

The Porcupine Advance

TWO PHONES—26 and 2020

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IS TOBACCO TO BE RATIONED?

There have been hints recently heard in town that tobacco is the next commodity to be rationed. Smokers will have some hope that this is not the fact because up-to-date the government has not denied the idea that the fragrant weed is to be rationed. The usual procedure is for someone to suggest that a certain commodity is to be rationed; then the government issues a prompt denial. It is pointed out that there is no immediate scarcity of the article mentioned and people are warned against the foolishness of buying up large stocks. Many people, however, lay in as large a supply as they can, and in the meantime the government announces solemnly that hoarding is both foolish and against the law. Most people wonder how hoarding could be two such opposite things. The next step is for new ration coupon books to be issued and the article is under the rationing ban.

The avowed purpose of rationing is to assure the equitable distribution of commodities that are in scarce supply. There is serious doubt as to whether or not the present system of rationing has achieved the purpose for which it is supposed to be intended. Supply and demand appear to be stronger factors than any plan of rationing. Those who make the rationing laws have largely confined ration plans to commodities that are considered as actual necessities. Luxury items are left in the hands of the old supply and demand laws. There are many unrationed articles that have rationed themselves, as it were. The supply is so restricted that the demand has to restrict itself. There are many who believe that it is not rationing that is required, so much as a ceiling on price and a floor on quality. With these two restrictions, supply and demand are believed by many to be quite capable of handling the situation without formal rationing. Those responsible for the ration plan, however, have a different opinion. There is a danger, though, that the opinion may be due more to a desire to regiment and regulate rather than to any definite knowledge or power to control conditions.

One thing appears to be certain and that is the fact that there should be the very least possible regimentation and governmental interference. It should be an accepted principle that no rationing or other regimentation should be undertaken unless it is absolutely necessary to the public welfare. Hundreds of articles formerly considered as of much importance but easily recognized as not being essential have escaped the rationing ban. The people have had to ration themselves and this has not resulted in any particular hardship or harm.

In the case of tobacco, it appears that this commodity is not an essential one and so might well stay off the rationing list. It would appear to be well for the bureaucrats to forego the pleasure and the personal profit and employment created through rationing.

In any event if any rationing of tobacco is considered as essential it should not be done through any coupon system. In such cases it would seem that the only logical plan is to do the rationing at the source. The manufacturer should be required to ration the wholesalers, and the latter in turn should ration the dealers. This plan has worked with fair satisfaction in the matter of candies and other commodities. Of course, this plan does not appeal to the bureaucratic minds. It means less power of interference with people in general, less regimentation, fewer government jobs.

It is frankly admitted that the Wartime Prices and Trade Board in its rationing plans has attempted to keep from undue discrimination against any particular class of business. In this laudable desire, however, the Board does not appear to have always been successful. There is a very general belief that the small business man has been rather ruthlessly sacrificed while the chain stores apparently have been fairly well protected. If rationing of tobacco is an essential part of the winning of the war, smokers in general will be ready to reduce their consumption of tobacco to any figure required, so long as there is no undue discrimination or injustice. In this connection it appears essential that any rationing of tobacco should be along some other plan than by ration coupons. To adopt ration coupons for tobacco would be to ruthlessly sacrifice a large number of specially deserving dealers. The Canadian National Institute for the Blind sponsors several hundred tobacco and news stands in Ontario. These stands are conducted by blind people who thus are able to maintain themselves and to enjoy useful and serviceable occupation. Any system of ration coupons would necessarily put these little shops out of business. It may be that this would not be displeasing to the chain stores handling tobacco and to the larger dealers. It would, however, be very displeasing to the people at large who believe in a fair deal and who would resent the ruthless and unnecessary crushing of a gallant little band of men and women, who, despite the handicap of

blindness, have been giving cheerful and earnest service to the public.

