

THE CANADIAN MUNICIPAL JOURNAL

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

City of Montreal and
United States \$2.25

Canada, Great Britain
and Countries in
Postal Union \$2.00

Published Monthly by

The Canadian Municipal Journal Co., Limited

HARRY BRAGG

President

FREDERICK WRIGHT

Editor

CORISTINE BUILDING, MONTREAL

Any article appearing in these pages may be reproduced provided full credit is given to the Journal.

Although the Canadian Municipal Journal is the Official Organ of the Union of Canadian Municipalities and other bodies yet these are not responsible for any other matter published in its columns than what in each article or itself is stated to be official by any of these bodies

VOL. XIV.

OCTOBER, 1918.

NO. 10.

CONTENTS.

Parliamentary Report of U. C. M. (Fred Cook)	293	Address by Premier of B. C.	309
To Control Food Prices	297	Address by President of B. C. Union	310
Teaching Citizenship via Movies	298	War Conditions in East (Mayor Hawkins)	312
Credit of Western Municipalities	298	Closer Relations between East and West (Mayor Gale)	314
Municipal Officers and Records of Tenure	299	Closer Relations between East and West (Mayor Bouchard)	315
A National Debt (A. H. D. Hair)	300	The Forum (Howard S. Ross)	317
Food Board Orders (Ernest Roberts)	301	Municipal Finance (James Murray)	319
Convention of U. C. M.	302	Bachelors' Tax	319
War and Municipal Canada	311	Municipal Legislation in Quebec (Arthur F. Bell) ..	320
How West is Affected by War (Mayor Costello) ...	311	Municipalities and War Bonds	321

THE NECESSITY OF A NEW ORDER-IN-COUNCIL TO CONTROL PRICES.

The Food Board has been in existence eight months and many people have asked, What has it done? At times certain of its orders have been criticized in and by the press. Even this Journal has not always viewed with favour the orders, and no doubt the Board itself will admit some mistakes, but taking into consideration its short existence, its limited powers and its very limited staff, the work accomplished by the Canada Food Board is little short of marvellous. The nature of the work so far as it affects the municipalities through the local councils has been ably placed before our readers month by month by Mr. Ernest Roberts, but of the general propaganda, having for its object the conservation of food on the one hand and the greater production of food on the other, the general public has but a hazy idea. What the average citizen does know is that he, or she, is restricted in the use of sugar, flour, etc., and that in some way Great Britain and the Allies are getting the benefit of it, but to what extent he does not know.

Perhaps the best evidence of the Food Board's activities is in the following excerpt from a recent bulletin:

"The effect of these measures (Food Board Orders) may be noted by the increased exports to Great Britain and her Allies. In the case of beef, these exports have increased over the average exports for 1910-1914 by 75,000,000 pounds per annum, or 8,795 per cent.; in the case of pork, (including bacon and lard), the net exports have increased by 125,000,000 pounds per annum, or 571 per cent. It is estimated that Canada has exported at least 25 to 30 per cent more wheat during the last twelve months than could have been exported had it not been for conservation and organization of this country's food resources."

This is something to be proud of, and Mr. H. B. Thomson and his colleagues are to be congratulated on the results of their efforts, particularly when it is understood that their staff and their powers, as already mentioned, are limited. Take the staff. It is questionable if it reaches a hundred, whereas the Food Controller of the United States has a staff of over 4,000, which means that the Canada Food

Board has to depend largely on voluntary and local assistance, but even this does not near represent how the above results were achieved. To get to the real means of accomplishment we would have to visit the headquarters of the Board, talk with H. B. Thomson, and then we would realize what personality meant in achieving something.

But there is a part of the Food Board's work that needs developing—namely control of prices. We fully recognize that the primary object of the Board is to get foodstuffs over to Great Britain and her allies, and that to achieve this object certain regulations had to be made and carried out, concerning the consumption of food, but as yet no serious attempt has been made to regulate the prices of those foodstuffs allowed to be used in Canada, the consequence is the consumer has been exploited to such an extent that it unnecessarily hurts, and it is time this exploitation was stopped. It is true that there is in force an Order-in-Council giving the Minister of Labour certain powers to regulate, in conjunction with the municipal councils, the prices of foodstuffs, but the order for all practical purposes is a dead letter, because it is unworkable, so that if the Government is really in earnest in regulating prices it must try some other method—something more direct. Our suggestion is that the present Order-in-Council regulating prices be rescinded and that a new Order be made giving the local councils power, with summary jurisdiction, to control the prices of all foodstuffs sold within their respective municipalities, and that administration of the Order be made part of the work of the Food Board. In this way the local authorities, who are in daily touch with the people and their requirements, would be made responsible, either through a committee of the council or a local commission, for the proper administration of the Order. As it is, no one is responsible, and the profiteers are having the time of their lives.