

"Leave the Fads to the Yankees"

The Campaigns for Commission and City Manager Government in Toronto, 1910-1926

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Volume 20, Number 2, October 1991

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1019256ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1019256ar>

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Publisher(s)

Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine

ISSN

0703-0428 (print)

1918-5138 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this article

Petersen, P. (1991). "Leave the Fads to the Yankees": The Campaigns for Commission and City Manager Government in Toronto, 1910-1926. *Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine*, 20(2), 72-84.
<https://doi.org/10.7202/1019256ar>

Article abstract

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The two proposals, commission government and city manager government, had originated with municipal reformers in the United States during the Progressive Era. The main idea behind both plans was to concentrate the executive and legislative authority in one governing unit. Commission and city manager government, however, attracted only a few supporters in the City despite their extreme popularity in the United States. City government in Toronto was not considered as bad as the government in those cities in the United States that had changed to new forms. Moreover, the proposals were American innovations and Toronto politicians were wary of American fads, especially ones like these which were drawn "from the uncertain spheres of political theory."

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Abstract

Does the border between the United States and Canada make a difference? To a political scientist it does for the obvious reason: the border defines two different political entities with different forms of government, different political customs and conventions. Two attempts in the first thirty years of the twentieth century to change the structure of the government of the City of Toronto illustrate the difference the border can make.

The two proposals, commission government and city manager government, had originated with municipal reformers in the United States during the Progressive Era. The main idea behind both plans was to concentrate the executive and legislative authority in one governing unit. Commission and city manager government, however, attracted only a few supporters in the City despite their extreme popularity in the United States. City government in Toronto was not considered as bad as the government in those cities in the United States that had changed to new forms. Moreover, the proposals were American innovations and Toronto politicians were wary of American fads, especially ones like these which were drawn “from the uncertain spheres of political theory.”

Our sharing 4000 miles of border with a large and energetic country may have some disadvantages, but it has at least one advantage: it gives us something to talk about. One question which continually occupies Canadians is the amount of influence the United States has had on their country. The Progressive Era which extended from approximately the 1880s to the 1920s was a period of intense reform in the United States. Much of this reform was directed at cities. Canadians were also occupied with urban reform during the same period, although to a lesser extent, (for one thing, Canada had fewer cities). It seems highly likely, therefore, that there would be a sharing of reform ideas across the border. This paper examines several unsuccessful attempts to import two of the most popular innovations of the Progressive Era to Toronto: commission and city manager government.

The Progressive Era in the United States, and the reform movements in Canada during the same period, were responses to changes engendered by rapid industrialization. City governments, in particular, bore the brunt of the changes for they had to provide basic services to their growing populations and developing industries. Cities were responsible for ensuring a supply of clean water, adequate gas and electricity for heat and light, some form of public transportation, and a healthy environment for their residents. Many city governments were unsuccessful. Some lacked the authority, the money, or the officials with administrative or technical knowledge. Often party politics or corruption, or both, kept them from doing their job.¹

Because city governments could not, or would not, act, organizations sprang up in both countries to campaign for reforms. According to Paul Rutherford, it

was this “collectivist urge” to create organizations “to control a society both fluid and complex” that distinguished this period in history in Canada and the United States.² The reforms these organizations fought for varied considerably. To make sense out of this variety, Rutherford and James Anderson have divided the reformers into two camps: social reformers who fought on moral issues, such as temperance, and institutional reformers who were more interested in changing the way city governments were run. Rutherford and Anderson argue that this distinction is important because the groups often came from different segments of society. Social reformers were generally women, clergymen, and academics, whereas the “typical leaders of campaigns for local government reform ... were leading businessmen, usually members of the boards of trade.”³ By the turn of the century, however, the focus of urban reform was set on changing institutions.⁴ One aspect of this institutional reform was the reform of municipal government structure.

Local businessmen in cities in both countries advocated structural reform to city government and their arguments were the same: let's create a more efficient, i.e. businesslike, government. They hoped that the reforms they promoted would replace the politicians on city councils with businessmen and produce a professional civil service to advise them. According to John Weaver, the “ethos of economy and efficiency” was “the most enduring of reform concepts.”⁵

These reforms, once implemented, tended to benefit the upper middle class in both countries. James Anderson's examination of municipal reform in the Canadian west concludes that the reforms were “anti-democratic” for they reduced the ability of the working classes to participate in government

Résumé

La frontière entre les États-Unis et le Canada change-t-elle quelque chose? Pour un spécialiste en science politique, et pour d'évidentes raisons, la réponse est oui: la frontière sépare deux entités politiques distinctes, avec chacune une forme de gouvernement distinct, des coutumes et des conventions politiques distinctes. Au cours des trente premières années du 20^e siècle, deux tentatives visant à modifier la structure du gouvernement de la ville de Toronto illustrent la différence que peut faire cette frontière.

Les deux propositions, le gouvernement avec une commission et le gouvernement avec un directeur municipal émanaient de réformateurs municipaux américains, et dataient de l'âge du progrès. L'idée était avant tout de réunir le pouvoir exécutif et le pouvoir législatif en une même unité administrative. Cependant, ce mode de gouvernement avec une commission et un directeur municipal ne rallia à Toronto que quelques adeptes, alors qu'il connut aux États-Unis un très grand succès. Le gouvernement municipal de Toronto n'était pas considéré comme étant aussi désastreux que celui des villes américaines qui avaient adopté les nouvelles formules. De plus, ces propositions étaient des innovations américaines, et les politiciens de Toronto éprouvaient une certaine méfiance à l'égard des modes américaines, en particulier, des modes comme celles-ci émanant “des sphères incertaines d'une théorie politique.”

decisions. John Weaver has come to much the same conclusion in examining reforms in the City of Toronto. Municipal government reforms, he notes, were designed to erode the authority of the ward alderman under the guise of reducing inefficiency. Furthermore, he discovered that in the campaigns for municipal ownership of streetcars “the question of property development was central.”⁶

There were exceptions to this, however. The history of the campaign for commission government in St. John, New Brunswick illustrates that working classes could also benefit from the reforms. According to H.V. Nelles and Christopher Armstrong, a campaign for commission government was initiated by the local board of trade to attract industry to the city. Because the vote to adopt the new form of government was by city-wide referendum, it needed the support of the working classes to pass. (The franchise had been extended to this class a few years earlier.) The form of commission government on the ballot, and supported by the board of trade, included clauses which gave ordinary citizens a great deal of control over city government.⁷

St. John was one of two Canadian cities to convert to commission government. In 1913, Lethbridge, Alberta also changed to commission government when its city council was replaced with a commission consisting of three elected commissioners.⁸ It seems that commission government was not very popular in the rest of Canada, however. It was rejected by most of the people appearing before the Royal Commission on Municipal Government in British Columbia in 1912 precisely because “it place(d) too much uncontrolled power in the hands of a few men.”⁹ Nor was it ever adopted for any city in Ontario despite a strenuous campaign for it—in Toronto, at least.

