

They are not seeking to evade any of the responsibilities of citizenship. Nor do they ask for any special privileges.

They do demand, however—and if they exercise the power afforded by the franchise, they will be enabled to effectively demand—that the city council shall respect the rights conferred by the by-laws of the council and by the statutes of parliament.

At the risk of repeating what has been said several times before, let us again refer to the agreement entered into between the city and the government in 1885, and subsequently confirmed and continued by the Act creating the Ottawa Improvement Commission. By the terms of that agreement, the city undertook two things. First to waive any existing claims (presumably for water service and fire protection) which it had against the government, and, second, to make no claim for taxes on the incomes of officials and servants of the government. In return for these concessions, the government abolished the tolls on the bridge at the Chaudiere; undertook to maintain and keep in repair certain specified parks, streets and bridges, and to give an annual grant of \$60,000 a year for the purpose of beautifying and improving the city.

That was a fair and square bargain. A bargain confirmed by a by-law of the city and an Act of Parliament.

Was it a bargain in the interests of the city? We believe it was. Including the grant of \$60,000 it probably costs the government \$100,000 per annum. Would the city expect to get that much for water service and fire protection for the government buildings?

But that is not all. By the building of the driveway, which is a source of pride to every loyal citizen, the values of properties has been enhanced three, four, and in some instances, tenfold, and the city reaps the benefit of the taxes on these enhanced values to a degree much greater, probably, than the \$18,000 or \$20,000, which they

will secure if permitted to collect taxes upon the incomes of government employees.

Then if the community has the big end of the bargain, what quarrel has it got with the civil servant who objects to the city council violating its agreement by the imposition of this tax?

And if the government chooses by this method to pay the income tax of its officials, what special privilege does the civil servant enjoy save that given him by his employer? None whatever.

Who, then, is there that will object to the civil servant condemning the city council for the manner in which it has undertaken to violate its agreement? Who is there that is prepared to take the unsupported opinion of the city solicitor to the effect that the council had no legal right to enter into any agreement which had the effect of exempting civil servants from the imposition of the tax? And who is there but believes — if the city solicitor's opinion is the correct one — that the course to have been pursued was either for the council to repeal its by-law or, if it desired the continuation of the agreement with the government, to have sought legislative sanction for continuing the exemption?

It was a childish, nay a most reprehensible, thing—no matter what the object may have been—for the council to attempt to shift the responsibility to the shoulders of its officials. It was an unsafe thing to do as well. It is not within the province of the city council — acting either with or without the advice of its solicitor— to raise the question of the legality of a by-law passed twenty-three years ago and observed ever since. That is a question for the courts to decide.

At a later stage, if necessary, the civil service will, through the Association, carry the matter into the courts. That will mean expense, however, and there is no particular anxiety to incur any additional expense if it can be avoided.