

# Challies Predicts Cuts or Rebates For Hydro Users

Prediction that Ontario rural municipalities, with perhaps 10 or 12 exceptions, will enjoy either reductions in Hydro rates or rebates soon was made yesterday by George Challies, Ontario Hydro commissioner.

Speaking before the convention of the Ontario Association of Rural Municipalities, he declared that because of the amalgamation of the Georgian Bay, Eastern Ontario and Niagara systems the commission had found it possible to effect considerable savings which, in due course, would be passed along.

Outlining the growth of Hydro, he declared it now had assets of more than \$500 million and yearly turnover of funds amounting to more than \$50 million. At present 2½ million horsepower of electrical energy is being used, of which one million is purchased. All, however, is developed from waterpower. In the United States, he said, most electricity is developed from coal.

Until recently Ontario had 120 Hydro districts, scattered "hit and miss" throughout the Province, but these had now been consolidated into one district and boundary lines were wiped out. "The promise we made a year ago that the service charge to primary producers would be wiped out has been carried out. Farmers, because of the uniform rate, have paid out \$500,000 less this year than they did last year," he said.

## Bold Move Forecast

It was hoped, he continued, that "in the boldest move Hydro has seen since it was instituted, we will give service to 10,000 new consumers in Ontario." A five-year plan is being prepared for the postwar years which, he said, would make Ontario Hydro the "best rural Hydro system in North America. We hope to have 85 per cent of all the farms in Ontario equipped with Hydro," he said. Demonstration coaches would be sent into rural areas to show farmers just how Hydro could assist them, and rural Hydro superintendents would be available to farmers the same as agricultural representatives, he declared.

This year, if restrictions on materials are lifted, "we're hoping to build 400 miles of line and put 10,000 rural customers on if wartime conditions permit," he said.

Stamping as bad the practice of some municipalities in offering fixed assessments to industries seeking to locate in them, the convention unanimously adopted a resolution asking the Government to rule such assessments illegal. H. E. Kilman, Fenwick, sponsoring the resolution, declared in most cases "the companies have already made up their minds to locate in the municipality, but get fixed assessment through intimidation. They threaten they will not locate there if they do not get it."

## Would Avert Litigation

Another resolution, endorsed by 16 counties, asked the Department of Municipal Affairs to introduce legislation providing all claims against municipalities for damages for flooding or any other drainage damage claims be determined by a drainage referee or other officials appointed by the Government rather than by actions at law.

The convention unanimously adopted another resolution which asks the Provincial Government to review the situation regarding appointments for returned soldiers "and make no more permanent appointments until our soldiers overseas return home, when they will have an equal opportunity to apply for and obtain these positions."

J. N. Corry, Atwood, was elected president of the association at its final session yesterday. Vice-presidents are P. J. Mather, Keene; O. Foster, Staples; while the secretary-treasurer is W. S. Milmine, Stoney Creek.

Directors are J. P. Meilleur, Casselman; D. A. Hill, Waterford; H. E. Kilman, Fenwick; E. Campbell, Chatham Township; S. Nicolson, Belleville; Dr. J. H. Munroe, Maxville; Robert Reid, Arthur, and H. Miskell, Mooretown.