

THE GUARDIAN

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Municipal Revenue Problem

The reports of the various civic and municipal monthly meetings appearing in yesterday's Guardian covered a variety of subjects, but one common denominator was evident in the concern shown by all Council members over the problem of financing. That this is a matter of general concern to municipal authorities across Canada was apparent from the discussions at last week's executive meeting at Ottawa of the Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities. Statements approved at this meeting were presented in the form of a brief to the Federal Government, in which the need for a comprehensive review of the functions and responsibilities assigned to the three levels of government in Canada and the present distribution of revenues accruing to them was strongly urged.

It is suggested that a Federal-Provincial-Municipal Conference be convened to study this question in all its bearings, and that in the meantime relief be given by the exemption of municipal purchases from payment of the Federal 10 per cent sales tax, and by permitting full municipal taxation of all Federal crown property, or equivalent grants in lieu thereof.

Municipalities today are excessively dependent upon one single source of revenue—the real property tax. It produces, on the average, about 80 per cent of their available finances. With property tax rates at a record peak it is questionable whether this source of revenue can be expected to produce any significant increase. Over the years, the municipal governments have obtained a measure of financial relief through the device of grants-in-aid of one kind or another from both the Federal and Provincial Governments; but this procedure can never be considered as anything more than a temporary solution to the problem. The grants have the effect of relegating the receiving government to a position of financial dependency. If municipal government is to survive as an instrument of local democracy, it must possess financial resources equal to its responsibilities.

This is not to circumvent the constitutional status of municipalities as creatures of the Provincial Government, as set forth under the British North America Act. It is essential, however, to recognize the changes that have taken place since Confederation, in the new and onerous burdens which the municipalities have been called upon to shoulder, particularly since the end of the Second World War. In 1871, for example, the urban population of Canada represented 19.6 per cent of the total population. By 1951, that percentage had climbed to 57.3 per cent. During the decade 1941-1951, the urban population increased by 1,503,294 persons, representing a 24 per cent jump over the previous decade. Even in this predominantly agricultural Province, the effect of the trend has been quite noticeable.

More people in our cities and towns means more municipal services, more municipal employees, and more administrative costs. Yet while the aggregate revenues accruing to both the Federal and Provincial Governments have moved steadily upwards and well beyond their equivalent 1930 dollar value, the increase in municipal revenues has been barely sufficient to meet their minimum expenditure needs, with no margin to finance undertakings which the needs of the time require, and which further developments are making imperative. This is the problem in a nutshell, and it is one which presents a serious challenge to the country at large.

The Economic Outlook

Present prospects give little indication of any major change in 1953 from the generally prosperous conditions which prevailed this year. It was stated at the Federal-Provincial Agricultural Conference at Ottawa last week. There is some evidence that total capital expenditures will be at least as high as in 1952.

On the other hand prospects in the export field are more uncertain. Due largely to exchange difficulties, sales to some overseas countries are not likely to be maintained at the high levels of 1952. Present prospects suggest the continuation of a firm market in the United States. Foreign demand is likely to remain firm for most of export items such as wheat, newsprint, base metals and other raw and processed materials necessary to industrial

production of western nations. However, export prospects for lumber are less favourable.

A moderate increase in employment, incomes and production is expected for 1953. However, farm production as a whole may be lower if only average crop yields are realized next year in contrast to the 1952 record yields. Domestic requirements of food products will probably continue to grow with a gradual expansion in population and income. The domestic market will be supported by what promises to be a strong foreign demand for grains.

It is anticipated that farmers' receipts in 1953 will be lower than in 1952 if grain fields return to average levels and if grain acreages remain unchanged. However, in the event of a heavy carryover of the 1952 crop into the calendar year 1953, the sale of this carryover next year might well offset other factors tending to lower the 1953 cash income.

Farm net income is also expected to be somewhat lower in 1953. There is little likelihood of any significant change in total farm operating expenses in 1953. Taxes and interest rates may average higher than in 1952 and depreciation charges may continue upward. On the other hand, favourable harvesting conditions this fall will eliminate spring harvesting next year. Although the need for feed appears to be as great in 1953 as in 1952, there may be some reduction in prices. No significant change is anticipated for labour outlay.

If an average crop is harvested in 1953 stocks of grain held on farms at the end of the year will likely be substantially below those held at the end of 1952. This, when compared to increased year-end stocks of 1952, will also contribute to a net income somewhat lower for 1953.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted four years ago today.

