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**Municipal Explosives
Commission**

1912



MUNICIPAL EXPLOSIVES COMMISSION

OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

April 12, 1912.

Hon. William J. Gaynor,

M a y o r.

Sir:-

In reply to your letter of the 10th instant, and the question therein relative to a complaint of two blasting contractors, we beg to report that we have not received same, nor have we had a similar complaint from any source.

With regard to the requirement of the regulations that an applicant for a certificate of fitness shall be able to read and write the English language; this was inserted because reasons, both public and personal, would seem to require that he should be able to read at least sections 164 to 189, inclusive, of the regulations, including as they do specific duties of a blaster and of the magazine keeper, the latter on many blasting jobs being under the direct orders of the blaster.

As stated in a former letter, we have tried to make these regulations practicable (and perhaps we may use the word sensible), and not onerous to those who must comply with them. In the effort to accomplish this we have given every possible opportunity for people interested to consider with us our tentative regulations and to show us, if possible, where they should be modified or abrogated. We have pursued this course throughout, with the result that the people directly interested have had much to do with the preparation of the regulations as finally promulgated. With such a large number of subjects covered there might well be some criticism expected; but so far as we know (previous to the receipt of your letter) there have been but two subjects objected to, and those only in part-- fireworks and matches.

Referring again to the requirements for a blaster, we held three numerous attended public hearings on the explosive regulations, and received very many delegations subsequently for the purpose of discussing some particular feature of the blasting sections. At no time did any person object to the requirement that a blaster should read and write English. As originally drawn the regulations provided that an applicant should be a citizen of the United States. This was strenuously objected to from many sources, and in deference thereto it was stricken out.

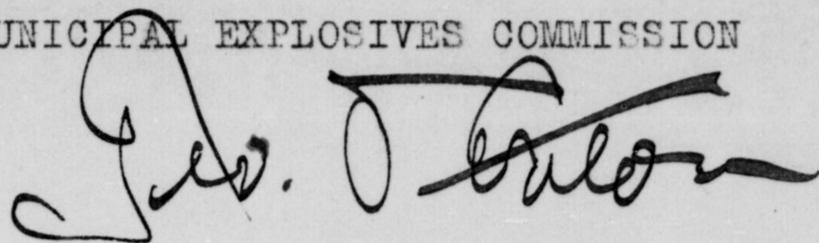
In reality, the requirement that a blaster be able to read and write English is not oppressive in practice. Section 2 of the regulations was designed, among other things, ^{to avoid} an injustice being done to applicants for blasters' certificates whom while not able to read and write English, were otherwise qualified to receive such certificates. As a matter of fact, out of probably three hundred applicants for certificates of fitness who have come before us for examination, less than eight per cent. have

been unable to read and write English; and but one of them has been refused a certificate.

This Commission is using its best judgment in all these matters to avoid working any hardship to any class of citizens or individuals.

Respectfully,

MUNICIPAL EXPLOSIVES COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. T. Tolson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name of the commission.

Chairman pro tem.