

BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH

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,
CANADA

White Paper No. 286

February 15th, 1944

VOTING IN THE CIVIC ELECTION

1st January, 1944

(STORY No. 1)

There were 363,185 names on the Voters' List. This does not mean that that number of persons might have voted. There are probably some duplications within wards which affect chiefly elections of Aldermen, members of Board of Education and members of the Separate School Board. These duplications in actual practice have probably a very slight effect. A voter may have votes for aldermen and for school board trustees in nine wards if he has property in nine wards, but he has only one vote for Mayor and one vote each for four candidates for the Board of Control, since the Mayor and Board of Control are elected "at large." There is a very large duplication in the voters' list on this account. For some years, the Bureau has deducted one-third from the voters' list to arrive at an estimate of the number of those who may vote for Mayor and Controllers. Whether this is too large or too small is not known, but so long as the same proportion is used in all years, the trend of voting as shown by this method is fairly accurate.

The number of individuals who actually voted was 143,110, representing 39.40% of the total number of names on the list. This percentage would be higher if allowance were made for serious illness, deaths outside the city since assessment was made, and unavoidable absence of potential voters not eligible for advance polls.

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WHAT THE RECORD SHOWS

On the other hand, this percentage does not reflect failures to exercise the full franchise, due to "plumping", not voting in other than the home ward, and lack of interest or knowledge in the case of some offices. If a voter has cast only one vote when he might have cast ten, his voting efficiency is only 10%.

It will be noted that:—

1. The vote for Aldermen on the percentage basis was the highest in nine years, except in the 1939 election, and more than double that of last year.

2. The vote for Controllers on the percentage basis was the highest in nine years, except in the 1939 election, and not quite double that of last year.

3. The number of voters for Mayor was the highest, save in 1939, but on the percentage basis was exceeded in 1936.

It may be of interest to note that, after making a 12½% deduction from the voting lists on account of Separate School voters, the vote for Board of Education was lower than that for Aldermen—about 29.7% to 32.2%. In view of the number of parents who have children in school, the importance of education and the large sums spent on schools, this is difficult to understand.

The table below is for comparative purposes only:—

HOW TO PROMOTE VOTING EFFICIENCY

Special issues in the 1944 election, the general campaign to get out the vote and especially the services of the Voters' Information Bureau of the Board of Trade, all contributed to the improved voting record of the City. It is hoped that, as understood, the Voters' Information Bureau will be continued for at least some years.

Great as the improvement in voting efficiency was, it is hardly a record of which the people of Toronto can be proud. Would not the following steps contribute to voting efficiency?

1. The preparation in October and publication in November of a draft budget as a basis for public discussion at the Civic Elections.

2. Publication by the City in local newspapers of an official summary of the activities of Council and Board of Control—say every two weeks.

3. Keeping in touch with members of elected bodies throughout the year, encouraging them in well-doing and admonishing them when necessary. (Why leave all such contacts to "pressure groups"?)

4. Securing, by a disinterested body, of a factual record of candidates for publication in December immediately after nomination day.

5. Promotion of candidature throughout the year.

6. The alteration of the system of one-year terms for elected persons to two or three-year "staggered" terms—terms sufficiently long and assured to prove efficiency or inefficiency.

TORONTO CIVIC ELECTIONS

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Election Date	For Year	Population	Names on Voters' List	Estimated No. of Individuals on List*	Individuals Who Actually Voted	VOTES FOR COUNCIL			VOTES FOR BOARD OF CONTROL			VOTES FOR MAYOR		
						Possible** (Est.)	Cast	%	Possible*** (Est.)	Cast	%	Possible† (Est.)	Cast	%
Jan. 1, 1936	1936	645,462	325,784	217,190	128,987	651,568	192,682	29.57	868,760	324,128	37.31	217,190	125,136	57.62
Dec. 7, 1936	1937	648,309	345,462	230,308	107,058	690,924	159,277	23.05	921,232	263,922	28.65	230,308	101,124	43.91
Dec. 6, 1937	1938	647,803	348,402	232,268	128,177	696,804	188,556	27.06	929,072	311,853	33.57	232,268	120,507	51.88
Jan. 2, 1939	1939	649,123	350,740	233,827	154,458	701,480	237,706	33.88	935,308	421,020	45.01	233,827	146,701	62.74
Jan. 1, 1940	1940	648,098	350,372	233,581	125,533	700,743	194,809	27.84	934,324	333,882	35.73	233,581	120,451	51.57
Jan. 1, 1941	1941	655,751	352,691	235,127	92,327	569,722g	115,539g	20.28	940,508	250,324	26.62	235,127	88,793	37.76
Jan. 1, 1942	1942	669,130	366,767	244,511	72,115	733,534	111,220	15.16	978,044	195,528	19.99		Acclamation	
Jan. 1, 1943	1943	?	361,342	240,895	73,083	722,684	112,973	15.63	963,580	199,076	20.66		Acclamation	
Jan. 1, 1944	1944	?	363,185	242,123	143,110	726,370	223,911	32.20	968,492	379,552	39.19	242,123	138,037	57.01

* Estimated, by allowing duplication at 33½%.

** Estimated, twice number on Voters' List.

*** Estimated, four times net individuals.

† Estimated, net individuals on list.

g Acclamation in Ward 3 (25,361 names) and Ward 9 (42,469 names). 705,382 less twice 67,830.

Based on: Votes cast by Wards as in Toronto Council Minutes. Summary of Names on List and Actually Voted. Population as in City Estimates except for 1942. The 1942 figure is also official.

On basis of 300,000 possible voters:

for Mayor—January 2, 1939—48.90% voted.
 January 1, 1940—40.15% voted.
 January 1, 1941—27.60% voted.
 January 1, 1942—Acclamation.
 January 1, 1943—Acclamation.
 January 1, 1944—46.01% voted.

No. of people entitled to vote on Money By-laws. Duplication within a ward eliminated.
 1940—120,244 1941—119,603 1942—121,048 1943—122,066 1944—126,662

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