

Drew to Answer Critics On Family Allowances

Premier George A. Drew will take the floor in the Legislature Monday in reply to Opposition members who spent two hours yesterday hammering at the Government on the family allowances issue. The entire sitting was taken up with debate on this question, and the criticism was directed at Premier Drew's Aug. 9 radio address in which he criticized the Dominion's legislation.

A. A. MacLeod, Labor-Progressive Leader, moved adjournment of the House to consider a matter of "urgent public importance." Unless the Premier was prepared to state the position of his Government on family allowances, Mr. MacLeod said he would introduce a resolution calling for condemnation of the Government.

In order to have the matter thoroughly aired, the Premier and his Ministers refrained from taking part in the debate which followed Mr. MacLeod's motion to adjourn, which was accepted by the Speaker. The ensuing debate saw Liberal House Leader Mitchell F. Hepburn speak briefly and numerous C.C.F. members give their views on the subject. By agreement between the party leaders, the family allowances debate will proceed Monday, with the Throne Speech debate resuming Tuesday.

Charges Aim at Disunity

Mr. Hepburn accused the Premier of attempting to create disunity in Canada, and asserted that Quebec would pay 34.5 per cent of the cost of family allowances and receive 32 per cent of the payments. He did not admire the Premier for "cloaking himself in a mask of silence," Mr. Hepburn said.

After a dozen members had spoken, H. C. Nixon, former Liberal Leader, said he was prepared to move an amendment to the MacLeod motion to adjourn "that this House stands adjourned until the Government is prepared to state its stand on family allowances." Mr. Nixon said he did not have the book of House rules with him, but it was his understanding that if the motion before the House was allowed to die, the subject matter could not be brought up again this session.

"It is not my custom to back away from any statement I have made or any position I have taken," Premier Drew said. "It is obvious that the members wish to discuss the matter further, and I said earlier that full opportunity to discuss it would be given. I have said I propose to discuss it and I mean exactly that. Several members of the Government have also expressed a desire to take part in this debate."

"Hepburn's Hussars"

Then gernal debate on family allowances which followed acceptance of the MacLeod motion saw a number of C.C.F. members refer to the Hepburn regime and the policy of that Government during the days of depression.

William Dennison (C.C.F., Toronto-St. David) spoke of "Hepburn's Hussars" and asserted: "Opposition to decent relief and welfare allowances did not start with the present Government, despite the fact that some people would like to give that impression."

Mr. Dennison assailed Mr. Hepburn for his treatment of the Lakeview strikers and the arrest of two of the strikers. This brought a defense from Mr. Hepburn, who said one of them was a criminal and the other was shown to have been on the relief rolls of two Provinces.

J. B. Salsberg (Lab.-Prog., Toronto-St. Andrew) seconded the MacLeod motion. Thousands of Ontario families were disturbed by the thought that the Provincial Government might attempt to prevent the payment of family allowances in Ontario, he said.

"Double-D" Opposition

Behind the cry of Provincial rights raised by the Government, was the "Double-D" opposition to family allowances. By "Double-D" he meant the Duplessis-Drew opposition, Mr. Salsberg explained.

"We must not allow the false cry of Provincial rights to block this or any other social legislation," Mr. Salsberg declared.

B. E. Leavens (C.C.F., Toronto Woodbine) said the Provincial rights cry was the "same old red herring" which had been dragged across other social security trails in Canada. The member for Elgin (Mr. Hepburn) used the same cry when he was Premier, Mr. Leavens remarked. The member scored the use of the phrase "baby bonus," and declared it was playing the "vilest type of politics with one of our most sacred institutions."

Miss Agnes Macphail (C.C.F., East York) said the Premier should let the House know where he stood on family allowances.

"If he changes his mind and admits he has made a mistake, we will respect him for it," Miss Macphail said. "One of the things I dislike about this is calling family allowances the baby bonus. Having babies isn't one of the things a woman undertakes for the sake of the small allowance."

Other C.C.F. speakers included Arthur Williams (Ontario), G. H. Mitchell (North York), and Cyril Overall (Niagara Falls).