

BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH

TORONTO'S CITIZENS CAN CONTROL TORONTO'S AFFAIRS ONLY
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MUNICIPAL ELECTORS Looking Forward to 1942

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast"

In spite of experience since the war started, and the immediate necessity not only of economy in the ordinary sense, but of sharp retrenchment in municipal expenditure for current services, the citizens still hope for the best. Will it be a vain hope for 1942?

NOT WHAT WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE AS A CITY, BUT WHAT WE CAN DO WITHOUT

In 1929, when there was no war and little thought of it and when money was comparatively plentiful, Toronto citizens were faced with estimated expenditures of \$33,009,077.

In 1941, with a well armed and ruthless enemy almost at our gates and when citizens and taxpayers are, or should be, straining every nerve to contribute as much as possible to the nation's war effort, when the radio almost every day, and rightly so, calls for retrenchment—not merely economy—in personal expenditures, the citizens of Toronto must out of an income certainly not higher than in 1929, provide through taxation or otherwise \$34,872,430. Very soon the cost-of-living index will have reached and passed that of 1929.

Since 1932, the general assessment, which excluding business assessment represents the valuation for taxation purposes, has decreased 113½ million or almost 11½%. Does anyone think that 11½% represents the real decline of realty values and that the present assessment is based on a realistic valuation?

But irrespective of whether or not

1. The city is efficiently and economically managed, or
2. The people have more money to pay municipal and school taxes,
3. The assessment on all kinds of property in all parts of the city represents 100% of the actual value,

the question asked concerning every proposed expenditure must not be, "Is this for a worth-while purpose?" but "Should we, at this time, spend the money for this purpose?"

Canada is at War and Toronto is a Part of Canada

Anyone who proposes new ways or advocates old ways to spend more money or a more diffuse form of administering expenditures, should justify himself thoroughly. Otherwise how can he claim that he is cooperating in the national defence effort?

The notion that the war is so far away from us, that it can really never touch us and that therefore we do not need to change our scale of public expenditure, if not insane, is just silly.

Now is the Time to Begin the Selection of Candidates Who Will Compel Economy and Retrenchment

We are shortly to elect fifty men and women to administer our civic affairs and handle our money. Many are busy already to ensure their own candidacy or election. Should not the citizens get busy now to make sure that they will find names on the ballot that they can confidently and proudly vote for? The only way to do this is to bring forward responsible men and women for all places on elected bodies.

Now, if ever, is the time to take positive action.

TAXATION, ASSESSMENT AND INCOME

Year	Net General and School Tax Levy		Tax Rate (mills)	General Assessment ‡	Per Capita Share of National Income*	Per Capita share of National Income* going to City Taxation**
	Total	Per Capita				
1929	\$28,580,930	\$47.13	31.50	\$896,977,126	\$558.19	8.4%
1930	30,397,619	48.90	31.80	941,283,372	506.47	9.7
1931	33,419,253	53.28	33.60	976,771,653	435.87	12.2
1932	34,042,393	54.32	33.90	989,292,666	345.55	15.7
1933	33,176,845	53.21	33.40	977,517,405	310.49	17.1
1934	31,972,100	50.81	33.00	955,137,735	330.92	15.4
1935	32,820,094	51.42	34.15	944,275,007	353.50	14.5
1936	32,333,301	50.09	34.85	908,437,728	386.18	13.0
1937	32,936,862	50.80	35.70	902,700,427	427.89	11.9
1938	33,067,105	51.04	36.05	898,065,871	427.10	11.9
1939	32,253,369	49.69	34.75	895,512,159	440.62	11.3
1940	31,712,341	48.93	35.15	883,297,497	505.54	9.7
1941	30,998,887	47.27	34.60	875,719,226	553.17	8.5

‡ Figures from the Annual Estimates used in arriving at tax rate (not identical with revised figures).

* Based on figures for Ontario.

** Column 3 on column 6. Estimated on the basis of total payments to individuals.

COMMENT

1. Net school and general taxation per capita while it has decreased steadily, with small exceptions, since 1932, is higher than in 1929.
2. In total, the net school and general tax levy is \$2,418,157 higher than in 1929.
3. The tax rate has decreased since 1938, but is higher than in 1929 by 3.10 mills.
4. The per capita share of national income, based on Ontario figures, though increasing, may still be lower than in 1929, and the recent increase has been due to war expenditures.
5. Probably, even in Toronto, at least as great a share of the National Income goes to municipal taxation as in 1929.
6. All the increased National Income due to war expenditures, should go to finance war expenditures.
7. The first call on the resources of the citizens should be for defence. If we are overcome, we shall have nothing to say about the disposal of these resources.
8. There must be in Toronto not only rigid economies but drastic retrenchments by citizens and by their municipal government. "Business as usual" is not possible for either.

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