

March 17

"And other things, too," said Highways Minister Doucett.

Mr. Hepburn countered with: "I couldn't believe a Minister could do a thing of this kind, but then, he had been an agent of the company. Mr. McManus is a reputable citizen."

"I doubt it," said Mr. Doucett.

#### "Was Not Caught"

When Mr. Hepburn repeated that Mr. Doucett had been "caught in his attempt to assist the company," Mr. Doucett expostulated: "I have given you my word and you are obliged by the rules of this House to accept it. I was not caught and as soon as this letter was brought to my attention I attended to it as I have said."

Repeating that Mr. McManus was a very reputable London business man, Mr. Hepburn said the Highways Minister had acted to punish him.

"I want to tell you the most sordid story ever told in the history of Ontario politics," Mr. Hepburn went on amid derisive sounds from the Government benches.

"I buy gas and oil from the McManus Petroleum Co. It's an independent company, and independent companies are the only protection we have against the great gas companies. He decided to build storage tanks at Port Stanley so the farmers could not be exploited by the big companies, and, with the wrath of the Minister of Highways hanging over his head because he was caught, the work was stopped."

#### Under a Cloud

Here Speaker Stewart intervened to remind Mr. Hepburn that his actions were against the rules of the House. "If a member makes a statement and gives his word you must accept it," he said. He declared Mr. McManus was "under a cloud" because he had made the letter on bonds public.

"I had no knowledge of the letter until you made it public," said Mr. Doucett.

"When it went out," continued Mr. Hepburn, "it created a furor in the insurance world. It was unprecedented. Nothing like it had ever happened before."

He said Mr. McManus had proceeded in the usual way to make his every move legal and proper. He had applied to the Village of Port Stanley for permission to lay pipe and a by-law had been passed. He had got the permission of the Dominion Department of Transport and of the Highways Department, "probably without the knowledge of the Minister of Highways."

When objection was taken to the proximity of the proposed tanks to a 100-year-old church, Mr. McManus had purchased a 65-acre farm some distance away. Yet, to punish him for making public the letter, he had been ordered by the Highways Department to stop operations.

#### Asks Fairness

"Be fair," asked Mr. Doucett. "I've told you I knew nothing about the letter until you read it in this House. That is on my word of honor."

Mr. Hepburn went on to say the Highways Department had ordered removal of all pipe laid "to punish him for exposing you. It's one of the most ghastly things."

Attorney-General Blackwell challenged Mr. Hepburn, and declared: "He has made this statement with the full knowledge that it is untrue. It is inconceivable, in view of the intimate connection that exists between Mr. Hepburn and Mr. McManus, that he has the effrontery to make such a statement, knowing that the people of Port Stanley had taken legal steps to prevent this nuisance. A delegation came to me to see if they could bring the matter before the courts to prevent that outrage. I said I did not think it was a proper case for the intervention of the Crown and suggested that the best test was a test of public opinion in a municipal election. Such was the attitude to that council that made a deal with McManus that every member of it was defeated. Mr. Hepburn has made that statement with the full knowledge that it is untrue."

Then Liquor Commissioner W. G. Webster hurled his bombshell.

Mr. Hepburn went on to say that now the McManus company had been given two weeks' notice to remove pipes costing \$40,000, and asked why. The order had come from the Deputy Minister.

"I'd like to answer this one," cut in Highways Minister Doucett. "I have no dispute with the Deputy Minister. Mr. McManus had notice before completing the job and went ahead and laid pipe after the notice was served. You should withdraw that statement. I have no quarrel with the Deputy Minister and he will clarify it if you want to bring him before the Public Accounts Committee. In Public Accounts I would welcome a complete investigation."

#### "Suits Me Perfectly"

"That suits me perfectly," said Mr. Hepburn, adding: "There's no use pursuing the debate in the House. Let's go before Public Accounts. You have no interest in building the tanks, only in damage to highways. Your only interest was in punishing McManus. The Minister took the ball. Mr. McManus appealed to Deputy Minister Millar, who said to proceed. Now he's still under the plow. He wants to build tanks, but right now he's like Mahomet, suspended between heaven and earth."

Premier Drew called attention to the fact that more than an hour of the House's time had already been taken up "by a device of the member for Elgin to air his own views here following a simple statement. Mr. Hepburn said once of Ottawa that it was the only lunatic asylum operated by the inmates themselves. I don't intend to let this House become like that."

Mr. Hepburn said he resented being so classified.

Mr. Jolliffe ended the discussion by stating all parties wanted a return of correspondence in the case

and an investigation before the Public Accounts Committee.

## Riggs Sponsors Chemurgy Plan

Diversification of industries and establishment of those which through chemurgy, would process the products grown in Southwestern Ontario was suggested by William C. Riggs (C.C.F., Windsor-Walkerville) in the Legislature Thursday night as a means of maintaining a stable industrial situation in Windsor after the war.

The member said the Ford Motor Company, as an example, has 14,000 workers and 5,000 overseas with seniority. In normal times, he said, employment in the Windsor plants of the firm was about 8,000. Thus 11,000 Ford men would be looking for work after the war.

Mr. Riggs said that adoption of diversification by using the products of the soil at hand could not only be Windsor's solution but the solution for Canada as a whole.

He pointed to soybeans and their byproducts as one means of expanding industry in Southwestern Ontario.

At the moment corn is widely grown in that part of the country and the market has been greatly enlarged. With proper encouragement, Mr. Riggs said, this market can be maintained after the war.