

## Toronto and its Unemployed

In reply to your circular letter addressed to His Worship the Mayor, I forward herewith a copy of Report No. 1 of the Special Committee appointed by the City Council to deal with the Unemployment question. The Committee are still at work, and hope to arrive at satisfactory results at an early date.

W. A. LITTLEJOHN, City Clerk.

### Report No. 1 of the Special Committee re Unemployed.

Your Committee beg to report, for the information of the City Council, that since their appointment on the 15th inst they have held three meetings and in addition to the recommendations below referred to the following action has been taken in reference to matters herein mentioned.

A deputation was appointed, consisting of members of the City Council, representatives of the Board of Trade and the Trades and Labor Council, to wait upon the Ontario Government and lay before them requests, which if carried out, would provide a certain amount of work for the unemployed, viz.:—

- 1.—To undertake and carry on, as far as practicable, the clearing of Crown Lands to be subsequently occupied by settlers who will be expected to make repayment of expenditure on the instalment plan.
- 2.—Clearing and doing considerable work during the winter months on Government roads in New Ontario.
- 3.—Establishment of new mills to create local markets for pulpwood and timber.
- 4.—To carry out the Good Roads programme as adopted by the Ontario Good Roads Commission.
- 5.—To make an early beginning of the work of constructing the Hydro Railway System.

The deputation, along with the City members of the Legislature, waited upon the Honorable Mr. Hearst, Premier, and the Members of his Cabinet, on the 31st inst., and after laying before the Members of the Government the propositions above mentioned, the Honorable Mr. Hearst, on behalf of the Government, briefly outlined what the Government has done and is doing to help the unemployed situation, and gave your Committee to understand that the Government is willing, ready and anxious to do all that they can to assist in securing employment for the unemployed not only in Toronto but throughout the Province.

In compliance with the request from your Committee the heads of the several Civic Departments reported as follows:—

Commissioner of Works: That during the present year the amount of \$840,000 for water mains, etc., throughout the City, would be provided, and that the special appropriation of \$5,000 for the removal of snow and ice has given a certain amount of employment, also that if funds were provided the proposed sewerage system for North Toronto could be put under way.

The Street Commissioner reported in favor of the suggestion to remove ice and snow from the main thoroughfares of the City. In connection with this item your Committee have recommended that the Board of Control report \$10,000 in addition to that already granted for this purpose.

The Commissioner of Parks advised that he is at present carrying on a large amount of relief work, and is investigating the proposition of utilizing relief labor in the cleaning out of Catfish Pond (High Park). He has since reported thereon to the Committee on Parks and Exhibitions.

The Committee received a large number of communications from citizens offering suggestions to relieve the condition of unemployment, and these will receive due consideration.

Communications have been received from the Mayors of a number of Canadian cities and of cities in the United States, stating what steps have been taken by their respective cities to provide work for the unemployed.

The Commissioner of Works addressed your Committee in reference to the following works which was stated had been stopped, viz.:—

- 1.—Filtration plant at the Island.
- 2.—Work at the main pumping station.
- 3.—Work on contracts on pavements, sidewalks and sewers.

In reference to the filtration plant at the Island he stated that he stopped the work deeming it inadvisable to proceed therewith during the cold weather. He further stated that work at the main pumping station has not been stopped, but is going on satisfactorily. As for contracts for work on streets he did not know of any contracts held up which could be carried on at the present time.

The Commissioner of Property reported that work in connection with the erection of the new City Registry Office which was held up on account of the slow delivery of steel to be used in connection with the erection of the building, will now proceed more expeditiously as material is coming to hand.

A complaint was made that in connection with the Bloor Street viaduct some fifty French Canadians had been brought to work thereon from outside the city. Upon investigating the matter it was found that this was not the case.

His Worship the Mayor submitted a plan to start a "give-a-man-a-job" campaign and the suggestions outlined by the Mayor have been referred to a sub-committee to report thereon.

The Commissioner of Works has been asked to consider several suggestions made by members of the Council regarding the construction of local improvement works.

It has been decided to communicate with the City Members of the Dominion Parliament and the Government to ask them to commence the work of erecting the new Post Office and Customs House buildings at the earliest possible moment, and also to ask the Government to use its influence to have the work of erecting the new Union Station and Esplanade Viaduct proceeded with as little delay as possible.

Your Committee beg to recommend as follows:

### Census of Unemployed.

- 1.—That the Board of Police Commissioners be asked to have a census of the unemployed taken by the uniformed police.

### Repairs to Public Buildings.

- 2.—That the Property Commissioner report to the Board of Control what repairs he contemplated doing during the present year to the various fire halls and other public buildings, together with the estimated cost thereof, and that the Board of Control be requested to provide the necessary funds in advance of the Estimates in order that work may be commenced at the earliest possible date.

### Reorganization of Labor Registration Bureau.

- 3.—That the Labor Registration Bureau be placed immediately under the direction of the Board of Control, and have its functions and scope enlarged so as to make it a permanent organization for the purpose of bringing together persons needing employees and persons needing employment, as well as for the supplying of labor to Civic Departments.

### Contracts for War Supplies.

Your Committee, having heard a deputation from the garment workers, beg respectively to recommend that the proper authorities of the Dominion Government be asked to give clothing manufacturers doing business in this city as large a share as possible of clothing contracts and of any other contracts for war supplies, with a view to providing work for some of the unemployed in this City; and further, that the Government be asked to do what they can to secure similar action by the Imperial and French Government representatives who have charge of the purchase of goods and material for war purposes.

### Laying of Water Mains.

It is recommended that the Commissioner of Works be requested to proceed at once with the work of laying water mains throughout the city (including North Toronto), by day labor—funds to the amount of \$840,000 having been appropriated therefor.

### Rate of Wages For Relief Work.

Your Committee recommend that relief work be hereafter defined, and that men employed under that heading be paid at the rate of twenty-five cents per hour, and that seven (7) hours constitute a day's work.

Respectively submitted,

F. S. SPENCE,  
Chairman.

### TORONTO'S RECORD IS AN ENVIABLE ONE.

The general death rate in Toronto in 1914 is lower than that attained by any American city or British town in 1913, being 11.2, while for 1913 the rate for Toronto was 12.9. Milwaukee's rate in 1913 was 13.2, and Bristol's 13.3, these being the nearest to Toronto's rate. New York in 1913 had a rate of 13.8, London of 14.4, Chicago of 15.1, and Glasgow of 17.2.