

1952

Open Letter Issued by the Bureau of Municipal Research, 24 Isabella Street, Toronto 5



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*An independent fact-finding organization  
reporting to the public on civic affairs.*

# CIVIC AFFAIRS

## ANNUAL MEETING FEATURES RICHARD S. CHILDS

Those attending the combined annual meeting of the Citizens Research Institute of Canada and the Bureau of Municipal Research will be privileged to hear Mr. Richard S. Childs, who as secretary of the Short Ballot movement was the single person directly responsible for initiating the city-manager plan of local government. The meeting will again take the form of a luncheon, to be held this year on Tuesday, April 29th, in the Royal York Hotel, Toronto. Mr. Childs' subject will be "The Coming of the Council-Manager Plan".

Mr. Childs comes to us from New York City, where as a former President and now full-time Chairman of the Executive Committee of the National Municipal League, he has helped the spread of council-manager government to more than one thousand municipalities throughout the United States and Canada. Mr. Childs speaks as a former New York business man, at one time general manager of the Bon Ami Company, more recently executive vice-president of Lederle Laboratories, and a director of the American Cyanamid Company. In addition to a distinguished business career, Mr. Childs has made an outstanding contribution to the improvement of municipal government in the United States. He has been prominently associated with no less than six national organizations working in the field of public administration and civic betterment. For twelve years, also, he was president of the City Club of New York.

The manager plan is commanding increasing attention as a modern approach to efficient and economical administration. Because of the growing interest it holds for Canadian cities, members and friends of the Bureau will not want to miss the opportunity of hearing Mr. Childs. Those who plan to be present are asked to return the enclosed reservation card at their earliest convenience.

"LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN CANADA"

For all who would like to know more about local government, how it works and how it might be improved, a new book by Dr. Horace L. Brittain "Local Government in Canada" makes welcome news. It supplies the first comprehensive account to be published on this subject in forty-five years. The story holds interest for everyone who has dealings with local authorities as a taxpayer, business man or private citizen. It makes stimulating reading for all who are active in civic affairs as electors, local representatives or paid officials.

Local government--the one we see closest at hand--is by many people the branch of public affairs which is least understood. It is not an easy subject to tackle because the form of organization is quite different in each Province, and different again for every type of municipal, school or special local authority throughout Canada. Dr. Brittain, however, is uniquely qualified by genuine scholarship and rich experience to undertake the job. For this reason, his book makes an outstanding contribution to the Canadian scene.

Friends who know Dr. Brittain's work with the Bureau and the Institute need no one to vouch for the quality of his presentation. The book is brief and to the point. It is clearly written in his direct, strong style. In a little less than one hundred and fifty pages, Dr. Brittain sketches in the historical background, outlines and explains the present municipal and school organization in various parts of Canada, and points up apparent weaknesses and problems. In the following hundred pages, he presents a more detailed description of municipal and local school establishments and gives an account of the provincial controls exercised in part through general legislation and in part by supervisory departments and agencies. The book was originally prepared several years ago, but important recent developments have been covered and a brief chapter has been added on Newfoundland.

"Local Government in Canada" serves up a skillful blend of factual data and considered opinion on the calibre of our municipal institutions. Taken together, the description of local government in the very early days and the discussion which follows on the influences British and American practice have had on later Canadian developments are particularly enlightening. Indeed, throughout the whole book, the author emphasizes that local institutions, as we know them now, have been a product of growth and change over the years. Finally, his analysis of present weaknesses in the municipal structure brings the whole purpose of representative government at the local level into sharp focus.

The book, which was published by the Ryerson Press, has already been given a good reception. Both as a popular presentation on an important topic and an accurate work of reference it is a most valuable publication. We offer warmest congratulations and good wishes to Dr. Brittain on this achievement.