

March 17

Race Tracks Tax Increased To 10 Per Cent, Frost Reveals

Acting on the theory that those who can afford to wager on horse races can best stand a fairly stiff tax, the Ontario Government has boosted the race tracks tax from 5 per cent to 10 per cent, Provincial Treasurer Leslie Frost disclosed in his Budget address yesterday. This will increase the revenue from \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000.

In the words of the Treasurer "the rate of tax payable by the holder of a winning ticket issued under the pari-mutuel system will be increased from 5 to 10 per cent." With the Dominion Government taking a 5 per cent cut out of the wager and the tracks keeping 7 per cent for themselves, this means that out of every dollar bet at the tracks 22 cents finds its way to taxing bodies and to the tracks themselves.

The Provincial Treasurer did not go into details in announcing the boost in the tax on wagers. It is understood, however, that Ontario felt there should be more revenue

accruing to the Provincial Treasury from this source and that if the Province failed to act the Dominion Government likely would raise its tax.

One Queen's Park viewpoint is that the Provincial levy is more of a license fee than a tax. With money pouring through the pari-mutuels in an ever-increasing volume, the Government took the stand that the imposition of an increased contribution to the public coffers would place a burden where it could best be borne—on those with money to risk on the thorough-breds.

Provide Extra Financial Aid For Health, Hydro, Research

Additional Provincial financial assistance in the fields of health and welfare, as well as grants to Ontario universities and extension of rural Hydro were announced by Provincial Treasurer L. M. Frost in his Budget address yesterday.

Almost \$27 million is budgeted for Health and Welfare Departments. This includes an extra \$1 million for health and an additional \$2,651,775 for welfare with \$2,106,000 bonuses.

With the prospect of postwar skill and knowledge taking the place of

tariff barriers, grants totalling \$1,316,000 were announced for universities, \$816,000 to the University of Toronto and \$250,000 each to Queen's and Western to aid higher education, especially scientific research.

An outlay of about \$400,000 is planned for Hydro to add another 400 miles of rural transmission lines to the present 21,000 miles so as to serve an estimated additional 5,670 rural customers now totalling 136,000. The Province pays 50 per cent of capital costs. Rate adjustments will bring the outlay for the benefit of rural areas to \$900,000.

Vivian Sees Hope.

Health Minister Dr. R. P. Vivian told the Legislature yesterday that the Ontario Government hoped for an early adjustment by National Selective Service of the hospital help shortage which had compelled two Provincial sanatoria for tuberculosis cases to leave 168 of their beds empty.

"We have been attempting to have National Selective Service take steps to provide needed staff," said the Minister, "but so far with no success. We hope for an adjustment in the near future."

The matter was brought before the House by G. H. Mitchell (C.C.F., York North), who referred to an article in yesterday's Globe and Mail concerning the situation at the Toronto hospital, Weston, and Muskoka hospital, Gravenhurst.

Mr. Mitchell asked that all possible steps be taken to have the situation corrected, and suggested increased wages for help might do it. Dr. Vivian explained that the Government had no control of the shortage of kitchen and general service help, but was doing what it could, and hoped for early results.

Budget Debate Opens Tuesday

The Budget debate will open in the Ontario Legislature Tuesday afternoon, Premier Drew told the House yesterday. Flt. Lt. L. E. Wismer (C.C.F., Toronto-Riverdale) will lead off as the Opposition's financial critic. For the Liberal group the debate probably will be opened by A. St. Clair Gordon (L., Kent West), former Provincial Treasurer and recently retired head of the Ontario Liquor Control Board, though in view of his recent illness there are reports that he may not be able to undertake the task.