

## DOUCETT HITS EXTRAVAGANT EXPENDITURES

### Highway Construction Should Be Limited Down to Maintenance

"Frills" in Ontario highway construction in wartime when only maintenance should be done and while the Province's mental hospitals were overcrowded, youth generally neglected and old age pensions and mothers' allowances "a shame and a scandal" brought criticism upon the Government yesterday from G. H. Doucett (Prog. Cons. Lanark) continuing the Budget debate.

"Stone battleships" on the Henley Bridge at St. Catharines, which, he said, cost the Province nearly \$50,000, and elaborate monuments at the Toronto entrance to the Queen Elizabeth Way were specified in his criticism of "extravagance" which also embraced sums paid to architects. The reported \$20,000,000 Provincial surplus he termed as much a hallucination as the Indian rope trick and he hated to think money was being spent for non-essentials "when the people on the back concessions were up to their axles in mud." A boasted million dollars to farmers in subsidies was nothing compared with huge payments elsewhere, he maintained and criticized a case where he said an architect's fee had been 37 per cent of the cost of the project instead of the usual 3 to 7½ per cent.

Referring to Government activity before the 1937 election, Mr. Doucett discussed a Provincial hospital planned at Port Arthur and halted after election. A "little cut" of this, he said, had gone to the Port Arthur firm of C. D. Howe and Co., \$3,419.62 for superintending engineers "what ever that is." (Mr. Howe is now Federal Minister of Munitions and Supply). Interference with insurance rates he scored as "for election purposes," and charged "every promise of economy and debt reduction has gone by the wayside."

## PUT NEW TEETH IN FOREST LAWS

### 'Hot-Logging' and Other Ills Checked, Says Hipel

Highly effective teeth are being placed in regulations for the protection of Ontario's forest resources, according to a review of the Lands and Forests Department given in the Legislature yesterday by its Minister, Hon. N. O. Hipel. And they're serving the further purpose of protecting financially the taxpayer whose inheritance they are as well as the operators who develop them.

Theft of timber, "hot logging" and other such offenses will be dealt with strictly, the Minister said. And as an aid to smaller operators, cumbersome guarantee bonds have been done away with. The department has a keen eye on the transfer of licenses as well, and this now can be done only by application, giving full particulars "so we may know what the deal means." Often large sums were involved, Mr. Hipel explained, as much as \$100,000 in one case, and the smaller companies which bought such licenses on transfer were often left with burdens around their necks which made it impossible for them to carry on.

In view of the expensive fire hazard which forests faced, careful supervision was being kept over summer users of them and fire losses were being sharply reduced. Almost a million feet of timber, valued at about a quarter of a million dollars, had been destroyed as a result of fires last year, and that year had been more favorable than most.

## PROBE COSTS OF HIGHWAYS

Investigation into contracts on two stretches of Ontario highways was indicated in Public Accounts Committee yesterday when Opposition Leader George Drew asked for information concerning the section of the Trans-Canada Highway between Hearst and Nipigon and No. 15 Highway between Seeley's Bay and Kingston. The section of the Trans-Canada Highway constructed by Ontario joins two other sections of the transcontinental road chain.

Construction and maintenance costs and other details are to be produced, on the committee's order, by the Acting Deputy Minister of Highways at the next session Monday. At this time, too, Deputy Minister of Public Works McAllister has been instructed to produce information as to cost, maintenance and mileage payments of all Ontario Government automobiles for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1942.

## DENY CORNWALL STATUS OF CITY

The private bills committee of the Ontario Legislature yesterday rejected a request of the Town of Cornwall that it be incorporated as a city. The request came in a bill which also sought approval of the annexation to the municipality of Cornwall of lands known as the "Glebe" in Cornwall Township.

The committee approved the annexation request but rejected that for incorporation as a city after Hon. T. B. McQuesten, Minister of Municipal Affairs, said the people of Cornwall wanted to live in a city and at the same time wanted to retain the status of a town for municipal purposes, including assessment.

George S. Henry (Prog. Con., York East) said there was no other case of the same nature on record and that the committee should be careful about establishing precedents.