

March 3

Control of Transport Through Board Sought

Opposition Bill to Amend Municipal Board Act Withdrawn

IN THE face of warm opposition from the Government benches and little encouragement from his own side of the House, Arthur Ellis (Cons., Ottawa South) yesterday withdrew in the Legislature his bill to amend the Ontario Municipal Board Act so as to place the operation of motor transport and bus systems under that board.

Eliminate Politics.

"I fail to see," said the Ottawa member in speaking to the bill, "why motor transportation should not come under the Railway and Municipal Board. It would have the sole power to grant licenses and to control and supervise the entire business, including rates and routes. The real object of the bill is to take the entire motor truck question out of politics."

Hon. T. B. McQuesten, Minister of Highways and Public Works, said he didn't believe for one minute that Mr. Ellis sincerely supported the principle of his bill.

"Surely," the Minister commented, "it would be highly unfit for a body of that sort to be called upon to deal with a political matter."

Duplication Feared.

There would be duplication of services should the step be taken, he added, and felt that the matter should not be placed in the hands of a judicial independent board.

Hon. Leopold Macaulay (Con., York South), former Minister of Highways, said there was "more throat-cutting by improvident reduction of rates in the trucking business than anywhere else."

"Chiselling" Charged.

"Why," he exclaimed, "they were trucking stuff from Toronto to Hamilton at one-quarter the railway rate. They chisel along for two or three years, upsetting all rate scales, and then they go into bankruptcy. I will support the Government if it will make a genuine effort to place on its feet this staggering industry."

Fraser Hunter (Liberal, Toronto-St. Patrick) said he was opposed to the principle of the control of private enterprise passing into the hands of boards not responsible to the elected representatives of the people.

Attorney-General Arthur Roebuck said he appreciated the concern for the transport drivers, but suggested that their grievances be aired, and adjustment secured, under the provisions of the Industrial Standards Act.

Mr. Ellis then withdrew the bill.

Liquor Amendment Aids Hotel Owners

Beverage Rooms Required to Vacate on March 31 Following Dry Vote in Municipality

IF A MUNICIPALITY votes dry, "March 31 of the next following year" will be the legal moving day when the municipality's beverage rooms and liquor stores must move out, under a Government amendment brought down in the Legislature yesterday.

Renewal Date.

March 31 is the last day of the Ontario fiscal year and of the beverage room authorities which are renewed annually. The Government has previously revoked beer authorities within a short time after they were knifed by municipal vote.

Premier Hepburn, sponsor of the amendment, said last night that it only extended to hotel men the protection which the Government now demands for its liquor stores. The Government was taking such a period of time now, he said, to close out liquor store leases.

Hotel owners, the Premier pointed out, could be also caught by a dry plebiscite shortly after they had sunk a sum of money into their premises. The amendment, the Premier said, only gave them the protection already afforded the liquor stores.

A remaining half-dozen amendments to the Liquor Act, brought in yesterday, have a direct bearing on the pending Toronto plebiscite.

Petition Rights.

The most important of these is designed to clarify the right of every Ontario election voter to petition and vote in a wet-and-dry plebiscite. The amendment provides that "the last revised list of a municipality is to be defined as the voters' list for the municipality as revised for the last election to the Assembly." Before a plebiscite takes place, these lists are to be revised again.

Another clause will deny voters in dry Eglinton and West Toronto a vote in a city ballot on beer. Says the amendment: "Persons in a portion of a municipality in which the sale of liquor is prohibited may not sign a petition or vote on the sale of beer and wine in the other portion of the municipality." This vote on prohibition does not stand if the liquor prohibition is lifted.

Other new clauses legalize the appointment of wet and dry managers at a plebiscite and give these managers the right to examine and inspect the petition during a four-week period.

BILL SUPPORTED BY ALL PARTIES

Garnishee Restriction Measure Generally Approved

Party lines went "haywire" in yesterday's Legislature when the Cabinet and both parties split to give J. H. Clark's bill, which bans garnishees prior to a court judgment, a healthy send-off.

The Windsor lawyer's legislation went through second reading to the Legal Bills Committee with Wilfrid Heighington protesting that it shouldn't be sent to the Legal Bills Committee—"to have it killed." Attorney-General Arthur Roebuck was skeptical about the effects of the proposed legal change, but Welfare Minister David Croll and a half-dozen other young lawyers were for the bill.

"Fords," the railways and many big corporations fired employees who were garnisheed, Mr. Clark said. The employee might be right under the law, but the companies would not assume the complications of a garnishment action.

Attorney-General Arthur Roebuck reminded the House that a working-man got credit because a storekeeper felt the law stood behind the credit. Garnishment before judgment was the Division Court's one effectiveness, and if abolished—one might as well abolish those courts.

The value of "credit" was debated in the House, and one member said a restriction of credit would be generally beneficial.

"We might be just as well off if we had no law to make debtors pay creditors," said the Attorney-General, "but that's philosophical speculation—not practical politics."