Toronto was certainly not immune to urban problems. These are well documented in Maurice Careless's *Toronto to 1918*, and also in *Forging a Consensus*, a volume of essays produced for the City's sesquicentennial.¹⁰ The description of the continuous and often frustrating attempts by Toronto Council to regulate the private companies responsible for providing services to its residents, for example, is a striking illustration of the difficulties the city faced during this period.¹¹ In comparison to many American cities, however, Toronto was doing well. As Roger Riendeau notes, Toronto gave an “impressive performance in providing for the social and economic welfare of its citizens between 1900 and 1930.”¹²

Without a doubt this performance was due to the City's unique civic culture which was in place by 1884. This civic culture was based on a consensus over “the values of efficiency, order, and stability”,¹³ essentially the same ideas progressive reformers in the United States were to promote several years later. This civic culture produced aldermen who were “tight-fisted” and “utilitarian”. “As a result, city government could scarcely be accused of extravagance and not often of corruption—blatant, anyway.”¹⁴ These values of “efficiency, order, and stability” were reflected in the only major change to Toronto government: the board of control. The board of control was created in 1895 to restrain council spending. It was an initiative of Toronto Council and was the end result of a number of small changes that previous councils had made to the structure of city government over a period of years.¹⁵ Allied with these values was an undercurrent of anti-americanism. This appeared periodically in debates at council in the latter part of the nineteenth century especially during the debates on the structural changes that would lead to the board of control. Labeling a scheme for restructuring govern-

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ment as “Yankee” was enough to condemn it, if for no other reasons than that “the record of Chicago and New York should be a warning to Toronto.”¹⁶ Toronto, it seems, was not fertile ground for the campaigns that were to come in the beginning of the twentieth century for commission and city manager government.

Commission and City Manager Government in the United States

The commission plan for city government was first implemented in 1903 in Galveston, Texas, and for the next twenty years was the most popular form of city government among American municipal reformers. The 1903 city charter for Galveston and the city charter for Des Moines, Iowa, adopted in 1907, provided the models for all subsequent commission charters. These two charters combined all of the executive and legislative authority of the city government in a popularly elected commission. The commission consisted of five commissioners elected by the population at-large to administer specific city departments. Des Moines’ charter placed greater restrictions on the commission’s authority for it included three provisions not in the Galveston charter: the initiative, the referendum, and the recall. The initiative gave the voters the authority to initiate and approve legislation and city charter amendments; the referendum required that certain by-laws of the commission be approved by the voters before taking effect; and the recall allowed voters to remove any person from office before his term expired.

Commission government was attractive to so many cities because it promised to do two things much valued by urban reformers of the progressive era — increase government efficiency and reduce government corruption. The plan’s key to providing efficient and honest government was the unification of executive and legislative author-

ity. This, it was said, would produce an “efficiently concentrated business-like administration” and fix responsibility for all government actions in one governing unit.¹⁷ With the unification of authority, politicians could no longer shift responsibility for their decisions as they had in the past. If the voters were not getting the kind of government they wanted, they now knew whom to blame, and could vote them out of office. It was argued that government under the commission plan was visible and therefore accountable. In addition, the unification of authority meant that governments would need significantly less time to reach a decision. Moreover, the short ballot, which was an integral part of the plan, facilitated non-partisan elections, and this, in turn, meant less party influence at city hall. Advocates of the plan could, and did, promise that their scheme would produce policies that benefited the entire city and not just a political party. As one Minnesota reformer argued, commission government “does away with the evils of boss and gang rule and places the reins of government in the hands of the people.”¹⁸

The majority of those who actively campaigned for commission government were businessmen and local journalists united in the belief that “good city government is based on two things ... efficiency and control by the voters, insuring that business be done for the public interest.”¹⁹ Local politicians, especially those on council who were in danger of losing their seats, formed the bulk of the opposition. For example, Des Moines Council fought long and hard during the charter campaign to convince the City’s voters to reject the new charter. One Des Moines newspaper commented on Council’s opposition: “a corrupt city machine is fighting desperately to save a corrupt city government.”²⁰

For most cities that adopted it, commission government did achieve some of the things promised. It did, for example,

streamline government procedures. However, other aspects of the plan proved disappointing for, despite the shortening of procedures, government under the scheme was no more measurably efficient than government under previous structures. The major defect in the plan was the division of administrative authority among the five commissioners. This produced incoherent policies at best or no policies at all. “It is this division of municipal government into five independent kingdoms that destroys all possibility of intelligent coordination of city government and makes it a chaotic, wasteful, inefficient jumble.”²¹ Moreover, cities governed by the plan were not attracting permanent, professional administrators contrary to what the plan promised. The reason for this was that the men responsible for administering the departments, the commissioners, were elected, not appointed to office.

To overcome these difficulties, Richard Childs, President of the National Short Ballot Association and one of the commission plan’s most ardent supporters, created the city manager plan in 1911. Childs’ solution was simple: let the commission appoint a manager and make him responsible for running the city administration. The commission would still be a small body elected at-large but its members would not be elected to administer specific departments. As Childs stated, “to rid us of the amateur and transient executive and to substitute ... experienced experts in municipal administration is enough in itself to justify the coming of the city manager plan.”²² As it was a variant of commission government, the city manager plan could claim all of the advantages credited to its predecessor. It, too, unified executive and legislative authority in one small body and had a short ballot. The only structural difference between the two plans was the appointed city manager, and for this reason the new plan could promise

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something the old plan could not: a professional and coordinated city administration.

The first large city in the United States to adopt city manager government was Dayton, Ohio, in 1914, and it became the model for other cities considering the change. Dayton's problems, and the methods by which it solved them, were fairly typical of most of the cities that switched to the new plan. Citizen dissatisfaction with Dayton's turn-of-the-century government grew out of that government's inefficiency and partisan politics rather than corruption. Before 1914 Dayton had had a weak mayor system of government and partisan elections; this meant that the City's entire legislative body and four of its major executive officials, the mayor, solicitor, treasurer, and auditor, were elected, and elected primarily because of their party affiliations rather than their abilities to govern. The “frequent party strife within the council or between the council and the executive”²³ that occurred because of this would have made it extremely difficult for Dayton's government to manage under ordinary circumstances, but the circumstances just before the installation of city manager government were not ordinary.

Several years before the change Dayton's government had been at the mercy of two contradictory forces that had undermined the City's financial structure. Demands on the City's funds had risen sharply by late 1909 owing to some major annexations. Then, early in 1910, new restrictions were placed on the City's major source of revenue by the enactment of a state law limiting the amount by which the City could increase its tax rate each year. The City began to expand its debt to cover its operating expenses, and, when it could borrow no more, it was forced to reduce services. Citizen outrage at “government by deficit”²⁴ precipitated the change in government structure in 1914.