British Minister of National Defence, Viscount Alexander of Tunis, was born this date 1891.

Premier Smallwood's large scale deals for the development of Newfoundland are reminiscent in proportions, at any rate, of the great East India Company and our own Company of Gentlemen Adventurers trading into Hudson Bay.

The Maritime Provinces Board of Trade is anxious to restore regional representation on the Board of Transport Commissioners. The change over to a balanced board of assorted experts resulted in almost all being appointed from the central Provinces.

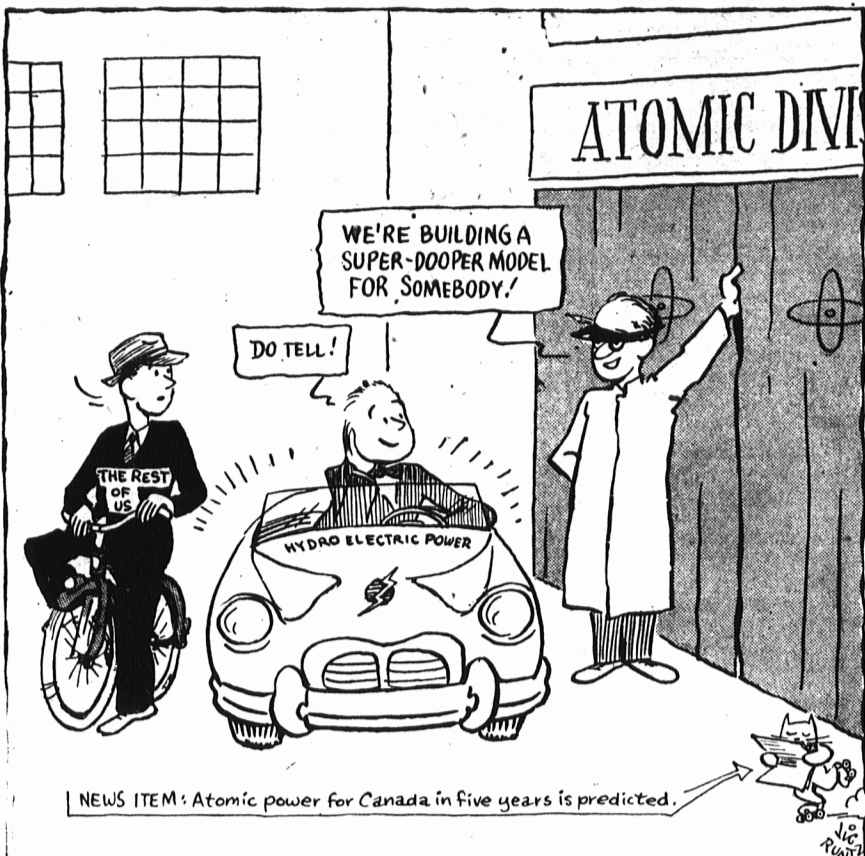
Charlottetown's police force has been coming in for well merited commendation in the City Council. Chief MacArthur, however, is more interested in acquiring additional staff to take care of necessary assignments than in accepting kudos.

Alfred Bernhard Nobel, Swedish engineer, died this date 1896. He studied the construction of torpedoes and marine mines at St. Petersburg and returned to Sweden to study explosives, particularly nitro-glycerine. He discovered and patented dynamite, smokeless powder and other inventions. From these and from the Baku oil-fields he amassed a great fortune which he left chiefly for five annual prizes in physics, chemistry, medicine, literature and service to peace.

Signor Franco Abbiati, music critic of a Milan daily, reports through UNESCO that the long-missing solo part of Paganini's unpublished fourth violin concerto in D has been discovered among waste paper in Parma (Italy). Paganini is known to have finished this concerto in Germany in 1830, and it has since had only one public performance. After a single public performance, the whole manuscript was lost. The orchestral parts of the concerto were found in Parma fifteen years ago.

A survey of Canadian universities by the Engineering Institute of Canada reveals that there were 2,865 first year students registered in engineering courses for 1952-53 as compared with 2,105 for last year and 1,874 for 1950-51. The percentage increase last year was 14 per cent, so that there are approximately 50 per cent more students taking first year engineering than there were two years ago. Total registration of engineering students this year is 8,230, which is slightly more than last year. However, the number of engineering students in the graduating classes across the land is lower than last year. It is expected that only 1,357 will graduate in 1953, and probably fewer than that in 1954. By 1955 there will be a small increase, but hardly sufficient, it is believed, to fill the engineering jobs that Canada has to offer.

