

# BECK INTRODUCES BILL FOR HYDRO RAILWAYS

Commission Will Construct, Equip and Operate Radials, but Municipalities Must Finance Them—Legislature Gives Measure First Reading

Construction, equipment, and operation by the Hydro-electric Power Commission is the proposal of the Government with respect to radial railways in the Province, submitted to the Legislature yesterday afternoon by Hon. Adam Beck. This is the immediate solution of the agitation for radial railways in connection with the Hydro-electric service, which municipalities from one end of the Province to the other have been discussing for a year.

The bill, which had its first reading yesterday, repeals in its entirety the enabling legislation passed last session, which provided three alternatives, dividing the matters of construction, equipment, and operation between the Hydro-electric Power Commission and the municipalities, but which offered no suggestion about financing.

This year's bill takes away these alternatives, and places the whole matter under the Hydro-electric Power Commission.

#### Burden on Municipalities.

The financial arrangement places the entire burden on the municipalities. Beyond directing the enterprise and making investigations, for which \$165,000 is included in the estimates, along with the general services performed by the Hydro-electric Power Commission, the Province will not be called upon to spend a dollar. The railways are to be built out of the proceeds of the sale of bonds issued by the Hydro-electric Power Commission, which will be secured by a first mortgage on the road and equipment, and the Commission will in turn be protected by municipal debentures issued in respect of the portion of the capital cost that each municipality has to bear. Conditional power is given to attach the endorsement of the Province to the bonds if this is deemed desirable in the inter-

ests of securing a favorable rate for the sale of the bonds.

The bonds will be extended over a period of fifty years, and in order to assist the municipalities over the first ten years when the roads are getting under way there will be no collection required on account of sinking fund.

To protect the Commission it is to be provided in cases where a municipality defaults in the payment of interest or sinking fund that the Commission may sell the debentures of that municipality to make up the deficiency. If the debentures do not realize the full amount of the deficiency the municipality will be still liable for the balance.

#### Electors Have Say.

The responsibility for initiating any radial railway project is to rest entirely upon the municipalities. With the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council the Commission may enter into a contract with one or more municipalities, and this agreement or contract must be ratified by the electors qualified to vote on money by-laws.

The importance of having the right men to manage small radial systems, and the advantage of having a measure of central control with standard construction and equipment, and the necessity of being able to deal with the various systems as they are extended over the Province on a broad basis, have largely influenced the Commission and Government to adopt Provincial control, organization and operation.

In reply to Mr. Rowell, Hon. Adam Beck said the Commission would issue its own bonds, and would operate the road, not the municipalities.

Mr. Rowell—What is the basis of the charge? Is the total charge against the municipalities coming within it?

Hon. Mr. Beck—Yes.

The only case where the Hydro-electric Power Commission will directly participate in sharing the burden is to supply power to the railways on a cost basis.

## LABOR COMMISSION / REFUSED BY TORIES

### MR. ROWELL MOVES FOR GENERAL INQUIRY INTO CONDITIONS.

The motion for a second reading of Mr. Allan Studholme's bill for fair wages and an eight-hour day produced an extended debate in the Legislature last night. Mr. Studholme spoke at some length.

Mr. Rowell took the position that the time had come for the Government to inquire into the whole question affecting wages and the hours of employment, pointing out that the same discussion as was now occupying the attention of the House was first heard of in Great Britain in 1851. In support of his argument he moved the following amendment:—

"This House recognizes the obligation to give careful consideration to all matters affecting the welfare of the wage-earners of the Province, and is of the opinion that a commission should be appointed by the Government to inquire into the conditions of labor in the Province of Ontario, including the matters dealt with in bill No. 149, and to report to this House at its next session as to what legislative or administrative action should be taken to improve the condition of the workers of the Province, and that such investigation is desirable before proceeding further with the bill."

The amendment was lost on division, and the second reading of Mr. Studholme's bill was defeated, Mr. Studholme alone voting for it.

## SCHOOLS IMPOVERISHED FOR GOVERNMENT HOUSE

When the Legislature went into Committee of Supply last night the Opposition put up a spirited criticism of the expenditure on Government House, the discussion arising on an item of \$125,000. Mr. Rowell asked if it was any wonder that the people, knowing how much money was being wasted on new Government House, viewed with apprehension the enormous increase in the public expenditure of the Province. As far as he could judge it was sheer incompetence and wasteful expenditure. They were asked to vote \$125,000 more on this House, and they cut off from grants to the rural public schools of the Province a sum about equal to that amount. This Government could not provide the money to pay the grants under the regulations of the Department for the rural schools, but they could provide \$125,000 to be wasted on Government House. It was an indication of the mismanagement of the financial affairs of the Province. They had not yet got to the end of these expenditures on Government House, and as far as he understood they had no estimate of the furnishings. To-day they were borrowing on the credit of the Province to sink money in this. He thought it was time they should call a halt to expenditures of this kind.

Messrs. McDonald (Bruce), Anderson, Marshall and Sinclair also criticized the expenditure on Government House, and Mr. Scholfield (South Wellington) defended it.

Mr. Rowell asked for a count and the expenditure was sanctioned by 25 votes to 12.