

PROVINCIAL HIGHWAY UNCERTAIN PROJECT

Even Its Promoters Are Little Vague on Details

OTTAWA SEPARATE SCHOOL

Minister of Education Introduces Legislation to Meet Any Situation Arising Out of Privy Council Judgment on Bilingual Issue.

That there is little if anything definite about the Ontario Government's Provincial highways bill was once more demonstrated in the Legislature yesterday when the Liberals sought information as to the route and the estimate of cost. When asked for something definite as to the route, Hon. Finlay Macdiarmid said any answer that he might give would not be fair to himself or to the House. Mr. Rowell maintained that the House was entitled to such information as the Government had got.

Windsor to Montreal.

Hon. Mr. Macdiarmid said it was a scheme from Windsor to the eastern boundary of the Province, and the machinery was provided in the bill whereby when the time comes the Government would assume certain portions of the highway that they may designate and portions of any existing highway as a Provincial highway.

Not Certain on Details.

In reply to further questions as to certain places the Minister stated that they had not yet got down to a policy of definite route. They had not reached that stage yet. As to cost it was impossible to give an estimate at present. Even the engineers hesitated to give an estimate with regard to an expenditure that was not going to take place at the present time. He pointed out that cost of materials and labor could not be definitely figured out at present.

Big Scheme, but Indefinite.

Mr. Proudfoot (Centre Huron) did not think this was the time to force through the House a bill of this kind when they had not more information than they had.

Mr. Sam Clarke (West Northumberland) questioned the advisability of asking the House to adopt this great big scheme, so indefinite in its nature that they did not know the liabilities they might be called upon to assume. "It is not only blind, but it looks stupid," he said.

Mr. George H. Gooderham (Southwest Toronto) said the most absurd argument he had heard was that asking for estimates. The money that would be put out on this road would be that paid into the treasury under the motor vehicles act.

Mr. C. M. Bowman (West Bruce) said he could quite well see why Mr. Gooderham was so averse to an estimate considering his experience of the Toronto-Hamilton highway. He wanted it explained how the Government was going to avoid conflict between the Provincial highway and the Provincial county scheme.

Hon. Mr. Macdiarmid said he did not think there was the slightest danger of any conflict between the county and Provincial systems.

Ottawa School Situation.

Two bills with reference to the Roman Catholic separate schools of Ottawa were introduced in the Legislature yesterday by the Hon. Dr.

Pyne, Minister of Education. Regarding the first measure the Minister explained that the object was to appoint a Commission to carry on the schools in Ottawa if they were not being carried on by the Separate School Board of Ottawa, and it was in case of default that this bill would be used. If the Separate School Board of Ottawa was going to put the children in the same position as before, that the schools were closed again, then the Government was taking the right to appoint a Commission to carry on the schools through the board's default.

Mr. Mageau—Is it a similar bill to the one last year?

Dr. Pyne—It is not the same. A great deal of it is similar, but there are some little differences.

The other bill, Dr. Pyne pointed out, was to indemnify the members of the former Commission against any action that might be brought against them for the money expended for the carrying on of the schools during the particular period. It was a bill to give relief to the Commission, who are now being sued for the return of the money expended and to indemnify them from any loss in carrying on the schools.

Commission in Certain Cases.

According to the first bill, whenever the board shall neglect or refuse to conduct the schools under its control according to law, the Minister, with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, may appoint a Commission of not less than three nor more than seven persons to act in place of the board. The Commission may take possession of and administer the property and assets of or under the control of the board, and may levy and collect, and shall exercise and perform the rights, powers, privileges and duties of the board in place of the board. The conduct and management of the school shall be restored to the board by the Minister of Education whenever it shall appear that the schools will be conducted by the board according to law. If any question arises as to whether the circumstances justify the appointment or the continuance of a Commission it shall be determined on summary application to the Supreme Court at Toronto.

The Supreme Court may, on summary application, make any order that may be necessary to secure to the Commission appointed under this act possession of the property and assets to which it is entitled.

The Commission shall conduct the schools in accordance with the separate school act.

The Minister of Education, with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, may from time to time advance moneys from the consolidated revenue fund to the Commission to enable it to carry on the schools under its control.

Commissioners' Monetary Liability.

By the other bill it is declared that the Commissioners disbursed the moneys and incurred the liability for payments and expenditures which were necessary to maintain and carry on the schools, and which should have been made by the board in the proper conduct and management of the schools; that the payments and disbursements shall be deemed for all purposes to have been made by the Commissioners for and on behalf and at the request of the board, and that the Commissioners are entitled to indemnity from the board in respect thereof; that the liability to the Bank of Ottawa, subject to the rights of third parties, if any, is a debt of the board to the bank, and that the bank is entitled to set off the sum against any other moneys in its hands. In default of the payment of the liability by the board, the same may be paid to the bank out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Province, and thereafter the sum with proper interest shall be a debt and may be recovered from the board in any action brought for that purpose. This act may be pleaded as a defence to any action now pending or that may hereafter be brought by the board against any person or corporation in respect of any of the moneys received and disbursed by the Commission.