

The Porcupine Advance

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When The Porcupine Was Young

By G. A. Macdonald

No. 34. 1916 Council Busy About Many Matters



In last week's article in this series, reference was made to the many matters in which Councillor Dr. McInnis took the initiative in the 1916 council work, but it was also noted that the other members of the council were almost equally active and alert in all town affairs. It was suggested that in further reference to the 1916 town council mention would be made of resolutions sponsored by other members of council to show that each and every member of the 1916 council was "on his toes" for the interests of the town. Before this is done, however, one other resolution proposed by Dr. McInnis must be noted.

This motion was passed by council on March 20th, 1916, and provided for the council donating the sum of \$100.00 per month, for three months, if necessary, towards helping defray the expenses of recruiting, etc., of men enlisting with the 159th Battalion in this section. The motion was proposed by Dr. McInnis and seconded by A. R. Globe.

A sequel to the above motion was one passed at a special meeting at the end of June, when a donation of \$1,500.00 was made to the regimental fund of the 228th Battalion, the money to be raised by debentures. Councillor McInnis proposed this motion, and it was seconded by Councillor C. G. Williams. About the same time the Williams. About the same time the \$100.00 per month to the 159th Regt. was renewed.

While "McInnis-Brazeau" was a frequent combination on the top of motion blanks, so also were "Globe-Williams," "McLaughlin-Moore" and all other sorts of combinations, the total showing that the 1916 council worked together in effective way.

For example, it was on motion of Councillors Globe and Moore that provision was made on March 6th, for the collection of taxes in two equal semi-annual payments.

A somewhat similarly sponsored motion provided for the renting from January 1st, 1916, at \$50.00 per month, of the town offices in the Courtemanche block.

At the same meeting, Councillors Globe and Moore presented a resolution that passed without dissenting vote, "that the clerk publish a notice in The Porcupine Advance, drawing attention of the townspeople to existing by-laws, that people who desire watermains laid, or sidewalks, must present properly signed petitions."

A motion, proposed by Councillor Globe, seconded by Councillor Dr. Moore, and passed on May 1st, suggests the difficulties that the town encountered in its financing. In those days it was particularly impossible to sell debentures on the open market. The financial houses asked for very short term bonds, with high interest, and even then were far from anxious to buy. Councillor Dr. Moore took a

Letters to the Editor

Wilbur's Fantastic "Ore Body" Proves Mining Man's Dream

29 Munro Park Ave., Toronto, Ontario, January 5, 1948

The Porcupine Advance, Timmins, Ontario. Dear Sirs,

A statement by Mr. Brunette to the Council and published in the press hinting that one of a group interested in the sale of land to the town had attempted to bribe him calls for a reply from me.

While I could not possibly reconcile Mr. Brunette's version to the Council with regard to the interview I had with him, I have no doubt it was I he had in mind. However, I do excuse Mr. Brunette to the extent that when he made his statement to the Council, he spoke under very heated and intense provocation. Nevertheless, I consider it was a serious reflection on me.

In explanation it is necessary for me to refer to a writ which Mr. Bannino had issued against members of a previous Council in an effort to have some \$10,000.00 returned to the Treasury of the Town of Timmins which he alleged had been illegally paid to certain employees of the Town.

I was opposed to this litigation because in my opinion, in such lawsuits, every one wins except the plaintiff and the defendant, to say nothing of the bitterness and ill feeling which follows. This litigation might well have continued to the Supreme Court of Canada or even to the Privy Council. The cost could amount to \$50,000.00 or more which in the end would likely have to be paid by the innocent victims — the home owners of the Town of Timmins. The learned Judge who heard the case may have had this thought in mind when he found the Council's action illegal, but did not order the return of the money to the Town's Treasury. Thus avoiding the necessity of any appeal.

Now I will deal with the tract of land which we offered to the Town of Timmins at approximately 40% less than the price being paid for less desirable land adjacent to our property. Personally I was not enthusiastic about selling at such a sacrifice. Most of our land was sold and there appeared no reason for sacrificing this tract. Also, I doubted very much with this legislation on, fair consideration would be given to our offer.

Before submitting our prices to the Town, I urged Mr. Bannino in a very heated discussion to withdraw what I termed "senseless litigation" without success. During the following days, I had interviews with several tax payers and the opinion expressed to me were generally as follows: "Your land is the most desirable. It is high and dry, close to schools, churches, shopping district, and what is most important, is its proximity to water and sewer installations which would undoubtedly save the Town a considerable sum in making these services available to new homes, but it was added, the antipathy that exists in the Council Chamber may have an unfavourable bearing on any transactions concerning your land."