After its adoption in Dayton, the popularity of the plan soared. It was endorsed in 1915 by the National Municipal League and included in its model city charter; the League has continued to support the plan ever since as the “most democratic and efficient form of municipal government.”²⁵ For the League and the many cities that have adopted it, the plan was a way of achieving control over what had become a very complicated and uncoordinated city administrative structure, and a way of reducing the influence of the political parties in city hall. Despite some problems with the scheme, it still is “the most popular type of government for all United States cities of over 10,000 population.”²⁶

The Campaign for Commission Government in Toronto

Most Torontonians working or interested in municipal government became aware of commission government early in the second decade of the twentieth century. The *Toronto World* began the campaign for it in January 1910,²⁷ and fought hard to keep interest in the plan alive in the City for the next six months.

It is clear throughout the *World's* campaign for commission government that the paper was more interested in promoting the growth of the City than promoting an American form of government. Editorials in the paper continually demanded the provision of roads, water, sewage treatment, street lighting, and, above all, a cheap and co-ordinated system of public transportation to the City and the undeveloped territory surrounding it. It was imperative, the *World* argued, for Toronto Council to act immediately to assume all responsibility for public transportation, (the majority of which was still owned by private companies), to annex territory to the north and east, and to build the Bloor Street viaduct across the Don Valley. “Vote for the Viaduct,” the paper

declared, “and help develop the city.”²⁸ Much of the *World's* enthusiasm for the growth of the City derived, no doubt, from the fact that its owner and editor, William F. MacLean, owned over 900 acres of land just east of the Don River. This land, the *Globe* noted in an editorial in November 1909, “would be greatly appreciated in value by the construction” of these public works. “Can't William Wait?”²⁹

According to the *World* Toronto Council was either unwilling or unable to decide upon the construction of the major public works which were necessary to the growth of the City. The paper complained bitterly of the “muddiness of intellect at the city hall”³⁰ which kept Council just “meddling and muddling” with the City's problems.³¹ The *World* had concluded that Toronto was being governed “after the style of an overgrown village.”³² Even worse, the City's executive committee, the Board of Control, was unwilling to recommend the payment of salaries sufficient to attract experts into the City's civil service. As the *World* sarcastically remarked upon the resignation of the City's medical officer of health, now that the Board of Control had announced “its determination not to pay a first-class man” to be medical officer, “the second-class men are . . . welcome to apply for the position.”³³ With no first-class civil servants, government would remain ineffective and inefficient. In the first six months of 1910 the *World* repeatedly argued that Toronto's government was incapable of appreciating the “magnitude of the problems involved in the rapid growth of the city” and if Council could not be convinced to act, “then the only hope for Toronto [was] to get a commission to govern it.”³⁴

The *World* was attracted to a commission form of government because it was “exactly in accord with the plainest principles of good business . . .”³⁵ The paper

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argued that the plan, in replacing the politicians on Council with experts, would improve government efficiency and reduce taxes for “you can get business administration with commissioners, you cannot with aldermen.”³⁶ The *World*, convinced of the plan’s success in the U.S. cities, often relied on this experience to prove that “good government, efficient government, economic government is achievable.”³⁷ Galveston, where “the profession of politics went out of existence ... and the city government has been excellent,” Des Moines, Colorado Springs, and Sioux Falls were all cited in evidence.³⁸

The *World* fought hard to mobilize support for the commission plan, through its editorials and articles and by encouraging direct public debate on the issue. When the Guild of Civic Art, a group of Toronto businessmen promoting physical improvements, stated that it liked the plan, the *World* in one editorial implored the association to make its support public.³⁹ In another editorial the paper asked the Board of Trade to prepare a report on commission government.⁴⁰ In April 1910 the paper conducted a poll of some influential Torontonians to show that it was not alone in advocating the scheme.⁴¹ In June 1910, it invited the City’s young lawyers to draft commission charters which the paper would print for public discussions. It further invited the public to debate the merits of the plan in the paper’s “Letters to the Editor” column.⁴²

There can be little doubt about the intensity of the *World*’s campaign. Between the end of January 1910 and the beginning of June, the paper carried no fewer than twenty-four editorials and at least four major front-page articles attacking council and defending the commission government. The June 1 edition exemplifies the kind of coverage the *World* was prepared to devote to it. On that day the paper carried a full double column story

on its front page describing the City’s problems and ended it with the question: “Do you think anyone but a high-class commission, highly paid, is competent to deal with these problems?” On the editorial page of the same issue the paper persisted in its pursuit of reader support: “government by commission continues to make good wherever it is tried.”⁴³

Despite the *World*’s intense prodding, it failed to generate much enthusiasm for the scheme. The *World* was never joined in its crusade by any of the remaining five major newspapers in the city, even though four out of the five had little praise for the present Council. The *Globe* argued that, owing to the annual elections, Toronto Council could not provide the continuity in policy necessary to govern a large city effectively.⁴⁴ The *News* complained that Toronto’s government was “feeble”; strong government was needed to make the City a “pleasant and wholesome place for rich and poor alike.”⁴⁵ The *Mail and Empire* was dissatisfied with Council’s “incapacity ... to do anything without great waste of time and money,”⁴⁶ and the *Telegram* did not like the way politicians interfered with the City’s administration.⁴⁷ The *Star* was the only paper to defend the actions of Toronto Council, pointing out that the problems Council faced “were the penalties of rapid growth” and occurred in all large cities “no matter under what form their government may be administered.”⁴⁸

None of the newspapers were willing to support commission government, for as the *Globe* remarked:

A system or method venerable by age, even if worn, frayed, weatherbeaten, and moss-grown, is more acceptable to the good and wise of this municipality both electors and elected, than any vaunted innovation from the uncertain spheres of political theory.⁴⁹

A few years later, the *Star* declared open warfare on the idea. The paper called it a “partial return to absolutism,” and argued that the City was better off with the mistakes the people made in “managing their own affairs” because these mistakes were “nothing compared to those deliberately designed injustices inflicted on the masses ... when the masses had no voice in government.”⁵⁰

Nor did commission government receive any formal support from Toronto’s business community. The Toronto Board of Trade, for example, never endorsed the plan. Board of Trade members who attended a special luncheon in 1912 to discuss various forms of city government agreed that they did not want commission government in Toronto. “The present system is a very efficient one,” they noted, “and plenty good enough.”⁵¹

We will never know how many of Toronto’s voters would have supported the plan, because the question of commission government never appeared on any election ballot. However, it is reasonable to assume that there was no strong public support for it. If there had been, this support should have shown itself in petitions to City Council or the provincial Legislature, or as an issue during the municipal elections. There is no record in the City Council minutes or the journals of the provincial Legislature of citizens asking for commission government for Toronto, and no discussion of the plan in the newspapers during any of the municipal elections throughout the decade. Even the *World* which fought hardest for commission government, never mentioned it, or any other plan for re-organizing Toronto government for that matter, in its election editorials or reports. The fact that the papers were silent on the issue can only mean that the candidates were silent on it and they ignored it, no doubt, because commission government was just not important to the voters.

