

Obstructionist Tactics Delayed House Business

Defeat of the Drew Government last night finds the business of the Legislature nowhere near completion, and the delay in transacting the work of the House stems from the tactics of some Opposition members who have used the "before the orders of the day" technique to consume hours of time in speech-making.

Reference to this was made by the Premier during his history-making address which wound up the debate. The people of Ontario would be able to judge for themselves how much of the time of the House was taken up with matters other than the business of the Legislature.

The Throne Speech debate this session opened Tuesday, Feb. 20, and ended March 22. In 1944 the debate opened Feb. 23 and concluded March 15, a three-week debate as compared with a month this year. In 1944 the Budget debate opened March 16 and wound up March 28. This session there has been no opportunity for a Budget debate. The House went into Com-

mittee of Supply to pass on an \$8,808,000 estimate for education, and nothing resembling a Budget debate has taken place.

Even in this matter of passing the special grant to school boards, the Liberal group headed by Mitchell F. Hepburn attempted to thwart the Government. Mr. Hepburn insisted that no supply could be voted until the Throne Speech debate was completed, and only after some hours of discussion the item was passed.

There have been days when the entire afternoon session was taken up with members rising on points of order, on questions of privilege, on motion to adjourn the House "to consider a matter of urgent public importance." These were invariably the signals for Opposition members to get to their feet and indulge in long and often wandering speeches.

Three Contributors

Joseph B. Salsberg, the Labor-Progressive member for Toronto-St. Andrew, was on his feet more often than any other member. William Dennison (C.C.F., Toronto-St. David) and Arthur Williams (C.C.F., Ontario) were not far behind in length of contributions.

The first recorded division in the Legislature occurred March 7, when Mr. Hepburn divided the House on Treasurer Leslie M. Frost's motion to go into Committee of Ways and Means.

A. A. MacLeod, Labor-Progressive Leader, and Mr. Salsberg voted with the Liberals. On March 14 there was another House division, and again the two Labor-Progressives voted with the Liberals.

The long debates, the numerous repetitions in Opposition members' remarks, caused a piling up of business that threatened to create a critical situation. Only by holding successive night sessions during this week was the mass of accumulated business thinned out. And there still remain plenty of bills in various stages of the House.

Asks Why Door Barred To British Servicemen

Demand that the King Government explain why it has refused to grant preferential consideration for United Kingdom ex-servicemen, especially those who trained in Canada, as immigrants to Canada, was made last night in the Legislature by Premier George Drew.

Referring to his earlier statements on this issue, and to a published report in which Resources Minister Crerar stated he knew nothing about any reluctance on the part of the Federal Government to grant such preferential treatment, Premier Drew remarked that this statement had followed his charge that the Dominion Government had refused it.

Speaking last night in the closing moments of the Throne Speech debate, Premier Drew continued, "I had said Ontario had a right to know why the Canadian Government had failed to give such consideration to those young servicemen from the United Kingdom who might be anxious to establish their future homes here."

Jibes at Hepburn

"Now I will admit that when I saw Mr. Crerar last it was at a time when I was seeing more eye to eye with the member for Elgin (Provincial Liberal Leader Hepburn) and it was at a meeting with the Dominion Cabinet. He was not following everything very closely."

"Who wasn't?" demanded Mr. Hepburn amid laughter.

"Oh, I mean Mr. Crerar," said Premier Drew, joining in the laughs. "I would like to jog his memory a bit. And I will do it from the record, not from my memory. I will read a cablegram, and it records the decision of a Cabinet meeting. It says, and I quote: 'Canadian Government not in favor of granting preferential treatment to United Kingdom servicemen, even those serving or who have served in Canada.'"

"Now that is from the official records," said Premier Drew. As Aurelien Belanger (L., Prescott) asked wherein the cable referred to immigration, the Premier laughed and said, "It refers to immigration, as I'm sure our unfortunate friend Mr. Crerar will recall sadly. There is much to evidence that."

Vitally Interested

"The point I make, however, is that this Province is vitally interested in the immigration policy that will be determined in the future. We had thousands of those young men out here. They saw our way of life, our customs. They know

if they would like to live here, and if they should so decide, I submit there should be some prearranged preferential plan by which they could enter Canada."

Stressing that he had already revealed to the Legislature that the Provinces had a legal, in addition to the economic, right to participate in matters of immigration, and that Ontario House had already received 25,000 requests for immigration information—evidence of British interest—the Premier demanded that Ottawa clarify its stand.

"We have a clear right to know why no arrangement has been reached yet as to the position of servicemen from the United Kingdom," he declared, "and whether there will be such an arrangement when we determine on an immigration policy in the future."