

ONTARIO HOUSE GIVES APPROVAL TO O.A.C. SCHEME

No Great Curtailment
in Courses Expected,
Legislature Informed

TWO-HOUR DEBATE

Controversy that raged nearly two hours yesterday in the Legislature over issues arising from the Government's decision to lend buildings at the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph to the Department of Defense closed on a note of unity when the entire House approved the Administration's policy of "releasing for the use of the militia Provincial buildings, lands or any other asset that you (Ottawa) might require" in the prosecution of the war.

The backing by the House of the Government's war-aid policy was called for by Provincial Secretary H. C. Nixon in an amendment to an Opposition-sponsored motion opposing the O.A.C. loan proposal. With it he declared to applauding Liberals that Ottawa long ago should have made use of Premier Hepburn in the war effort. He termed him a "human dynamo and model of efficiency."

"I am sure," he added, "there would have been a different story in the production of planes if he had been in charge."

When the smoke of debate had cleared there emerged two points beyond dispute. They were that transfer of dormitories and the dining hall at the O.A.C. would not halt either student courses, except at Macdonald Institute, or farm experimental programs, and that every member of the House was in favor of an all-out support of the war effort.

The latter point was in detail a reaffirmation of the unanimous stand taken at the special September war session of 1939. The former came from information given by Premier Hepburn and his Minister of Agriculture, Hon. P. M. Dewan, in reference to the motion tabled Monday by Conservative Leader Drew and his Whip, T. L. Kennedy, Peel.

By its terms, the members were asked to approve of the principle that every public building "actually needed for the effective prosecution of our war effort should be made available whenever required, but they believe there is no justification for taking over the buildings of the Ontario Agricultural College for use as a wireless training school."

Colonel Drew, before the order for debate on the motion was called, asked the Premier for late information about the proposal to lend the buildings. He was advised that the O.A.C. work would not be curtailed greatly by such a transfer. Colonel Drew then said that the motion was tabled on the basis of early information given to the House that the college would have to be closed.

The Premier retorted he had not said the college would be closed; that on Friday last, when he advised the House of the Government's intention, he had said it "may cause the closing of the college."

In the light of the new information, that the college was not to be closed, Colonel Drew asked that his and Colonel Kennedy's motion be held over. Out of the continuing discussion, however, the House was given a more detailed report by Mr. Dewan. The Minister said Ottawa requested dormitories, the dining-room and only one classroom. "We can carry on all the courses of instruction," he said. "The only class we cannot continue is that of Macdonald Institute."

Associate Course.

He believed that an associate two years' course in practical farming could be accommodated at the Kemptville Agricultural School. The degree courses could be continued at Guelph, the only change being that the students will be required to board out.

Provincial Secretary Nixon, with a blunt assertion that Opposition members "cannot blow hot and cold on this question," opposed any suggestion that the original motion be withdrawn unless the Opposition was prepared to adopt the amendment which he proposed.

"We are sparring at men of straw," broke in Leopold Macaulay (Cons., South York) when he summarized that the original motion was brought in under a misapprehension of facts. "Now," he added, "the Minister and other authorities have made it clear that they are not going to close all the buildings."

Mr. Macaulay said Provincial Secretary Nixon's resolution "appeals to me, and personally I hope it appeals to the Opposition Leader."

"There can be no opposition to a resolution that has already been approved," said Colonel Drew, recalling that it had first come up in the September session. "As I have said over and over again, every member of the House wants an effective prosecution of the war."

The debate was closed by Hon. Farquhar Oliver, Minister of Public Works. He couldn't follow arguments that the closing of the O.A.C. would impair the farmers' war contribution. Not one less pound of cheese and not one less slice of bacon would be produced, he said.