

NO ONTARIO ELECTION UNTIL AFTER THE WAR

The Government Accepts the Offer of the Opposition—Premier Stipulates It Shall Be Regarded as a Fresh Mandate From the People and the Dropping of Party Politics—Debate Ends.

THE FARM LABOR PROBLEM TO THE FRONT

While the members on both sides of the House banged their desks in approval, Sir William Hearst in the Legislature last night accepted the proposition of Mr. William Proudfoot, leader of the Opposition, to extend the life of the Legislature until after the end of the war.

The Premier's announcement, immediately after the House assembled in the evening, came with suddenness. After Mr. Proudfoot had stated in the afternoon that he and the Premier had been discussing the matter, it was generally believed that an election would not be held, but the Premier's announcement was unexpected.

In resuming the debate on the speech from the throne in the afternoon, Mr. Proudfoot said that an election would not be complete without the votes of the soldiers, and he did not think that the soldiers' votes could be secured at the present time. An election would also mean that the attention of the people, particularly that of many of the women, would be diverted from the prosecution of the war. He said he had received several letters from various women's associations protesting against the holding of an election, and on account of these reasons he asked the Government to exercise the power it possessed and extend its life.

Many Conferences Held.

"The Prime Minister and I have had several conferences regarding the matter, and I would like very much to see his Government adopt the plan I have outlined," he said.

For Duration of the War.

The Premier wanted to know how long he would have the Legislature extended, and Mr. Proudfoot replied that he would have it extended for a year. Later he said he would be willing to have it extended until after the end of the war.

Resuming the debate in the evening Sir William Hearst immediately dealt with Mr. Proudfoot's suggestion. "My hon. friend," he said, "urges that an election should not be held until after the war is over and the soldiers are back home and a reasonable time thereafter. What a reasonable time may be is hard to say now. It would certainly have to be long enough to enable the soldiers to settle down and the conditions become normal.

"The hon. gentleman has put his proposition in a fair and reasonable manner, and I have no doubt if we can agree on the principle we can agree on the details. The proposition my hon. friend has presented places a tremendous responsibility up my shoulders, but I have never shirked meeting a responsibility in the past and I will not shirk or hesitate now.

Cessation of Partyism.

"Of course, the proposition necessarily involves a cessation of party activities and party hostilities—I do not mean exemption from proper criticism, we don't ask that—but we have vacant seats that must be filled, that have been left open expecting an early election. It would be senseless to postpone a general election if we are to have party contests in bye-elections." (Applause.)

"Some of my friends may accuse me of not paying enough attention to my party," he said, "but the fortunes of political parties are but dust and ashes when the fate of a country hangs in the balance. I do not care what happens to the party if the length of the war can be shortened by one hour.

Fresh Mandate of the People.

"In accepting this suggestion made by the leader of the Opposition it must be on the distinct understanding that the Act extending the life of the Legislature will be construed the same as a fresh mandate from the electors," said Sir William, "so that we will feel free to enact any legislation we may consider to be in the interest of the Province no matter how radical and far-reaching that legislation may be.

In resuming the debate in replying to the speech from the throne in the afternoon, Mr. Proudfoot paid a glowing tribute to the work of Hon. N. W. Rowell, and wished the former leader and the Union Government every success.

In referring to the question of farming and of farm labor he said that a great deal of the work done by the farm tractors last year was experimental. "Instead of only allowing 25,000 acres to be ploughed they should increase the acreage. I tried to secure a tractor last year, but at the time there were not enough."

Mr. Proudfoot claimed that last year there were more men available for farm labor than the farmers were able to use. He paid a high tribute to the students who had worked on the farms.

"Why not use interned men for the purpose of production?" asked Mr. Proudfoot. "It might be asked who could look after them, but there are plenty of returned soldiers to do that."

Mr. Proudfoot said that the Government fish had been good and that more should be caught. He doubted whether as much fish could be secured by legitimate means as the Government thought there would. Mr. Proudfoot complained that a great deal of fish caught in Canadian waters had been shipped to the States which should have been used in Canada.

"We reach meatless days, but we send our beef across to the Buffalo market," he declared. "It seems inconsistent that while we have to do without meat here we ship it across the line."

