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VETERAN'S BUS FRANCHISE

(Continued from Page One)

damage to the possibility of our attaining any success whatsoever with the public on election day.

"The agreement has been termed undemocratic procedure. It is recalled that, in the spring of this year, the council itself was on the verge of entering into an agreement with the present Arrow Bus Lines which would award them a franchise if a suitable monetary arrangement could be arrived at. Was this democratic? Not until we directed for your personal attention a letter dated March 28, 1947, was favorable consideration given to advertising this proposition so that all interested parties would have an opportunity to submit a tender. Our letter of that date said, in part: It is considered only proper that we, as citizens, and as interested parties, urge upon you to pursue a democratic policy of public advertisement, in a matter of such magnitude as a local franchise.

"Further, when tenders were finally opened, and it was found that Veterans' Stage Lines had tendered three per cent of the gross fares in accordance with the Goldenberg Utility report and Arrow Bus Lines had tendered only two and one-half per cent, council allowed this latter tender, (mark you—after all tenders had been opened) to be raised to three per cent. Was this democratic?

"Veterans' Stage Lines offered no objection to this irregular procedure. We were convinced that our tender was sound enough to still win the support of the council and our convictions were justified. The press later announced that council had chosen Veterans' Stage Lines as the one tender which would be recommended to the public. Our tender had won the 'unanimous' approval of council.

AGREEMENT WAS PROPER

"The agreement itself was drawn up in a proper manner by City Clerk H. D. Thain. With three minor changes, made on the basis of legal advice, we accepted and signed the agreement. Later, in the council chambers, the aldermen scrutinized, line by line, the entire agreement. That agreement as amended by the aldermen themselves, was unanimously adopted, and it was therefore final that the bylaw in that form would be duly advertised to the voters in the press. How then could the council possibly be misinformed? How could they have misunderstood the question? Is it their practice in council to vote in favor of an 'undemocratic' bylaw upon which they have been 'misinformed' and which they don't understand?

"It is significant to note that, at the time the agreement was discussed, a petition rested on the desk of the acting mayor. This petition was presented by Arrow Bus Lines in an eleventh-hour effort to defeat the franchise by a display of public support. Why was no action taken on this petition at that time? If it were not to be ignored, why did council deliberately ignore it?

"Finally Section 4 of the notice of motion declared that: The proposed bylaw, whether rejected or approved by the plebiscite, does not permit of any but a negative answer to the original applicant (Arrow Bus Lines) for a franchise which application was received March 10, 1947, and has not yet been answered. Were these council members aware that Veterans' Stage Lines applied for the franchise on March 14, 1946? Furthermore, by virtue of the fact that all tenders had been rejected save that of Veterans' Stage Lines, was this not answer enough to Arrow Bus Lines?

"We feel, your Worship, that the foregoing situation should be clarified to the public who have been misled and bewildered during the entire preliminary negotiation of this franchise agreement and towards that end we would respectfully suggest that a statement be published and signed by the aldermen concerned to exonerate the members of Veterans' Stage Lines from any adverse criticism whatsoever resultant from the notice of motion referred to above.

"We believe further that the signors of the notice of motion concerned should be censured for their action. It is obvious that they were in the wrong by reason of the fact that they withdrew their notice of motion—but too late—after it had reached the headlines of the press.

"The judgment shown by Alderman Youngs in refusing to vote, because of his moral obligation to Arrow Bus Lines, has won our respect, and we in no way hold him or his company responsible for the unfortunate turn of events which has culminated in our final withdrawal.

ADMIRATION FOR MAYOR ARNOLD

"Further, we wish at this time to express our admiration for the fair manner that you personally have listened and given consideration to our problems. You have in every way been firm, yet fair, and we sincerely hope that the public of this community clearly understands that we in no way reflect any blame whatsoever on you personally for the action of several members of your council."

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FRIENDS FAREWELL GORDON DURKIN

An engraved lighter was the farewell gift presented to Gordon Durkin, Canadian National Telegraphs manager, who is leaving the city on December 17 for Regina, by a group of more than 50 friends and associates last night in the Moose Temple.

The presentation was made by Don Esselmont and was accompanied by a card bearing the signatures of all those present. Entertainment included group singing and music with Andy McNaughton at the piano, and card games. The party was arranged by Ted Smith.

Mr. Durkin accompanied by Mrs. Durkin and their two children, will leave on December 17 for the prairies.

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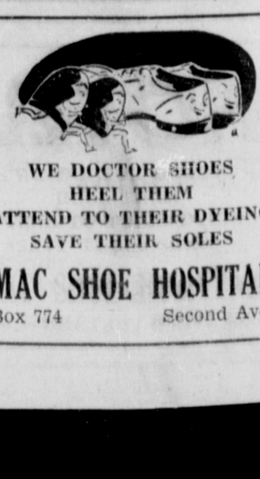

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