

April 6

# SUGGESTS NEW TAXATION BASE FOR EDUCATION

Shift Load Off Real Estate,  
McArthur Committee  
Urges

## ASKS WIDE INQUIRY

Pointing out that it is desirable the burden of taxation on real estate should be reduced, the report of the McArthur Committee of Inquiry into the Costs of Education which was released to Legislature members yesterday, states consideration should be given to taxation by the Province of other forms of wealth. That should be followed by the distribution of the proceeds of such taxation to the municipalities in the form of increased grants for education.

It notes the loss of the right to tax income has had the effect in urban centres of shifting a greater portion of the cost of education to real estate. It was, the report adds, represented to the committee that farm lands were required to bear more than their proper share of taxation and that the equalization of assessment undertaken was limited to the property located within a county while different methods of equalization were employed with different counties.

The committee recommends the institution of an inquiry by the Province into the principles which ought to be applied in the assessment of different types of property throughout the entire Province with a view to undertaking a Province-wide equalization of assessments.

### Costs Are Lower.

Attention is called to a general decline in the costs of education since 1930. An examination of expenditures per capita shows the cost for all educational purposes was \$2.73 in 1920-21, \$3.89 in 1931-32 and \$2.73 in 1936-37.

The committee believes that, during the next ten years there should be a reduction in the amounts required annually for the retirement of debentures. As a means of reduction of interest charges, school boards should be permitted to set aside from their annual revenue an amount not exceeding a mill of taxation for the purpose of providing new buildings when they are required. These moneys should be placed in the custody of the Provincial Treasurer and allowed to accumulate at compound interest rates and be paid with the approval of the Minister of Education to school boards.

The committee reports that during the next ten years teachers' salaries are likely to be increased rather than reduced, because of a decline in the supply of teachers. It does not recommend, however, that any salary schedule should be put into force in either the elementary or secondary school panels, and suggests that that is a responsibility for the individual area.

### Transfer Praised.

The proposal to transfer the first year or the first two years of the secondary school course to the elementary school deserves "serious consideration," the report states, adding that the committee recommends "that generous grants be given elementary school boards for the conduct of the work of one or both of these grades in the elementary school where it is offered in a manner satisfactory to the Department of Education. Conditions in different areas should be considered in formulating a policy, the committee emphasizes.

It is recommended also that grants for secondary education and for public and separate schools should be increased, that every part of a county should ultimately be incorporated in a secondary school district, that the payment on teachers' certificates for rural public and separate schools be discontinued and that the amount payable on this account should be added to the appropriation for the grant on teachers' salaries payable to rural schools and those in small urban districts. Apportionment of the school grant should depend to a greater extent than hitherto on the need of the municipality.

### Experiment Urged.

Although the committee does not recommend the adoption immediately of larger units of administration throughout the Province, it proposes that experiments should be undertaken with different types of larger units with a view to determining their merits as compared with the present system of organization.

The committee, which made an exhaustive survey of educational needs and costs and has just completed its findings, included Dr. Duncan McArthur, Deputy Minister, as Chairman; Dr. George F. Rogers, Vice-Chairman; E. C. Desormeaux, V. K. Greer, W. T. Kernahan, E. L. Longmore, B. B. Patten and John Stuart.