

# PREMIER TO PROBE CASE OF PROFESSORS

## Government Will Consider Whole University Situation — Toronto Legislators Head Demand to Dismiss Ger- mans — Board of Education Wants Other Pro- fessors Disciplined

The Provincial Government will immediately take into consideration all the circumstances surrounding the embroglio resulting from the compromise decision of the Board of Governors to grant the German professors at the University of Toronto leave of absence with pay. If any general investigation of conduct and management of the University is deemed necessary as a result, "all matters pertinent to the subject" will be fully investigated.

Such were the promises made by Hon. W. H. Hearst to the large deputation which thronged the Legislative reception room and crowded the adjoining hall last night. "We will neither evade our duty nor sidestep our responsibility," declared the Premier.

### Deputation Was Big.

The deputation was announced by Mr. W. D. McPherson, K.C., M.P.P., who introduced them, to be "not only representative of Toronto, but of the Province of Ontario, both east and west." It was headed by the following Toronto members of the Legislature: Messrs. W. D. McPherson, E. W. J. Owens, W. H. Price and Thos. Hook. Although professedly non-partisan, and comprising many men in both political parties, it numbered as well Presidents and officers of various Conservative Associations, and many of the civic candidates seeking municipal honors in Toronto. Among those from outside points were: Mr. T. B. Collins of Millbrook, and Mr. E. T. Essery, K.C., of London.

The visitors made the strength of their convictions very manifest by applause and comments, the criticism by Mr. Owens of President Falconer as attempting to "exercise an autocratic despotism with moneys that come from the public purse" being especially vigorously applauded, while Dr. Charles Sheard's declaration that there was "need for a general reorganization of University affairs if the institution is to be preserved as a great exponent of national ideals, national teaching and national precepts," was cheered loudly.

Premier Hearst, who was accompanied by Hon. Dr. Pyne, Minister of Education; Hon. W. J. Hanna, Provincial Secretary; Hon. I. B. Lucas, Provincial Treasurer, and Hon. James Duff, Minister of Agriculture, gave assurance that all matters brought to the attention of the Government by the deputation would be fully inquired into.

### Did President Cable?

"Will the Government, in the course of any investigation that may be held, ascertain whether President Falconer cabled to the old world after the formal outbreak of war, telling certain professors to come home so as to be here?" asked Mr. Owens.

"If there is necessity for investigation shown I can assure the deputation that there will be a thorough investigation of all matters pertinent to the subject," replied the Premier.

A resolution from the Toronto Board of Education stating that that body "believed it to be the duty of the Government to inquire into the conduct of these professors"—seven members of the faculty of the University who sent a memorial to the board protesting against a deliverance on the war by the Principal of Harbord Collegiate Institute—was presented to the Premier on behalf of the board, as was also a memorial from the staff of the collegiate, endorsing their principal and criticizing the professors in question for unwarranted and unpatriotic interference. Dr. Sheard maintained that this was the inception of the whole trouble, and had served to create serious doubt in the public mind as to the condition of things on the staff and management of the University. Premier Hearst stated that the Government would look into this phase of the matter also, but pointed out that all the seven professors in question were British subjects and not Germans.

The deputation also emphasized its protest against Professor Mueller be-

ing permitted to pay any substitute professor in the State-owned and State-supported University out of his private purse. "It is repugnant to the public," observed Dr. Sheard. "It makes our blood boil," said Mr. Owens.

The deputation had no especial criticism for the project to exchange the professors in question with others in United States universities. "But," said Dr. Sheard, "up to the present the proposed trade has been a failure. These professors are apparently not acceptable to the United States. They evidently don't want them." (Cheers.)

### "Subsidizing Aliens."

The views of the gathering were expressed by Mr. W. D. McPherson, M.P.P., Dr. Charles Sheard and Mr. E. W. J. Owens, M.P.P. They argued that the action of the Board of Governors was totally out of harmony with dominant public sentiment throughout the whole Province, was "entirely against the spirit of the University act, contrary to the interests of the institution and to the spirit and example of British precedent." They urged that there was immediate need for "a thorough reorganization of the administration of University affairs and a need for putting the institution on a basis which, while keeping it free from the zone of party politics, will give the people who supply the funds some control over their expenditure." Dr. Sheard described the action of the Governors as "the subsidizing of alien enemies," while Mr. Owens declared that "the public coffers are being depleted so that these Germans may go dangling up and down the street having a joyous good time at the expense of the Canadian people who are giving their men, their muscle and their money to the service of the Empire."

### Premier's Statement.

In his reply Premier Hearst stated that the Government regarded the whole question as a very important one. No one could be more British than the Government, or ready to go further in any course calculated to benefit the British Empire. But there were many phases of the situation to be considered. In considering, as it would, the action of the seven University professors who were said to have originated the feeling said to be existing, it was to be remembered that these men were British subjects, and not Germans. While he was not prepared to express any views as to the action of the Governors, the Premier also reminded the deputation that while there might be cause for criticism at bonusing or subsidizing the German professors when the public resources were required for other purposes, these men were engaged by the term, and the board would probably be met by a legal obligation if they were dismissed entirely.

"Dismiss them!" shouted a man in the audience, amid cheers.

Premier Hearst smiled, but made no comment.

The charge that the whole status of the University was being affected and that the university act was not working out upon the lines and in the spirit of its purpose, was, the Premier said, "entirely new to me, and will require great thought and attention." It was true that all staff changes must be recommended by the President, under the act, which had not, of course, contemplated any situation such as the present.

### Government to Act.

"The Government will take all your representations at once into its earnest consideration," promised the Premier. "Anything that affects the educational system of our Province affects the public in a vital spot. It is the supreme duty on the part of the Government to take measures to direct the education of our youth along lines not only calculated to prepare them for the battle of life, but as citizens of our country and our Empire. We will not evade our duty in this matter, nor sidestep our responsibility. You quite fairly claim that what you have submitted requires careful investigation. To act hastily would be culpable. I can promise you that all the matters referred to will have the fullest immediate attention of my colleagues and myself."