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Commission government was never advocated by Toronto Council, although it was occasionally promoted by individual aldermen. The most persistent of these was Norman Heyd, a lawyer first elected to City Council in 1910. In April 1910 Heyd convinced Toronto Council to appoint a special committee to do three things: to investigate commission government in the United States, to examine his own draft for commission government for Toronto, and finally, to recommend to Council whether the question of commission government for the City should be placed in the ballot in the next municipal election.⁵² The special committee never reported to Council on any of the directives given it because Heyd, for some unrecorded reason, “shelved the matter later on in the year.”⁵³

In proposing the committee, Heyd had argued that there were a number of problems confronting city government that could be solved with a new government structure. City policy lacked continuity: Torontonians had no control over the civic department heads, and Toronto politicians interfered in the appointment of city officials.⁵⁴ Heyd's solution was to “concentrate in the hands of a few men the whole executive and administrative duties.”⁵⁵ In its most important points Heyd's proposal was the same as the Galveston charter, which Heyd liked because it had “been so successful ...”⁵⁶ The “commission or council,” as Heyd termed it, was to consist of five members elected at large for two-year terms and exercising all executive and legislative authority.⁵⁷ There were two features in Heyd's plan not in the Galveston charter. First, one of the commissioners was elected directly as mayor to serve as chairman of the commission and, second, the commission and not the voters decided the administrative responsibilities of each commissioner.

Toronto Council had voted unanimously in favour of setting up Heyd's committee, yet this unanimous vote cannot be construed as unanimous support for commission government. Newspaper reports of the debates on the motion at City council's Legislation and Reception Committee and at City Council make it clear that the City's politicians were not at all interested in adopting the plan although they were willing to study it; for, as Alderman Phelan noted, “there are principles (in the plan) which may be applied to the city government ...”⁵⁸ Furthermore, if Toronto Council had been sincerely interested in the scheme, it would not have allowed Heyd to defer the work of the committee indefinitely, as he did a few months later.

Later councils were even less receptive to the scheme. Twice in 1914 Alderman Sam McBride moved that the question “are you in favour of a commission for the administration of the affairs of the City of Toronto?” be placed on the ballot.⁵⁹ Both times his motions lost. Alderman Sam Ryding also tried to have the question of commission government submitted to the voters in 1916, 1918, and again in 1919, but, he, too, failed in each attempt.⁶⁰ Only once did the papers mention the motions by McBride and Ryding and then it was only to note that the topic of commission government was “time-worn” and “found little favour among the aldermen.”⁶¹

One would not have expected any Toronto Council to have committed itself wholeheartedly to commission government. To have accepted the plan was to abolish Council and drastically reduce the number of elected offices in city government. The commission plan called for only five elected officials. Toronto's Council-Board of Control system had twenty-five, and it is difficult to imagine twenty politicians willingly voting themselves out of office. None of the members of Council, however, offered this as a reason for

opposing the change, (which is understandable) although they did give a variety of others. One alderman said it would be only an “aggravated Board of Control,” another argued that it would not help government efficiency to get rid of the aldermen, and a third scorned it as a “yankee fad.”⁶² Amidst all of these comments of disapproval, several members of council did advance two compelling arguments against the plan, and these arguments go a long way to explain why there was so little interest in commission government in Toronto. The first argument was theoretical: commission government did not fit Toronto's British political heritage. The second argument was practical: Toronto did not need it.

The theoretical argument was simple and straightforward. According to Toronto politicians, commission government was objectionable because it violated the British constitutional principles of representative and responsible government. The clearest and most detailed explanation of how it did this was given by Controller Francis S. Spence and his argument fairly accurately represents the less well articulated opinions of other council members. According to Spence's interpretation of British constitutional principles, city government activity can be divided into two major functions, legislative and executive, to be performed by two different, but not completely separate bodies. City government was representative only if the legislative body was large: “the larger the body you have ... to make a law ... the more representative will (the laws) be of the general opinion of the whole community.”⁶³ City government was responsible only if the legislative body controlled the executive. “While it is wise to discriminate between the functions of the legislator and the administrator,” Spence argued, “we have always conceded that the legislative body should have control of the body charged with the administration of the laws.”⁶⁴ This control was best obtained with the “British plan, by which the respon-

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sible head of an executive department sits in the legislature and cannot sidetrack his responsibility ...”⁶⁵ Commission government was unrepresentative because its legislative body was small; it was irresponsible because it unified executive and legislative authority, and therefore had no separate legislature to control the executive. As Alderman S. Morley Wickett exclaimed, those who supported commission government for Toronto might “as well say: Abolish the provincial Legislature and let the cabinet run the province.”⁶⁶

The practical argument was equally straightforward. Commission government had been adopted by American cities to resolve specific problems. As these problems did not exist in Toronto, a change to the commission form of government was not necessary. In essence this was the argument made by Controller Jesse McCarthy in November 1912 during a debate between members of Toronto Council and students from the University of Toronto, sponsored by the University’s Literary and Scientific Society. McCarthy reminded his audience that, unlike politics in American cities, politics in Toronto were not corrupt nor were they unduly influenced by political parties. Moreover, the municipal ballot in Toronto was not as long or as confusing as the election ballots in American cities. According to McCarthy, proposing commission government for the city was “akin to calling in a physician for a man who is not ill.”⁶⁷ Other members of city council sided with McCarthy; they, too, argued that the city was not poorly governed. Whatever problems city council had had in governing the city, they attributed to the unexpectedly tremendous growth of Toronto over the preceding decade. “Toronto never dreamed of such development,” the mayor argued, “and the Council was not prepared for it.”⁶⁸

Both arguments, the theoretical and the practical, were formidable because there

was a great deal of truth to them. The truth of the theoretical argument was implicit in the argument itself. By British standards, commission government could not be considered either representative or responsible. The truth of the practical argument could be found in the performance of Toronto government.

In the first instance, there was no serious corruption in city government in Toronto during the years in which commission government was being promoted. If there had been, it seems reasonable to assume that knowledge of it would have come to the surface in at least one of two places: either during municipal election campaigns or in the three formal investigations into charges made against city government during this period. Corruption was not mentioned in the December 1908, 1909, or 1910 election campaigns; the major issues in each of these campaigns were civic economy and the expansion of the city’s public works.

