

# 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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## TORONTO GROWS

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Government, including Municipal government is an overhead of business and industry, the cost of which is passed on in charges for services and goods, along with those governmental costs which are paid by citizens directly, and thus becomes an item in the cost of living of the consuming public.

### WHEN GOVERNMENT WAS SIMPLE.

When government was simple, governmental costs were small and might be regarded as negligible by business, industry and the citizens in general. This is no longer the case.

The disastrous results of over-expansion, inflation, waste and extravagance are patent in other fields. In so far as these exist in governmental administration, they are even more widespread and deep-seated in their effects. The people who pay the bills are the only ones who can grapple decisively with these conditions. They can, but will they? Or will they allow the reign of custom and inertia to continue?

### TAXES NOT A NECESSARY EVIL.

Taxes are not a necessary evil. They are to pay for necessary services or services which the public think necessary. That part of taxation which represents unnecessary costs of government is itself unnecessary and uneconomic. This unnecessary and uneconomic part of taxation is a burden on business and industry and all those who derive their incomes from burden and industry. The long drag of the depression was undoubtedly aggravated by unnecessary taxation, and its disappearance would undoubtedly be hastened by the elimination of governmental waste and unnecessary expenditure, the cost of which, in the last analysis, is met out of taxation. The notion that there must be waste and over-expenditure in government is unpatriotic and reduces citizens to the position of insensible cogs in a senseless machine.

### WHO SHOULD BE MOST INTERESTED IN BRINGING ABOUT CONDITIONS IN THE MUNICIPAL FIELD WHICH WILL PRODUCE THE GREATEST AMOUNT AND QUALITY OF SERVICE FOR THE LEAST EXPENDITURE, CAPITAL AND CURRENT?

There comes a point in public expenditure when the tax burden becomes a handicap on business and industry, from which most citizens draw their incomes. When this point is reached, incomes of citizens begin to decline, tax-paying ability decreases, industry and business tend to seek other communities less highly taxed, tax-paying ability still further declines, and so on in a vicious circle. In the present times, a real stimulus to

prosperity would be an increase in efficiency and economy of governments, including municipal governments. Everyone who has a stake in Toronto—and who of its citizens has not?—is vitally interested and should give some consideration to these facts.

Since 1913 Toronto has grown in population 40.76%. City taxation produced by the general tax rate has increased, in dollars of 1913, 104.88%. Has the average income in 1913 increased to the same extent? Even if it has, might more dollars have been left in the average income to meet expenses other than taxation?

Granted that some improvement is possible, how may it be effected? Possibly most persons would agree on the following propositions:

1. The city should have a high degree of continuity of policy with regard to services which require current and capital expenditures.
2. Expenditures should be decided on the basis of community needs rather than on local or sectional desires.
3. If current expenditures are planned a year in advance, capital expenditures should be planned five or ten years in advance.
4. Consistent with thorough discussion, expedition in civic affairs is desirable.
5. Policy-forming bodies may be so large and over-organized as to impede real discussion and delay decisive action.
6. Policy-forming bodies may be so large as to play into the hands of cliques and special interests and bring about a condition of "low visibility" as to real responsibility.
7. The fewer administrative units there are, the more easy it is to bring about co-ordination and co-operation.

Those who agree with these propositions should consider the advisability of voting for candidates pledged to the following policies:

1. Reducing the number of Aldermen.
2. Increasing the length of term of Alderman.
3. Electing one-third or one-half of the Aldermen each year.

4. Reducing the number of wards.
5. Simplifying the Committee System.
6. Establishing a five or ten-year Capital Budget, subject to annual revision where necessary.
7. The co-ordination of all spending departments rendering direct service to the citizens—as distinguished from the overhead departments, such as Finance, Assessment and the City Auditor's and City Clerk's, and from the protective such as Police, Fire and Public Health—as Bureaus in a Department of Public Services under a Director of Public Services.

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