Year's Vegetables From Quarter Acre.

Mr. Proudfoot gave an example of food production, where his wife had planted enough vegetables on a quarter acre plot of ground to provide the family with produce for one year.

He congratulated the Government on its legislation to place returned soldiers on the land. He suggested, however, that the \$500 which was paid to them should not be paid outright in order that they might not feel themselves to be objects of charity.

Hon. G. Howard Ferguson said that the soldiers preferred log cabins, and the money was given to them to assist them.

Mr. Proudfoot favored a home with hospital accommodation in every military district so that the soldiers might be near their friends. The Provincial

Secretary he thought was entitled to great credit for what he had done for the invalided soldiers. The Government was entitled to credit for the erection of the Orpington Hospital, but he thought that the hospital should not be used exclusively by Canadians but should be open to all members of Imperial forces.

Harness Niagara Lower Rapids.

"I have always backed up the Hydro-Electric," said Mr. Proudfoot. He said that every possible effort should be made to secure all the power that was available. A portion of the Niagara that was not yet harnessed would yield thousands of horsepower. Mr. Proudfoot said that he referred to the Thompson scheme which the Government had not yet seen fit to adopt. Other sources of power should be considered and the Hydro Commission should be backed up in every possible way.

He said there were thousands of cords of hardwood near Byng Inlet and Deer Lake in Northern Ontario that might be used for fuel.

"Why not allow the interned alien to haul it in?" he asked.

Referring to the failure of the Dominion Permanent Loan Company Mr. Proudfoot said he had nothing to say in reference to that particular company until the liquidator made a report, but he suggested that the Government should amend the act so that a proper report would be made to be even fuller than that given by insurance companies.

Mr. Proudfoot also suggested that the Government should extend the power of the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board so that it could deal promptly with emergency situations. He also favored the grouping of counties so that there would be fewer jails.

Tribute to Rowell.

Sir Wm. Hearst paid a high tribute to Hon. Mr. Rowell. "Although we differed with him, we greatly respected him and hope that he may long be able to acquit the position which he now so capably filled," he said.

"There is something away beyond party at the present time," said Sir William, who praised the tolerant spirit shown by Mr. Proudfoot's speech. "I thank him for the kind reference that he has made to the sons of the Cabinet members who are at the front, but his sense of modesty was too great for him to mention that his own son has been decorated for bravery." (Applause.)

The Premier agreed with Mr. Proudfoot that the Orpington Hospital should not be confined to Canadian soldiers, but should be open to Imperial troops as well.

"Every effort will be made to dispose of the work before the House in the shortest possible time," he said. "The measures that will be brought down will not be contentious, and the budget will likely be brought down on Tuesday."

Supply of Labor On Farms.

In referring to the labor situation, he said that Mr. Proudfoot's experience in securing more labor than the farmers could use was an exception. The Ontario farmers, he said, had done the best they could with the help they had. One problem was to convince the farmer that the city help was capable of doing practical work on the farms.

Sir William paid a tribute to the 8,000 High school boys who had served on the farm last year. Praise was also given to the High school girls who had gone berry-picking.

A new source of labor supply would be found in the returned soldier. The Premier said the Great War Veterans' Association was taking the matter up, and soldiers were already being trained to run tractors. He estimated that 40,000 people would be needed to secure increased farm production. Of this number it was aimed to secure 15,000 older boys, 5,000 girls, 7,500 men for seeding purposes, and 12,500 for harvesting.

"At a conservative estimate 2,000,000 pounds of fish will be secured from Lakes Nepigon and Nipissing this year," said the Premier. "In addition to this the Government has an option of 20 per cent. of the catch of fishermen in the International Waterways. Last year these fishermen caught 35,000,000 pounds, so that if they keep up that record this year the Government's share will be 7,000,000 pounds, or 9,000,000 pounds in all."

Talks of Peat Question.

