

BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH

"TO PROMOTE THE MOVEMENT TOWARD EFFICIENT CITIZENSHIP"



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take pride in their City and act thoughtfully

~~To all citizens who will take the trouble to read this letter, which concerns their own affairs, interested in its affairs,~~

Ladies and Gentlemen:

This age, which delights to call itself practical, demands "Results". Results which cannot be expressed in dollars and cents, ton-miles, miles to the gallon, etc, are, for it, not results at all.

This attitude puts such organizations as churches and schools, as distinct from school buildings and church edifices, at a disadvantage. A building can be pointed to with pride as an evidence of piety or love of education. Toronto is often referred to as the City of Churches and Schools, but rarely as the City of Pastors and Teachers. A pastor or teacher is a deduction from revenue, but a school or a church is an advertisement, even if built in the wrong place, from unworthy motives, and costing too much for the value received.

Bricks and cut stone are extremely impressive to the ordinary mind. So we continue to spend more money on plants, which can be seen and measured, than on brains or character, which can neither be seen nor measured.

Such organizations as the Bureau of Municipal Research suffer from the same attitude of mind, in that its most vital results cannot be measured. Its first objective is effective and informed citizenship as a basis for effective government. This is basal in importance but as difficult to measure as education or religion, intellect or character.

It is in even a worse position than most organizations, in that the claiming of credit for improvements is fatal to cooperation on which the Bureau must depend for results. It is not natural to expect that governmental authorities, being human, will be as energetic in pushing policies for which others are to get credit rather than themselves. Besides it is in the public interests that legislative and administrative authorities should be given full credit for all improvements and be held responsible for all failures in the production of public services.

The main function of the Bureau is to leave ideas around loose to be had for the taking, encourage the use of these ideas and give credit to those who put them into actual operation. A Bureau, if it is to be anything but a parasite, must be more interested in the welfare of the community than in its own. Those who have been in touch with the Bureau for the last fifteen years know that it has from the beginning preserved this attitude. It is not in the interests of the citizens and taxpayers, however, that the Bureau's work for them should suffer through lack of funds on account of this self denying ordinance.

The primary work of the Bureau is to promote efficient municipal government through developing effective citizenship. Any improvements not based on citizen support is apt to be ephemeral. Real permanent progress cannot more than keep pace with growth in citizenship. What is fundamentally wrong with Chicago is not inability to pay wages, inability to borrow money, subservience to the "racket", delayed assessment reform, improper accounting, inadequate financial control, decentralized administration or daily holdups and murders. They are only symptoms. The real disease is the atrophy of citizenship. ~~The slogan of charity campaigns often is- "What if nobody cared!" That is what is wrong with Chicago. "Nobody cares, as long as they get theirs" or, less extremely expressed, not enough people care enough to work hard enough to bring about the complete reversal of form which is so patently necessary.~~

Thirty years ago some people foresaw the harvest that Chicago is now reaping and which any city will reap if its citizens are lethargic, narrowly selfish, hopeless and therefore helpless. The seeds from which the Chicago convulsion developed exist in all cities, and Toronto is no exception. Granted the same conditions, one does not need to be a prophet or son of a prophet to forecast results.

The only way to combat mental lethargy is to stimulate thinking through discussion and constructive criticism. The only way to fight unsound ideas and warped attitudes is to face them with sound ideas and normal attitudes. This the Bureau of Municipal Research has been trying to do for fifteen years, those nearest to it believe, with considerable success. Its programme has been limited only by the limitation of its funds. Those who believe in the dynamic of ideas, intellectual and moral, those who believe that there is need of and hope for an increase in enlightened citizenship and effective government, even those who, while hopeless, believe in going down fighting, will find the Bureau the best available medium through which they can do their bit.

Although, as has been said, it is quite undesirable, even if possible, to catalogue the achievements of the Bureau like the output of a factory; although no one agency can honestly claim sole credit for results which flow only from the cooperation of many agencies and influences, yet the supporters of any movement

have a right to full information as to the nature of its programme and the quality and quantity of its work. Such information is summarized in a pamphlet entitled, "Twelve Years of Community Service" (1926) and in the Bureau's Annual Reports issued since. These are available to all.

Different citizens react very differently towards the Bureau's programme, but the number of unsolicited appreciations sent along with cheques is increasing. A short pamphlet containing a few of these has been prepared and is available.

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The Council of the Bureau is so convinced that its work is ~~so~~ vital to the Bureau's future that it appeals for support to those citizens who are not now supporting it, and for continued and, if possible, increased support from those who are now its supporters.

For the last fifteen years the Council and Executive Committee of the Bureau, without any compensation except the satisfaction in the work, have averaged over 20 meetings a year. Many of the members have given service for over a decade. Notwithstanding this, they do not ask support for the work of the Bureau because it is theirs. They ask support because it is yours.

an annual budget of
which means a The Bureau will need for the next five year period \$50,000, ~~in addition to its present resources.~~ This sum can be made up *as follows by obtaining, in addition to present supporters, the following*

60	sustaining members (guarantors)	at \$100 a year	- \$6,000
60	members	at \$ 50 "	- 3,000
40	"	at \$ 25 "	- 1,000
	Total-		<u>\$10,000</u>

In view of the facts that, outside of the Hydro Commission and Transportation Commission, the City spends on current account over \$37,000,000 a year, over \$30,000,000 of which comes from taxation, it does not seem unreasonable that public spirited citizens should contribute \$10,000 annually to promote efficient municipal government.

The subscription form attached may be forwarded to the offices of the Bureau, 137 Wellington St. West. All cheques will be promptly acknowledged. Your cooperation in the way suggested is earnestly solicited.

Yours very sincerely,
BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH.

Signature

30 signatures