

Research Council Urged To Open Paper Markets

Disruption of normal European trade channels by the war offered an excellent opportunity for Ontario pulp producers to increase their export markets, Conservative Leader George Drew told a select committee of the Legislature investigating administration of timber resources yesterday.

Colonel Drew called attention of the committee to a press despatch from Montreal which told of the presence of a Dutch official in Canada in search of special types of paper for Dutch consumption. The despatch, he said, reported that the official had been unable to find the required type of paper in Eastern Canada and was preparing to investigate the British Columbia market.

Netherlands requirements in this particular field, Colonel Drew said, had been filled by Scandinavian countries in the past, but the war and its consequent hazards to shipping had made filling of such orders difficult.

"This illustrates the need for haste on our part in establishing some form of research council to keep an eye open for opportunities like this," Colonel Drew declared. "The war has disorganized normal trade arrangements and is opening new markets for us if we are prepared to take advantage of them. If Ontario mills are not producing types of paper in demand elsewhere, such a council could recommend necessary changes."

Hon. Peter Heenan agreed a research council would be of benefit to the Province, but he doubted whether it would help in cases such as that outlined in the Montreal despatch. "That's just a matter for salesmanship," he said.

The committee resumed its in-

quiry into the allocation of timber limits to various companies and Colonel Drew again pressed for memoranda showing how the permissible cut was determined in each case.

"It's in the agreement," said Walter Cain, Deputy Minister of the Department of Lands and Forests. "The timber areas are surveyed from the air and by land crews, and the timber limits are based on the cruisers' reports."

No other country in the world, he said, including the Scandinavian countries, had gone to such pains to make an inventory of timber resources as had Ontario.

Colonel Drew repeated his declaration of Tuesday that large areas of timber land were being disposed of "most informally" and protested at the lack of documents concerning preliminary negotiations.

"All we have is the word of certain department heads that great care was taken," he said. "There has not been one letter or report tabled before this committee. The procedure, so far as the information before us is concerned, has been utterly unbusinesslike."

Mr. Heenan defended his department's action in allotting timber limits to the Pulpwood Supply Company and others. The area in question, he said, had been considered "inaccessible and worthless" until the deal had been made.

"I consider this agreement one of the finest the department has ever entered into," the Minister said.

The committee will resume Thursday morning, when delegates from Port Arthur and Fort William will present briefs dealing with the effect of timber policies on the welfare of their municipalities.