

Citizen Control of the Citizen's Business

TORONTO'S CITIZENS CAN CONTROL TORONTO'S AFFAIRS ONLY THROUGH FREQUENT, PROMPT, ACCURATE AND PERTINENT INFORMATION WITH REGARD TO TORONTO'S BUSINESS.

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OPEN LETTER

MAILED ON FEBRUARY 23RD, 1926, PREVIOUS TO
THE PASSAGE OF THE CITY ESTIMATES.

*Printed for the Information of
Members of the Bureau.*

To
The Mayor,
Board of Control and
Members of the City Council:

The recent debate on salary increases is an additional proof, if one were needed, that the personnel problem at the City Hall is in a chaotic condition and will not be solved effectively until there has been a thorough survey of the civic service from top to bottom. Until this is done there will continue to be "liveliness," always tending to become livelier, at least twice a year usually—once before the civic elections and once during the consideration of the estimates.

Under the present method, well considered plans of reorganization, leading to individual increases, where deserved, without any or very slight increase in total salary bills, are apt to be confounded with raids on the civic treasury not based on any definite plan for the protection of the city's interests. Also deserving cases are apt to be passed over from year to year from lack of a sufficiently active backer, while less deserving cases may be recognized on account of more effective and pertinacious presentation.

Does it not seem clear that the only way to put all departments and all individuals on an equal footing, and at the same time give the taxpayers adequate protection, is to have a thoroughgoing standardization of grades and salaries in each department and as between departments?

The Bureau of Municipal Research, as it has done many times in the past, begs leave to submit the following suggestions for the consideration of your honorable body:

1. That the organization of every department be carefully studied.
2. That every position in every department be examined as to the duties connected with it, the salary paid, the amount of salary paid elsewhere in public and private business for similar work and the prerequisite training and experience for the position.
3. That the whole service be graded so that as far as possible the grades in one department shall correspond to the grades in all others where similar positions exist.
4. That maxima and minima for salaries in each grade be established with annual increases for satisfactory service.
5. That individual continuous service records be established as the basis for all increases.
6. That methods of promotion, transfer and demotion be worked out so as to contribute to the esprit de corps

of the service by rewarding merit on a businesslike and sure instead of an unbusinesslike and spasmodic basis, by discouraging poor service and by utilizing the whole personnel from the standpoint of the service as a whole, not simply from that of the various departments.

The Bureau is not one of those which desecrates fair or even generous financial rewards in municipal employ based on the magnitude and character of service rendered and it has no reason to believe that such a study as it suggests would result either in an average reduction of rates of pay or in an increase in the total payroll. In fact, it believes that the result would be quite otherwise.

With regard to service in the policy forming body, such a study, with service records, is, of course, quite out of the question; but when the policy forming body considers raising its own stipends, the Bureau would suggest that it consider the possibility of effecting such a raise without increasing the total cost by securing legislation to reduce the number of members in the City Council. If the stipends could be raised without increasing the total bill, particularly when it would not lead to any decrease in efficiency in Council but would probably lead to a considerable improvement, it is not likely that there would be any serious objection from the ratepayers; but to increase cost without improving service might possibly not be so well received.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN MACDONALD, President.
HORACE L. BRITTAIN,
Managing Director.

If there is a sufficiently insistent demand on the part of the taxpayers who bear the burden of the present system of adjusting the annual salary and wage bill, and also on the part of civic employees, themselves taxpayers, who recognize the inefficiency, injustice and wastefulness of the present system of wages and salary control, it will be impossible to postpone much further the long overdue standardization of grades and salaries within departments and as between departments, the establishment of maximal and minimal salaries for all positions and the setting up of uniform methods of promotion, demotion and discharge based on individual service records in all departments.