Some corruption was uncovered by three investigations made between 1908 and 1920: the Parks Department Investigation in 1908, The Works Department Investigation in 1911, and the Fire Department Investigation in 1915. The corruption discovered, however, was minor and involved no members of Toronto Council. The investigation into the Parks Department revealed that the head of the department had been using his employees to do his gardening during their work hours. “The work of planting, attending to, and gathering in was paid for by the city, and this was, of later years,” the report noted caustically, “somewhat considerable.”⁶⁹ A similar form of corruption was uncovered by the investigation into the Works Department. It found that one Works Department employee had hired another Works Department employee to build his house, “receiving wages from the city while he was so employed.”⁷⁰ Furthermore, he was even so bold as to

use “some of the city’s nails and paint in connection with the erection of his house.” The charge of using City property for personal use was also laid against the city’s deputy fire chief in 1915, but the county court judge in charge of that investigation found no evidence to support it.⁷¹ In all, such corruption as could be found in Toronto was in no way comparable to what was going on in cities in the United States. As one example of that corruption the *World* reported in 1908 that 60 of Pittsburgh’s councilmen had been charged with accepting a total of \$45,000 in bribes, and this “for the passage of one ordinance.”⁷²

Another reason American cities had changed to commission government was to shorten the ballot, but the municipal ballot in Toronto was already short. Torontonians elected eight people to municipal office each year; a mayor and four controllers elected at large, and three aldermen per ward. This was three more than would have appeared on the ballot in a commission form of government; still, it was substantially less than the 23 officials that Buffalo’s citizens, for example, had to elect before they changed to a commission government.⁷³

Moreover, political parties did not influence city politics in the way they influenced city politics in many of the U.S. cities. Elections in Toronto were technically non-partisan and the nomination procedures were such that anyone interested in running for office, and who met the property qualifications, could do so. A potential candidate did not need to be a member of a political party to be nominated; his name was placed in nomination by two other electors at the public nomination meeting held at the start of each campaign. Although most candidates were known to be affiliated with a particular party, political parties could not claim responsibility for any victory as

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the candidates did not run on a party label. In Toronto, therefore, it was much easier for individuals without obligations to political parties to be elected to municipal office.

The lack of intense party competition in city politics in Toronto meant that appointments to the civil service were not used extensively as party patronage, and thus city officials did not change with a change in membership on council. This allowed for the development of a career civil service in city administration. Evidence of this can be seen in the fact that the men who served as heads of the city's four most important departments, City Clerk's, Treasury, Assessment, and Engineer's, had worked in their respective departments for many years before their final promotion. Furthermore, they remained department heads for a number of years thereafter. (Table 1) This produced at least some continuity and stability in civic government. In addition, the calibre of the politicians of Toronto Council was high when judged by the standards of commission government supporters in the United States. Two-thirds of the 1910 council either owned or managed businesses in the city, three were lawyers, and one was a journalist. (Table 2)

There is no doubt, however, that the strongest and most persuasive piece of evidence against the need for commission government in Toronto was the city's good financial condition. Between the years 1908 and 1912 there had been no sharp increases in the city's annual expenditures or debt, and the city's tax rate had either remained stable or, in some years, declined. According to the mayor's inaugural address in 1910, “the financial position of the Corporation was never better than at the present time, and the credit of the city stands high in the money markets of the world.”⁷⁴ (Table 3).

**Table 1:
Service Records of the Men who Headed the City's Four Major Departments During the Period 1908–1912**

	City Clerk:	William Littlejohn
Years of Service:	Assistant Clerk:	1883–1900
	City Clerk:	1901–1927
	City Treasurer:	Richard Coady
Years of Service:	Assistant Treasurer:	1878–1888
	Treasurer:	1889–1914
	City Assessor:	James Foreman
Years of Service:	Assessment Clerk:	1892–1904
	Chief Assessor:	1905–1928
	City Engineer:	C.H. Rust
Years of Service:	Deputy Engineer:	1892–1897
	Chief Engineer:	1898–1912

From a list compiled by the Toronto Archives.

The theoretical and practical arguments against commission government were also formidable because of the respectability they gained from the men who used them. Two of the plan's most outspoken critics, Samuel Morley Wickett and Francis S. Spence, were recognized as experts in city government. Wickett taught political science at the University of Toronto and had edited a book on local government in Canada.⁷⁵ Spence, a journalist, had studied commission government in the United States and was often asked to speak on it.⁷⁶ Wickett and Spence were also practising politicians with a sincere concern for honest and efficient government. The *World* had noted that Spence's election victory in 1910 was “apparently the result of a feeling that a policy of economy [was] needed.”⁷⁷ Wickett, as a member of council in 1915, had written a report for council describing the ways in which the use of statistics and new accounting

methods could improve city administration.⁷⁸

Even more damaging to the *World's* campaign for commission government in Toronto was the fact that many of those who strongly opposed it would have become more powerful had the plan been adopted. It is reasonable to assume that if the plan had been implemented in Toronto, the five people who would have been elected commissioners would have been the mayor and four controllers as they were the only members of council to have developed a city-wide constituency; yet, often it was the mayor and controllers who spoke most ardently against the plan.⁷⁹ Given all of this evidence, it would have been difficult for Torontonians to have dismissed the opposition to commission government as selfish or frivolous; the arguments had to be taken seriously.

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**Table 2:
Toronto Council – 1910: By Occupation**

Mayor:	G.R. Geary	barrister, K.C.
Board of Control:	F.S. Spence Thomas Church John H. Ward Thomas Foster	journalist, temperance leader barrister merchant gentleman
Aldermen:		
Ward 1	Thomas Phelan Daniel Chisholm Z. Holton	barrister merchant manufacturer
Ward 2	John O'Neill, Jr. Henry A. Rowland William Hambly	manufacturer druggist financier, Director of the Eastern and Western Land Corporation
Ward 3	C.A. Maguire Sam McBride Norman Heyd	insurance agent merchant barrister
Ward 4	George Weston George McMurrich Albert Welch	bread manufacturer insurance agent merchant
Ward 5	John Dunn Joseph May Robert H. Graham	cattle exporter contractor merchant
Ward 6	Jesse O. McCarthy James McCausland David Spence	Provincial manager, Great Western Life Assurance broker with Smiley, Stanley and McCausland wholesale fruit merchant
Ward 7	A.J. Anderson William A. Baird	not available not available

Compiled from the *Toronto World*, December 24, 1910 and January 3, 1910.

**Table 3:
Annual Expenditure, Net Debt, Annual Tax Rate for Toronto: 1908–1912**

	Annual Expenditures	Net Debt	Annual Tax Rate (in mills)
1908	\$ 10 596 942.	\$ 23 294 153.	18.50
1909	12 779 378.	26 649 397.	18.50
1910	16 054 351.	28 497 680.	17.50
1911	21 914 796.	33 203 268.	18.00
1912	24 879 479.	33 074 242.	18.50

Compiled from Reports of the Finance Commissioner and Assessment Commissioner, City of Toronto.

