

March 24

## Dissolution Stay Sought to Enact City Private Bills

Although no public statement was forthcoming from Premier George A. Drew, both C.C.F. Leader E. B. Jolliffe and Liberal Leader M. F. Hepburn assured Mayor Saunders yesterday they were willing to prolong the session of the Legislature sufficiently to pass several City of Toronto private bills.

Mayor Saunders emphasized last night that Premier Drew had not refused the request for passage of the Toronto bills, but had indicated he would confer with Cabinet colleagues on the matter.

Unless the Legislature approves of Toronto's previous arrangements regarding housing expenditures, City Council members may be individually liable for the funds expended, the mayor said.

### Would Withdraw Zoning Plan

Until now, the city has spent \$368,000 on emergency housing, and has made commitments for the spending of an additional \$240,000, said the mayor. Legislation legalizing these expenditures has been sought by the city in private bills.

An emergency meeting of Board of Control yesterday unanimously requested the Government to stay dissolution of the Legislature until the Toronto bills had been approved.

The city is willing to withdraw its zoning by-law, toward which opposition has been advanced, if this withdrawal will speed passage of the remainder of the Toronto legislation, the board decided.

### Impediment to Projects

"We have put forward private bills which concern postwar planning and would enable us to effect a master plan for Toronto," the mayor said. "Unless we obtain this legislation, our slum clearance projects will be impeded seriously. We must approach Ottawa in the near future regarding Federal assistance for our postwar works. I know that the Dominion Government will not assist us in housing projects unless we can demonstrate that we have a master plan for the city and can chart its progress into the postwar era."

If the legislation is not forthcoming, a special City Council meeting will be called by the mayor to discuss the situation.

## May or June Election Likely For Ontario

After a three-hour Cabinet session at Queen's Park yesterday, Premier George A. Drew told newspapermen: "The course of action has been decided upon, but it would be most improper for me to say anything more until necessary formalities have been completed." The Premier added that he hoped to be in a position to give more definite information today.

This was the only official statement to emerge from the Parliament Buildings following the 51-to-36 defeat of the Drew Administration in the Legislature early Friday morning by a combined C.C.F.-Liberal-Labor-Progressive vote.

There is little doubt that Mr. Drew and his Cabinet have agreed upon the necessity of holding a general election as early as possible, most likely late in May or early in June, and that dissolution will be granted by Lieutenant-Governor Albert Matthews. It is learned that the Premier conferred with the Lieutenant-Governor yesterday morning and received an assurance that dissolution of the Legislature would be the course followed.

### Two Courses Open

Defeat of the Drew Government in the Legislature opened two courses for the Administration. The Premier, as Chief Minister of the Crown, could advise the Lieutenant-Governor to call upon Opposition Leader E. B. Jolliffe and ask him to form a Government. The alternative would be to recommend dissolution and the calling of an election. The second course is the one understood to have been adopted by the Government.

There is no chance that Mr. Jolliffe will get a bid to form an Administration. It is pointed out that if the Progressive Conservatives, with 38 seats, could not continue to command majority support in the Legislature, the C.C.F., with 32 seats, would have even less success, particularly in view of the fact that they would have to depend upon Liberal House support.

The Drew Cabinet will continue to function as Executive Council until after the next election, believed likely to take place about the first week in June. The Premier will meet the Legislature Tuesday and it is possible the House may sit for several days to clean up unfinished business. What the Premier intends to tell the House is his and the Cabinet's secret, but it is possible the Government Leader may

make a full statement to the Legislature.

It will be necessary for the Legislature to pass the Voters' List Act and the new Election Act, which are tied in with the Overseas Election Act. The overseas act was given third reading and Royal Assent, but the other measures still are in committee stage.

In fixing the date of the election, it is understood the Government will take into consideration the fact that 10 weeks or more will be necessary for the proper recording of the active service vote overseas. This would make the earliest an election could be held some time early in June.

It is reported that the new regulations under the Overseas Election Act are near completion. The act provides that the Chief Election Officer for Ontario must supply a certificate that he has conferred with the Chief Election Officer for the Dominion and that the Ontario act follows the Dominion legislation. This entails a visit to Ottawa and the working out of details, all of which consumes time.

### Returning Officers

The printing of ballots and their despatch and distribution overseas is another big item in the work of preparing to take the active service vote. Returning officers also must be sent overseas.

The overseas vote may be taken prior to the vote in Ontario, and the hours of polling must be satisfactory to the commanding officers of the different units concerned. The Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council may designate voting areas such as the United Kingdom, Italy and Western Europe, which takes in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany.

On polling day overseas the votes will be tabulated and cabled to the Chief Election Officer in Ontario, who in turn will inform the various returning officers in the ridings.

### Hepburn's Stand

In a statement issued yesterday, Liberal House Leader Mitchell F. Hepburn charged the Government with pursuing a persistent policy "of deliberately ignoring and challenging the Opposition members, who constitute a majority of the elected representatives of the Legislature." The sovereign power of the people themselves must make the final decision, he declared.

Mr. Hepburn said his group in the Legislature is prepared to co-operate with the Government in passing essential bills and in voting sufficient supply to carry on the business of Ontario during the period of a general election.

### Jolliffe's Statement

Mr. Jolliffe issued a statement charging that "the present political crisis was deliberately engineered by Premier Drew. Ever since last summer he has zealously followed a course which he knew could not be accepted by the Opposition majority.

"He did everything he could to make his own defeat inevitable because he is determined to force an election, if he can, before the end of the war. He knows that when the war ends the policy of his Government will be exposed as miserably and disastrously inadequate."