This was an angle worth considering so I decided to pay a visit to the Mayor. I was received in a most gracious manner. We discussed the Bannino litigation. I found him as intelligent as Bannino. I made known to Mr. Brunette my efforts to halt the litigation in the hope he might offer some co-operation or suggestion but non was forthcoming. I intimated to him that in the event of the Council selecting our land, (provided of course our land was suitable and the price satisfactory) I intended to make one more effort to have Bannino withdraw this litigation. It was quite obvious I could not make any definite promise without Bannino's permission.

Had the Council selected our land, I intended to approach Bannino once more and suggest to him that since the Council had overlooked their antipathy towards him to the extent of buying his land, he should be big enough to withdraw his litigation. The following night I met Mr. Brunette at the corner of Pine and Third Sts. I inquired of Mr. Brunette if the Council had made any decision at their meeting in the afternoon. He replied this matter had been discussed but the decision would be made the next day. He added there was some confusion about our quotations as two or three prices had been submitted. I told him .15 per square foot was the price. He remarked "that is better" and added "you have a nice piece of land." I might add Mr. Brunette was particularly gracious and courteous and paid me a very nice compliment which modestly prevents me from repeating.

I regret very much that Mr. Brunette interpreted any part of our friendly interview as an attempt to bribe him. Had our land been chosen by the Council, I had hoped to bring about happier relations among members of the Council and various factions in the Town. However, the opportunity did not present itself but I have no apology to offer for an honest attempt to at least ease the ill feeling that follows senseless litigation.

In closing I wish to extend to all the citizens of Timmins a sincere wish that 1948 may be one of Peace and Good Will.

Yours truly,
J. P. McLaughlin

WOW!

The Advance unearthed some fancy figures this week when it delved into the travelling expenses allowed the members of council of Timmins and Tisdale when they take their frequent jaunts to Toronto and other points in the South on public funds. As related in a news story on Page One, the town of Timmins hands its representatives return fare and berth plus \$15 a day, while Tisdale is even more bountiful with its public men, untying municipal purse strings to the extent of rail fare and berth, plus an astounding sum of \$25 per day.

The bulk of these funds is obviously designed to be used for "entertainment". There are no questions asked as to how it is handled. Every municipal traveller gets a carte blanche. He can pitch the municipality's funds about in any fashion he likes, temporarily assuming the role of the Northern millionaire who owns a private gold mine, or perhaps that of a rich potentate from India. These methods of "entertainment", we presume, are designed to soften the hearts of government officials and prevail upon them to view the problems of the North with a gentler, perhaps even alcoholic, light. Maybe the system even works, though there has been little evidence of the latter when one views the kind of a deal North Ontario has consistently obtained from the pleasure-loving gentry in Queen's Park.

The Advance dislikes to harp on the manner in which The Slate for 1948 is running town business, but it must again take them to task for the way in which they glossed over the question of travelling expenses at Monday's meeting. No public discussion on the \$15 a day travelling "plum" took place. In fact it appeared that mention of this figure was strenuously avoided, council quickly signifying that it knew what the business was all about. No, such a subject didn't appear suitable for public discussion.

In regard to Tisdale, it seems that a rather scandalous situation has existed. During the past year, entire caravans of councillors have journeyed to the South and dwelt in luxury on the public funds. It was a common occurrence for four or five representatives to hie themselves in a group to the Southland with any old convention that happened to come along as an excuse. It has been a great life, but it is about time it stopped.

VERY SERIOUS

As it becomes more and more evident that lay-offs or shut-downs may take place in the mines of the Porcupine as a result of the shortage of electricity, it becomes apparent that every responsible citizen in Timmins should do everything in his power to conserve power. Rather than have either of the aforementioned possibilities occur, particularly at a time such as this when the working population is already hard-pressed due to higher living costs, it would be advisable to have the town blacked out to the extent of British cities during the war.

While this may seem a far-fetched suggestion to some, it is nowise extreme from the viewpoint of the Advance. Lack of adequate lighting would be a serious discomfort, but it would be as nothing compared to the sight of several hundred men out of work in the district. If curtailment of power among the general population would result in keeping these men at work, then the necessary curtailments should be made. If they are not made voluntarily, local authorities would be justified in seeing that they are enforced legally.

The seriousness of the shortage of power should not be minimized. It is extreme. Do your part to keep every miner in the camp at work, by saving electric power in every possible manner.

CRIMINAL RACKETEERING

A great deal of hard-headed common sense was voiced from the platform of the Empire theatre on Sunday afternoon when executives of the International Union of Mine Mill and Smeiter Workers levelled their guns at recent price increases and the present cost of living. Unionists denounced food prices as exorbitant and demanded that price controls be resumed.

