

Abitibi Inquiry Report Is Asked

Inquiry will be made immediately by Premier Hepburn to learn when the report of the Royal Commission investigation of the Abitibi Power and Paper Company will be presented.

This assurance was given yesterday to Colonel George A. Drew when the Conservative Leader said that the legislative committee investigation into timber administration could not be concluded until the Abitibi report was made. Premier Hepburn also said he would assume, as a personal responsibility, the duty of seeing to it that Conservative questions into administration on the order paper were answered promptly.

ONTARIO TO PAY 75 P.C. OF RELIEF, MAYORS LEARN

Delegation Stunned by Hepburn Announcement; More Than Anticipated

ASK PENSIONS RISE

After listening to numerous Ontario mayors give their views as to what they thought the Provincial contribution toward unemployment relief should be, Premier Hepburn yesterday stunned the eighty chief magistrates present by announcing that the Province would pay 75 per cent of the cost.

Not one of the mayors who spoke at the conference with the Cabinet had gone so far as to suggest such a favorable division of the costs, from the municipal point of view. The Premier allowed them to speak for well over an hour, holding his own counsel until he had ascertained the views and hopes of a cross-section of the delegation.

Cheers greeted the announcement from the Premier that Ontario would take up the slack caused by the Dominion Government withdrawing all assistance to unemployment relief.

"We had our own officials go into the question from all angles," the Premier stated, "and we thought at first that a percentage of 66 2-3 would be all that we could offer, but we found out that we could do better, and so we will accept 75 per cent of the cost. I believe that there will be a general improvement in business through war industries—a greater stimulation. I have talked privately to the mayors of Toronto and Hamilton, and we have a good idea of the situation throughout the Province."

The Premier's announcement was such a pleasant surprise to the gathering that for a moment or two there was hardly a sound in the room.

"We have come to the Provincial Government," said Mayor Morrison of Hamilton, who acted as delegation chairman, "and have got more than we ever dreamed of getting."

"Very satisfactory," stated Mayor Conboy of Toronto, who earlier had said he did not think that the situation in Toronto could be satisfactorily handled without a contribution of at least 70 per cent.

In expressing the gratitude of the mayors to the Government, Mayor Morrison suggested that the Government consider an increase in the contributions for old age pensions, mothers' allowances, as well as for unemployables.

"The Minister of Labor," Mr. Hepburn replied, "has been studying this question for the last month, and we will do our best. I ask you for the fullest co-operation in this matter. We have shown that we share good times with you, but if times are bad you will have to share adversity with us."

The new agreement takes effect on the expiration of the Provincial-Dominion agreement on March 31 and will run until the first of next January.

"I hope to meet the cost of this situation out of present revenue," he said. "I don't want to put it on income tax, as I know the Dominion Government is going to increase that. As far as amusement tax is concerned, we experienced a great deal of trouble in collecting it in smaller places before, and so we abolished it. We are advertising extensively the fact that Ontario is a Province where there is no amusement tax, no meal tax, no sales tax, and no toll gates with the hope that these features will help bring tourists to Ontario this year."