COUNCILS WANT RIGHT TO MAKE AGREEMENTS

OBJECT TO BEING FORCED TO CONSULT ELECTORS ON CONTRACTS.

Expressing strenuous objection to certain clauses in the new telephone bill introduced in the Legislature by Hon. I. B. Lucas, a deputation of about twenty representatives of cities and towns through Ontario waited on Hon. Mr. Lucas and Hon. Col. Hendrie Thursday at the Parliament Buildings.

The principal objection was in respect of that clause which prevents the Council of a municipality giving a franchise to a telephone company for the exclusive use of its streets without first submitting the terms of the contract to a vote of the people.

It was claimed that the cost of holding an election for this sole purpose would be greater than it was worth. Then it would be hard to get the electors to ratify these agreements. They wished the right to give an exclusive contract to remain with the Council, as at present.

There had been no demand for any change in the legislation.

Mayor McIntyre of Kingston suggested that the Council of a municipality might advertise the contract for a certain length of time in order to secure publicity instead of submitting it to a vote.

Among those in the deputation were Mayor Hopewell of Ottawa, Mayor Graham of London, Mayor McIntyre of Kingston, Mayor Price of St. Thomas, Mr. O. G. Fleming, President of the Windsor Board of Trade; Mr. J. H. Coburn, City Solicitor of Walkerville.

Colonel Hendrie said that they had also received the views of some of the rural telephone companies, which did not agree with those of the municipalities. His views, he said, were slightly different in this matter from those of Mr. Lucas. He promised consideration of their requests.