

The Porcupine Advance

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THE HOUSING COMMISSION

To many of those who have attempted to follow the rather involved story of efforts to solve the Timmins housing problem, the establishment of a Housing Commission may seem of little consequence. Many of those discussing the situation this week take the view that it is "just another committee."

It should be explained, however, that while the various committees which have had the housing problem in hand were, at best, simply bodies created for the business of investigating and for planning, the Housing Commission has the power to act. There were definite limits to what the committees could do, and within these limits they operated as best they could. A survey was made, a housing registry set up, and plans for further action were laid.

At this point the Housing Committee takes over. Established by a by-law of the Town of Timmins, it has the power to acquire land, to build housing, and to arrange the required financing up to imposed limits. In short, it has the power necessary to deal with the housing problem.

Of one thing the members of the commission may be sure — there will be no lack of interest in its activities. The problem with which it has to deal is one of the most important faced by the town this year. It can be assured, too, of the good will of most of Timmins' citizens. And in equal likelihood, the Housing Commission may face determined opposition by a small minority.

In its own interest the public will keep a sharp eye on any obstacles placed in the way of the Commission, and on those responsible for those obstacles — the public should know its enemies as well as its friends. But whatever the difficulties faced by the Commission, these should not be permitted to interfere. The public welfare, and to a large degree, the future of Timmins itself, depends on the Commission attaining its objective — a supply of sound housing, available at a price which the average man (and this includes ex-servicemen) can properly afford to pay.

MR. BREWER HAS AN IDEA

In this week's mail was received a letter from Wendel B. Brewer, whose idea, whether he knew it or not, was the inspiration for an editorial in these columns last week.

His letter, dealing with the matter more ably and in greater detail, is printed in this issue. It points out that school buildings, in use only eight hours a day, might serve as community centres outside of school hours. It urges that planners of new school buildings keep this aspect in mind.

It is a good idea, and one which should commend itself both to council and school boards. Lacking a building created solely for the purpose, Timmins and other towns might be well advised to make the most of what they have. It is to be hoped that Mr. Brewer, in the public interest, will find the time and opportunity of pushing the idea further. He should have little difficulty in finding citizens who will co-operate with him in this end.

IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO A DOG

Some twenty years ago, at the urging, we understand, of some irate gardeners, the powers that be were persuaded to pass a by-law to the effect that no dog might roam at large within the limits of Timmins.

The by-law still stands, to the continuing disgrace of the Town.

As a result of this ill-advised legislation — there were some nine charges laid in court this week. As a triumphant testimonial to legislative hard-headedness, nine dogs were "disposed of".

It is a good thing to have pride in one's garden, and admittedly Timmins can stand any amount of beautifying that flowers and well-kept lawns can add to it. But the amount of gardening done in the past week has not been particularly impressive and so far as lawns are concerned the visibility is zero. It is therefore doubted if any dog, searching for a spot to bury a bone, could do much damage to anyone's dahlias in the past few days. The dogs could have had a few hours of freedom without doing too much damage to the boulevards.

But we believe Timmins would have even more to be proud of if this by-law were repealed and another substituted for it permitting dogs a free run from October to April.

If the citizens of Timmins really hate dogs to the extent that the stupidity of the by-law would indicate, the dogs would never have been in Timmins in the first place. But it is believed a good many people in Timmins like dogs, and most folk like them well enough to permit them to live unchained during the winter months.

If the town council thinks the by-law as it presently stands is fair to the dogs and to the children whose much-beloved pets they are — then it is suggested in all seriousness that the councillors, not the dogs should be "disposed of".

Action to amend the by-law may be considered a small thing — but only by those who consider a child's tears to be a small thing.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

Those who believe that a newspaper's editorials should be focussed on events occurring in the area served by that newspaper will take considerable satisfaction from the editorial page of that issue of The Daily Press which bears the date of January 15th.

One editorial in that issue urges stronger support of the Board of Trade by Timmins business men; the other mentions the annual report of the Mountjoy Community Nursery School, and commends to its readers the proposition that kindergarten training be made available to all children.

