

HEPBURN REPUDIATED BY TORONTO LIBERALS SEND MR. KING WIRE

Ontario Government Tattered on Verge of Defeat— Railroaded Motion

MUCH RESENTMENT

For a few tense minutes yesterday the Hepburn government tottered on the verge of defeat, and even yet Premier Hepburn is faced with an insurrection in the Liberal ranks which may topple him from the throne he ascended in 1934. Today there is talk of the formation of an Independent Liberal group.

The Toronto Central Liberal association, through its president, John B. Cooper, today sent the following telegram to Premier King: "The Toronto Central Liberal association, not being in agreement with the vote of censure passed by the Ontario legislature Thursday, Jan. 18, against the federal government, express their loyalty and devotion to you as our leader and our unshaken faith and confidence in the ability of your government to conduct the affairs of Canada in the present conflict."

Corridors at Queen's Park are still seething following the motion censuring the federal government which the premier forced through the House yesterday. Dissenting members agreed among themselves that, had the issue been placed before the House at a time when all members were present, the government would have been defeated, automatically bringing about the resignation of Mr. Hepburn.

22 Wouldn't Vote

As it was, nine Liberal members and one Independent Liberal bolted government ranks. Twenty-two more of them were in the members' room, reportedly undecided whether to vote Mr. Hepburn's motion down.

They concluded, it was reported today, to refrain from voting entirely. They agreed they were against the premier's motion, but at the same time, "owed the premier a debt of gratitude for the manner in which he brought the Liberal party from oblivion to office in 1934."

Analyzing the vote, the members pointed out that only 12 private Liberal members voted with the government in its censure of the King administration. Out of the 26 Liberals who supported the motion, 12 were cabinet ministers, one was the chief whip and another was a member of the Hydro Commission. "Why should we criticize the

federal government until we know all the facts?" one insurgent member demanded today. "Why, I didn't even know the first division was on its way overseas until after they arrived. Surely, men like Ernest Lapointe, minister of justice, and Wallace R. Campbell, chairman of the war purchasing board, know what they are doing. They are just as anxious to win the war as anyone else, and personally I can't find it in my heart to criticize them when I know they are doing their best."

"Hepburn's Race Run"

"I believe Mr. Hepburn's race is run," said another member, "and if anyone will get up in the House and cross the floor I'll be right behind him. Mitch has done a lot for the Liberal party in the past, but now he is undoing everything. Yes, there would be a lot of recruits for an independent Liberal party if anybody would just start the ball rolling. There was a revolt in caucus last September which found him supported by only three members, and if he had ever caucused this issue there would have been no doubt of the result."

Mr. Hepburn's move came as a decided surprise to the members, who strongly urged him to submit

the matter to caucus, even though it would have meant adjourning the House. However, the word came back that "there isn't time to hold a caucus, the premier wants this finished now." It was partly because of this that 22 of the members remained in their room while the vote was taken.

R. G. Croome, Rainy River, who voted against the motion, told The Star today: "I couldn't vote for the motion because I believe we should know all the facts before we vote. Perhaps, I am in the political doghouse, but I've been in the doghouse all my life, so that doesn't change things at all."

Keep Self-respect

"My mother told me this: there's only one thing you can always keep, and that is your self-respect," said another of the insurgent members.

"I felt the premier was wrong on this issue; that we should discuss provincial matters of vital importance and let those in authority at Ottawa ask us for aid when they needed it," another member said. "After all, they are just as interested in fighting for Canada as we are and are in a position to know just what is the best course to take. All this talk in the legislature isn't going to do Canada any good, and will hinder, rather than help. So I feel we should do what we were elected to do, instead of trying to help the premier carry on his personal grudge against Premier King." Shortly after the vote was taken

yesterday, the premier was asked any action would be taken against the members who voted against the motion. His reply was that "it was every man for himself"

The insurgents, however, made quite clear they expected reprisals from the government. "Those things are usually administered quite peacefully, on the surface," two of the said.

"You just don't get anything for your constituents and you just don't get elected next time. However, we voted as our consciences told us to vote and if the P.M. doesn't like it he knows what he can do."

