

TORONTO MEMBER INSURES T. & N.O. RY.

Mr. Dewart's Complaint in the Legislature

SHOULD OPEN THE BOOKS

Mr. Dewart Also Wants Government Commissioners Put in Same Position as Ministers Respecting Government Contracts.

Mr. H. Hartley Dewart's bill regarding an inspection of the accounts of the T. & N. O. Railway Commission was declared lost on division in the Legislature yesterday. The bill proposed that the accounts should at all times be open to the inspection of any member of the Legislature. He had asked this rather than that the full accounts should be included in the Public Accounts, which would be expensive. There was a total of \$2,000,000 of insurance on T. & N. O. Railway property, and the firm of insurance agents with which this was primarily placed was Irish & Maulson, the President and largest shareholder of which (Mr. Mark H. Irish) was one of the members for Northeast Toronto. One would think, said Mr. Dewart, that there were some other firms beside that in which the member for Northeast Toronto was largely interested in which the insurance could have been placed. This illustrated the importance of having these accounts accessible to members of the House.

Hon. Mr. McGarry (Provincial Treasurer) pointed out that there were 111 members of the House and one could conceive if the members exercised that right the trouble, annoyance, inconvenience and loss of effective work on the part of the Commission. If a member of the House had some particular purpose in view, if he desired to get information for use in the House, he did not think he (the Treasurer) would refuse to facilitate access to these books.

Regulation of Commissions.

Mr. Dewart then moved the second reading of his bill amending the Legislative Assembly act, applying to those who were members of the House, so that they should not be able to make contracts whereby they directly or indirectly received sums of money for any service, work, matter or thing, "by or on account of any commission or board appointed by or existing under the authority of any act of the Province of Ontario." For example, it would apply to the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board, the Hydro-electric Commission of Ontario, the Timiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway Commission, and to the Board of License Commissioners for the Province.

Hon. Mr. Lucas (Attorney-General) said he had no quarrel with the principle enunciated by the member for Southwest Toronto. He was advised by legal officers of the department that the law was now exactly as his honorable friend thought it ought to be.

Put Them in the Act.

Mr. Dewart said there might be very serious doubt as to whether money that was paid, coming from the T. & N. O. Railway, was so paid as money of the Province of Ontario.

He took as an instance the Hydro-electric Commission, where money of the municipalities was being handled by the Commission. He thought that, so far as these Commissions were concerned which indirectly expend public money, those who contract with them should be placed under the provision just as effectively as if they received it from the Public Works Department or any other department of the Government.

Mr. Rowell said there was room for doubt as to the present law in respect to some of these Commissions. He knew the question had been up in Court with reference to the University.

Hon. Mr. Lucas instanced the Niagara Park Commission, where it was held a contract was a contract with his Majesty.

Premier Hearst said the Government would look into the matter.

The bill was lost on division.

The bill setting forth annual elections to the Board of Education, and which applied to Toronto, passed through committee.

Compensation Provisions.

When the workmen's compensation measure was in committee, Mr. Rowell thought there should be some method that would be fair all round in the case of workmen with a low wage who were incapacitated for a longer period than the thirty days' first aid provision. Hon. Mr. Lucas, Attorney-General, took the view that extreme cases were provided for in the discretionary power given the Commission.

American Insurance Companies.

Mr. Rowell, at the request of some of his constituents, raised a question in relation to the insurance act and weather insurance companies. He stated that the complaint was that American companies did not come under the insurance act and were permitted to rate insurance at a lower figure than the domestic companies are permitted to accept.

Hon. Mr. Lucas said he would have a report on the subject.

No Lake Nipissing Fishing.

Regarding a notice of motion by Mr. Mageau (Sturgeon Falls), Hon. Finlay Macdiarmid said no licenses were going to be issued for the year to fish in Lake Nipissing. This had been decided in view of the strong representations from representative business men and others. Mr. Mageau said the statement was quite satisfactory, and he would not press the motion.

Second reading was given to a bill introduced by Mr. Hilliard (Dundas) giving municipal Councils power to purchase supplies of vegetable and root seeds and retail them to the residents of the municipality.