

MARCH 7

STEWART URGES GROUP TO PROBE RELIEF CASES

Non-Partisan Committee
to 'Weed Out' Recipients,
Is Suggested by M.L.A.

A non-partisan commission to investigate each relief case was urged yesterday by W. J. Stewart (Con., Parkdale), speaking to the Speech from the Throne at the legislative session yesterday. Mr. Stewart believed that such a commission would reduce Provincial relief costs.

"Would it not be well to have a general weeding out of those on relief?" he asked. "I would suggest that the Government consider a plan whereby a non-partisan commission, composed, say, of a Liberal, a Conservative and a well-known humanitarian, be appointed, without salary. Then all relief recipients could be notified that they would be struck off the rolls at the end of sixty or ninety days unless they appeared before the commission and provided sufficient reasons for being kept on."

Mr. Stewart spoke highly of the work done by Dr. W. H. Avery, consultant of the Department of Public Health, in combatting venereal disease. Dr. Avery was a member of the Royal Commission which investigated the mental hospitals of Ontario several years ago, and which found 15 per cent of the cases in Ontario mental hospitals could be charged to social diseases.

"Since Dr. Avery took over his work as consultant there have been many patients discharged from mental hospitals as completely cured. Last year it was reported that fifty patients more had been discharged than in any other year, because the treatment they have been receiving had resulted in cures," Mr. Stewart said. "This has resulted in a great financial saving for the Province. Not only are we saved the cost of maintaining these people in the hospital for this year, but they will not be charges in future years, and I would estimate that in time the saving made in this respect will be somewhere between \$150,000 and \$250,000. I would suggest that this work be given every encouragement."

He regretted that more assistance had not been given to farmers.

The recent egg-grading regulations adopted by the Federal authorities were criticized as being unfair to the small farmer.

Among other suggestions advanced by Mr. Stewart was the appointment of a committee to co-ordinate with patriotic bodies in combating fifth column activities.

Premier Hepburn congratulated the Parkdale member on the number of suggestions included in his speech. He said he would investigate the claim that egg-grading regulations prevented farmers from trading at stores.

Charging that various governments in Canada, Federal, Provincial and municipal, had been partly responsible for the unemployment and relief problems of recent years, another member of the Opposition, William Duckworth, of Toronto-Dovercourt, said that the same governments must now make plans for the immediate postwar years.

Budget Speech Friday Has No New Taxation, Premier Hepburn Says

Last-Minute Change
Depends on Federal
Action, Report States

SURPLUS INDICATED

Premier Hepburn, who on Friday next will present his seventh Budget to the Ontario Legislature, said last night "no new taxation is being contemplated."

Any last-minute change in that policy, it is understood, depends almost wholly on whether or not Ottawa leaves Provincial gasoline and liquor revenues unchanged by either regulation or a Federal tax.

Revenues from both these sources, for the year ending March 31, have greatly exceeded the Treasurer's forecast of last Feb. 15, when for gasoline he budgeted \$24,000,000 and for Liquor Control Board \$9,500,000. This much he revealed when he said the anticipated surpluses from these two sources would cover the \$2,000,000 cheese bonus.

Later reports at Queen's Park indicate that the surplus, on a budgeted expenditure of \$88,694,970, will greatly exceed that figure. For example, Dr. A. C. Trottier, Liberal member for Essex North, in seconding the motion for the adoption of the Speech from the Throne, gave a figure on 1940-41 Lands and Forests revenue approximately one and three-quarter millions above that estimated in the Budget.

Next year's Budget, it is understood, is being drafted with consideration of the possibility that war taxes may cause a falling off in domestic gasoline and liquor sales, but it is hoped confidently that any such reduction may be more than made up by increased tourist travel.

At the Dominion-Provincial conference it was estimated Ontario's relief bill in 1941-42 would be \$6,725,000. In assuming 75 per cent of relief cost figures, the Government is obligated to pay \$5,043,750 on that estimate, or a little less than a million more than the Province's share in the 40-40-20 agreement of the current year. Plans are being made to pare even that figure and, consequently, relief does not figure prominently as an item of comparison in last year's Budget and the one to come.

"Two factors are present in consideration of this year's surplus," said Premier Hepburn last night. "First, there is the cost of snow removal on our thousands of miles of road, and, second, when there is no snow condition there is heavier traffic and we collect more gasoline taxes."

"Up to the present, we have had most favorable weather conditions. Mind you, we are not taking credit for the weather. We have taken credit for a lot of things in our day, but we haven't rung in the weather yet."