

POSTWAR PLAN IS ADVOCATED TO LEGISLATURE

W. J. Stewart Suggests Non-Partisan Group Probe Natural Wealth

The suggestion that the Government appoint a non-partisan commission to deal with ways and means of transferring Ontario from a war economy to a peacetime economy, was made in the Legislature yesterday by W. J. Stewart, (Cons., Parkdale). He spoke at resumption of the debate on the Throne Speech.

"People are asking the question, after the war what?" said Mr. Stewart. "Steps should be taken now to assist in the postwar reconstruction period."

Mr. Stewart also advocated a commission to direct the exploitation of the natural resources in Ontario. Returned men could be sent into the North under a proper plan and encouraged to develop these resources, he said. The speaker dealt with other phases of Governmental activity. He urged a periodic check-up on motorists with a view to putting off the road those who failed to pass the test, and more attention in the schools to teaching civics. Mr. Stewart touched on education in the schools and declared that while the vast majority of teachers were doing a splendid job, there were those who imparted political instruction.

Mr. Stewart was followed by A. L. Elliott (Lib., Peterborough), and W. A. Sommerville (Cons., Riverdale). J. M. Cooper (Lib., Sudbury), adjourned the debate.

Enters Armed Service.

Mr. Elliott, for two terms chairman of the Legislative private bills committee, a member of the special committee appointed to revise the Assessment Act at this session and a member of the special committee which, in 1940-41 made an investigation into the lands and forests resources, spoke on the eve of his departure for training as an officer of the Prince of Wales Regiment, Peterborough.

Mr. Elliott stressed it was the responsibility and duty of the Provincial Government, through exercising certain measured control over the municipalities, to see that the default situation of the depression years should never occur again.

"Looking ahead," the member said, "we might well consider that after the conclusion of the present world conflict, there will be an influx of settlers from the British Isles and elsewhere. We know that if that does happen, municipalities will be required at substantial capital expense, to supply civic services, and they should be prepared to meet this situation."

He saw as a major problem the inequalities in assessment. Equalization of assessments in counties has long been a disrupting factor in the development of the county as a strong municipal unit, he said, citing that in various municipalities the assessments vary from 25 to 100 per cent of the actual value.

"In the proposed changes of the Assessment Act it is desired to keep the townships as spending bodies in the same manner as they are today. It will simply mean that the duties of assessing and collecting taxes will be transferred to the county."

Warns of Rules Breach.

At this juncture, Speaker Clark reminded the member that to speak directly of legislation before the House was a breach of the rules. Mr. Clark ruled that while the new Assessment Act had not been introduced, that notice of its introduction had been given.

Mr. Elliott spoke of the farm economic problem. But he stressed particularly the duty which rested upon the Province to develop the forest wealth which is playing such an important part in war industries. He advocated a five-point postwar program entailing general reforestation, improvement of woodlands which have become depleted, reclamation of wastelands that will support forest growth, planting to prevent erosion and to conserve the water flow and prevent flooding.

Mr. Sommerville in the course of his address compared what the city of Detroit is doing in A.R.P. work with the efforts of Toronto City Council.

"After a long debate the city of Toronto gave all of \$20,000 for this important work while the city of Detroit spends \$1,000,000 on A.R.P.," said Mr. Sommerville. "Some of the members must be half asleep. It is the citizens themselves who are doing things without pay."