The Government had been investigating the resources contained by the Province in wood and in peat. Although there was a good deal of hardwood available it had been found that it would not be a commercial success to haul it long distances. The Premier praised the work rendered by the Ontario Fuel Controller, Mr. R. C. Harris. It would soon, he thought, not be a question of how much coal would cost, but whether or not it could be secured at all. Peat bogs had been set aside for the use of the Province along the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railroad, and the Premier said it was possible that further sections would be set aside in Eastern Ontario.

Aliens Should Bear Burden.

The Premier said that he had no sympathy with the suggestion that Chinamen should be imported into the country as laborers. "As for alien enemies I think that they should be forced to bear some of the burdens of the present war, and not allowed to fatten on what their own countries have caused. The Canadian is being forced to go to war and all the advantages should not accrue to the alien."

Sir William said that the alien enemy could not very well be employed by the farmers of Ontario as the farmers would not want to have them in their homes. The situation was different in Western Canada, and Sir William thought that the aliens might be used there to advantage, but if they were used at all on the farms of Ontario he thought that it would have to be under the surveillance of the military authorities.

"We have no control over the alien enemies," said Sir William. "That is a matter for the military authorities to deal with. We have made an attempt to use them to work in the North Country, but some of them refused to work and we were unable to make them. If there is any way of securing productive work out of them it certainly should be done."

Sir William said he did not

understand what Mr. Proudfoot meant by prohibiting the shipping of cattle to the States. He wondered if Mr. Proudfoot wanted to stop the farmers' market in the States.

Loan Situation Delicate.

He said he had no fault to find with the manner in which Mr. Proudfoot had dealt with the Dominion Permanent Loan failure.

"The possibility of the Government inspecting loan companies is worthy of consideration," he said, "but the matter is a delicate one to deal with and inspection might do more harm than good."

Mr. Proudfoot's suggestion that the powers of the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board should be broadened, Sir William considered to be a good one. Legislation would be introduced providing that the board would have full power to deal with everything coming under its supervision.

Plan For Economy.

The Act respecting public service which would be introduced would tend to make the service as perfect as possible, and, it would also result in economy in the purchase of supplies upon which the Government was spending large sums of money.

"It will be a good thing if it will cut out patronage," said Sam Carter.

"While there was no reference to the extension of Parliament in the speech from the throne the Premier has been suddenly converted by the leader of the Opposition as he was on two previous occasions," said Hartley Dewart, K.C., M.P.P., following the Premier. He twitted Hon. I. B. Lucas on his East York speech when he described the leader of the Opposition as a camouflage. He suggested that the Premier should form a Union Government and quoted from the Premier's speech during the Federal campaign to show that the leading members on both sides of the House should be taken into the Cabinet.

Dr. Forbes Godfrey, Conservative member for West York, said that as the debate had become a love feast he did not object to criticizing the Government himself. He took a few whacks at Mr. Dewart for the latter's efforts in the Federal election and then lauded Mr. Proudfoot for the offer which he had made to the Premier. He said that never before had the debate reached such a high level in the House.

Wants Rule By Doctors.

He said that when a medical report was to be made it should have been done by a doctor and not a lawyer. "I think Mr. Justice Hodgins' report fair, but I don't like his statement that some members of the medical profession are so fossilized that they say no good can come out of Nazareth," he stated. "The medical men are only anxious to use what they believe will cure."

Dr. Godfrey thought Dr. McCul-

lough, the Provincial Medical Health Officer, should have been appointed to make the report on social diseases. He complained that Dr. McCullough was only drawing \$4,300 a year while the chairmen of other boards were drawing larger salaries. After April 1st he thought that the chairman of the Ontario License Board could handle the department himself.

Wants Another Fine Institution.

"The reception hospital is utterly unfit for any person mentally defective or otherwise to be taken to," he stated. He said 2,000 cases had been treated at the hospital and it would pay the Government to build a large reception hospital for the Province.

"Our educational system is doing damage to the brains of our people," he said. "If the homework of it was entirely eliminated the people of the Province would be benefited beyond doubt."

Should Choose Business Men.

Sam Carter, South Wellington, said that the Government should choose three or four business men, "untrammelled by patronage abuses," to occupy the seats now vacant. He praised the Premier's speech and heartily approved of the Government's action. He said that an election should not be held on account of the difficulty in reaching the troops and the expense involved.