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OPEN LETTER

To Electors of the City of Toronto

Men and Women:—

On January first, 1946, one question is to be submitted to a vote of the electors entitled to vote for Mayor of the City of Toronto and two questions are to be submitted to a vote of the electors qualified to vote on money by-laws.

The Bureau believes it would have been possible, if "time had been taken by the forelock", if reasonable forethought had been exercised and if due energy had been displayed, for the City to have had prepared and to have adopted a city-wide master plan, a detailed list of necessary improvements with estimated costs arranged according to priorities of construction based on relative needs. In the absence of such plan, the piecemeal construction with which we have been long familiar continues.

The first question to be submitted to electors entitled to vote for Mayor, is:

"Are you in favour of the Toronto Transportation Commission proceeding with the proposed Rapid Transit System provided the Dominion Government assumes one-fifth of the cost and provided that the cost to the ratepayers is limited to such amounts as the City Council may agree are necessary for the replacement and improvement of city services?"

There is no doubt whatever that something drastic needs to be done about rapid transit whether or not federal aid is received. The project as drafted was approved by the City Planning Board "as part of the official plan, etc." This official plan cannot, of course, refer to a master plan which has not been adopted by the Corporation or the ratepayers and is only in course of preparation. However, the rapid transit plan would probably have been a part of the master plan if this had been ready, as the incomplete and almost forgotten plan submitted by a former City Planning Board indicated.

While the rapid transit plan may not do everything that its proponents hope, there can be no reasonable doubt that it will provide great relief to traffic and that it has been carefully considered and well worked out in detail.

The two questions to be submitted to the electors entitled to vote on money by-laws, as all money by-laws should be except in case of emergency are:

(a) *"Are you in favour of the construction, if possible with financial aid from the Dominion Government, of a subway under the tracks of the Canadian Pacific Railway, between the intersection of Clifton Road and Inglewood Drive and Highland Crescent, together with necessary approaches thereto, for the elimination of the danger and traffic congestion on the MacLennan Avenue hill and crossing, at an estimated cost \$1,032,000?"*

(b) *"Are you in favour of the construction, as the first step in a city-wide traffic improvement plan, of a traffic artery in the Don Valley and Belt Line Ravine from Keating Street to Mount Pleasant Road, at or near Merton Street, with the necessary connections to existing highways, at an estimated cost of \$2,259,606?"*

Both these projects have the approval of the City Planning Board and (b) refers to "a city-wide traffic improvement". It is to be noted that "a" is used and not "the". The elector is supposed to be able to surmise what this plan will be in order that he may cast an intelligent vote.

There is no doubt that (a), the MacLennan Hill project, should have been completed years ago. The question arises whether the proposed plan goes far enough, even at the present time, toward eliminating the north and south traffic congestion.

The second project to be submitted to those entitled to vote on money by-laws, (b), the Don Valley traffic artery, has been mooted many years. It is so obvious a way of relieving traffic congestion, that one wonders what has held it up so long. To get fullest possible benefit for this project, there will need to be complete co-operation of suburban municipalities, the County of York and, particularly, the Toronto and York Roads Commission, about to be approached by His Worship the Mayor at the instance of the City Planning Board.

If electors are under the impression that contributions from the Dominion Government will lower costs they are under a misapprehension. There are about 4,000 municipalities — including 1,655 urban — many of which will "get theirs" also. It may, if it encourages larger local expenditures, not even lower the ~~net~~ cost of improvements to the local taxpayers. In the long run it may mean nothing more than collecting money from ourselves for ourselves, while paying in addition the cost of collection.

Respectfully submitted,



T. G. ROGERS, President.



HORACE L. BRITTAIN,
Managing Director.

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