

# HOUSE REJECTS ONTARIO TOWN PLANNING BODY

Present Departments  
Held Adequate in St.  
Lawrence Developments

## PROJECT PREPARED

Government members, backed by one determined Conservative vote, late yesterday rejected by 49 to 18 a motion sponsored by Opposition Leader Drew calling for the creation of an Ontario Town and Country Planning Commission.

The division, second of the session, came after a two and one-half hour debate which opened directly after Orders were called. Liberals, supported by George Dunbar, Ottawa South, rallied to the claim of Treasury Bench speakers and of Eric Cross, former Minister of Municipal Affairs, that planning, particularly with respect to the reallocation of St. Lawrence River bank municipalities which will be flooded by the proposed power dam, should be left properly with the Department of Municipal Affairs, backed by advisers of the Hydro, Highways and Health branches.

Out of the discussion came the declaration by Hon. T. B. McQuesten, Highways and Municipal Affairs Minister, that the roads branch had under advisement a long-range plan capable of being swung into effect after the war.

"We are prepared at any time," he said, "with an after-the-war program employing 50,000 men a year for five years and costing \$50,000,000 a year. We can handle highway additions to this extent with profit to the Province."

### Considered by Cabinet.

Linked with that scheme, he said, was a plan for resurveying the entire taxing system and "we believe it should coincide with that great eastern development."

He revealed also that problems of the St. Lawrence municipalities have been given the special attention of a subcommittee of the Cabinet. Premier Hepburn said that, since the session started, the Housing Committee of the Province had been assured that any municipality requiring assistance in planning shall be granted the advice and support of the Government departments. Colonel Drew's commission, he held, was premature. He believed that the House was not divided on the principle of planning but on the method of procedure.

The call to division revealed that F. B. Brownridge (Lib., Stormont) and a resident of Cornwall, which is situated just below the proposed power dam, had left the Chamber. Mr. Brownridge read to the House a wire from the Cornwall town-planning body asking for the co-ordination of zoning and planning schemes and provision for a Provincial planning board. He suggested that a representative of the St. Lawrence municipalities should be appointed to the board. "I am in favor of the resolution," he said, and promised his co-operation to the suggested board.

### Pickering Is Cited.

Mr. Dunbar, the recalcitrant on the Opposition side, believed municipal affairs should be the guiding force in town planning. The municipalities had to go to the department in any event to have works sanctioned.

As the vote was being taken, Mr. Dunbar was counted among the supporters although Liberal members chorused their doubts. At the end, Provincial Secretary Nixon queried the vote and Mr. Dunbar said he had not supported the motion.

There was a chorus of applause from the Government benches which was stilled suddenly, when Colonel Drew said: "I am very glad to see our member voting against it rather than running out like another," turning to the vacant seat of the Stormont member.

Colonel Drew's motion asserted that effective planning, under a commission as proposed, was made particularly urgent by the St. Lawrence situation, and in argument said that special municipal emergencies arising from war production are being created and demanded attention of a planning body. He cited Pickering, where 2,000 acres of land have been expropriated for munition making and where it is anticipated there will be a huge influx of labor.

He suggested the commission should be composed of an architect, engineer, social service expert, and a doctor, all outstanding in their professions, and a representative of agriculture and of labor, as well as others.

Mr. McQuesten pledged that the department will give all necessary town planning assistance when it is asked for. He opposed any large-scale planning on the St. Lawrence due to uncertainties existing in the development.

George H. Challies (Con., Dundas), a resident of Morrisburg, which will be partially flooded, declared "the municipalities down there are looking for some guidance, some assistance, and some help."