



The Liberal

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Natural Gas

There seems to be a surprisingly apparent lack of interest in the possibility of obtaining natural gas in this area on the part of municipal councils. In the past month, the councils of Markham and Vaughan Townships and the Village of Richmond Hill have all been approached by representatives of the Consumers Gas Co. regarding the establishment of franchises for gas service in this area. Both Markham and Vaughan have deferred decision without setting any definite date to consider the matter, while Richmond Hill council which was approached last Monday also laid over the matter until a later date. While caution in committing a municipality to obligations is certainly most commendable, municipal bodies should be able to take steps towards a decision fairly soon, particularly when the question of gas in the community has been made known for some time now.

In presenting the request for a franchise, the Consumers' Gas Co. has pointed out constantly that the installation of natural gas service will not cost municipalities anything. The fact that natural gas has been so successfully installed in many communities in and around Toronto would seem to bear out this statement. Twenty years ago, the advent of natural gas in

the district would have been hailed as a progressive step; now, however, with progress coming in leaps and bounds in the Toronto area, it seems to be received with little real enthusiasm.

Most municipalities in the Toronto area are doing their utmost to encourage industry to settle in the suburbs and are making considerable concessions to gain this important industrial assessment which offsets residential costs. The majority of services such as water, sewers and hard-top roads which are used as inducements for industry are of a very costly nature and result in increased taxes. On the other hand, natural gas supplied, serviced and installed by a private company is an additional service to offer prospective industries and yet does not cost the taxpayer anything.

Although natural gas is far from the answer to the many problems of industry, it is an essential service which is to be found in every progressive expanding community. In looking to future development in terms of both expansion and taxation, services which do not represent a drain on the tax dollar are particularly worthy of consideration. The establishing of as many as possible services now will to a great extent gauge the way in which the Richmond Hill area will handle future expansion.

Bouquet For The Firemen

It has come to light that during the recent barn fire at Elgin Mills, the Richmond Hill volunteer Fire Brigade was only five minutes in reaching the blaze. At 2 a.m. on Sunday morning a call giving the location of the fire was received by the Chief; at 2.05 a.m. the truck had reached the blaze, a mile distant from the fire hall — a pretty good record for any brigade and particularly for a volunteer group. It is doubted whether it could be beaten. A recent experiment at the Liberal Office actually timed the brigade's speed and it proved that in exactly two minutes from the time the firebell at the public school was rung, the fire truck passed by with a full compliment of men.

Critics of the brigade are only those who are unfamiliar with the conditions which exist. To start with, there is never a moment when the fire-phone is not within earshot of the person on duty while the mainstay of the brigade is a group of public spirited men who volunteer to man the truck for a small

remuneration. Then there is the family on call, who must sacrifice many pleasures while on duty. In looking over the life of the volunteer fireman, we must also keep in mind that many times he is called from his bed to answer the alarm and often is the case where a volunteer ruins his clothing because he feels it his duty to go immediately rather than stop to change to old clothes.

As in the case of the proverbial "Old Fire Horse", there is naturally some attraction to fires for these men to volunteer for this work, but regardless of the motives, it is fortunate that small towns like Richmond Hill have such conscientious volunteers. We often wonder if the critics would be willing to jump out of bed in the middle of the night in mid-winter and possibly stay up until the dawn fighting fires even at any price.

Just remember, the next time you meet one of the R.H.F.D. men, they're mighty fine fellows.

Economic Prospects

Prime Minister St. Laurent announced recently the Government had appointed the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects which had been forecast by the Minister of Finance in his budget speech in April.

Chairman of the Commission will be Walter Lockhart Gordon, President of J. D. Woods & Gordon Limited, management consultants.

In establishing the Commission, the Committee of the Privy Council had before them a report from the Prime Minister stating that "it is desirable that the Canadian people should be more fully informed of the long-term economic prospects of Canada and that it is in the national interest to initiate, examine and publish studies of Canada's economic potentialities including developments in productive capacity, the growth and distribution of population, the direction and nature of our internal and external trade, progress in standards of living and expanding requirements for industrial and social capital."

These are broad terms of reference and the report of the Royal Commission should do much to map out the course of our great and growing country in the years ahead. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the Commission is charged with the responsibility of studying and reporting upon (a) Developments in the supply of raw materials and energy sources; (b) The growth to be expected in the population of Canada and the changes in its distribution; (c) The prospects for growth and change in domestic and external markets for Canadian products; (d) Trends in productivity and standards of living; and (e) Prospective requirements for industrial and so-

cial capital. The appointment of this Commission has, generally speaking, been hailed as highly desirable and the personnel of the Committee is recognized as being of such stature that the report will be awaited with interest by all Canadians.

This is a particularly propitious time to undertake an enquiry of this nature. Canada has undergone a period of growth and development of almost boom proportions, particularly during and since World War II. The pause in the pace of Canada's expansion during 1954 has raised some questions which needed to be answered.

