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New Assessment Proposals Cause Of Much Discussion

Some Views On the Tax Situation in Saint John.

With the introduction of the proposed amendments to the taxation system of the city of Saint John much is being said for and against the proposal, and it behooves every citizen to view the situation calmly and fairly and not as so many are prone to do, rejoice if they find their own particular burden eased and condemn if they find it increased. In other words no one should try to shift the burden to the shoulders of others and particularly to those less able to pay.

Money must be found to pay for the services provided by the city. There is only one source from which it can come and that is from those with ability to pay. Even to those who are able to pay it must be seen that each is treated fairly and no one favored at the expense of another.

The Common Council must show due consideration for the taxpayer, whoever he may be, realizing that the first duty is to try to lessen the tax burden by eliminating unnecessary jobs, services and deficits. No one desires to see any individual unemployed but if there is an opportunity to save money for the taxpayer in the way of eliminating jobs, which are unnecessary, there should be no hesitation in making such a move, as any business firm would have to do and have been obliged to do in the past.

Civic employment should be treated as jobs, wages paid for work done, and not as a resting place or a reward for favors. A city job should be considered as worth so much money according to the work performed, the same as it would be viewed in business and not from the standpoint of sympathy or vote-producing power, which is so generally the case in the matter of government appointments.

The ferry operation shows a large deficit which the taxpayer is to pay. What is being done to stop this drain on the taxpayer's pocket-book? Deficits should not be allowed to pile up. If the city cannot afford to pave a street a halt should be called until the city can afford it and the same should apply to the services.

As the situation now stands, the city must raise more money for this year, and with the increasing relief burden more must be raised each succeeding year. Where is it to come from? That is what the Common Council is trying to determine, and no matter where the burden is placed, the taxpayer of any class will say, "I am paying more than I can afford right now."

The proposed change in the business tax is meeting with favorable acceptance from business generally. It is, however, felt that chain stores were very lightly touched compared to other local merchants. The big bone of contention appears to be, however, in the matter of the revision in

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Vicious Propaganda

THE BIG interests, which are behind the move to subordinate the Provinces of the Dominion of Canada, appear to be determined to work their will upon the weaker Provinces. They are using their newspapers to publish untruths about the Dominion-Provincial conferences and other propaganda which they think will help them in their selfish plans.

Press despatches from Ottawa during the last conference said that New Brunswick was likely to agree to having the amendments made to the British North America Act in Ottawa instead of in London,—which was untrue. Since the conference closed the big interest papers continue to insinuate that the British North America Act will be brought to Ottawa and that the Dominion-Provincial conference made all the necessary plans,—which also was untrue.

The New Brunswick representatives are opposed to the breaking of the Imperial connection and the whole Province is agreed on this.

This Province will not submit to being placed further under the domination of the Dominion because the experiences of the last sixty-eight years have taught the people of this Province that written contracts mean nothing to those big interests, who, by manipulation, influence parliaments and party organizations.

The people of New Brunswick would have the present Confederation pact carried out. If the present contract is ignored what can be expected from a new one?

The Dominion of Canada is a confederation and each unit or Province must consent to any changes in the constitution or contract. So New Brunswick has the power to veto any move which might be detrimental to the best interests of this Province.

Mounted Police Contract May Be Changed In N. B.

Country People Have Come To Consider Police Service Necessary.

Word comes from Fredericton that the contract under which the Royal Canadian Mounted Police work in New Brunswick may be changed. It is said that some curtailment in the service may be made. Under present conditions most of the people in this Province rely upon these police for protection. They have been particularly useful in connection with automobile traffic. Any curtailment of this service might cause alarm in the Province unless something else were provided to take its place.

SECTIONALISM

SECTIONALISM is a word that has come much into prominence lately in the various Provinces, but more particularly in Ontario and Quebec. Almost daily references are made to sectionalism by speakers and in the press, when the finger of scorn is shaken at outlying Provinces which would dare to stand up for their rights.

New Brunswick, the other Atlantic Provinces, and the Provinces of the West are being oppressed by the sectionalism as practiced by Ontario and Quebec, while those two Provinces control the economic life of the whole Dominion. By that sectionalism as practiced by Quebec and Ontario the people in New Brunswick and the outlying Provinces are gradually being made paupers, while the two big Provinces wax fat at the expense of the others.

In Ontario and Quebec big business raises the cry that "sectionalism must cease," contending that the east and west are unfair in their demands and that they would wreck the national life of the whole Dominion, if they thought more of their Provinces than of the Dominion as a whole. So what have we? The east and west asking for fair play, while Ontario and Quebec defend a sectional policy of aggression, which they try to disguise as nationalism but which really means that they command trade, commerce and the national policy.

Before Confederation the Provinces were self-governing. Each made its own laws, regulated its own trade and the economic life of its people. New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Quebec created the Confederation and if the business of this partnership had been carried on according to the charter, trade today would be flowing as intended, east and west, the wheels of industry would be humming from the Atlantic to the Pacific and the people of each Province would be happy and prosperous.

