

SINCLAIR ADVOCATES BOARDS OF CONTROL FOR SMALLER CITIES

**Finlayson Agrees That Salaries
Should Be Kept
Low**

"MUNICIPAL CABINET"

Should it be decided to so amend the Municipal Act that all cities, irrespective of their size, might have a Board of Control, care should be taken that the salaries for members of such Boards of Control would be so low as to prevent any one seeking the office for monetary reward. Both W. E. N. Sinclair, Liberal House Leader, sponsor of an amending bill, and Hon. William Finlayson, Minister of Lands and Forests, who spoke for the Government, made this quite clear when speaking to Mr. Sinclair's bill in the Legislature yesterday. It was given its second reading and referred to the Municipal Committee.

Service, Not Salary.

Said Mr. Sinclair in this connection: "My thought is that in these smaller cities, the salaries should be kept low down. If the bill is accepted, it should not leave opportunities for big salaries. They should be kept on a low scale, and no one should be encouraged to take office for the salary he would get out of it. Rather a Board of Control would be to attract a class of men who would develop a better system of municipal government in Ontario, having in mind, not the salary which would go to the Controller, but the service the Controller could give to the municipality."

Said Mr. Finlayson: "I am glad to hear my friend say that perhaps we have gone too far in the matter of salaries. We have gone a long way to make it attractive financially."

In speaking to the bill, the Liberal House Leader stated that in cities of more than 100,000 there were Boards of Control, while in cities between 45,000 and 100,000 such boards were optional. "The Board of Control should be in the nature of a cabinet for a municipality," he said. "There is not a great deal of continuity in Councils, but there is more on Boards

of Control. Men who are better versed in municipal affairs would want to be on the Board of Control."

Mr. Finlayson opened his remarks by paying tribute to Mr. Sinclair for having accepted the onerous duties of Mayor of Oshawa. "That city has had an abnormal development, and has, perhaps, assumed more burdens during boom times than have been justified," he said. "We all admire your action in coming to the rescue at Oshawa."

"But I cannot altogether share your ideas with respect to Boards of Control. Many members are of the opinion that there is too much machinery. Some think that subsidiary bodies, such as the Board of Education, Police and Parks Commissions, have too much power, and that Councils have only power to collect taxes over which they have little control. Such bodies, with their expenditures, leave little money over which Councils have control. It is a question whether or not it is wise to have more machinery."

The Minister of Lands and Forests questioned whether or not it was wise to leave the smaller cities with an option as to having Boards of Control. He thought there was too much optional now. For instance, could any one say when municipal elections were being held, except that they were in the fall or early winter?

Hon. Harry C. Nixon, Progressive Leader—Can any one say when the Provincial election is to be held?

Mr. Finlayson—My friend is just as anxious about that as he was in 1926 and in 1929. Now he is calling for an election again. It has merely become a habit with him.

Mr. Finlayson stated he had no objection to Mr. Sinclair's bill having its second reading and going to the committee.

Mr. Sinclair's bill to amend the Assessment Act, so as to remove the assessment exemption on Indian lands which have been leased to white men, was also given its second reading and was sent to the same committee.

Its sponsor explained that at present Indian lands were exempted, and in many cases non-Indians had leased portions of it and were also exempted. "If it is so leased to non-Indians, it should become taxable," he said. "The exemption should be done away with when it is rented."

Mr. Finlayson—There are some cases in Northern Ontario where very valuable land has been so leased for industrial purposes. It should not be exempted by the department and the revenue should not be kept from the municipalities. The main idea of the bill is very proper.

Mr. Finlayson's amendment to the Northern Development Act was also given its second reading. He stated that settlers on Crown lands had often been given loans for seed, etc., and had later abandoned their lands. A good deal of this abandoned land had been taken up by new settlers, he said. "It is manifestly unfair that these new settlers should have to shoulder the burden of loans to former occupants. This does not relieve the original debtor of his debt, but merely allows the new settler to take the land over free of encumbrance."

Second reading was given to the Long Point Park Act amendment. Mr. Finlayson stated that Long Point Park was a game reserve of some 400 acres, jutting out into Lake Erie at Port Rowan. Now 140 acres of adjoining property could be acquired, and the amendment is to allow this.

A bill, sponsored by S. C. Tweed (Waterloo North) and W. Newman (Victoria North), Liberals, to amend the Municipal Act so as to allow a property owner to qualify for office on a land or income assessment of \$500, was given its first reading. Mr. Tweed told The Globe that the reason for his introducing the bill is that at present property owners must have all their taxes paid before being allowed to qualify. At present tenants can vote even if their rent is in arrears, but in many cases the owners are unable to pay taxes unless these rents have been paid.

Mr. Tweed's bill to amend the Public Health Act so as to prohibit the use of old mattresses, etc., which have been used in hospitals or other places where there has been illness, for the making of new mattresses, was also given its first reading.