

# PROPOSED REDUCTION OF RACE-TRACK TAX AMENDED BY LIBERAL

**Belanger Argues for Removal of Order-in-Council Authority and for Imposition of Sliding-Scale Levy—Government Measure Stands Over Until Next Week**

## INFORMATION GIVEN ON RACING REVENUE

The path of the Government's amendment to the Corporation Tax Act, which provides for a reduction from \$7,500 to \$5,000 in the per diem tax on race-tracks, and empowers the Government, through Order-in-Council, to increase the levy from \$5,000 to \$10,000, circumstances warranting, is none too smooth. On Thursday the amending bill got second reading, only after the House had divided. Yesterday approval of committee of the House was deferred when Aurelien Belanger, Liberal member, gave notice of an amendment to the bill. The measure now stands over until the fore part of next week.

Mr. Belanger not only would remove from the Government's hands the Order-in-Council authority to increase the track assessment, but he would have a sliding-scale of impost fixed by the Legislature instead. His argument, as first advanced on Thursday, and reiterated yesterday, was that, while some tracks might be able only to meet the \$5,000 assessment, others better off might well afford to pay more.

### \$1,000 a Day.

In addition to the \$5,000 levy, he would have each association, club or company pay, within ten days after the closing of its meet, "a further sum of \$1,000 per day of the said meet for every \$50,000 or fraction thereof by which the average daily amount wagered during the said meet exceeds \$150,000; provided, however, that the total amount of the tax so paid for the said meet shall not exceed \$10,000 per day."

The amendment, he contended, would achieve the same objective, financially speaking, to which the Government had set itself, but would do it in a manner that would eliminate any chance of reflection being cast upon the Ministry.

He stressed the fact that were the power for increasing the levy to be left with Order-in-Council, the Government might easily find itself in the position of being criticized for keeping the tax to a minimum on certain tracks in return for election campaign funds, or something of that sort. There was no doubt, he contended, but that authority of the kind asked should be vested only in the Statutes.

Hon. W. E. Raney, Progressive Leader, here expressed the view that inasmuch as the section under discussion was a very important one, the bill should stand over.

Premier Ferguson replied that the House had voted on the principle of the bill (the previous day), and had passed it.

### Different Feeling Likely.

Mr. Raney replied that he understood that on the division many members of the House had voted for the "track tax reduction" clause for fear that voting contrarily would have negated the other sections of the bill. In his belief, the "straight opinion" of the House would evidence a different feeling toward the matter.

The Prime Minister had no objection, he said, to standing the bill over, and asked Mr. Belanger to give notice of the amendment in the customary way, and to furnish the Government, for its consideration, copies of the amendment he proposed later to move.

During the sitting further light was thrown on the activities of various racing associations by Hon. Dr. J. D. Monteith, Provincial Treasurer.

D. J. Taylor (Progressive, North Grey) was informed that the Province, in collection of revenue from racing associations last year, had received \$162,432 in amusement tax, \$1,354,449 from the 5 per cent. impost on wagers, and \$855,000 in the per diem tax, making a total revenue of about \$2,400,000.

Of this amount, the Belleville Club, at Niagara Falls, contributed \$25,173 from all these sources; the Hamilton Jockey Club, \$232,996; the Kenilworth Jockey Club, \$268,861; Long Branch, \$264,568; Fort Erie, \$141,736; Woodbine, \$378,021; Thorncliffe, \$331,064; Dufferin Park, \$283,717; Western Racing Association, Windsor, \$275,013; and the Windsor Jockey Club, \$170,727.

Mr. Taylor was also informed that all the clubs had not held spring and fall meets. Autumn meets were not held by the Belleville Association, operating at Stamford Park; the Niagara Racing Association, the Windsor Jockey Club. The Belleville Club only operated two days of its spring meet.

C. Gardiner (Progressive, Kent East) was told that a Provincial audit of the affairs of the Hamilton Jockey Club last year showed the association had suffered a loss of \$33,000. This was the only special audit conducted by the Government, the statements of other associations being given only the customary checking over.

Mr. Gardiner wanted to know what profits were made by the various racing associations, and what amount was allowed in the balance sheets of the various tracks, shown to Government officials, for depreciation of plants. Mr. Monteith gave information only about the Hamilton Club. In the statement to the Government from that association, said he, no allowance was made for remuneration of directors or officials, nor was allowance made for depreciation of the plant or maintenance of the capital investment.

# DEEMS PUNISHMENT FOR TIPSY AUTOISTS QUITE INSUFFICIENT

**Commissioner of Provincial  
Police Presents Report  
to Legislature**

## ENFORCEMENT OF O.T.A.

In his annual report for 1926, submitted to the Ontario Legislature yesterday, Major-General V. A. S. Williams, Commissioner of Provincial Police, voices the opinion that the minimum penalty of seven days' imprisonment for intoxicated auto drivers is altogether insufficient punishment in view of the crowded conditions on streets and highways.

### Under O.T.A.

He points out that the enforcement of the O.T.A. has met with "many and continued difficulties." Noting the activities of bootleggers along the border, he says: "To circumvent those engaged in this unlawful business and patrol the river thoroughly would require a force of men altogether out of proportion to our present staff."

Prosecutions under the O.T.A. for 1926 totalled 4,469, which resulted in 3,890 convictions, 442 dismissals, 125 withdrawals. Twelve other cases are awaiting disposal.

Amount of liquor seized by the department and confiscated by the courts was as follows: Beer, 23,812 dozen bottles; beer, 7,234 gallons; liquor, 1,097 cases; liquor, 3,658 gallons; alcohol, 3,658 gallons. Total value of such liquor, \$41,651.03.

### Vehicles Seized.

Seventy-two motor vehicles were seized by the department and confiscated, a number of which were later returned by order of the Supreme Court.

Total fines imposed in connection with the O.T.A. prosecutions amounted to \$456,491. Of this amount \$341,608 was collected and \$6,710 refunded by Order-in-Council. The amount paid into revenue was \$334,487.70.

Of all types of cases prosecuted numbering 7,839, there were 6,643 convictions, 863 dismissals, 236 withdrawals and 97 still awaiting disposition.

During the year stolen property to the value of \$91,447 was recovered and returned to the owners by the force.

### Revenue Decreases.

Expenditures of the department totalled \$667,709 and revenue \$464,227. The decrease in revenue of \$63,000, compared with the amount collected last year, is due principally to there being \$43,400 less collected in fines for offenses under the O.T.A., states the report, and to the fact that the value of the liquor confiscated was \$15,000 less than the amount for the same period last year.

Referring to the Highway Traffic Act, General Williams said:

"Considering the crowded condition of our streets and highways, I consider an intoxicated person in charge of a car such a menace to the safety of others that the minimum penalty of seven days is altogether too little punishment," says the report.

Deaths from violence or unnatural causes in Ontario for the year 1926 are reported by the Commissioner as follows: Murder, 11; manslaughter, 23; suicide, 41; autos, 73; drownings, 100; other causes, 115. Total, 363, as compared with 316 in 1925.