Let's Wait And See Who Gets It



Old Charlottetown (And P. E. I.)

EARLY ISLAND PAPER This column is indebted to Mr. Brian Cudmore, son of Mr. T. Roy Cudmore, for the perusal of an interesting relic of early journalism in this Province. It is a copy of the "Weekly Recorder of Prince Edward Island," dated Thursday, Nov. 25, 1813, and was formerly in the possession of Mr. Cudmore's uncle, Mr. Osborne Farquhar, of Boston, a former resident of the Island. The newspaper which measures 10 by 7 inches and runs to eight uncut pages, was published weekly by James DOUGLAS Bagnall in Charlottetown and sold for 15 shillings annually. It ran for only a few years (starting in 1811) and it is unlikely that the subscribers ever numbered more than one hundred.

Published during the Napoleonic wars, the paper gives prominence to a Proclamation by Lieutenant Governor Smith, stressing the need of strict precautionary measures in dealing with newly landed persons in the Island. "It is fully ascertained that they are entitled to the liberties and privileges of British Subjects, or those of her allies." All masters of vessels are ordered, immediately upon their arrival, to report to the nearest magistrate the names, destinations and places of origin of all persons coming as passengers on board their vessels. Doubtful cases are to be made the subject of further examination in Charlotte Town. "Persons disregarding these necessary Regulations will subject themselves to be treated as Spies."

The issue also contains a Proclamation ordering that "Spanish Dollars, limited to the amount of One Thousand, shall be cut at the Treasury, by having a circular piece taken out of the centre of each—the Dollars so cut, are to be issued from and received at the Treasury at the rate of Five Shillings Currency each, and the pieces so taken out to be issued from and received at the Treasury at One Shilling Currency each."

This was the famous "Holey Dollar" innovation, introduced to offset "the serious inconvenience occasioned by the want of sufficient circulating Medium in the Colony." For the purpose of inducing "an influx of the current coin of the realm from other quarters," the Proclamation announced fixed premiums to be paid on all British coins received at the Treasury, as well as on uncut Spanish milled dollars which were to pass for five shillings currency. As a further and more effectual remedy, it was intimated that the Home Government would be requested to sanction the adoption of a silver and copper coinage for the Island, of four shilling and two shilling silver pieces, and of pence, halfpence and farthing copper coins respectively.

The news columns of the paper deal chiefly with the Duke of Wellington's victories in the Peninsular campaign. Locally, public interest appears to have centred on the Legislature, then in session. Governor Smith was quite an autocrat, and the members of the Lower House had to walk warily. This is reflected in their cautious approach to the subject of public discontent in their Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, which appears in full. "From the unfavourable representations, that your Excellency intimates, have been made of the internal state of the Colony," says the Address, "we feel the highest degree of satisfaction in the acknowledgment your Excellency has been pleased to express of a contrary feeling on your part, and we ardently trust that, under your Excellency's wise and unbiased principles of justice, any latent sparks of political dissension may expire."

Notes By The Way

On the subject of Christmas parties, we would like to make the observation that while it is a very fine thing for clubs to have parties for the children of their own members, it should be remembered that these youngsters are assured of a wonderful Christmas at home. Is it not a much more fitting gesture to give parties for kids who can't be certain Santa will call at their house? A party for underprivileged children demonstrates the real Christmas spirit. —North Bay Nugget.

Congratulations to Senator J. W. DeB. Farris on obtaining his half-century mark in the practice of his learned profession—the law. For nearly 50 years Senator Farris has been a Vancouver resident, lending of his energy and his wisdom to many good causes. He has served the people in public office—years ago as Attorney General in Victoria, and in this high office he made his mark, now has his place in our political history. His friends hope he has many years in which to practise his profession—and they prepare also to wish him a happy 44th birthday early in December.—Vancouver News Herald.

A new country, India would like to have a new calendar. And Prime Minister Nehru has appointed a committee to study the matter. One of several committee members who regard The World Calendar as the best of all plans is Professor M. N. Saha, president of the Astronomical and Astrophysical Society of India. He points out that India's indigenous calendars are in a confused state, and the Gregorian system is unscientific. He argues that The World Calendar would foster national unity, as well as being convenient. India may become the pioneer in this reform.—Ottawa Citizen.

