

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 to the Citizens of Toronto

Why not a study **now** to determine "Just how many employees of each kind are absolutely necessary for efficient operation" in each Department of the City Government?

To the Citizens of Toronto.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Estimates of the City of Toronto for 1931 provided for a current expenditure of \$37,486,425 out of taxes (taxes net \$33,419,252), educational grants and incidental revenues other than taxation, not including the expenditures of self-sustaining special services operated by the City itself, other than any deficits which might occur. Of this total it is estimated by the Bureau that \$18,659,092 was to go to salaries and wages and other payments for personal services, or 49.77% of the total estimates on current account, about \$10,400,000 being for the City and about \$8,250,000 being for the Board of Education and Separate School Board. According to the best information available to the Bureau \$3,548,183 or 9.47% of the total estimated expenditure was to go to supplies, including heat, light and power. The debt services, interest and sinking fund, were estimated at \$7,411,177 or 19.77% of the total.

Economy in capital expenditures will affect the current expenditures of succeeding years and is indispensable if we are going to begin to control which has loosely been called "uncontrollable expenditures", but it is evident that the effect of economy in 1932 in capital expenditure will not make a large reduction in 1932 current expenditures.

It is fairly obvious that in order to reduce the tax rate, or even retain it near its present level, it will be necessary to effect reductions in other large items of current expenditures, such as the bills for salaries, wages and supplies. As pointed out in our previous "Open Letter", drastic co-ordination and amalgamation of administrative units offers a practical method of reduction in cost and this may be made operative this year if and in so far as it is effected this year. Another method would be to fill all vacancies from the existing staffs and rearrange the work so as to enable departments to carry on so far as possible without increases. It is amazing what private business has accomplished in

this way without decrease of efficiency or productivity. A third method would be to suspend salary increases for the year as recommended by the Heads of Departments and Board of Control and passed by Council (Jan. 25th). A fourth method would be to grant the regular increases so as to put all of the City employees on an even basis, but make a percentage reduction over all or almost all as has already been decided by the Board of Education (Jan. 28th). **A fifth, and the most promising and thorough going method would be to make a detailed "establishment" study of each department and administrative unit in order to ascertain just how many employees of each kind were absolutely necessary for efficient operation.** This would be a long time job and could not secure results before the time of passing the estimates, but any savings indicated could be effected before the end of the year. Is there any sound reason why several of these methods should not be started in operation at once?

The statement is sometimes made that the services are overmanned. The statement is sometimes made that some departments are seriously undermanned. What disinterested person knows whether either or both statements are correct? The citizens and taxpayers have a right to know whether or not out of their reduced taxpaying ability they will be called to pay only what is necessary for services they regard as necessary and desirable. On every side citizens are reducing their expenditures because they must for things to which they have become accustomed. Is it possible that the City also, which is financed by the citizens, has reached a point where it is desirable not only to reduce costs to a minimum, without reduction of services, but even to reduce services? If the people want it done it can be done.

Respectfully submitted,

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President.

HORACE L. BRITTAIN,
Managing Director.

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