But it has turned out to be a much different kind of partnership. Instead of a display of co-operation, which makes for strength and unity, the intended national policy developed into a purely sectional policy so manipulated as to work to the direct advantage of Ontario and Quebec and to the disadvantage of the other original partners and those who have joined later. Ontario and Quebec, by means of party politics, have made slaves of the people of the other Provinces. Party has been preached as being ahead of country so that the self-appointed overlords could work their schemes to their own advantage.

The Province of New Brunswick, through its Attorney-General and other representatives, has taken a stand which is not sectional, in spite of the propagandists of Ontario and Quebec. All that is wanted is fair play which rightfully belongs to all the Provinces under the partnership agreement. The Government of New Brunswick is asking that the people of this Province be accorded that treatment to which they are entitled, so that the heritage which is theirs can be retained by those to whom it rightfully belongs.

There is no more patriotic people in this vast Dominion than those in the Provinces washed by the Atlantic and the Fundy tides. Their sons have given freely of their lives for king and country, not only within the borders of their own Provinces but in India, South Africa, in France, in Flanders and elsewhere. This spirit of empire and patriotism must be applied to their provincial affairs. No longer can they afford to support the self-appointed overlords of Ontario and Quebec. The sectional policy of Central Canada must be combatted. The young men and women of the outlying Provinces must be given opportunity for gainful employment in the land of their birth.

The Confederation Agreement was never intended to work such hardship on these Atlantic Provinces. It was intended as a safeguard to protect the future. All one has to do is to read the accounts of the conferences at Charlottetown, and at Quebec, the texts of the London Agreement and the British North America Act to see how flagrantly the original agreement has been broken by Central Canada.

Did Sir Andrew Duncan, after his commission had made an exhaustive survey, consider that the Maritimes have received fair treatment? The findings will show that the Maritimes have not received a square deal within the Confederation. When someone says that New Brunswick in her demands for fair play is threatening the national life of Canada, they do not know what they are talking about or else they are those who have been hoodwinked into believing that the sectionalism as preached by Ontario and Quebec is nationalism. The national life of this Dominion is threatened by the selfish, monopolistic policies of Ontario and Quebec. New Brunswick is merely fighting for her life as a unit in what should be the greatest of Dominions under the British flag.

The public men of New Brunswick, who are stepping into the front line trenches to protect this land of their birth, must feel that the people of the Province are behind them and are giving their whole-hearted support. This is a time when party politics must be submerged, when the spirit of co-operation must be developed and there is evidence that the people as a whole will support their leaders to the last ditch.

The British North America Act is not an obstacle to progress, as big business and overlords would have us believe, but it is the balance wheel of prosperity, when it is made to function as intended.

Gossip from Far and Near

HERE is a suggestion for the Legislature. During its sessions there are private bills being offered for consideration and often these are found to give much trouble to the committees which have to deal with them. Sometimes there are vague expressions and wrong words used. If the Legislature would have a lawyer to go over all bills submitted before they go to the committees much time would be saved and the work of the session would be expedited. Some of the Provinces are said to have such a system and it is found to be very satisfactory.

THE people of Saint John are now concerned with some changes in the assessment system. The exemptions formerly given to wage earners are being reduced, if present plans are adopted. Some of the tax experts who have been hired by the city have been opposed to taxes on small incomes and this idea went so far that in the act now in force there are some 10,000 citizens who are assessed only \$5 a year. The Dominion finds it necessary to give large exemptions on incomes and many cities do not tax incomes at all. The proposed move in Saint John would seem a step backward instead of forward, so some citizens claim.

THOSE whose names have been mentioned as possible candidates in the coming civic election are: For mayor, James W. Brittain, the present office holder, and D. Laurence MacLaren; for commissioners, the present office holders, Commissioners Wilson and Walsh, K. D. Spear, James A. Whitebone, J. Harold McLellan and Alick Taylor.

THE prepayment of civic taxes for 1936 goes merrily on. The interest offered on these prepayments seems to be some inducement for payment. The city will save something on the overdraft interest on these payments and the payers will be able to avoid the last-day rushes of the discount period. If a citizen so desires he can pay his taxes in monthly installments.

THE active minority, which has been so intent on tearing up the British North America Act and subordinating the outlying Provinces, has met defeat at Ottawa, so the Toronto Mail and Empire says. No doubt Messrs. Dysart, McNair and Paterson of New Brunswick had somewhat to do with the decision to let the Act rest as it is for the present at least. In spite of the encouraging words New Brunswick must be vigilant and not let down one iota on its defense preparations. This Province stands for the Imperial connection, even ahead of the Dominion.

OVER in England the authorities are making a drive against gambling. The Home Office and Scotland Yard have joined forces with the churches to curb the gambling activities. The sentiment in New Brunswick is to curb gambling and the authorities should not be backward in any move that will protect those who are unable to protect themselves.