"Dr. 'Mickey' Armstrong of Parry Sound, one of the 10 who voted against the government, has not yet resigned his post as assistant whip. As to whether he will, he said, 'It's much too early to say.'"

Dr. Armstrong arrived, smiling and alert, at Queen's Park and immediately made his way to the Liberal members' room, as though there had never been any breach between himself and the cabinet

By H. R. ARMSTRONG.

Ottawa, Jan. 19.—Federal cabinet ministers see yesterday's Ontario legislature vote of censure of the King government's war policy as direct challenge to Premier Hepburn's leadership of the Ontario Liberal party.

They base their interpretation of the fact that under duress of resignation threat, Mr. Hepburn managed to muster only a total of 26 out of 60 Liberals in the legislature for his anti-King resolution. Of the remaining 40, ten voted against the provincial premier, one refrained from voting and the rest either walked out or were absent from the chamber.

It is pointed out by a member of the dominion government that, aside from the Hepburn government ministers themselves, only 16 Liberal M.P.'s voted for the Hepburn resolution.

"The vote of censure of the King administration, from the Liberal viewpoint, comes very close to being a vote of want of confidence in Premier Hepburn by the Liberal members of the legislature," said a cabinet minister. "If a vote of the rank and file of the party in Ontario were taken, the result would be more pronounced against Mr. Hepburn."

The dominion government interprets the Hepburn-Drew drive against the King administration's war policy as a direct bid for national power by the Ontario premier and Ontario Conservative leader. The feeling in cabinet circles today is that in the next dominion election, Mr. Hepburn and Mr. Drew will attempt to lead to power a coalition government, with themselves at the head of it.

"When the election comes, the people of Canada may have to choose between a Hepburn-Drew union government and the King administration," a cabinet minister declared. "It appears as though these two gentlemen are trying to push Hon. R. J. Manion, federal Conservative leader, out of the picture altogether."

The King government feels it has

made a sincere, considered, energetic effort to prosecute the war effectively, that it has met with a considerable measure of success and a large measure of popular approval. Politics is playing a large part in the Hepburn-Drew opposition, it is claimed.

"The dominion government is not going to be diverted into any dog-fight with Premier Hepburn," said another cabinet minister. "All we can do is go on with our work of directing the nation's effort toward winning the war and maintaining national unity in this as far as possible—and let those who want to criticize go ahead and criticize."

As for Premier Hepburn, the view is voiced in cabinet circles that he is allowing personal jealousy and enmity for Prime Minister King and other members of his cabinet to dominate his relations with the dominion government and its war administration.

The feeling that Mr. Hepburn and Mr. Drew were combining for a joint effort in the national political field has been taking shape in federal cabinet circles for some time. Today it crystallized into open conviction, and the Dominion cabinet would not be surprised if some announcement of this intention is given in the near future by the two provincial leaders. It is believed they are carefully weighing public and press reaction to their latest surprise move.

Federal ministers claim to know that the attack which Col. Drew made on the King government's war effort at the emergency session of the Ontario legislature, was launched with full knowledge and approval of Premier Hepburn. The Ontario premier lost no time in joining in it, even at that early date. Developments since have seemed to warrant the view that the two plan a drive for national power in the next federal vote.

Herridge Comment

Hon. W. D. Herridge, leader of the New Democracy which has been endorsed by the Social Credit Party, after reading a report of the Ontario proceedings, said:

"We must have national service. Until we have, ineffectiveness and inefficiency are inevitable and our maximum war contribution is impossible, I declared for national service when war was declared."

"Co-operating With Britain"

Hamilton, Jan. 19.—One of the 10 Ontario Liberals who voted against the Hepburn-Drew resolution criticizing the King government, John P. Mackay, Hamilton East, today expressed the opinion that the Dominion government is co-operating fully with the old country.

John Newlands, Hamilton Centre, suggested that the break will have the effect of making it possible to co-ordinate the war effort.

"I regret that the incident should have developed," said Mr. Mackay. "I think the King government is more or less co-operating with the old country."

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Liberal
broken*

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