

Censure Moved by Hepburn, Climax to Debate, Voted 44-10

LIBERALS BOLT

Canada's war effort as prosecuted to date by the Mackenzie King Administration at Ottawa was formally condemned in the Ontario Legislature yesterday for what a 44-10 majority of the members voted to be its lack of vigor.

Climaxing three days of intense discussion of the Ottawa effort, Premier Hepburn created an unprecedented situation in the Provincial House when he accused the Federal Prime Minister of "never having done his duty to his country—and never will," and personally moved the resolution that brought the Dominion Government under the official censure of the Queen's Park Assembly.

In spite of Mr. Hepburn's warning that defeat of the resolution, "a Government motion," would mean his immediate resignation, ten of his Liberal followers bolted his determined attitude and policy, thereby creating the first potentially serious rift in the party since the hectic days of the separate schools tax controversy.

Comes Suddenly.

Seconded by Hon. T. B. McQuesten, Minister of Highways, and President of the Ontario Liberal Association, the resolution—a hasty longhand scrawl across a sheet of butter-yellow paper—came with startling unexpectedness. A dozen or more Liberals left the Chamber and were not present for the vote.

The resolution read:

"That this House has heard with interest the reports made by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition of the result of their visit to Ottawa to discuss war measures with the National Government, and this House hereby endorses the statements made by the two members in question and joins with them in regretting that the Federal Government at Ottawa has made so little effort to prosecute Canada's duty in the war in the vigorous manner the people of Canada desire to see."

Of the Liberals who stuck their trying ground, twenty-five supported the Premier and the possibly far-reaching significance of his "scrap of paper." They were Hon. Harold J. Kirby, Minister of Health; Hon. P. M. Dewan, Minister of Agriculture; Hon. Mr. McQuesten; Hon. L. J. Simpson, Minister of Education; Attorney-General Gordon Conant;

Provincial Secretary Harry C. Nixon; Hon. Paul Leduc, Minister of Mines; Hon. Eric Cross, Minister of Welfare and Municipal Affairs; Hon. N. O. Hipel, Minister of Labor; Hon. W. L. Houck, Vice-Chairman of Hydro; Hon. A. St. Clair Gordon, Liquor Commissioner; J. A. Smith, Hydro Commissioner; Chief Whip Ian T. Strachan; W. J. Gardhouse, York West; J. Frank Kelly, Muskoka-Ontario; William Guthrie, Lambton West; Allan A. Lampport, St. David; J. W. Sinclair, Bruce; James Ballantyne, Huron; T. A. Blakelock, Halton; T. P. Murray, South Renfrew; John Newlands, Hamilton Centre; C. G. Mercer, Durham; F. B. Brownridge, Stormont, and J. W. Freeborn, Middlesex North.

The ten Liberal dissenters from the Government stand were former Attorney-General Arthur W. Roebuck; Assistant Liberal Whip M. T. Armstrong, Parry Sound; C. M. Macfie, South Middlesex; Morgan Baker, North York; D. M. Campbell, East Kent; W. A. Dickson, Perth; J. A. Habel, North Cochrane; R. G. Croome, Rainy River; J. P. MacKay, Hamilton East, and C. O. Fairbank, Lambton East.

Eighteen Conservatives—all that were in attendance—voted for the condemnation. They were Colonel George A. Drew (Leader); Leopold

Macaulay, South York; G. H. Chalmers, Grenville-Dundas; H. E. Welsh, East Hastings; L. M. Frost, Victoria; former Premier Henry, East York; W. D. Black, Addington; W. A. Baird, High Park; William Duckworth, Dovercourt; A. H. Acres, Carleton; G. C. Elgie, Woodbine; T. A. Murphy, Beaches; W. J. Stewart, Parkdale; R. D. Arnott, Hastings West; T. A. Kidd, Kingston; W. B. Reynolds, Leeds; W. A. Summerville, Riverdale; J. de C. Hepburn, Prince-Edward-Lennox.

There was no mincing of words as Mr. Hepburn squared up to this—one of the most sensational moments of a long and sensational career in public life. All afternoon the storm had been brewing. Duckworth of Dovercourt had attacked Canadian sale of wheat to Russia. Both the Premier and Colonel Drew had attacked editorials in The Globe and Mail and in "the chief propaganda sheet of the Mackenzie King Government," the Toronto Star. Both had reiterated their demands for more action at Ottawa, with the Premier charging as an illustration of "slipshod methods" that "a near-riot" had occurred at the air station in the St. Thomas Mental Hospital because men had had to parade in near-zero weather without proper clothing and boots.

