

DREW PREPARED TO ACCEPT TEST ON 'CONFIDENCE'

Giving emphatic denial to the Opposition claim that the present Government is a minority one, Premier George A. Drew told the Legislature yesterday that he was prepared to accept at any time a want-of-confidence motion as a test of the Government's right to continue executive direction of Provincial affairs.

Failure to bring in a want-of-confidence motion would be taken by the Administration as expressing confidence in the continuance of the Government's work, he declared.

The question was raised by C.C.F. Leader E. B. Jolliffe, who invited the Premier to say at the first opportunity what circumstances would be interpreted by him as giving rise to a question of confidence or no confidence. As far as the C.C.F. was concerned, he said, defeat of a Government bill would not constitute defeat of the Government.

Analyzes Points.

As soon as Mr. Jolliffe concluded his address on the Speech from the Throne, Premier Drew rose and answered points raised by the Opposition Leader. The Premier spoke for 30 minutes and adjourned the debate at 6 p.m. He will continue his address next Tuesday.

"This is not a minority Government," said the Premier. "It is the Government called to give executive direction to the affairs of this Legislature. It may be a healthy thing to see members free to express their own opinions and vote in accordance with their own views.

"This cannot be a minority Government. You have the power to move a want-of-confidence motion which we will be glad to accept as an issue. If this is not done, we must imply you have confidence in the continuance of our work as the Government of this Province.

No Thought of Dictatorship.

"As for the terms on which we will govern," the Premier told the House, "there are no terms and no thought of dictatorship. Even a hint of dictatorship is a reflection on the man who makes it," said Mr. Drew. "We are in the position where we must depend entirely on your support of what is done.

"We do not intend to govern in a spirit of fear," he made plain. "We assume full responsibility, and as soon as you feel we have not confidence, the democratic test is there."

The Premier said he agreed with the Opposition Leader that there was no reason why a wide spirit of co-operation could not be achieved by those who believed in the welfare of the Province and not "party expediency." He would welcome support of measures on the widest possible basis, he said, and promised "full discussion," and that all bills would "go through the democratic mill of this Legislature."

BILL TO AMEND LEGITIMACY ACT

Asserting that the present Legitimacy Act is "back in the Middle Ages" as regards inheritance, Attorney-General Leslie Blackwell introduced in the Legislature yesterday a bill to amend the act so that mothers could inherit property of illegitimate children and vice-versa.

Premier Drew also announced his plan for stenographic reports of debates, copies of which will be supplied to party leaders, the clerk and the Legislative library. There was no thought of establishing a Hansard as at Ottawa, but merely a record, and the heavy expense of Hansard would not apply. The move was commended by C.C.F. and Liberal party leaders.

Mr. Blackwell introduced a bill to amend the Abitibi Moratorium Act, explaining that it is an extension of a previous act, purpose of which is to prevent the Abitibi Power and Paper Co. property from being "sold under the hammer." To date the result of the moratorium had been, he said, that bondholders now getting 36 cents on the dollar appear likely to receive 100 cents.

Seeks Data on Hotel

In a question on the Legislature order paper, William Dennison (C.C.F., Toronto-St. David) asks if James Franceschini, Italian-born contractor, interned after Italy entered the war and later released, owns the Royal Cecil Hotel, Toronto; on what date he first obtained a hotel license, when a beer license was issued and whether the premises were operated under the control of the custodian of enemy alien property, and, if so, for how long.