Now a complete house is driven to the service station for gas and oil. Newest wrinkle in motor transportation south of the border is a vehicle that looks like a house, with picture windows in the front living room, a roof, frame walls and windows. Inside is a self-contained toilet, an eighty-gallon water tank, built-in shower, two double beds, a dining table, a four-burner gas stove. When the house is in motion, the driver is necessary for adopting measures to remedy the defects of the Colony in other respects, yet we apprehend the means within our power are not adequate to full relief: in such cases. Then as now, the advertising columns contained many items of interest. Some examples of these will appear in tomorrow's issue.

seated in the living room, the front picture window serving as the windshield. The cost of the model equals the cost of a modest house in Fort William.—Fort William Times-Journal.

President Truman says he expects General Eisenhower will continue the remarkable Washington institution of the presidential press conference. Unquestionably it serves there a good purpose. Ottawa, with the Prime Minister and his cabinet members sitting in the Commons and available for questioning about seven months of the year, has no comparable need.—Ottawa Journal.

This is the season of disastrous house fires—usually from overheated stoves or pipes in small homes where more often than there are young children. It is difficult in such circumstances to achieve complete safety and constant vigilance is the only real protection.—Ottawa Journal.

The Poet's Corner

FROM STANZA Where forlorn sunsets flare and fade On desolate sea and lonely sand, Out of the silence and the shade What is the voice of strange command Calling you still, as friend calls friend With love that cannot brook delay. To rise and follow the ways that wind Over the hills and far away! Hark to the city, street on street A roaring reach of death and life... And ruin in appointed strife; Hark to it calling, calling clear, Calling until you cannot stay. From dearer things than your own most dear Over the hills and far away. Out of the sound of the ebb-and-flow, Out of the sight of lamp and star. It calls you where the good winds blow, And the unchanging meadows are; From faded hopes and hopes agleam, It calls you, calls you night and day Beyond the dark, into the dream Over the hills and far away. —William Ernest Henley.

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Human Rights Declaration

(Unesco) Four years ago, on the night of 10th December, 1948, delegates to the United Nations General Assembly meeting at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris, paid tribute to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which had just been adopted and proclaimed. They compared it with the Magna Carta, the American Declaration of Independence and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the citizen. They spoke of it as having a moral value and authority without precedent in world history, and said that in it was the beginning of a system of international law.

Now, after four years, we can make a more complete estimate of the significance of this document. Is it merely a noble idea elaborated in dignified and sonorous prose? Or is it a document which is destined to leave its mark on human affairs and make a contribution to the historic development of our time? Perhaps the first thing to observe is that today many more people know about the Declaration than in December 1948. At that time, its contents were little known outside the family circle of the United Nations, few had heard of it and its text had been published only in French and English. Since then, the Declaration has been made available in some 46 languages, through the activities of governments of the United Nations, and of Unesco.

Perhaps its greatest influence has been in those fields of national and international action where the United Nations itself has played a key role. In its short period of existence, the world organization has presided over the birth of several new States, and has helped a number of non-self-governing territories on the road to independence. In such cases, the principles—and often the texts—of the Declaration's thirty articles have been of immense service to constitution-makers and others.

The Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, a sixth member of the United Nations, contains many of the provisions of the Universal Declaration, some in the same words used in the Declaration.

The Constitution of the newly created State of Libya bears the imprint of the Universal Declaration in those sections which guarantee the rights of the inhabitants of the new State. The same is true of the Constitution of Eritrea which sets forth rights never before enjoyed under the protection of the law by the inhabitants of that territory. The agreement drafted to guide the administrators of the former Italian colony of Somaliland within the United Nations Trusteeship System, includes a statement of constitutional principles which reflect the basic principles and scope of the Universal Declaration.

During the past four years, a number of States have had occasion to revise or redraft their constitutions. In the case of Costa Rica, Syria, El Salvador and Haiti, the new constitutions all show the influence, and in some cases actually reproduce the wording, of the Universal Declaration. A new constitution creating the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico was proclaimed by the Governor on 25 July 1952.

This Constitution, written by the people of Puerto Rico, contained many provisions guaranteeing basic civil and political rights, the right to participate in Government, rights to social security, freedom of association and right to education, health and welfare. These

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The Age-Old Story

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; The Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is established, that it cannot be moved. Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.