

APRIL 14

# York Taxpayers Shun School Inquiry Costs

## Leopold Macaulay States Bill May Be \$100,000

The taxpayers of York Township stand every chance of being saddled with Runnymede Collegiate inquiry costs, running between \$50,000 and \$100,000, Leopold Macaulay (Prog. Con., South York) declared in the Legislature yesterday. Discussion of the collegiate controversy arose during consideration of Education Minister Duncan McArthur's estimates.

After a prolonged debate Mr. Macaulay asked: "What protection has the Township of York against being burdened with costs which may be \$50,000 or a lot more if this inquiry keeps on until August or September, as has been suggested?"

"I would say," said Dr. McArthur, "that the protection the township needs most is against its own Board of Education."

A legal argument developed over whether the judge of the Board of Reference has power to order payment of counsel costs as well as the costs of the board. Mr. Macaulay insisted that there was nothing to prohibit the judge who sits as chairman from assessing the costs against the township. He was supported in this opinion by Opposition Leader George Drew.

In answer to a question from Dr. Harold Welsh (Prog. Con., East Hastings), Dr. McArthur said the Board of Reference had power to recommend to the Minister of Education who should pay the costs. He believed the terms of the act were broad enough to include a recommendation to this effect.

Premier Conant did not believe any judge would construe his powers other than to order costs of the Board of Reference itself, and not the legal fees.

## Reeve Says Township Should Not Be Liable

The taxpayers of the Township of York "are becoming increasingly alarmed at any suggestion that they should have to pay for any charges incidental to the Board of Reference now investigating Runnymede Collegiate Institute matters," said Reeve Farquhar J. MacRae, last night, when asked to comment on the Parliamentary discussion of the matter yesterday afternoon.

"The inquiry was initiated and ordered by the Provincial authorities," said Reeve MacRae, when told that Leopold Macaulay, M.P.P., had referred to local concern lest the township be saddled with all the expense of the inquiry, which might run from \$50,000 to \$100,000.

"The taxpayers feel they have not asked for the inquiry," added Reeve MacRae, "and consequently have no responsibility for the costs incurred."

Chairman Harry Durrant, York Township Board of Education, said he was hoping the Department of Education would pay "at least a share" of the cost, including the remuneration of the commissioners and their counsel. While no definite arrangements as to costs had been made and there was no way of knowing how much they would run, he said, "I should anticipate we would pay our own solicitor and incidentals such as witnesses."

Mr. Durrant added it was Mr. Clarke, not the board, who had asked for the inquiry, as he was interested in having his name cleared. The estimate of cost given in the Legislature, in his opinion, was "extravagant."

Any teacher may request a Board of Reference, who feels he has a grievance, Trustee Frank Oke, York Township, pointed out, and if so, it was his understanding that the Department of Education supplied the machinery.