

# NIXON STATES HE WILL FIGHT BOTH MEASURES

Proposed Legislation Now  
Ready for Second  
Reading

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

Notice was served upon the Ontario Legislature yesterday by Hon. Harry Nixon, Provincial Secretary, that he would attempt to block in second readings bills that would authorize Forest Hill to incorporate as a city and York Township to apply to the Municipal Board for permission to assume city status.

Mr. Nixon's declaration came immediately after David a Croll, (Lib., Windsor-Sandwich) had reported to the House that the two bills had been approved the same morning by the Legislature Private Bills Committee.

"As far as I am concerned," declared Mr. Nixon, "I want to give notice that I will oppose the passage of these bills to set up two additional cities on the outskirts of Toronto."

While final authority rested with the Legislature, officials pointed out that reverse action in the House to that of one of its committees upon a piece of legislation, was extremely rare.

### Attacked by County.

In this instance, threat of further opposition fell upon a bill, that of Forest Hill, which bore the brunt of battle at every step in its passage through the committee and then emerged on the basis of a scant 17-15 vote. The York Township bill, asking only permissive legislation, passed committee without a polling of the members. Both bills, particularly that of Forest Hill, which asked city status on Jan. 1, 1939, was attacked by York County representatives.

Special legislation in this first major revision in years of the status of suburban municipalities was essential because Forest Hill had neither the required 15,000 population to become a city under application to the Municipal Board, nor was it in a position under normal procedure to jump from a village to city standing. In the second instance, there was lacking under existing legislation authority for a municipality of township status to become a city without first passing through village and town stages.

Forest Hill's population was given as between 11,000 and 12,000 and that of York Township as 75,000. Loss of revenue in county appropriations without an equitable return in services, leaving an estimated \$80,000 yearly "gift" to York County, was a major factor in Forest Hill's appeal for a break from the county unit.

### Lower Rate Predicted.

Hon. Leopold Macaulay, Conservative House Leader, who sponsored the Forest Hill bill, and Reeve Fred G. Gardiner, emphasized that prior to 1935, when the Ontario Government took over income tax collection from the municipalities, that one-third of the village's revenue had been made up of income tax. Loss of the tax caused the mill rate to jump 11 mills to a total of 43.

There was, they argued, no equitable return in the one mill rebate from the Government or in its assumption of mothers' allowances and old-age pensions for the cost of these two services were comparatively light in the village. Reeve Gardiner argued that every other municipality in the county, with the exception of Swansea, benefited by the change over of the income tax collection system.

In addition to that loss, he claimed that no more than \$25,000 at the most out of the village's \$125,000 county levy was returned in the way of services, so that the revision meant a net loss to Forest Hill of \$80,000 per annum.

Melville Grant, K.C., for Forest Hill, estimated that incorporation would allow a five to six mills reduction in the municipality's rate. Douglas Lucas, for the county, declared emphatically: "The county cannot afford to lose Forest Hill. If the village is incorporated, the county will have to absorb \$100,000. It can't be done. It would be terrible."

He claimed that Forest Hill paid 10 per cent of the county levy and that two-thirds of the county on an assessment basis was still in default. Reeve Warren of East York pointed out that the rate in his municipality was 60 mills on an assessment equal to Forest Hill and he maintained that East York simply could not make up its proportion of the loss if Forest Hill left the county.

## Reporter Is Exhibit "A" for Proof All Forest Hill Folk Not Millionaires

Fashionable Forest Hill Village, Toronto suburb, which is seeking status as a city, proved yesterday it has a population not entirely made up of millionaires.

During discussion by the Ontario Legislature Private Bills Committee of Forest Hill's application to be incorporated as a city, A. L. Elliott (Lib., Peterborough), asked if it were true that Forest

Hill's population consisted entirely of millionaires or if "ordinary people" also lived there.

"Well," returned Chairman David A. Croll (Lib., Windsor-Walkerville), "the best example I know of is—stand up, Cragg."

Kenneth Cragg, no millionaire, but a reporter for The Globe and Mail, stood up. A citizen of Forest Hill, he was reporting the committee meeting.