

April 13

Compensation Board Firings Attacked

But Roebuck Claims Holders of Executive Positions Must Be in Sympathy With Government

ONTARIO'S Liberal Government wants Liberal Government men to head the public service, and will accord the same right to succeeding Administrations.

"Absolutely Essential."

"It is absolutely essential," Attorney-General Roebuck told yesterday's Legislature, "that executive positions be held by those who are in sympathy with the Government. But, in the event of a change in Government—there will be no attempt by this Government to tie the hands of succeeding Governments."

The principle, contained in an act making the Workmen's Compensation Board removable "at pleasure," was flayed by Arthur Ellis. The Government, the Conservative member charged, did not realize that some bodies had been constituted to be free from political influence.

"That's a shameful condition," he charged. "The late Sir James Whitney never did the disgraceful things this Government has done in wholesale dismissals. The Attorney-General has such a mental outlook on political life that he doesn't beat about the bush. I am very sorry that the viewpoint of the Attorney-General is that this independent board should be placed under political influence."

Administration Unsatisfactory.

"The administration of the act," Mr. Roebuck explained, "had not been satisfactory to the Government. Messrs. Halford and Sinclair (former

Vice-Chairman and Chairman) were asked to resign. Both claimed that they had something of a life interest."

A retroactive clause in the bill would cover these executive changes of last fall in the Workmen's Compensation Board. "This bill," said Mr. Roebuck, "makes it clear that these offices are the gift of the Government of the day."

He assured the Opposition that when their term of Government arrived they would not have to ask the present board members, George Wilkie and Earl Hutchinson for their resignations,

NO GRANTS FOR TOWN BANDS

Wailing bassoons, oboes sounding off on summer evenings, and tootling sousaphones went flat in yesterday's Legislature.

The House accepted the report of the Private Bills Committee, which killed Fraser Hunter's bill, asking that municipalities be empowered to vote grants for the maintenance of local bands.

When the report of the committee was submitted, Hon. Leopold Macaulay (Conservative, South York) protested its acceptance on the grounds that the bill had been killed, according to his information, at a time when the committee lacked a quorum.

"How can we vote to accept this report when the action of the committee was ultra vires through lack of a quorum?" he asked.

W. E. N. Sinclair (Liberal, Ontario), Chairman of the committee, declared that the Secretary informed him that a legal quorum was present at the time. He declared vigorously that it was not his practice to sanction actions of a committee when a quorum was not present.

The South York member asked that the Secretary produce a certificate saying a quorum had been present.

"Surely," said the Hon. Harry C. Nixon, "the honorable member is not going to demand a Secretary's certificate in the face of the assurance of the Chairman."

Mr. Macaulay agreed to accept the statement of Mr. Sinclair.

Ambulance Chasing Is Curbed by Bill

Lawyers Only May Act in
Accident Claims,
Says Croll

Legislation was introduced in the Ontario Legislature yesterday designed to curb the activities of "ambulance-chasers" -- insurance adjusters who grew fat on claims arising out of motor accidents.

The measure, introduced by the Hon. David A. Croll, Minister of Public Welfare, would enable only a solicitor or barrister, acting in the usual course of his profession, to act in connection with claims for accident damage.

Another amendment to the same act—the Insurance Act—is aimed at so-called "synthetic fleets," and hits at the practice of a small minority of insurance companies who undertake to insure at a lower premium the privately owned cars of groups of persons in common employment, or living in the same apartment houses.

This practice, the explanation to the bill points out, has been demoralizing to the automobile insurance business and works against the individual policyholder. The amendment does not interfere with the legitimate "fleet-rating."