

Steps were taken in the Ontario Legislature yesterday to halt the growing practice of conferring membership in the professions by virtue of acts of parliament.

Taking direct action in the matter, after speakers on both sides of the House had condemned the practice, Attorney-General Gordon Conant gave instructions to Major Alex. C. Lewis, Clerk of the Legislature, to prepare a new House rule that would prohibit introduction of any bill creating barristers, solicitors, doctors, or members of any profession by act of the Legislature.

This rule, the Attorney-General said last night, would be introduced for debate and passed before the present session is prorogued next Wednesday.

Its introduction arose out of debate on a private bill which would confer the degree of barrister-at-law upon Aurelien Belanger (Lib., Prescott) and which passed through committee stage during the afternoon.

Principle Disapproved.

Although the measure encountered no opposition in committee, it was passed with obvious reluctance on the part of every member who took part in the debate. Conservative and Liberal private members, along with government ministers, made no effort to conceal their disapproval of the principle of the bill.

A. W. Roebuck (Lib., Toronto-Bellwoods), former Attorney-General of the province, expressed the general sentiment of the House when he declared that law students were "disturbed by the very bad principle on which this bill is based, and look with hearty disapproval at the action of this House in overriding the Law Society." Continuation of the practice, he threatened, would "ruin the legal profession."

"I hope to spare myself and the House further embarrassment in cases such as this," Attorney-General Conant said, as he expressed agreement with his colleague's remarks. "It is wrong for us to set ourselves up as an appeal body from the jurisdiction of the Law Society. I will oppose future bills unless the circumstances are most exceptional."

Hepburn Would Stop It.

Premier Hepburn expressed the belief that the House should go even further than voicing disapproval. "Some amendment is needed to take away from this Chamber the authority it has in this respect," he said. "I hope the Attorney-General will amend any existing statutes to make a recurrence of this impossible."

"I don't think this Legislature can do anything by statute to prevent itself from enacting the statutes of the province," observed Colonel George A. Drew, Conservative Leader. "I strongly disapprove of the principle of this bill, but since the Attorney-General, as chief law officer, has seen fit to take the responsibility of offering no opposition, I will not oppose it."

"We can make it a rule of the House that this should not be done in future," Mr. Conant suggested. "It would at least offer substantial opposition to any future efforts along this line."

DEATH DUTIES REVENUE ITEMS REMAIN SECRET

**Liberals in Committee De-
feat Macaulay's Plea to
Show Accounts to Clear
Estate Executors of Sus-
picion**

ACT PREVENTS PROBE

Demand of Hon. Leopold Macaulay for authority from the Legislature and treasury to have the Public Accounts Committee examine the \$20,000,000 succession duties revenue item recorded for the fiscal year of 1937-1938 was "steam-rolled" into defeat by the Liberal members of the committee in a hectic and sometimes undignified sitting at Queen's Park yesterday.

Solidly supporting the argument of Attorney-General Conant, Provincial Secretary Nixon and James Cooper, committee chairman, that under the present Succession Duties Act "secrecy" provisions prohibited them from attempting the probe of Mr. Macaulay's desire, the Liberals voted 22-9 against the motion of the Opposition second-in-command.

Colonel George A. Drew, the Conservative Leader, contended that examination of these death duty payments was imperative if suspicion which had been cast upon estates administrators in general in recent years by the "loose, irresponsible statements" of Premier Hepburn were to be dissipated, and justice done them.

The Premier, he said, had not been averse to talking of various estates settlements with the treasury, and had left the impression throughout the province that "punitive measures" had had to be resorted to in many instances to recover moneys for the Crown, and that the Crown had been "defrauded" out of great sums in past years. If the situation were not as the premier had painted, then surely, said he, the administrators of estates had "the right to clear themselves of suspicion." The only way of determining what was what was to examine the revenue item challenged by Mr. Macaulay.

The Attorney-General argued that just because "some one in the past" had violated the succession duties law, by discussing settlements, the Public Accounts Committee should not be asked to violate it.

"The head of the government did," interjected Mr. Macaulay.

"I don't care whether he did," said Mr. Conant. "The committee shouldn't do it."

"Are you prepared the next time the Premier goes off the deep end," asked Mr. Macaulay, "to tell him that he's breaking the law?"

Committee Chairman Cooper expressed the opinion that the law prohibited the committee from going into the succession duties revenue.

Mr. Conant said it was possible that the law as it now stood "might be a little rigorous," but the committee was bound by it, in its present form.

"If, as the Attorney-General says, the law is too rigorous," said Mr. Macaulay, "we should start in to change it. This is the place to start to change it. My motion is the first step in that direction. Let's get its administration away from all this political atmosphere of charges and counter charges."

Later, Chairman Cooper said he would be "broad minded" and permitted the Macaulay motion to be put.

S. Chester Walters, controller of finances and assistant treasurer, who had been on the witness stand, all this time, awaiting Mr. Macaulay's examination on various treasury items, took occasion to state that at no time had he ever given information regarding succession duties collections, settlements, or administration to any one—not even the members of the cabinet. The law, he said, forbade him to.

"Who gives the Premier the information he uses from time to time?" asked Mr. Macaulay.

"I don't," said Mr. Walters.

"Well, then," said Mr. Macaulay, "are the files of your department open to Mr. Hepburn?"

"He is the Treasurer of the Province," said Mr. Walters.

"And naturally," some Liberal cried, "he has access to them."