

February 26

Director of Police Asked for Ontario

Roebuck Introduces Bill Providing Control for Unity of Action in Emergencies

A PPOINTMENT of a Director of Special Police Services, vested with power of control over all police forces in Ontario to ensure united action in an emergency, is urged in a bill introduced in the Ontario Legislature yesterday by Attorney-General Arthur W. Roebuck.

Given First Reading.

The proposed act is not designed to take the administration of police forces out of the hands of municipalities.

Given its first reading yesterday, the bill provided that such a director, to be appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, shall be responsible to and subject to the direction of the Attorney-General. This is in accordance with the Attorney-General's announced plan of centralization of all Ontario law enforcement agencies in an emergency. The necessity for such co-operation was stressed by Mr. Roebuck at the time of the Labatt kidnapping.

The proposed director, according to the bill, shall have power to direct and order every constable to perform such duties as he may require. The director may at any time conduct an inquiry into the conduct of any constable and shall have the same power as a Commissioner appointed under the provisions of the Public Inquiries Act. The director will also be an ex-officio Magistrate with power to perform magisterial duties and to issue summonses, take informations and issue warrants anywhere in the Province. The Attorney-General explained that the position of the director shall be distinct from that of the Commissioner of Provincial Police.

Powers Defined.

The bill provides that the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council shall have the power to make necessary regulations not inconsistent with the act, such as defining certain duties of the director; the duties and power of constables or any class of constable during an emergency and providing for the payment of expenses incurred by constables when acting under the orders of the director.

There was little discussion of the measure at its first reading. Wilfrid Heighington, Conservative, asked if it would include control over R.C.M.P., and the Attorney-General replied that this force is entirely under Federal jurisdiction.