

CITY TO CARE FOR LOCAL UNEMPLOYED

Mayor and Aldermen Take Time by the Forelock, Foreseeing Hard Winter Ahead

RUSH AHEAD PUBLIC WORK

And Council Leader Recommends Laying in of Supplies in Anticipation of Wants of the Needy

Steps were taken at the meeting of the City Council yesterday to provide for those out of employment or who may otherwise need assistance during the coming winter. This was done in the form of a resolution which was adopted and sent to the Board of Control suggesting that "practical systematic action be taken" so that the council should not be taken unawares when the time came for supplying relief. In support of his motion, Ald. L. A. Lapointe remarked that the Dominion Government had done its duty by showing active sympathy for the Mother Country. Besides, a patriotic fund would be created by Parliament for the families of those in want. It was time for the city of Montreal also to prepare for the coming winter and the best beginning was to fill up the bunkers with supplies. It was then proposed by the leader of the council, seconded by Ald. Boyd, and resolved:

"That it behooves the City Council, even at this early moment, to consider the vital question of providing for the wants of the needy and unemployed during the coming winter, as, in all likelihood, the European war, coupled with the discontinuance of important works and the closing down or curtailment of many industries and business enterprises, may cause a situation of hardship heretofore unheard of in our history.

"That the Board of Commissioners be requested to give their earnest attention to this all-important question within the shortest possible delay, and to make such recommendations to Council as they may deem fit, for the establishment of practical, efficient and systematic action, in order that the Council may not be taken unawares when its intervention and aid may be required."

MAYOR'S VIEWS.

Mayor Martin, while in sympathy with the idea, said he thought too much publicity at the present time would do harm. The effect would be that many, not citizens of Montreal, would be clamoring for help. Mention was made by His Worship of his communications to the railways, suggesting they distribute to the poor the old railway ties that were scattered along their tracks and already a favorable response had been received from one company. "If you say too much about soup," said the Mayor, "you will have thousands asking for food who are not our people at all."

Ald. Lapointe remarked that he was unable to understand the attitude taken by the Mayor. Was it through jealousy or something else he did not know? Mayor Martin said, "No, no."

Ald. Lapointe continued that he saw nothing to fear, and, anyway, if a citizen of Three Rivers or Quebec asked for food he should get it in Montreal. He was not thinking of foreigners for the moment, but Ald. Lapointe added that there was no time to lose, and as for showing the motion to the Mayor he would have done so with pleasure had he been aware of any desire of the Mayor to know the contents of the motion. What he was suggesting was to get ready in time and then to act when it was necessary to act.

Ald. Boyd referred to a meeting of the Patriotic Fund Committee he had attended yesterday forenoon, at which suggestions were made for practical relief. One of the suggestions was that the city should remit the water taxes to those unable to pay. Another meeting would be held Wednesday at noon, when more definite plans would be submitted. The necessity of adopting some system for the protection of the genuine unemployed of the city was concurred in, said Ald. Boyd, and he thought the city should do something of the kind. This was to issue certificates to those who were to be helped. The need of this was realized when it was known that there were said to be as many as 15,000 Austrians in Montreal most of whom would be out of employment. They would be asking for food, but the first duty of the city would be to see its own people got help first.

Ald. Ward suggested that the city should undertake extensive improvements in the water works system this winter and spend the money that had been authorized.

ALD. BASTIEN'S LEAD.

Ald. Bastien gave a good example to manufacturers of foodstuffs. He said he was the partner of a large firm which had a million and a half pounds of flour on hand which they were ready to dispose of either as flour or as manufactured products at the ordinary price. This sentiment was applauded by the aldermen, and Ald. McDonald followed with a few words in favor of the motion by Ald. Lapointe which was for a purpose that might become, he said, one of the most serious in the history of the city. The duty of the City Council, said Ald. Menard, was to care for its own people anyway, and he moved, and it was resolved:

"That the Board of Control be requested to issue orders to officials of the Department of Public Works to give employment only to taxpayers of the city of Montreal, to British subjects, and to those from the allied powers."

When asked after the adjournment whether he had any definite plan in mind, Ald. Lapointe replied that it was advisable for the city to begin and purchase supplies at a reasonable hour, and thus be ready to distribute relief to the unemployed when necessary to do so. "I don't speak of soup kitchens yet," said Ald. Lapointe, "but we may have to come to that for all we know."