

# OTTAWA DECLARES U.S. EMBARGO ON MILK JUSTIFIED

City Receives Letter From  
Federal Ministry of  
Health

## MANY REQUIREMENTS

Find Montreal One of Most  
Inadequately Equipped  
Cities for Health

That Montreal is one of the most inadequately supplied cities insofar as public health measures are concerned, that the U. S. embargo on Montreal milk is justified, and that only by closest supervision of the department of health, provision of sufficiently experienced staff and material can the city expect to come up to the requirements of the U. S. authorities in the matter of its milk supply, are statements in a letter from the Federal ministry of health addressed to the mayor and council today.

The letter goes thoroughly into the milk question and states certain definite requirements which would place the city in a position to ask that the Ottawa Government take steps to lift the embargo.

### ASK INSPECTORS.

These are that a sufficient number of competent inspectors be named; that a bacteriologist and staff be supplied; that registering thermometers be placed on all pasteurizing plants, locked and kept under supervision of the city.

These conditions constitute a

minimum, it is pointed out, and must be increased as the city grows in size and population.

### TEXT OF LETTER.

Following is the text of the letter: "Having still in mind the gravity of the recent typhoid epidemic which raged in Montreal, the most violent of its kind caused by milk in modern times and which caused such great loss of life, and stopping to consider the problem of raising of the embargo imposed and maintained against the city of Montreal by the United States Ministry of Agriculture, I take the liberty, with your consent and approbation, to place before you the principal aspects of the situation as we find them today. Useless to add that in taking these steps I have in mind the profound and lasting interest you bear towards all that touches human welfare of the citizens of Montreal. I therefore anticipate with full assurance, that my observations will be well received. I am also confident that the only motive underlying my apparent temerity is the wish to be of service to you and to your population.

"Not one of you can ignore that on March 26, 1927, the Minister of Agriculture of the United States, on recommendation of the department of health of the same country, imposed an embargo prohibiting the importation of milk to the United States and of milk products coming from Montreal. You also are aware that the embargo is still in force. This preventive measure is the cause of innumerable inconvenience, and of great financial losses especially for those in Montreal who ask nothing more than that the embargo be lifted.

### STILL IN FORCE

"Since the end of the epidemic, milk dealers of the Province of Quebec and those of your city looked to the early raising of the embargo. In any event these merchants found out soon enough that the embargo was still in force against the City of Montreal, and as effective as at any time of the epidemic, even at its worst. Montreal dairymen could not at first understand the reasons for this decision. In fact it was only after an inquiry that they found out that the Minister of Agriculture in the United States considered that the personnel and material destined to safeguard the milk supply were absolutely insufficient and that the Minister had, in addition, the intention of maintaining the embargo against the City of Montreal as long as this city did not have the required personnel and material at its disposition with which to protect the milk supply in an adequate manner.

"The ultimatum launched against the city of Montreal by the Minister of Agriculture of the United States is therefore based on the existence of a staff and material sufficient to assure adequate hygienic protection. Otherwise the embargo will be maintained.

### NO INJUSTICE.

"Although the citizens and milk merchants of Montreal may be of the opinion that they are the object of arbitrary measures and that they are being discriminated against, the fact remains that the Provincial Health Department of Quebec as well as myself are both sincerely convinced that the United States Minister of Agriculture is amply justified in imposing and maintaining the embargo until such time as the material and staff of the health department of Montreal shall be deemed sufficiently effective to safeguard the milk supply and that of the surrounding district. If, by chance, the roles were reversed we, in Canada, would have been amply justified in maintaining an embargo against the United States.

"The Provincial Health Department and myself are fully in accord as to essential elements constituting the minimum of personnel and material equipment required to assure the safety of the milk supply in the city of Montreal.

### MINIMUM CARE

In our estimation this minimum can be defined as follows:

1. The habitations of all those who handle milk should be exempt of all infection, in the estimation of the health bureau of the city of Montreal.
2. All those who handle milk should be secure from contagious disease, and proof should be furnished that the persons are not carriers of typhoid germs by means of authorized bacteriological examinations.
3. The city should appoint at least five competent inspectors to examine and supervise pasteurization plants. As it is impossible to find these men among ordinary workmen it goes without saying that these inspectors should possess good education as well as the proper technical, physical, chemical, and biological knowledge to allow them a basis for the instructions of your own doctors. In addition these men should be able to efficaciously execute the work of inspection.

### MECHANICAL THERMOMETERS.

4. Mechanical registering thermometers belonging to the city should be attached to all pasteurization plants. These should be sealed and the key placed in charge of the department of health.

5. The city should be assured the services of at least 10 general inspectors, competent in their work, and the city should name 10 more equally

good men should be taken to inspect the sources of milk outside the city.

6. The city should have an experienced bacteriologist, as well as a good laboratory staff to control milk at all stages of handling, as well as to examine the persons charged with milk handling and all other employes, to the end that germ carriers may be discovered, in case of typhoid or other contagious disease.

"I believe that it is my duty to have you note that the above elements represent a minimum and are inferior to the conditions usually found in other larger centres of the North American continent.

"May I also be permitted to add that, with the rapidity with which the population of Montreal is growing, these factors of safety must be developed further and enlarged.

"Whatever may happen, the Provincial Health Bureau and myself are of the opinion that the establishment and proper working of a staff and material equipment of this nature will assure in large measure to the City of Montreal a supply of milk free of danger and will furnish a proper basis on which we may support our request that the embargo be lifted.

"To conclude, I might add that while Montreal is one of the largest, most populous, richest and most important on the North American Continent, this city, in point of public health, is nevertheless one of the most insufficiently provided for.

"J. A. AMYOT,

"Deputy Minister of Health.

"Ottawa."