Rushed to King's Defense.

Baker of North York had rushed to the defense of the King Administration and had read excerpts from Mr. King's addresses from Hansard, to be interrupted with Mr. Hepburn's "Do we have to listen to that twaddle?" Roebuck of Bellwoods, in suggesting that Colonel Drew was more concerned with furthering the political advantage of Federal Leader Manion, was compelled to withdraw his "impugning of motives" and was chastised by Mr. Hepburn for "making anti-war speeches in the last war at a time when the Opposition Leader was fighting in the trenches." Macaulay of South York had emphatically deprecated "propaganda despatches" from Ottawa which contrived, he said, to give the credit of the war loan's success to Prime Minister King, instead of to the patriotic, out-to-win-the-war bond-buying people to whom it really belonged. Mr. Macaulay had seen a propaganda buildup on behalf of the King party for the next election in June or July in the "truth-distorted" stories.

Bit by bit, step by step, as the discussion waxed warmer and the Liberal Party lines began to crack, and as Acting Speaker Roland Patterson sought vainly to call "Orders of the Day," the situation electrified until at times galleryites applauded and Mr. Hepburn moved restlessly in his seat. Then in that abrupt manner so characteristic of him the Premier rose quickly, waved down a back-bencher who was also trying to find his feet, plumped down before him the yellow-papered resolution that had appeared mysteriously from nowhere, and brought the seemingly interminable discussion to a halt. First he referred briefly to the visit which he and Colonel Drew,

as members of the Organization of Resources Committee, had made to Ottawa in October, at which time, he said, without political consideration, in the fullest co-operation, they had handed "a blank cheque of the Province's resources" to Mr. King, and had told him to do with them what he liked. From then on, however, he had been deeply disappointed, he said, in Ottawa's response to Ontario's offer, and in subsequent "lack of adequate proper prosecution of the war."

Thinks King Hates Ontario.

He had always been a sharp critic of the King Administration, he admitted, and he believed that Mr. King had "a positive hatred" for Ontario because the Prime Minister had never been able to get elected here. He had a long list of grievances against the Prime Minister, none of which were personal, but merely outgrowths of Ottawa's "cold, callous attitude" of one Government toward another. For instance, he said, at a time when Ontario had a surplus of power from new Quebec commitments Mr. King had deliberately refused to permit the Province the authority to export a portion of this surplus across the border.

"That refusal," he added, "cost Ontario a million dollars."

"No," he said, his voice rising, "it isn't any personal matter between us. As far as King is concerned and my attitude is concerned, his insignificance protects him."

National security, he declared, while the Opposition and the Treasury benchers in particular loudly applauded, was greater than "any political consideration." The issue had to be decided at once. From the tone of various addresses made earlier it was apparent, he said, that some members looked at the war situation differently than he. There was no use letting the debate drag on. For that reason he was going, he said, to test the opinion of the House.

Stakes Government on Vote.

"I don't care if I am defeated—and you must construe the resolution I am about to put as a Govern-

ment measure—I shall have done what I consider to be the right thing. Of course, if I am defeated, there is only one course left open to me—to resign. If I am wrong, if in the opinion of this House we (Colonel Drew and the Premier) are not reflecting the overwhelming opinion of the people of Canada at this moment, then I shall bow to the decision. I am ready to take my political future in my hands. I'm not going to take it on the chin as Federal Cabinet Ministers have done and go down without fighting.

"Let me say again that I stand firm in my statements that Mackenzie King has not done his duty to his country—never has and never will. I sat with him in the Federal House for eight years and I know him."

As the Premier read the text of the resolution slowly, the first scurrying from the scene began. As he handed it to the page, to be handed to the Speaker in turn, John Glass, ex-soldier member for St. Andrew, implored the Speaker not to take a vote on the ground that all the information requisite to a verdict could not possibly be before the members. When the Premier ignored the request Mr. Glass asked permission to absent himself from the vote and whirled away and outside the Chamber.

"All in favor say—" the Speaker was saying when Mr. Hepburn, desirous of recording each member's stand, called for a division.

"Call in the members," said the Speaker.