AGAINST REGIMENTATION

The municipal election returns in Toronto showed the defeat of every candidate on the C.C.F. slate, and the party had candidates for every office from that of mayor down, or up. The moral taken from the returns by most newspapers is that the people do not want the interjection of provincial and Dominion party politics into strictly municipal affairs. Of course, it is apparent that provincial and Dominion politics are out of place in municipal elections. Until last year Timmins found it profitable and practical to keep municipal, provincial and Dominion politics in distinctly separate compartments. The issues in the three arenas were different and unconnected with each other. There was a time in Timmins when many boasted that they voted Tory in the Dominion field, Liberal in the provincial elections, and for men irrespective of party politics in municipal affairs. Later the situation was reversed in Dominion and provincial elections, with the majority favouring the Liberals in the Dominion field and the Conservatives in the provincial, but still holding to the principle of no party politics in municipal affairs. At the election last year the electors in Timmins showed that they still believed in keeping party politics out of municipal affairs.

It is true that what the C.C.F. calls the "organization" in its own party and "the machine" in any other party favours the idea of interfering in all elections. Such a practice has its advantages for the machine of the C.C.F. and the organizations of the other parties. It keeps the working group together and active between regular elections, but this is not necessarily for the common good. Indeed, it is better for the people in general when the organization springs only from enthusiasm for the policies at issue, rather than the maintenance of a well-oiled and active array of workers. The people in general at the last municipal elections throughout the province made it very plain that they did not want any machine, even though it went by the name "organization" to make its weight felt in every sphere of action. In most of the municipal elections in Ontario, the electors made it quite plain that no party machine would be able to elect candidates whom the voters had rejected on other occasions and who hoped to achieve office through use of the C.C.F. banner.

One of the chief objections The Advance has had to the C.C.F. has been that this political party seems to desire a system of regimentation that would leave the people about as free as the people of Germany or Italy. Recent utterances by some of the leaders of the C.C.F. make it very plain that not only does the party plan a very complicated and onerous system of general regimentation of the people—all the people—but that once in power opposition is to be curbed as it was in other countries in Europe where similar socialism was adopted. In other words it was practically stated that a revolution would be staged, if necessary, to instal the C.C.F. in power, and once in power it would take another revolution to get rid of them. It was plainly indicated that it was not simply a case of giving a new party a trial. The problem promised was how to change, if change were desired.

Both Abraham Lincoln and Phineas T. Barnum have been credited with the saying:—"You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all the time." Whether it was the great president or the great showman who made this remark it appears to have perennial truth in regard to political matters. The majority may be wrong on occasion, but they have a habit of eventually seeing the true light. The silent voters finally come, often by devious paths, to the facts of most cases. In the case of the municipal elections in Ontario, The Advance ventures the opinion that the decision of the electors was not so much objection to party politics being introduced in municipal affairs as it was realization of the fact that by attempting to secure municipal control in Toronto and elsewhere the C.C.F. was exposing the fact that its leaders sought to control municipal affairs just as they would regiment and regulate provincial and Federal concerns if given the opportunity. The hopeful sign given by municipal election returns is not the defeat of the C.C.F., but the fact that the people are not in favour of regimentation and dictation.

LEAVES FOR SOLDIERS

Canada is a land of great distances, but the authorities do not appear to have considered this fact in connection with leaves and furloughs for sailors, soldiers and airmen. A man or woman on active service may actually have to spend the greater part of his leave in uncomfortable travel, or forego the comfort of visiting his home. This fact is felt with special force in this North Land, which itself is four times the size of the rest of the province and so has greater distances with which to contend. The man on active service has nothing to say as to where he shall be located. Indeed, it seems sometimes as if the authorities made a special point of placing him as far away as possible from his home town. This may have its reasons, or even its advantages, but the soldier suffers unnecessarily when it comes to the question of his leave or furlough. This is a matter that has been mentioned many times, but the authorities do not appear to care. The comfort of the soldier, the sailor and the airman should be the chief consider-

ation, but it does not appear to be that way.