The Campaign for the City Manager Plan in Toronto

The city manager plan had only two strong supporters in Toronto: the Bureau of Municipal Research and one alderman, Frederick Baker. The Bureau was the first to acquaint the city with the scheme, in 1924, and it provided the general public with most of the information on it. There was even less interest in city manager government in Toronto then there had been in commission government, and the newspaper coverage on it was both scant and non-committal. After several fruitless years of promoting the plan, the Bureau eventually dropped it in favour of another scheme for re-organizing the city's government. Baker, no more successful than the BMR, was unable to interest council in the plan, and when he retired from office in the early 1930s the idea was all but forgotten.

The Civic Survey Committee, a small group of Toronto businessmen, founded the Toronto's Bureau of Municipal Research in 1913. The purpose of the Bureau was to promote better city government, and it did this predominantly through the publication of pamphlets describing the changes the Bureau felt essential to improve Toronto government. During the 1920s the Bureau used these pamphlets to publicize the city manager plan. Although the BMR continually pointed out that much of the material was printed to "give information" and "not as a brief for or against the [city manager] form of the Municipal Government," it is obvious from earlier bulletins just where the Bureau stood on this issue.

"Does anyone really believe for a moment that Toronto would not be more democratically, efficiently, and economically governed if it had a city council of 5, 7, or 8; if its executive departments were reduced from fifteen to ten; and if its chief operating depart-

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ments were co-ordinated under one manager?”⁸⁰

The Bureau did not cite corruption as a problem in Toronto government, nor did it believe Toronto Council to be grossly inefficient. In fact, in March 1924 the Bureau had praised the council for reducing, in one year, the total taxation per capita from \$48.88 to \$48.72.⁷⁰ The Bureau wanted city manager government for Toronto because it believed that this “record could be improved on in future years.”⁸¹ One method of doing this was to simplify the government’s organization, for as the Bureau argued, “the fewer the parts of the machine, the more apt it is to be efficient.”⁸²

There is no doubt that the Bureau chose to promote this particular plan because it had been so successful in the United States. The Bureau had its origins in the United States, and was well aware of improvements to government emanating from American cities. Furthermore, it is almost certain that the Bureau’s director, Horace Brittain, who was responsible for the Bureau’s early policies, had had some personal experience with the city manager plan. Brittain had attended Clark University in Massachusetts, and later taught school in that State. He also conducted a survey of rural schools for the State of Ohio just before becoming the Bureau’s director in 1914;⁸³ this meant that Brittain was in Ohio during the campaign for city manager government in Dayton.

The Bureau eventually lost interest in the plan; the last bulletin promoting city manager government was released in 1926. However, the Bureau did continue to promote the reorganization of Toronto government. In September 1929 the Bureau produced three white papers under the title of “Business is Business”⁸⁴ and in the third paper gave “an outline of a possible suggested organization for the City

of Toronto which would simplify both the policy-forming and policy-carrying-out machinery of the City.”⁸⁶ This scheme contained one of the basic characteristics of the city manager plan and that was a council of four aldermen and a mayor all elected at-large; but it had omitted the city manager. In the Bureau’s new outline, the manager’s functions were shared by an advisory administrative board, made up of the ten department heads, and an executive and finance committee, composed of the mayor and two aldermen.

Alderman Frederick Baker may have been committed somewhat longer to the plan than the Bureau, but he was equally unsuccessful in getting it adopted. Between 1925 and 1929 Baker made six attempts to get council to act on the city manager scheme. In 1925 and again in 1927, he moved to have council include the question: “Are you in favour of the council-manager form of government for this city?” on the election ballot; and four times, in four separate years, he moved to have council set up a special committee to examine the plan.⁸⁷

Baker’s reasons for proposing the scheme did not differ from the reasons advanced by others who had supported it elsewhere; he, too, believed that city manager government would bring better administration. “This system ...”, Baker argued, “permits permanent administrators, ensures team work, and abandons attempts to choose administration by election.” Baker also argued that the plan would strengthen the voice of the civil service in the formulation of government policy; an area in which they had been notably weak. “An official is in this position — a committee declares the thing, the Board maybe another, then it comes to Council. The work of our expert commissioners is all undone. His opinion should come first.”⁸⁸

Council responded only once to Baker’s motions and that was in 1926 when it established a special committee to study, not the city manager plan as Baker had requested, but just an “improved form” of government for the city. The recommendations this committee eventually made to council were minor and suggested no structural change to the city’s government.⁸⁹

The members of council who opposed city manager government criticized it for essentially the same reasons used against commission government: it was not necessary; it was not British. In November 1925, the Board of Control debated at length Baker’s motion to place the question of city manager government for the city on the ballot, and both of these points were raised during that debate. The controllers argued that the plan was not needed because Toronto’s government was already working efficiently. For example, “our purchasing [is] done very economically.” A change in government structure like this was also not needed because the city’s government was not corrupt. “When the system has been changed it has been on account of some scandal in the council. Fortunately there has never been any dishonesty in the council of the city.” In short, the controllers doubted very much that the plan could improve an already well-governed city. “Are any of the cities who have adopted this better off than Toronto?” Even more to the plan’s discredit was the fact that it was “contrary to English procedure,” although the controllers did not elaborate on this. In the end the Board dismissed the plan as a “frill” and a “yankee fad” and decided to “go along on the old British style ... and leave the fads to the Yankees.”⁹⁰

Like the criticisms levelled at commission government, these two arguments were formidable because there was a good deal of truth to them. From council’s point

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of view all the practical advantages that the city manager plan had inherited from commission government were no more necessary in Toronto in the 1920s than they had been in the 1910s. There was still no major corruption in Toronto government; city elections were still non-partisan and the ballot short. The city's financial position during the 1920s was excellent. There had been no significant increase in the city's annual expenditures, annual debt, or annual tax rate. (Table 4) The city's banking practices were praised because "the profits that others got before [were] now made available to the citizens directly and indirectly."⁹¹ It is even likely that Toronto Council considered the addition of a city manager to the administrative staff superfluous as it now had two excellent administrators heading two of the city's major departments: R.C. Harris, hired in 1912 to run the Works Department, and George Ross, hired in 1921 as Finance Commissioner. Harris was "largely responsible for many of the public works" of the 1920s and "brought to this task an integrity of purpose and skill in the handling of difficult situations."⁹² Ross was known as an "outstanding financier," and had been credited with "many reforms that [had] placed the city in an enviable position."⁹³

Furthermore, council knew that the plan was American for it had received copies of

the Bureau of Municipal Research White Paper that outlined the history of the scheme. Baker tried to deny the plan's American origins and give it British ancestors: "This is not a United States fad ... the idea came from Lord Bryce, an English radical;" but he was not believed. As Controller Gibbons pointed out to him, "if this originated in England, why don't they adopt it there?"⁹⁴ Any council that had a strong desire to preserve its British traditions would have rejected the plan on this point alone.

