

# RELIEF RECIPIENTS ARE NOT EXPECTED TO PAY GOVERNMENT

Account of Elmira Proposals  
Brings Statement From  
Henry

## POLICY IS EXPLAINED

As far as the Government is concerned, it has no idea that those who are receiving relief should reimburse it for its expenditure, Premier George S. Henry stated definitely in the Legislature yesterday, when S. C. Tweed (Liberal, Waterloo North) told of proposals of the Elmira Council to compel recipients of relief to sign documents promising to repay the town for what they had received.

The Prime Minister explained that it was the policy of the Government not to interfere with the municipalities in the administering of relief. Certain ones, he agreed, had made certain rulings such as granting relief to no one who had a liquor permit or an automobile. While he said that the Government did not expect to receive back moneys spent in relief, he gave no indication as to whether or not such a proposal as that referred to would be allowed in the municipalities.

### Second Reading Given.

Other important matters before the Legislature included the bills to amend the Municipal and Assessment Acts. These bills embody the decisions of the special committee, which sat between sessions, and which took up proposed amendments to both acts. The first provides for the reduction in the number of Aldermen in Toronto, and the other an increase in the assessment on chain stores. They were given second reading and referred to the Municipal Committee.

At the opening of the sitting, Mr. Tweed rose and read from the Elmira Signet the proposal to compel recipients of relief to promise repayment; nor would they be allowed to obtain motor licenses until the money spent by the town on them had been paid back in full, and the same with liquor permits. "All moneys advanced will be repayable at such interest as may be determined by the town," he read. A copy of this regulation was to be forwarded to J. A. Ellis, Secretary of the Unemployment Relief Commission, he said. Two-thirds of the amount returned was to go to the Government, Mr. Tweed read.

"I am quite sure that the Government does not approve of that arrangement, and I do not think any one should have to sign any such document," said Mr. Tweed. He then read from the Kitchener Record of a report of the Family Relief Board, which stated that the question of publishing the list of names of those on relief had been discussed. No action had been taken, but it was to be brought up again at a later date.

### Leadership, Not Dictation.

Premier Henry said: "I would point out, in the first place, that, while an effort has been made by the Government to give some leadership to the municipalities in the matter of relief distribution, there has been nothing of dictation. Even the report of the Campbell Commission was merely a suggestion. The municipalities were free to use what they thought fit and suitable of it.

"They are left to their own discretion, and that has been the habit throughout the Province. In relation to the question itself, I would point out another angle. I learned at the conference in Ottawa that many of the farmers in the distressed areas in the West had refused to accept relief without the Province taking a note back in promise of repayment. As there has been no direct relief to farmers here, there has not been that situation," he went on.

"But, as far as the Government is concerned, it has never been the idea that there should be any strings attached to relief distributed. That is very definitely our opinion. It is news to me that there was any provision that we should get back two-thirds of what was spent," the Prime Minister stated.

### Assessment Bill Amendment.

T. W. Jutten (Conservative, Hamilton Centre), in introducing the amendment to the Assessment Act, referred first to the proposal to provide further business tax on chain stores. The old-time corner store had given credit and had delivered the goods, he said. "There are thousands on relief now who would not be there if the system of the corner store was still in existence. They used to carry people over the winter until work opened up in the spring."

And the old-type corner butcher store had given its clientele fresh meat, he declared. "They bought the meat from the wholesaler, who went out in the market and bought the cattle. It was sold direct to the butcher, and there was no cold storage to hold the meat until the price suited." And chain stores did not confine themselves to groceries and meats, he said, but sold such articles as toys.

### Income Tax Collection.

The bill also provided that income tax could be collected the year after it was earned. In Toronto at present it is earned one year, assessed the next and collected the year following.

Mr. Jutten stated another section provided that income tax should be uniform all over the Province. This would prevent rich men from moving from a city to an outside municipality to escape the tax, he said. "But if the rate was fixed at 35 mills, it might be too high for one and too low for another. Personally, I would like to see income tax compulsory, so that people could not move outside a city to escape it. The smaller taxpayer now has to carry the burden of those well able to pay," he averred.

Another amendment would be that where properties were sold for taxes the whole property would be put up for sale, not just a strip sufficient to pay the arrears.

### Municipal Act Amendment.

The bill amending the Municipal Act, besides providing for the reduction of the number of Toronto Aldermen, would also allow municipal elections to be held every two years instead of annually, Mr. Jutten explained. "I believe that would be in the interest of the taxpayers. The same men practically run every year and are returned. I hope the Government will consider this in order to help the poor taxpayer, who has got to pay the expenses of the elections."

### Sent to Committee.

In reference to the amendments to the Assessment Act Premier Henry said: "This will go to the committee for further discussion. There is considerable opposition to some items, and the committee should give it every care."

With respect to the Municipal Act amendments, the Prime Minister stated there was provision for municipalities to take votes of the ratepayers on a two-year term. "I remember, when I was in Council, of having one submitted 35 years ago. It was then turned down. There is some merit to it, as an economy measure, and it could be taken up by the Councils."