This week there were several striking illustrations of the hardship imposed on those in the armed services. One of these cases is worthy of mention. A young man whose home is in Timmins but who is stationed at Barriefield, was able to secure forty-eight hours' leave. He had not been able to visit his home at Christmas or at New Year's so he thought it would be pleasant to come home even though it were only for a few hours. Accordingly he left Barriefield Monday night on the Northland. Had all gone well he would have been able to reach Timmins and spend a few hours here and return to Barriefield within the brief leave period. Unfortunately, however, there was a wreck on the T. & N. O. near North Bay. This delayed him some sixteen hours. When he finally reached Timmins it was a physical impossibility for him to get back to Barriefield within the set period. Of course, it may be argued that in such a case, his plan was to notify his Commanding Officer in regard to the accident and his leave would be extended to meet the situation. Soldiers, sailors and airmen, however—and particularly soldiers—say it is not as simple or as pleasant as this argument suggests. It is true that the leave would be extended, but the soldier would have an unpleasant time on his return to camp. He would have special unpleasant duties to perform and otherwise be treated as if he had been to blame in the matter.

There does not appear to be much sense in arguing that men on service should arrange their visits on leave so that there is no chance of overstayng their leaves. This is all right for those who happen to be stationed near their homes or their par-

C.C.F. Candidates Defeated in Every Case in Toronto

Summary of Voting in the Big City's Municipal Election.

(An editorial in The Globe and Mail)

Toronto's civic elections showed what can be done. The C.C.F. Socialists made a definite bid for domination with a party ticket and its militant slogan: "Forward With the C.C.F." It had 23 tagged candidates in the field. None succeeded in attaining office, either in council or Board of Education. W. D. Dennison, apparently the party's city boss, who paved his way into the hierarchy by getting elected as a school trustee and then as alderman, and sought a controllership while sitting in the Legislature, found himself down in seventh place when the Board of Control votes were counted. Prof. G. M. A. Grube, also of the party hierarchy, elected to the school board by acclamation last year, was left in third place this time when he had opposition. Mr. Dennison's political proteges, chosen to contest Ward 2 for council and school board, were among the "also rans." The effect of the heavier vote was well illustrated in Ward 3. Rev. John Frank, C.C.F. candidate, who headed the aldermanic poll last year in a field of five received more support this time, but, among eight candidates, trailed far behind the leader, Ald. Simmons, and Harold F. Fishleigh, who was second. E. M. Davidson, C.C.F., who topped the poll for Board of Education in this ward a year ago, has been reduced to third place, with a new contestant, G. B. Laing at the top.

The rout of the Socialists has been complete, but the result must not be accepted with complacency as the finish in the municipal field or as portending the end of C.C.F. socialism in the broader political arenas. This was no three-party fight. It was a contest of non-partisans against partisans, an effort to keep party politics out of the City Hall. Had the Progressive Conservatives and Liberals put up tickets the result would have been less satisfactory. It is true the candidates would be fewer and in some wards great risk was taken by a multiplicity of contestants whose only effect was to divide the non-party vote. If the Socialists challenge again it may be necessary for some of these ambitious candidates to restrain themselves in the common interest. Obviously the C.C.F. is a unit at the polls, takes no thought of anything but its own success and cannot be considered on any other basis. The fight has to go on wherever it shows itself.

The electors gave Ald. Stewart Smith, former Communist, better support than Dennison. Less understandable is the fact that, although Ward 4 voter placed Ald. Nathan Phillips at the head of the poll, Norman Freed was second choice, and that, although Ald. Ernest Fogart topped the poll in Ward 5 (with two subdivisions to be heard from), Charles Sims was a close second. In each case there were other candidates, never charged with being pink or red, natural running mates for Messrs. Phillips and Bogart.

The re-election of Mayor Conboy and rejection of Con. Duncan in his third attempt to gain the Chief Magistracy was in harmony with the general character of the vote. If it was necessary to keep out self-seeking Socialists it was equally necessary to keep out Mr. Duncan. He has been an obstacle to the progress of Board of Control business; with his insistence on having his own way against the judgement of the majority. The people like a fighter, but in Mr. Duncan there is none of the sportsmanship which made the late Sam McBride a popular figure in a civic bear garden. These are grave times, too, when citizens would like to see business carried on carefully and judiciously. Mr. Duncan should accept the third defeat of his aspirations as final. Plainly, the electors have had

ticular friends. But for those who are located hundreds of miles from home there should be some special provision. The point is that the location of the man on active service is beyond his control and he should not be asked to bear the burden of the choice made by others. Those responsible for the soldier being far from home should devise some plan whereby the man on service should not have all the worry and discomfort. Enough is required from the soldiers, the sailors and the airman, without unnecessarily allowing them to suffer discrimination because their places of service and their homes are widely separated.

