

ROAD CONTRACT IS EXPLAINED

Stretch of Highway Was 115 Miles, Not 10

Inquiry by the Legislature's Public Accounts Committee into the \$90,000 highway patching contract that was extended into a \$328,000 construction job without calling tenders was resumed yesterday. The picture was completely changed when engineers of the Highways Department revealed that the contract, instead of applying to a ten-mile stretch of road between Kingston and Seeley's Bay serving heavy traffic from Barriefield Camp, really covered the 115 miles of highway in the Kingston division, from Kingston to Perth.

J. D. Miller, acting deputy minister of highway; William T. Noonan, district engineer on the job; W. G. Clark, who was inspector, and J. D. Foster, instrument man, all were quizzed on construction details and work orders. Mr. Noonan explained that two work orders for \$70,375 and \$9,313 issued subsequent to the \$90,000 contract really included part of the original contract and were not as they seemed—straight extensions of it.

Covered Long Stretch.

Mr. Noonan agreed, that when the original patching contract was let, it was possibly apparent that patching alone would not be satisfactory because of the disintegration of the road. Mr. Noonan then revealed that the original contract concerned patching over 115 miles of highway, whatever work the department staff could not handle.

"But why set aside ten miles for a special contract?" asked Col. George Drew, Opposition Leader. "Because it was worse than the rest," said Mr. Noonan.

Mr. McQuesten explained that the contract had been supposed to apply to only ten miles because the specific question by the Opposition applied to that small section. "Quite obviously we have been at cross-purposes," said Col. Drew.

Mr. Miller told the committee that while the contract on the 115 miles was for patching, it might have been necessary to pave the whole 115 miles if conditions warranted, but reiterated the \$90,000 contract was only for patching.

Provincial department officials will be heard Monday morning in further investigation into government use of motor cars and its system of checking and mileage payments.