

VOTED TO ABOLISH

NON-EXISTENT VOTE

Five Members of Council Were Caught by Absurd Resolution.

SIXTEEN SAW POINT

Wouldn't Vote to Take Franchise From Aliens Who Haven't It.

Too many demagogic resolutions are being introduced at the City Hall. Too much time is being wasted talking to the gallery. Too many imputations as to other people's loyalty are being uttered. Too much ill-feeling is being aroused over the one subject upon which there is an absolute unanimity—namely, the prosecution of the war and the treatment of returned soldiers. There is not a member of Council nor a head of a department but wants to do the very best that can be done for the returned men; nor are aldermen likely to forget their obligations to the various other phases of the Empire's struggle. Under these circumstances, no condemnation can be too strong for any men who attempt to pose as the sole friends of the soldier and of the Empire, and who cast slurs upon the intentions of others who have done equally as much for the great cause and are as warmly in sympathy with it.

A sample of the gallery play which should disappear at once and forever was the resolution introduced by Mayor Church which called upon the Federal Government to disfranchise "Austrians, Germans, and other aliens" not domiciled in Canada for 25 years. Mayor Church is a lawyer and knew—as indeed mostly anybody would know—that "Austrians, Germans, and other aliens" cannot be disfranchised, for the reason that they have no franchise now. They have no vote; therefore they cannot be deprived of a vote. The only persons having the franchise in Canada are British subjects, born or naturalized. The resolution was absurd, the City Solicitor so pronounced it, and, when its absurdity was realized, only five members of Council could be found who would vote for it.

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The fact that the resolution could get only five votes speaks for itself. Almost any project could get as many as five votes in City Council, especially one presented under the guise of loyalty. That sixteen men had the courage to say "no," means that the vote would have been almost two to one, even if the four absentees had been present and voted for the resolution. It is absurd to insinuate that sixteen members of Council, some of them with their nearest and dearest at the front, are less loyal than their fellows. The sixteen were not only equally loyal, but they were infinitely more sensible, when they voted against a resolution which would take away from Austrians and Germans the vote which they haven't got.

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Another phase of the gallery campaign is the attempt to harry officials, notably Commissioner Harris, about the employment of returned soldiers. Mr. Harris is as loyal a man as there is at the City Hall. He knows that there is a rule that returned soldiers must be given the preference. He would follow such a rule even if the Council had never laid it down. Yet he and other officials are spoken of as though they were trying to evade the regulation. There are, of course, exceptions to this attitude. Controller Shaw said this morning, "Well if the Parks Commissioner is trying to put a returned soldier in every place where one can possibly be put we ought to be satisfied with

that." And surely the controllers should be.

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The Council need not bite at every resolution which is offered under the cloak of patriotism. Many of these are foolishly framed, however good the intention behind them may be. Here, for instance, is one which Council passed on Monday:

"That it be an instruction to the heads of civic departments when employing assistance in their respective departments to give soldiers who have seen active service the preference, and salaries attached to their names."

The resolution does not make sense. What the latter part means is that officials should report to Council the salaries they are paying their soldier-employees. Yet Council passed it just as it stands, after hearing it read, once by the mover and once by the Mayor. And it passed this instruction, although the following almost exactly similar one was already on the minutes:

"That it be an instruction to the heads of the civic departments when employing help of any kind in their respective departments for both inside and outside service, that returned soldiers who have seen active service with the allies be given the preference if available, and that no variation from this order be permitted without first reporting to Council."

One instruction to officials was enough. Men like Commissioner Harris are doing their utmost for the returned men. They should and will. And all the imputing of want of consideration should cease.

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The gallery-play artists are going so far as to insinuate that the vote of 16 to 5 against the alien enemy resolution was some sort of a Liberal plot—the Camerons, McBriens et al. being notable Liberals except for their close connection with the Conservative party. Needless to say, there was no party politics in the vote against a resolution which would have made Council ridiculous. Controller Cameron, than whom there is no stronger Conservative, this morning handed to the press the following protest against the insinuations which have been made:

"A deliberately planned attempt has been made to question my loyalty and to place me in an entirely false light before the citizens of Toronto. I am too loyal a Canadian not to agree with the spirit of the recommendation, but the method employed was absolutely illogical. Mayor Church and those who primed the resolution knew full well that nobody but British subjects can vote at elections in Canada, and by adopting that recommendation we would be asking the Government to disfranchise every naturalized British subject on the voters' list. It was an insult to the intelligence of the business men in the City Council, who know well what has been done to safeguard Canada's interests against alien enemies. But the people Mayor Church would have disfranchised are citizens brought here at great expense to the country, with a view to facilitating its development. Many of them have proved loyal citizens, or they would have been interned. I would clap every man in jail and deport him after war who shows the slightest sign of disloyalty.

"There are hundreds of thousands of men in this country who, though born in enemy countries, have earned Canadian citizenship and hate Kaiserism, even more, if it were possible, than we British do, because they have experienced what it means. We would be practising Kaiserism in its worst forms if we deprived these people of the citizenship we bestowed upon them and dictate to them what conditions they shall live under. That is what our gallant boys are fighting against in Europe today. Why create more racial differences and unnecessary hatreds? The man who shows the slightest sign of disloyalty is immediately interned, and will be properly dealt with after the war.

"I strongly protest against any effort to accuse me of being un-British. The promoters of that recommendation were simply playing an inferior game of petty politics. Mayor Church did not fully comprehend the resolution when he introduced it, as he minimized it in the City Council Chamber when he added the proviso 'unless born here or been in residence here 25 years.'

"As for my alleged adherences to the party that is accused of preaching Austro-Germanism in Canada, I want to state that I have too many good friends in the city who know that I stand four-square as an Imperialist and absolute advocate of a closer unity of Empire. There is no place for me in any party or sect that preaches separatism. I make this statement to correct false im-

pressions that are being created in this city for local political reasons."

Controller Cameron has been a consistent worker for the welfare of Toronto's soldiers. He will not be alone in resenting the type of attack which has been made.