There was almost no interest shown in the plan outside of Baker and the BMR. City Council received no petitions either from interest groups or individual citizens requesting city manager government. In general, the city's newspapers were also indifferent to the scheme, devoting to it only a few minor articles and two editorials, neither of which suggested the plan be adopted.⁹⁵ Furthermore, Baker did not use his proposal as part of his election campaign. If he had believed that there was substantial public support for the city manager plan it seems probable that he would have tried to mobilize it at election time. The silence on the issue in the papers, council minutes, and election campaigns suggests quite strongly that Torontonians were as indifferent to the city manager plan as they had been to the commission plan.

Conclusion

Two of the most popular innovations of the progressive era in the United States involved municipal government structure: commission government and city manager government. There were two attempts in Toronto between 1910 and 1930 to introduce commission and later city manager government in the city: both were rejected with little fuss. The latter structure, the most popular city government structure in the United States today, was not even seriously considered. For the most part Torontonians were content with the work of their city government. Yet, even if they had been sufficiently dissatisfied to demand it be restructured, it is doubtful that either plan would have been acceptable. The plans were American innovations; Torontonians preferred to "go along on the old British style ... and leave the fads to the Yankees."

Notes

1. A great deal has been written on this period. For American cities an excellent, although short, annotated bibliography can be found in Peter R. Gluck and Richard J. Meister. *Cities in Transition*. (New York: New Viewpoints, 1979), pp. 221-25. For Canadian cities: John C. Weaver. *Shaping the Canadian City: Essays on Urban Politics and Policy, 1890-1920*. (Toronto: Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 1975); Paul Rutherford. "Tomorrow's Metropolis: the Urban Reform Movement in Canada, 1880-1920" in *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban and Social History*, Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, editors. (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1984), pp. 435-455; John Weaver. "Tomorrow's Metropolis" Revisited: A Critical Assessment of Urban Reform in Canada, 1890-1929", in *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban and Social History*, pp. 456-477.
2. Rutherford, op. cit., p.447.
3. Rutherford, op. cit.; James Anderson. "The Municipal Government Reform Movement in Western Canada, 1880-1920", in *The Usable Urban Past*, editors Alan F. J. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter. (Toronto: Carleton Library, MacMillan, 1979), pp.73-112.

Table 4:
Annual Expenditure, Net Debt, Annual Tax Rate for Toronto: 1923-1927

	Annual Expenditures	Net Debt	Annual Tax Rate (in mills)
1923	\$ 23 853 158.	\$ 52 112 400.	30.80
1924	30 072 881.	52 793 469.	30.00
1925	30 361 964.	51 417 742.	29.85
1926	30 361 983.	53 844 713.	29.60
1927	30 311 961.	56 476 211.	31.80

Compiled from Reports of the Finance Commissioner and Assessment Commissioner, City of Toronto.

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4. Weaver. "The Modern City Realized: Toronto Civic Affairs, 1880-1915", in *The Usable Urban Past*, pp. 35-72.
5. Weaver, *Ibid.*, p. 67.
6. Anderson, op. cit.; Weaver, *The Canadian City*, op. cit., p. 461.
7. H.V. Nelles and Christopher Armstrong. "The Great Fight for Clean Government", *Urban History Review*, No. 2-76, pp. 50-66.
8. Anderson, op. cit.
9. Nelles and Armstrong, "The Great Fight for Clean Government", op. cit., p. 57. Nelles and Armstrong are quoting here from the Report of the Royal Commission on Municipal Government, British Columbia, Victoria, 1913, pp. L5-7.
10. J. M. S. Careless. *Toronto to 1918*. (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1985); Christopher Armstrong & H.V. Nelles. *The Revenge of the Methodist Bicycle Company*. (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates Limited, 1977); Roger Riendeau. "Serving the Modern City 1900-30", in *Forging A Consensus*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), pp. 157-80.
11. Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles. "The Rise of Civic Populism in Toronto 1870-1920", in *Forging a Consensus*, op. cit., pp. 192-237.
12. Roger Riendeau, op. cit., p. 157.
13. Victor Russell, *Forging a Consensus*, op. cit., p. 5.
14. J.M.S. Careless, "The First Hurrah", in *Forging a Consensus*, op. cit., p. 147.
15. Patricia Petersen. "The Evolution of the Board of Control", in *Forging a Consensus*, op. cit., pp. 181-91. See also Patricia Petersen. *The Evolution of the Executive in City Government in Toronto, 1834-1984*. Ph.D. Thesis for the Department of Political Science, University of Toronto, 1985.
16. *Toronto Globe*, February 2, 1880.
17. Bradley Rice. *Progressive Cities*. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), p. 46.
18. Rice, op. cit., p. 58.
19. Buffalo reformer Melvin Porter in an address to the National Municipal League's Annual Good City Government Conference held in Springfield, Massachusetts, 1917. Melvin Porter, "The Buffalo Charter", *National Municipal Review*, 1917, p. 80.
20. Rice, op. cit., p. 40.
21. Des Moines Tribune quoted in *The Story of the Council-Manager Plan*. (New York: National Municipal League, 1962.)
22. Harold Stone, Don Price, and Kathryn Stone. *City Manager Government in the United States: A Review After Twenty-five Years*. (Public Administration Service, Chicago, Illinois, 1940), for most of the information on the city manager plan. The quote is on page 17.
23. Chester E. Rightor. *City Manager Plan in Dayton*. (New York: MacMillan Company, 1919), for most of the information on Dayton. The quote is on page 6.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
25. From the front page of *The Story of the Council-Manager Plan*. (New York: National Municipal League, 1962).
26. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
27. *Toronto World*, January 24, 1910. The *World* was founded in 1880 by William F. MacLean, Archibald Blue, and Albert Horton. MacLean was the proprietor and editor for much of the paper's life. Besides being a journalist, MacLean was a politician serving as a Conservative and later Independent Member of Parliament from 1892 to 1912. He was also a founding member of the Public Ownership League. The Parliamentary Guide for 1912 describes him as a "keen debater, a hard fighter, and a man prominent in every reform." MacLean often used the *World* to promote his many causes. MacLean left as editor in the late 1910s and the *World* was eventually sold to the *Mail and Empire* in 1921. Paul Rutherford has described The *World* as a "people's paper ... less partisan, more sensationalist, more chauvinist, and much cruder than the regular party journals." Rutherford, op. cit. Many of the *World's* biggest battles were waged against greedy capitalists who controlled utility companies in Toronto, as its editorial cartoons well illustrate. See especially the article by Nelles and Armstrong in *Forging a Consensus*.
28. *Ibid.*, December 12, 1910.
29. *Toronto Globe*, November 23, 1909.
30. *Toronto World*, March 22, 1910.
31. *Ibid.*, April 4, 1910.
32. *Ibid.*, February 28, 1910.
33. *Ibid.*, April 27, 1910.
34. *Ibid.*, February 21, 1910.
35. *Ibid.*, April 6, 1910.
36. *Ibid.*, March 8, 1910.
37. *Ibid.*, April 6, 1910.
38. *Ibid.*, January 24, 1910.
39. *Ibid.*, February 28, 1910.
40. *Ibid.*, March 16, 1910.
41. According to the *World*, commission government was supported by a second vice-president of Toronto's Board of Trade, a vice-president of the district Labour Council, one member of the Provincial Legislature, and a public inspector. *Ibid.*, April 7, 1910.
42. *Ibid.*, June 2, 1910.
43. *Ibid.*, June 1, 1910.
44. *Toronto Globe*, June 1, 1910.
45. *Toronto Daily News*, June 3, 1910.
46. *Toronto Mail and Empire*, June 3, 1910.
47. *Toronto Telegram*, June 3, 1910.
48. *Toronto Star*, June 6, 1910.
49. *Toronto Globe*, April 30, 1910.
50. *Toronto Star*, August 31, 1912.
51. *Toronto World*, February 29, 1912.
52. *Toronto Council Minutes 1910*, index # 383, 401, 402; and *Toronto Mail and Empire*, June 7, 1910.
53. *Toronto World*, January 3, 1911.
54. *Ibid.*, May 24, 1910.
55. *Ibid.*, May 31, 1910.
56. *Toronto Daily News*, May 31, 1910.
57. *Toronto World*, April 26, 1910.
58. *Toronto Mail and Empire*, May 31, 1910; *Toronto Daily News*, May 31, 1910; *Toronto World*, June 7, 1910; the quote is from the *Toronto Telegram*, May 31, 1910.
59. *Toronto Council Minutes 1914*, index # 1130, 1177.
60. *Toronto Council Minutes 1916*, index # 425; *Toronto Council Minutes 1918*, index # 88, 154, 509, 551, 552; *Toronto Council Minutes 1919*, November 3, 1919.
61. *Toronto Telegram*, December 3, 1918.
62. *Toronto World*, May 24, 1910.

