

April 6

## York Township's Plea Is Frowned Upon as Bill Applying to Village Is Lost on Second Reading

Government policy erected yesterday in the Ontario Legislature a solid barrier to Forest Hill Village's application for city status, defeated its bill and laid down a program to inquire into the "whole future of the Toronto suburban area."

The same ruling applied to York Township's application for permission to apply to the Municipal Board for authority to incorporate as a city. The village's bill was defeated in second reading and that of York Township was adopted, but only on the provision that clauses respecting incorporation would be cut out before it was reported for final readings.

### Would Simplify Situation.

Hon. Eric Cross, Minister of Municipal Affairs, declared it was the intention of the Government to simplify the municipal government situation on the fringe of the city rather than to complicate it by erecting two additional cities. He said there were ten municipalities in the area, having a population of 200,000 and an assessment of approximately \$100,000,000.

Some of these municipalities, he said, were emerging from a condition of default. There was not a balanced assessment in the area. The relief burden in East York was extremely heavy, while Forest Hill was the least affected by the depression.

"My suggestion is that a committee be appointed to inquire into the whole future of suburban Toronto," he said.

### May Force Amalgamation.

Leopold Macaulay, Conservative House Leader, whose South York riding included all of Forest Hill and a part of York Township, asked: "Would you force the city to take these two areas in?"

"We did it in Windsor," said Hon. Harry Nixon, Provincial Secretary.

"But Windsor was in default," came a voice from the Conservative benches.

Mr. Macaulay said it was useless to go on if the Government had decided to take a definite line of policy, but he held that Mr. Cross should have made some mention of it at the time the bill was before the Legislature Municipal Committee.

Previous attempts to settle the suburban question, he claimed, had foundered on the point that certain large sections must be coerced into taking action that they did not want to take.

He recalled that last year, when the bill was up, David A. Croll, Windsor-Walkerville, and then Minister of Municipal Affairs, was hopeful that Toronto would take some action within a year. In other words, he made the same proposition as the new Minister had offered.

He pointed out, too, that Forest Hill lost \$144,000, or 11 mills in taxation, when the income tax collection was taken over by the Province.

"Other municipalities, Toronto included, in spite of what my colleague from Riverdale (W. A. Summerville) claims, had practically made up in the one-mill rebate and Provincial assumption of old-age pensions, mothers' allowance and increased hospital grants all that had been taken away in income tax. Forest Hill has lost eleven mills of assessment and regained only one mill," said Mr. Macaulay.

### Pleads Township's Cause.

He said it was not a question of who lived in Forest Hill, but a question of an equitable application of a principle to all municipalities.

"I would like some undertaking that this committee that the Minister of Municipal Affairs proposes means business," said Mr. Macaulay.

The Premier declared he could only say that the Minister had outlined the Government's policy.

George S. Henry (Cons., East York), who voted against the bill in committee, briefly outlined efforts of the past twenty-five years to secure a foundation for a metropolitan area policy.

W. J. Gardhouse (Lib., York West), speaking to York Township's application, in spite of Premier Hepburn's declaration that the policy applied to both bills, pleaded that the township's cause was entirely different from that of Forest Hill, that as a township it could not apply for city status in spite of having 75,000 people, far in excess of the number required, unless permissive legislation was passed. He held it was ridiculous for a municipality of 75,000 to be held in the status of a township.

Mr. Macaulay also urged that the township bill be granted. Mr. Hepburn declared it had been overlooked that incorporation or leave to incorporate would disturb the refinancing process of certain York County municipalities.

Both Mr. Summerville and William Duckworth (Cons., Dovercourt) declared it was against Toronto policy to annex suburban municipalities.