The basic question on which Canadians want to be re-assured seems to be this: Can this country continue to lean as heavily as it now does on extractive industries and go on finding employment for its rapidly increasing population? Reliance on the extractive industries means heavy dependence on foreign markets and suggests a second question: Must Canada remain dependent on exports for its prosperity, or can it gradually grow into a more self-contained economy?

The expansion of the service industries has been the main balance to unemployment, but it would seem Canadians want to see some of the prosperity generated by the successful operation of new mines and smelters, and oil wells "shared" by the secondary manufacturing industries.

Ways and means of achieving this desirable goal will be high on the list of matters coming within the purview of the Royal Commission. It is sincerely hoped the results of the enquiry will point the way to a solution of problems which have appeared consequent upon our growth and development.



"He looks like Grandpa laughing at one of your jokes."



THE LAST COMBAT

It has often been said that you can tell a man's character by what he laughs at, and that is true of nations as well as individuals. We don't have to go far back in British history to find that public hangings were spectacles for public amusement. As late as 1833 a crowd estimated at 50,000 saw a child hanged in Tyburn, London, for the theft of a few pennies.

Louis Blake Duff points out that little more than a century ago in Canada public executions were accepted as necessary to combat lawlessness, and for what we would consider minor offences. Between 1831 and 1838 there were 84 hangings in the United States, and in many cases on circumstantial evidence. The last public hanging in Canada was in Ottawa on February 11, 1869.

Modern amusements may seem rough and callous but no sensible person would deny there has been a steady improvement, a sense of fair play and rising moral standards.

The Colosseum of ancient Rome was a vast amphitheatre holding 80,000 spectators. It was the scene of contests and combats and although the gladiatorial shows were cruel and brutal affairs the people liked them and each year hundreds, probably thousands of men were slain. In the earliest days the combatants were criminals who had already been condemned to death, but were given a chance to fight for their lives. Later they were often men whose views on political affairs had brought them into disfavour.

One afternoon early in the Fifth Century, the Emperor Honorius won a victory over the Goths. He had entered Rome amid much cheering and extravagant applause. Sports and games in the Colosseum were to be climaxed by a gladiatorial combat and the vast building was packed with a crowd frantically excited. Chariot races in which young Greeks drove magnificent horses opened the proceedings. Later, groups of negroes with spears and swords fought against ravenous lions. Some men lost their lives but in the end every lion lay in a pool of blood. The ghastly scenes seemed to satisfy some lust for blood on the part of the spec-

tators and as each animal fell there was a burst of wild cheer.

When the mounting enthusiasm reached fever heat two parties of gladiators entered the arena and prepared for battle. As men fell before the swords of their opponents the people, now more excited than ever, goaded on their favourites, urging them to slay their rivals.

Among the spectators was a Christian monk named Telemachus. He had watched the proceedings with feelings of terror and disgust. Even the slaughter of savage lions had moved him with pity for he knew it was an unequal combat. The sight of men goaded on to slay others with whom they had no quarrel was too much for him. Righteous indignation against the rulers, and deep sympathy for the suffering possessed him. He looked at the vast multitude, crazed with the lust for blood; they seemed to be turned into animals. It was more than he could stand.

Putting aside those near him, Telemachus swiftly climbed the wall separating the spectators from the arena, plunged among the fighters and ordered them, in the name of God, to stop.

For a minute, the spectators were stunned into silence, then, like wild beasts, robbed of their prey, they gave vent to their anger. Telemachus stood his ground and told them of the sin they were committing. It was of no avail. Stones fell on him to the ground where soon his lifeless body lay in view of all.

The incident did not end there. As the excitement died down the people knew that they had murdered a good man and a true servant of God. For days the chief conversation in Rome was not the courage of gladiators but the story of an unknown monk, braver than them all. Honorius ordered the fights to cease. It was the last gladiatorial contest in ancient Rome.

Our quotation today is by Tertullian: "The blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church."

"Way Back When"

Excerpts from the files of The Liberal
 Home paper of the Richmond Hill district since 1878

AUGUST 12, 1926
 About 75 descendants of the late Christopher Heise gathered at the old homestead, now the home of Orla L. Heise for a family reunion. Rev. Alvin Winger led the devotional exercises.

Editorial Comment

One of Canada's most valuable crops and one which is free for the taking is again on the market. Blueberries are being picked and marketed now for a good price.

All across Canada's north, berry pickers can be seen among the rocks gathering this unexcited fruit which commands top price at every grocery store. While the holiday-picker is quite common there are many who make a good summer salary during the blueberry season.

In the Gravenhurst district whole families may be seen quickly filling their baskets which when sold will reap them a good profit. And while there are some who feel that blueberry picking is a waste of time, particularly during holidays, there are others who can't resist going to their favourite patch as soon as they reach the cottage.

As far as wild fruit is concerned, there is probably no other fruit which commands the same high price as blueberries and yet the funny thing is they are free for the picking.

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