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63. Francis S. Spence, "Municipal Government by Commission", *Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Ontario Municipal Association*, August 28 & 29, 1913, p. 19.
64. Francis S. Spence, "Municipal Government by Commission", *Canadian Municipal Journal*, Volume VIII, Number X, October 1912, p. 396.
65. Spence, *Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Ontario Municipal Association*, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-2.
66. Samuel Morley Wickett, "A Toronto Viewpoint", *Proceedings of the First Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association*, 1913, p. 132.
67. Toronto *Telegram*, November 16, 1912. McCarthy was a manager of the Aetna Life Insurance Company as well as a member of city council. John Weaver describes him as "an ardent Methodist and temperance man...he stood for a business-like management of civic affairs and was remarkably active in promoting health measures." Weaver, "The Modern City Realized", *op. cit.*, p. 64.
68. Toronto *World*, February 29, 1912.
69. *Report of His Honour Judge Winchester re Investigation into Charges against the Parks Department, April 11, 1908*, p. 14. John Weaver, "The Modern City Realized", *op. cit.*, has a good description of the corruption in the Fire and Parks Department at the turn of the century.
70. *Report of His Honour Judge Winchester re Investigation into Charges against the Works Department, 1911*, p. 17.
71. *Report of His Honour Judge Denton re Investigation of Charges against John C. Noble, Deputy Chief of the Fire Department, March 15, 1915 and May 1, 1915*.
72. Toronto *World*, December 24, 1908.
73. The number of elected offices appearing on Buffalo's ballot varied from year to year as the terms of office were staggered. The 1891 ballot, for example, listed the following elective offices: mayor, comptroller, commissioner of public works, judge of the superior court, assessor, judge of the municipal court, overseer of the poor, justice of the peace, alderman, supervisor, constable, nine members of council, and three inspectors of elections. The city charter requiring the election of so many officials was in effect until Buffalo changed to commission government in 1916. New York State Laws, 1891, chapter 105.
74. G. R. Geary, Mayor of the City of Toronto, *Toronto Council Minutes 1910*, Appendix C, p. 2.
75. Samuel Morley Wickett, editor. *Municipal Government in Canada*. (University of Toronto Studies in History and Economics, published by the Librarian of the University of Toronto, 1907).
76. Cf. *Proceedings of the Annual Meetings of the Ontario Municipal Association, op. cit.*, and the records of the conventions of the Union of Canadian Municipalities as recorded in the *Canadian Municipal Journal*.
77. Toronto *World*, January 3, 1910.
78. Samuel Morley Wickett, *Toronto's Need of Reform: An Open Letter to the Ratepayers*, Toronto Archives, 1915.
79. Controllers McCarthy and Spence's opposition has already been cited. Controller Hocken publicly opposed the plan, Toronto *Globe*, February 21, 1911, as did Mayor Oliver, Toronto *World*, February 2, 1912.
80. From the front page of the series of White Papers on the Council-manager system published by the Toronto Bureau of Municipal Research. White papers # 91, October 20, 1925; # 93, November 25, 1925; # 96, February 10, 1926; #101, August 3, 1926; #102, September 22, 1926; #103, October 6, 1926; #104, October 18, 1926.
81. Bureau of Municipal Research White paper #74, March 22, 1924.
82. *Ibid.*
83. Information on Horace Brittain as found in the Toronto Public Libraries Scrapbook: Biographies of Men.
84. "Business is Business", Toronto Bureau of Municipal Research, White papers # 143, 145, 151, published September 12, 1929; October 25, 1929; and February 18, 1930.
86. White paper # 151, *op. cit.*
87. *Toronto Council Minutes 1925*, index # 720, 767, 842; Appendix A, p. 1419. *Toronto Council Minutes 1926*, index # 17, 365, 817; Appendix A pp. 112, 617; Appendix C, p. 25. *Toronto Council Minutes 1927*, # 86, 752, 829; Appendix A, p. 131. *Toronto Council Minutes 1929*, index # 77; Appendix A, pp. 109, 201.
88. Toronto *Telegram*, November 25, 1925.
89. Toronto Council Minutes 1926, *op. cit.*, Appendix C, p. 25-6.
90. All of the quotes in the paragraph are from the Toronto *Telegram, op. cit.*
91. *Report of His Honour Judge Coatsworth on the Municipal Investigation at the instance of Neil Macmillan (audit clerk), June 1926, Toronto*, p. 35.
92. *The Architecture of Public Works: R.C. Harris Commissioner 1912-1945*, City of Toronto Archives, Toronto, June 1982, p. 6, 8.
93. Toronto Public Libraries Scrapbook: *Biographies of Men*, volume II, p. 531.
94. Toronto *Telegram*, November 25, 1925.
95. Toronto *Globe*, January 4, 1926. Toronto *Mail and Empire*, February 3, 1926. Toronto *Star*, October 20, 1925; February 10, 1926. Toronto *Telegram*, November 25, 1925.