

March 9

# Members Sitting Overtime for Session Speedup

Indication that the Drew Government intends to advance legislation and the general business of the Legislature without undue delay this session was seen in the House yesterday when, instead of the usual early Friday week-end adjournment, the members sat for two hours and advanced 17 Government bills through second reading or committee stage.

Further evidence of a quickening tempo came at adjournment when Premier Drew announced that there would be two night sessions next week, and that he hoped to conclude the Throne Speech debate by 6 p.m. Thursday. If this plan materializes, the Throne Speech debate will have occupied only five days instead of the several weeks which it customarily takes.

Conclusion of this debate will clear the way for introduction of the Budget at probably the earliest stage of the session in many years.

Premier Drew said that Monday would be devoted to consideration of legislation, and that on Tuesday W. J. Grummett, C.C.F. House Leader, would resume the debate on the motion to adopt the Speech from the Throne. The House will sit Tuesday and Wednesday nights, and the hope was expressed that the debate would be concluded by 6 p.m. Thursday.

## Precedent Broken

The Government also broke precedent on opening day last Monday, when, instead of adjourning after the formal ceremonies, it went ahead to introduce 32 bills for the House's consideration.

Among bills given second reading yesterday was Mines Minister Leslie Frost's amendment to the Damage by Fumes Arbitration Act, affecting mining centres in the North such as Sudbury, and an act respecting marine insurance, which Attorney-General Leslie Blackwell explained provided for a codification of the marine insurance law long overdue in this Province. This, he said, would make the codified law available to insurers and insureds alike, whereas, until now, they had had to go to the common law or to textbook writers.

Mines Minister Frost explained that his act would provide the first appeal court for thousands of farmers and others in mining areas whose crops, farm implements and metal fences were damaged by sulphur fumes from mining operations. Appeal will be from arbitrators, from whom there has been no appeal, to the Ontario Municipal Board.

Mr. Frost pointed out that for years claims for damages against mining companies over sulphur fumes had to be taken to the Division Courts, causing hardship to claimants. Later, agricultural representatives were appointed as arbitrators. It was felt, he said, that to avoid any possible injustice, a court of appeal from such awards should be provided.

## Damage Diminishing

The Minister explained that, with the abolition of "open roasting" methods, and installation of high smokestacks, much of the fumes damage of past years had disappeared. But he said that sulphur fumes had often denuded an entire countryside of foliage and that "to this day some areas are completely barren."

"Now," said Mr. Frost, "International Nickel and other companies have huge smokestacks which take fumes high in the air. But there are occasions when smoke drops down and blights crops and trees." He said 587 damage claims had been made last year.

R. H. Carlin (C.C.F., Sudbury) criticized the amendment as "totally inadequate." He urged that there were only two solutions to the problem in Sudbury — that the Government should take "bold steps" and ask the International Nickel Company to remove the gas, or that a "proper board" would be established with adequate farmer representation. Thousands of dollars' damage could be avoided, he said, if the company would install gas-extracting equipment. Farmers of Sudbury, he said, demanded that the "devastating sulphur fumes" be removed. "You are working either for the farmers or the mining industry," he declared. "How would you like to waken in the morning and find all your garden crops burned to the ground?"

Though a special committee had reported that development of lignite deposits at Onakawana in Northern Ontario, long looked to as a fuel source for Ontario, was "not economic under present conditions," the Ontario Government feels that experiments should be continued. Mines Minister Frost told the House. He was replying to a question by A. A. MacLeod (L.P., Toronto-Bellwoods) regarding a newspaper report of intention of Chicago interests to conduct experiments in Canadian lignite. Mr. Frost said he knew nothing of the Chicago interests or their process, but promised to make inquiries immediately.