

APRIL 10

M.P.P. APPROVES OF PLEBISCITE

Members of the Ontario Legislature were called yesterday to give leadership and rally an affirmative plebiscite vote in their ridings when W. L. Miller (Liberal, Algoma-Manitoulin), declared a negative majority on the question "would be a national tragedy, received joyfully in the Hitler camp."

The member's statement on the plebiscite was the first mentioned made on that issue during the current session. His assertions brought from Lieutenant-Colonel Drew, Conservative Leader, and the following speaker in the Budget debate, full support and the declaration that, "Speaking for myself, I have every intention of voting yes, regardless of my feelings of the necessity of holding it."

Colonel Drew emphasized that the good-will and respect of the people of the United States was most essential at this time. "From personal contacts with those people, I am convinced," he said, "that a 'no' vote on the plebiscite will be interpreted there as an isolationist stand in Canada and a negative vote for a full out war effort."

HOUSE ADOPTS BUDGET SPEECH WITHOUT VOTE

Oliver Says Government Policy Is Economic Social Justice to All

The Ontario Legislature, shortly before midnight last night, concluded its third wartime Budget debate and moved into a consideration of the \$60,309,636 in estimates to be voted for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1943.

The action, made on a formal adoption of the motion to go into supply, followed an almost precedent-shattering decision of the Opposition not to force a division. Conservative critics left no doubt of their opposition to many factors in Premier Hepburn's budget and, as the House adjourned, it was intimated there would be further attacks on Government financing during the estimates' discussion.

Hon. Farquhar R. Oliver, Minister of Welfare and of Public Works, closed the argument on behalf of the Government, maintained that the tax structure was neither burdensome nor oppressive and laid down as Government policy the principle of providing equitably the widest service to the greatest number of people, and economic and social justice to all.

The Minister, a general stock farmer of Grey County, drew the attention of the House to a serious condition that exists in agriculture in the Province at the present time; one, he said, that must not be allowed to exist while the war is on, because it is necessary for the farmers to produce foodstuffs for Great Britain. He stated that recent census figures showed that in the ten-year period from 1931 to 1941 no less than 12,986 Ontario farms had been left unoccupied.

"The trouble with agriculture in Ontario is simply one of an economic nature," he said. "If the farmer only got the cost of production, plus a sufficient compensation, he could continue to produce. I believe that the products of the farm will play as important a part as the products of industry before the war is over, and I cannot see why the powers-that-be cannot do the same for agriculture as they have done for industry. I think it will have to be done."

"We are very short of farm help, and there again the question of dollars and cents is of paramount importance. The farmer and the hired man are going to the city because they can get more money working on munitions. This situation will become more aggravated unless something is done to bring about a parity between wages in the factory and what the farmer can pay to his hired man."

The tendency in many quarters for doubt to creep in as to whether all the sacrifices that are being made to further our war effort have not been frustrated by mistaken policy or bad leadership was deplored by F. Fraser Hunter (Lib., Toronto-St. Patrick) last night. He tendered the advice to all to "keep our shirts on." He regretted the growing evidence of impatience and the indication of a desire to force issues to immediate conclusions.

He concluded with a plea for an affirmative vote in the coming plebiscite.

G. C. Elgie (Con., Toronto-Woodbine), whose attack in the 1941 debate upon the Government's administration of the beverage-room system provoked a bitter exchange in the House, last night declared "liquor control should be taken out of politics, and certainly the hours of sale should be cut down."