Both editorials are well-written, well-reasoned arguments concerning matters of importance to the people of Timmins and of the Porcupine Camp, and are very much worth reading. The only thing about them which we deplore, is that we hadn't written them ourselves.

REQUEST FROM THE UNION

At its meeting on Sunday, Local 241 of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union decided to ask for representation on the recently formed Housing Commission.

On the face of it, the request would appear to be a little late. Work on the housing problem has been in progress for several months, yet nothing has been heard of the Union's desire to take part in it. Now, after the required by-law has been passed to set up the Commission, and naming its members, comes the announcement that the Union wishes to name a member. It is difficult to understand a display of interest which makes itself known only at this late date.

It may be of some consolation to Union men to learn that, had Mayor Brunette had his way, one of their number would have been on the Commission. The council decided otherwise, but in this too, they can find consolation — the council is elected to represent the people of Timmins, and this does not exclude union members.

Union members have the same voting power in the municipal elections as have farmers, merchants, clerical workers, etc. All have an equal responsibility for the voting which resulted in the present council — which includes, incidentally, several mine workers.

The miners are therefore assured of representation on the town council, and, by the same token, of representation on any body named by that council.

If it is genuinely interested in the housing problem, the Union could be of considerable help to the Housing Commission by making a survey of union membership with a view to finding out how many miners would be interested in buying new housing and what types of housing are desired. An expression of interest and of desire to co-operate comes better late than never.

THIS THING CALLED GAMBLING

"Gambling is gambling," says an editorial in the North Bay Nugget, under the above heading, "whatever way you look at it."

The Nugget looks at gambling from an amusing angle, mixed with some shrewd common sense. Here's the rest of the editorial:

"So, it is illegal for mothers to go to some hall once a week, to place little kernels of corn on a numbered sheet of paper. That is definitely gambling and because the Ontario attorney-general does not like gambling, he is going to save mother from perdition. Save her from the degradation of a weekly night of bingo.

"Of course, if mother wants to go to a race track when such a place is open, she will have no trouble finding places where she may wager all the cash she desires. Apparently, the same attorney-general smiles beneficently on that race track pastime.

"And, of course, father has some other outlets for his gambling instincts. He can go down town and bet \$10 or \$1,000 that a hole in the ground, or a piece of land where there is no hole, will turn into a gold mine in time. Mother can pour her money into holes in the ground also.

"But if either goes fooling with a handful of corn at home or in somebody's hall intent on winning a prize, that is really degrading and must be stopped. At least it must not be allowed to become a habit. It's on the straight road to perdition and a kindly attorney-general will certainly attempt to legislate mother and father away from such pitfalls.

"But what about junior? Surely he has not been overlooked in this scramble to cleanse everybody's habits.

"Junior and the attorney-general both know that spring is coming. And the marble season. And think of the shame of it. Those boys play 'for keeps'. 'Save the youth and you save all,' somebody said or may have said.

"There it is where the crusading attorney-general, with his zeal for the redemption of the proletariat, might have made his start.

"He should 'view with alarm' this marble business and issue lengthy directives to all crown-attorneys in the province, instructing them to convey the good news to all chief constables. The news that the government has at last seen the light in full measure and will proceed with the redemption of the younger generation.

"Surely he must realize that the older renegades, steeped in years and years of sinful bingo, deep in the degeneracy of dealing in wicked and disgraceful raffles, are now so far beyond the pale that it is a waste of time to endeavour to legislate them into the straight and narrow road.

"Surely he should concentrate on preventing the corruption of the morals of the morble players."

many cases dissimilar, we, in this rapidly growing town, can profit a great deal by Mr. McCallum's investigation.

It was recently proposed that a community center be built in Timmins at the cost of \$500,000.00 and rightly or wrongly, it was voted down by the ratepayers.

In Timmins, we have possibly a million dollars invested in schools and a great deal more will be spent in the future on schools that are used approximately nine months out of the year, five days a week and for eight hours a day.

