

CAUCUS AGAIN ON LABOR BILL

When Premier Conant left the Liberal Party caucus at Queen's Park Monday night, it was with the understanding that the Government's collective bargaining bill would be brought down in the Legislature on Thursday.

After the Premier's departure, however, former Provincial Secretary Harry Nixon came out strongly for a caucus at which the completed bill could be examined by the members before presentation to the House. Mr. Nixon was able to gain considerable support for his contention that the Liberals were entitled to see the bill before it was introduced in the Legislature.

The following day the Cabinet Ministers who remained at the caucus until it broke up, informed the Premier that the Government supporters insisted on another caucus before the bargaining bill came up for first reading.

Today at 2 o'clock the Liberals will again caucus the bill. Friday it will be introduced for first reading in the Legislature.

Juvenile Delinquency Rise Blamed on Liquor

Number of Prisoners Under 25 Years Increased by 50 Per Cent in Five Years, Says Challies

Liquor as a main cause of increased juvenile delinquency and crime in general in Ontario under the present Provincial Administration was cited in the Legislature yesterday by G. H. Challies (Prog. Cons., Grenville-Dundas), former Provincial Secretary. He declared that it was the Government's responsibility and the Government should look after it.

The juvenile delinquency age was lowering, he said, stating that in 1933 49 per cent of young prisoners in Ontario were under 25 years of age, whereas in 1938 this figure had increased by 50 per cent.

"You can't increase the sale of booze from \$30,000,000 to \$100,000,000 without getting such results," he said, "and the breaking down of the home goes right back to this." He quoted Mr. Justice E. R. E. Chevrier's statement at Kingston on March 12: "How in the name of heaven do the younger generation hope to run this world when the standards of morals are lessening every day?"

Convictions Up.

All convictions, juvenile and adult, had increased from 13,509 in 1934 to 29,926 in 1939, Mr. Challies said. Drunkenness had increased from 8,724 convictions in 1933 to 18,120 in 1939 and drunk driving from 498 in 1933 to 980 in 1938.

"Yes, but there was no law in force under your Government," H. C. Nixon (Lib., Brantford), interjected. "That's why you were put out."

Cost of keeping prisoners had increased from 90½ cents in 1933 to \$1.58 in 1938 and \$1.40 in 1942, Mr. Challies said, an increase when the Government had promised reduction. As a further "sign of the times," Mr. Challies said alcoholic cases committed to mental institutions in Ontario were 22 in 1933 and 40 in 1938.

Law and Order Costs.

Cost of administering law and order in Ontario had risen from \$914,000 in 1933 to \$1,565,000 in 1942. Mr. Challies charged, too, a steady debt growth in the Province from \$188,000,000 in 1929 to \$358,000,000 in 1934 and \$506,000,000 in 1942, an increase which, he said, was "a true yardstick of how the Province stands," and should give food for thought. Cost of administration had risen sharply in all 19 departments of Government except two minor ones, the Department of Insurance and the Department of the Provincial Auditor. A Government pledged to cut it in half had increased it from \$5,621,748.24 in 1933 to \$8,142,696.96 in 1941. To which Mr. Nixon replied: "How many millions did you cross-entry off?"

ASSESSMENTS STUDY URGED

Gardhouse Sees Need of Equalization Action

Appointment of a committee to deal with the problem of equalized assessments and possible revision of the Municipal Act and other statutes affecting municipalities, was urged on the Government yesterday by William Gardhouse (Lib., West York). He spoke in the Legislature Budget debate.

The far-reaching changes in economic and social conditions made it necessary to have revision of existing acts, Mr. Gardhouse said. Study of the equalized assessment question would undoubtedly bring good results.

Mr. Gardhouse predicted a serious food shortage unless help was given the farmers. The labor problem was the most serious one facing the men on the land, he declared. Rivalling it in importance was the lack of farm machinery, he said.

The last Opposition speaker in the Budget debate was G. C. Elgie (Prog. Con., Woodbine), who criticized the Government's record. The operations of the Old-Age Pensions Commission came under fire, Mr. Elgie declaring that many soldiers overseas had been compelled to assign more and more of their pay to maintain their aged parents who had been cut off by the commission.

Mail Opening by Secret Agents Suggests 'Espionage': Drew

Steaming open of mail of members of the Ontario Legislature was protested again in the House yesterday by Opposition Leader George Drew, who registered a similar protest last session.

"Since last session a letter which I wrote, addressed to a well-known officer at Ottawa, was steamed open, in a very clumsy manner, and returned to me," said Col. Drew. "I am the Leader of the Opposition and occupy an official position. I do not believe it proper for secret agents of any department to be steaming open letters marked plainly on the back, 'Leader of the Opposition.'"

Col. Drew recalled that last time he had brought the matter up, Postmaster-General Mulock had said no instructions had been given to open mail. "It is not done by officials of the Postoffice Department, but by secret agents operating under the

Department of Justice," Col. Drew declared.

"There is an attempt to use methods intended for the protection of the State for political purposes, obtaining information not right for the person getting it to have. I want to register my objection against letters to members at Ottawa being opened in an underhand manner, not frankly opened and frankly marked opened by censor, but in a way to suggest espionage. That brings into disrepute a perfectly proper control."