GRAVEL AND SAND—AND PLACER

Still stands the motto of the King:

"Put into your task whatever it may be, all the courage and purpose of which you are capable. Keep your hearts proud and your resolve unshaken. Let us go forward to that task as one man, a smile on our lips and our heads held high and with God's help we shall not fail."

A local gentleman invited into a beverage room to have a drink this week, answered briskly: "I don't mind if I do. I have been taking the gold cure, and the odd drink is always allowed in that cure!" The gold cure he referred to was the rationing of liquor during the holidays. "A man couldn't get enough for a taste," he said, "just enough to wean a fellow away from the stuff."

The Sudbury Star has helpful advice for fixing things when a tire blows out. "Get your shoes half-soled," says The Star.

enough of him. He received 53,490 votes in 1939, 58,432 in 1940 (both in contests with Ralph Day) and this time, with one subdivision missing owing to the late closing of the polls and the intervention of Sunday, his vote is 58,712. He has been defeated by about 20,000 votes.

But the mayoralty vote, as evidence of electoral interest, has not been to the credit of the city. It shows a total vote cast of slightly more than 131,000 out of a possible 360,000. This is 60,000 better than last year, but 15,000 less than 1939. And there has been a get-out-and-vote campaign conducted with vigor which must have reached to virtually every citizen. The showing is most creditable. It is a menace to democracy. The 230,000 electors who stayed home do not deserve the privilege of a franchise they insult by negligence. They do not deserve good government. Manifestly this indifference is serious enough to call for close study by competent authorities and a continuation, on a more intense scale, of the campaign which was so admirably conceived and so little appreciated by those in whose behalf it was conducted.

The election results, nevertheless, are creditable to those who took the trouble to vote, and a large proportion of whom were women. They swept out the trouble-making candidate for mayor and the dangerous Socialists and elected a council and Board of Education which this paper, in particular, believes will give sound administration. Of the candidates recommended by The Globe and Mail only two failed in their objective, and these because of the blocs in Wards 4 and 5, which concentrated on contestants of their particular convictions. Five candidates recommended by the Star and three by the Telegram were not returned. Incidentally the electors who turned out voted to keep Jan. 1 as election day.

The citizens have placed a 1944 administration in office with confidence, knowing that the 12 months ahead are likely to prove of high importance in public affairs. It is the task of the successful to make good.

Ottawa Promises More Labour for Mines of North

Chief Need is for Experienced Miners.

Despatches from Ottawa this week quote Arthur McNamara, head of the National Selective Service Board, as saying that "Canadian gold mines with insufficient manpower to stay in business, probably will be given relief soon." The statement is indefinite enough and restricted enough to warrant the belief that some newspapers may be taking a too optimistic view of the situation in hailing it as a material relief for the mines, and a promise of an early return to more normal conditions. All the mines in the North are handicapped by a shortage of labour. The chief need is for skilled and experienced miners, and for skilled mechanics in the various lines needed in mining work. The men needed are the classes of men taken away from here by the Selective Service and by enlistments. Some of the smaller mines have lost so large a proportion of their men that they have had to close down. Others, like the Omega, have had the greatest difficulty in keeping going. The announcement does not mention those closed down, but the mines in the Omega class will benefit if the promise in the despatch from Ottawa is carried through to its logical conclusion.

The Ottawa despatch says that no large scale movement of labour to the gold mines is anticipated, and that assignment to gold mining will be made only when the additional labour is essential to keep the mine in operation. However, any assistance to the labour situation in the gold mining industry will be a help.

Again Elected Director of Transport Association

For the sixth consecutive year, Walter Little, M.P. of Walter Little Limited, Kirkland Lake, was elected a director of The Automotive Transport Association of Ontario at the 17th annual meeting of the A.T.A. held recently in Toronto.

Other officers are — President, Walter W. Crawford of Hamilton; 1st Vice-President, G. M. Parke of Toronto; 2nd Vice-President, Harry E. Adams of Chatham; Treasurer, C. Stan Noble of Toronto; Secretary, Roger E. Leslie of Toronto. J. O. Goodman of Toronto was re-appointed general manager.

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