What would be more sensible than to utilize this investment where practicable for the rest of the time? It

World News in Review

A nation-wide strike of Canadian packing house workers has been authorized by their union. Those employed similarly in the U.S. are already on strike. The parade of vegetarians should commence any time.

If the strike of steel workers in the U.S. is not settled today, President Truman promises to make his own suggestions.

Iran is reported ready to ask the United Nations Organization for protection against interference in that country by the Russians.

France is ready to take over the trial of German war criminals, as United States and Britain step out of the witness box. Trying times, these.

Palestine is an Arab country and should stay that way, according to the Kings of Egypt and Sauda Arabia, who protest against further Jewish immigration.

It is stated this week that wage controls may be eased in the next fortnight, although controls will remain to some extent, as a necessary part of the anti-inflationary policy.

Two men have been charged with theft of equipment along the Alaska highway. Thefts of U.S. Army material are creating a "desperate" situation, it is said.

The Japanese government has resigned and it is reported that rightist parties are vying with the communists for control.

The reprieve from the death sentence awarded Major Gen. Kurt Meyer, charged with responsibility for shooting Canadian soldiers, came from Major Gen. C. Vokes, commander of the Canadian occupation force. It is stated.

Russia at one time offered a sea base and other valuable assistance to Germany in return for the liner Bremen, according to the diary of Admiral Reeder of the German fleet.

Churchill finds the current situation too interesting to retire from public life. A few men learned this week.

Eighty points will get you out of the army now, according to a recent announcement. Sixty-five points will

FAIRPLAY IN TAXATION

BY LEWIS MILLIGAN

When man emerged from the savage state and began to live in organized communities, one of the first penalties he imposed upon himself for that advancement was the payment of taxes, and he has been paying them under protest ever since.

It would seem that no one pays taxes willingly or, at least, gladly, and there are those who carry their objection to the extent of evading the tax-collector altogether. There are numerous ways of doing this, most of which are dishonest and illegal, but some of them, while they are quite legal, are manifestly unfair and even unethical.

Hold on, dear reader, and do not desert me at this point. Although you may abhor the subject of taxation, this is a matter that personally concerns you directly or indirectly, for every evasion of exemption from taxation throws an extra and unjust burden upon those who pay taxes.

I have just read an interesting report by Prof. J. L. McDougall, of the School of Commerce and Administration, Queen's University, in which he gives the results of a special study he has made of the income from commercial operations which are exempt from income and excess profits taxes, with estimates of the amount of tax revenue lost to the Dominion in 1944 by those exemptions.

The report does not deal with all tax-exempt organizations, but is confined to the Canadian National Railways and its subsidiaries the liquor control boards, electric power, telephone and street railway ventures owned by provinces or municipalities, and the great trading co-operatives.

Prof. McDougall estimates that the department of National Revenue lost from \$100,000,000 to \$125,000,000 by those exemptions. This last figure, he says, equals the personal income tax on 1,423,000 taxpayers with incomes below \$1,800.

These are extraordinary figures, and Prof. McDougall says they represent 58 per cent of the estimated total of personal income tax payers of the country, and he adds: "The longer these exemptions to the corporate income tax continue to be granted, the less likely is an easing of the burden upon other sources of tax revenues."

If Prof. McDougall's estimate is correct, the the removal of these exemptions would reduce by more than half the personal income tax on 1,423,000 taxpayers with incomes below \$1,800.

Furthermore, Prof. McDougall points out that these exemptions seriously affect private business. He declared that so long as the exemptions continue, taxing private enterprise will eventually be impossible where public ownership is possible; and that private business will be impossible where tax-exempt co-operative business can gain a foothold and then crowd the taxing business to the wall by reinvestment of its tax-free earnings.

The effect of this is to penalize all taxing businesses to the advantage of tax-free competitors. It also penalizes the customers of private businesses in many cases. "This," says Prof. McDougall, "produces gross inequality and injustice as between those communities with and those without public ownership of local utilities."