The mine union is right; and its sentiments should be echoed by every person who lives, works and raises a family in the Porcupine camp. Prices of basic commodities have rocketed to such levels that it is impossible for the person of average income to support his family properly. The racketeering which is going on in foodstuffs at present is racketeering with the welfare of the general population. When wholesalers of foods are permitted to employ the recent embargo on U.S. foodstuffs to hijack the buying public, something is seriously wrong with the men who run the country's affairs at Ottawa. With the enlightened social outlook prevailing today, it is preposterous that a band of unscrupulous individuals should be allowed to play havoc with the public welfare through their uncontrolled greed.

And not only is the general public effected, but so is every type of retailer and small businessman. Among the loudest protests against the present prices are those from grocery merchants in the Porcupine. Their businesses are being ruined by being forced to ask prices the public cannot pay. A very real and widespread buyers' strike is in force.

Then, what of the merchants who sell clothing, radios, shoes, refrigerators, automobiles and all the hundred and one other things classed as essentials or semi-essentials? What share are they getting of the buyer's dollar? Practically nil is the answer, for food costs are so great that there is nothing left for general purchases. How a typical local wage-earner with a typical family — \$160 a month and three children — can begin even to clothe his family properly, when he pays more than \$100 a month for groceries, \$35 a month for rent and the balance for fuel, light, water and transportation, is a mystery which several thousand people right here in the Porcupine are attempting to solve, and with small success.

For a person of this type, things like a new dress for his wife, a new overcoat for himself, shoes, dresses or suits for his children, medical and dental care, or any of the other essentials which could be obtained on his wage prior to the present deflated state of the purchasing dollar, are items with which the family must go without today. Or if they are purchased, it means floundering into debt and the situation becomes more aggravated.

The entire population of this community, as well as every other, is suffering due to food costs. It is the obligation of Ottawa to act at once to slap back controls on food and to slap down the food racketeers who are muleting the public. The gyp artists in the food industry today are more criminally responsible than the merchant who broke the Wartime Prices and Trade Board regulations in war years. These persons may be acting within the law, but there is something the matter with a law which permits them to disrupt the living standards of 90 percent of the population.

DALE CARNEGIE
Author of "How to Win Friends and Influence People"

The International Rotary Club held a contest to decide who could furnish the best personal experience under the title, "The Man Who Taught Me The Most." Manuscripts came in from all over the world; or, as the Rotarian magazine stated, "from Kenya to New Zealand." The contest was won by Louis Payler, Miami, Ohio.

You'll probably be surprised to learn what he considered the two most valuable lessons ever taught him by any man.

When he was fifteen years old he went to work for a druggist in Cincinnati—a Mr. Bolton. Mr. Bolton was a wise and understanding man and he seemed to realize that there had come to him a boy who was in the formative period of his life. In Mr. Payler's own words:

One warm afternoon I mixed a nectar soda for a high school boy like myself. As I opened the jar, I smelled the sirup and I knew that it wasn't right. But I thought it might get by. When the boy tasted the soda, he wrinkled his nose. "This nectar's off in smell," he said. I was about to argue with him when Mr. Bolton stepped up and said: "Why not try a cherry instead?"

After the boy had gone, Mr. Bolton turned to me. "Never argue with a customer, nor insist that you are right." He proved his wisdom in his policy time and again by making refunds that I knew were not deserved. But in the long run he made friends.

"Now that you are earning money," said Mr. Bolton, one day, "you should

put some aside. Did you plan on that?"

"No sir," I thought money was to spend as soon as I got my hands on it.

He told me that I should put aside a quarter of a dollar every week. "All right," I agreed, but far from enthusiastically.

The following Saturday something happened that puzzled me. I had scrubbed the floor for the first time taking the place of the scrub woman, and I was to get 50 cents extra for that. But when I opened my pay envelope I had only my usual \$2.

The next day I screwed up courage to ask Mr. Bolton about my extra fifty cents. "You forgot to pay me," I said.

"I did pay you."

I was about to explain about that extra fifty cents when he reached into a drawer and brought out a stiff black book with my name written on it, and a number—and \$1 entered opposite my name. He said that book was my building-association book, and he added, "I put in your scrubbing money and then added half a dollar from my own pocket. Now you follow on from here."

That made me feel grown up and important. I had a savings account! I was not merely working behind a soda counter, I was a young business man. Today I still have an account in that same building association, and the habit Mr. Bolton instilled in me has never lost its hold. To the lesson I learned from that act of Mr. Bolton's I owe my property and money I have accumulated.