

Reject Four C.C.F. Bills, But Concur in Fifth

Awaiting disposition for some time, four out of five C.C.F. private bills were voted down on second reading in the Legislature yesterday. The Government, however, concurred in one, an amendment to the Municipal Act submitted by William Dennison (C.C.F., Toronto-St. David). It provides for compulsory safety devices for window cleaners and prohibits them working without them. Another, a municipal health bill, already is covered by Government legislation, Health Minister Dr. R. P. Vivian pointed out.

Municipal Affairs Minister George Dunbar agreed to a suggested amendment to the Assessment Act by Mr. Dennison and said a bill would be introduced to permit municipalities above 300,000 population to repair houses which could be made habitable for families on relief. There are 50 such housing units in this district, Mr. Dennison said. Mr. Dunbar's action followed representations made before the Municipal Law Committee yesterday, which, Mr. Dunbar said, were "sound common sense where such houses are available." The bill originally was introduced by Dana H. Porter (P.C., Toronto-St. George).

Statement Monday.

Premier Drew said he hoped to make an announcement on housing Monday. "We are pressing the matter," he said.

The reference was to a previous question from Agnes Macphail (C.C.F., York East) concerning housing, to which the Premier had answered that, though it was a Federal matter, the Ontario Government was prepared to "do what it can" to assist.

Premier Drew said the Government would not support the bill to permit school board employees to serve on municipal boards. The reason, he said, was "obvious" since they would be able to influence their own positions.

Beer and Wine.

A C.C.F. bill to impose a tax of 25 per cent of their assessed value

on private clubs selling beer and wine was defeated. Mr. Drew said the Government was not prepared to support it. "It's far too sweeping," said the Premier. "There are many clubs, charitable and otherwise. The labor unions themselves would be seriously affected."

To the complaint by Mr. Dennison that veterans' clubs claimed they were not getting as fair a deal as hotels in that their beer quotas were reduced more, Premier Drew replied. "We are not discussing the Liquor Control Act."

Mr. Dunbar was on his feet at once, as Mr. Dennison said many municipalities had asked for action in taxing clubs.

"Not one request has been received from the 943 municipalities in Ontario except Toronto," declared Mr. Dunbar.

Fuel Monopolies Charged.

Declaring that 75 small fuel dealers had been "squeezed" out of business by the "big coal monopolies" in the past three years in Toronto, Mr. Dennison pleaded in vain for second reading for a bill to permit establishment of municipal fuel yards without consent of the Municipal Board. The bill was defeated.

Mr. Dennison said 28 per cent of fuel dealers in Toronto control 82 per cent of the fuel business. This, he said, was an opportunity for the municipalities to step in as well as for the Government members to give proof of their belief in public ownership.

"What happened to Toronto's wood?" asked William Duckworth (P.C., Toronto-Dovercourt). Mr. Dennison replied that the Dominion Government had "made a pretense at giving municipalities the right to set up fuel yards," but restricted them to wood, leaving the private dealers "where the money is to be made." J. B. Salsberg (L.P., Toronto-St. Andrew), supporting the bill, said Toronto was "potentially" a loser on its wood not yet disposed of.

Fire Protection.

An amendment to the Fire Departments Act was introduced. It permits any municipality having a population of not less than 10,000 to institute the two-platoon system. Attorney-General Leslie Blackwell explained that under the existing act the two-platoon system is confined to cities, towns and villages. In all cases where the platoon system is set up the fire departments must be on a permanent basis.

The Attorney-General introduced an amendment to the Municipal Act which empowers the Commissioner of Provincial Police to enter into agreements for the policing of municipalities. The legislation is permissive and not mandatory, the House was informed.

Another amendment gives authority to the Ontario Fire Marshal, or his deputy, or a municipal fire chief to close any premises where a fire has occurred, or where it is believed there may be any substance or device likely to cause a fire, and to remove from the premises any article or material which may be of assistance in an investigation. The entry of any unauthorized person into such premises is barred until completion of the probe.