In making his investigations, Prof. McDougall says he was unable to obtain specific information regarding profits from published reports of public corporations. He states that the Ontario Hydro Commission's annual report "lacks the first requisite of a full accounting of its stewardship, the full and clear accounting of income received." He made several attempts to obtain his information from the secretary of the Commission, but his requests were evaded.

It is a strange contradiction of public ownership when the public, as the "owners", are denied such information, while private ownership is obliged to give a full accounting of its finances to the government. It would seem that public ownership tends to become a tightly closed corporation, with private and even secret management and bookkeeping.

Prof. McDougall very rightly insists that, so long as any tax-exemptions remain, they ought to be explicitly recognized in public accounts. But he claims that tax-exemptions granted to organizations which engage in business activities should all be cancelled. This is merely a claim for justice and fairplay on behalf of all those who are forced to pay for the upkeep of government by taxation.

Yours very truly,
Wendell B. Brewer

NOTES TO YOU

The guy who writes those wide columns on the other side of the page seems, from this corner, to be pretty well off his rocker this week. It's the change in weather, we expect.

First, he gets away to a normal start with his usual housing blast. Then, after going higher than a kite on the subject of the town's dog-by-law, he goes into a spin and finds something good to say about the Daily Press.

If that is what those wide columns does to you, we will take our usual portion of spinach.

Speaking to Henry Keelock the other day, Henry, as you know, makes with the brass out at the Pavilion and doubles as proprietor of The Music Box. His trumpet is as sweet as ever, but he gets a sour note now and then out of the Music Box.

He has expanded the Music Box from a place where you can buy recordings to a place where you can buy, given the cash and the inclination, almost anything in the way of music supplies.

But Henry is having trouble getting instruments, seems if. Production of instruments, which lagged with the war years, hasn't caught up yet. Young folk wanting to take up music, and old folk trying to break a lease, just can't get an instrument for the purpose.

One youngster wants a violin, another a trumpet, and yet another hankers for a sax. Failing to get enough new instruments, and wanting to see the kids started on their way, Henry is looking for used ones.

So if you have a musical instrument of any kind, and want to make sure Junior doesn't get his hands on it, pass the word along to Mr. Keelock -- it will be good business for both of you.

Other morning, as we were slurping our way through our customary bowl of snap, crackle, pop, au lait, the thought came to us -- is this column too good for our readers?

Can it be, we wondered, that we are dishing out too heady a potion? Is it too rich a food, too rare a wine? Then, as we came to the end of the cereal, we thought again: No, can't be -- nothing is too good for our readers. And nothing is exactly what they get.

BACK TO CANADA'S WAY OF LIFE



PRIVATE JONES BECOMES PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

Opportunity is knocking for thousands of returned Canadian servicemen and women. With their re-establishment credits, many are starting small businesses, buying farms or completing their education.

Energy, initiative and new ideas will play a great part in the success of these new enterprises, but caution too, is needed.

Imperial Bank of Canada welcomes these new Canadian businessmen and offers them its services. Discuss your problems with us.

BANK SERVICES

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IMPERIAL BANK OF CANADA

Timmins Branch
H. C. SCARTH, Manager

TO THE EDITOR

The Editor,
The Porcupine Advance,
TIMMINS, Ontario.

While in Toronto recently, I attended a Lions Club meeting. We were addressed by Controller McCallum of the Toronto City Council on the subject of Community Centers. Mr. McCallum has spent a great deal of time during the past year, investigating on behalf of his city government, the place of community centers in the life of the citizens of Toronto and he gave us the benefit of his study.

Mr. McCallum stated that he had investigated very carefully, a number of cities in the United States who had community centers, and has also gathered information from Canadian municipalities on the subject.

Briefly, Mr. McCallum's conclusion was that for the time being at least, community centers should be based on existing buildings owned by the people, and of course, he recommended the use of the schools.

The speaker, of course, drew most of his illustrations from conditions that existed in the city of Toronto and while conditions in Timmins are in