

Editorial Page

Election Smoke Clears

With Acton Council now elected for 1961 and decisions made in most other Halton County centres, municipal life can carry on without too many big surprises.

In Acton there has been some change in the personnel that will continue to administer the affairs of the community.

Probably the most disturbing thing about Tuesday's election is the surprising few people who consider the expenditure of their taxes important. That only 45 per cent. of the electors should take the time to vote is appalling.

It seems to us that too many people do their complaining about what "that council" is doing through the year and not enough are sufficiently interested when the annual opportunity for electing council, school trustees and hydro commission comes around.

Acton's 1960 council has undoubtedly done things on which there was not town-

wide support. There's nothing unusual about that. We have disagreed with them ourselves. There's nothing unusual about that either.

Their quality or effectiveness cannot, however, be judged on single issues. The whole year and maze of decisions must be taken into consideration.

We're glad to see John Goy heading the 1961 Council because of his ability and sincerity. It's good, too, that some new faces will be joining the ranks of council to provide perhaps some new ideas and to help in shouldering the job of town administration.

It's not an easy job to serve as councillor or public official, accepting the abuse levelled and withstanding the pressures that are exerted. We're happy there are individuals willing to serve. Congratulations to the winners and thanks to the losers for offering your services.

Getting the Steam Up Again

Ottawa is still fighting inflation when it should be far more concerned about getting Canada growing again.

That charge comes from Walter L. Gordon who points out that far from advancing, the Canadian economy has slipped back to where it was in 1952.

"Real output per Canadian, after price increases have been removed, increased 13% in the four years between 1948 and 1952. It increased by a further 7% between 1952 and 1956. It will have declined by the same 7% during the four years 1957, 1958, 1959 and 1960. This is a sad story and even worse when we realize that this trend is still in a decline."

What disturbs Gordon and disturbs all responsible Canadians is the effect of no-growth on Canada's work force. In the good years between 1947 and 1956, we had virtually no real unemployment. It edged up to 4½% in 1957, climbed to 7% in 1958, dropped back to 6% last year—and is now probably close to a record 8%, seasonal factors considered.

These very uncomfortable facts of life have stirred up a great debate outside of Parliament about what is necessary to hoist this country out of the economic doldrums. Governor of the Bank of Canada, James E. Coyne, for instance, says greater national self-sufficiency is the road to survival. Ot-

tawa, so far, has devised only measures to increase employment on the construction front—measures which appear unlikely to get fast results.

Here is what Gordon suggests:

1. Easier money and lower interest rates which would cut the premium on the Canadian dollar to the advantage of all Canadian producers whether they supply domestic or foreign markets.

2. Encourage Canada's manufacturing industries in order to provide more new jobs, but do so by money and tax policies rather than by higher tariffs which invite retaliation.

3. Embark on an extensive program of urban renewal, giving this a practical assist by creating a Municipal Development Bank designed to help the municipalities raise money cheaply and at home.

4. Give the economy a quick boost by reducing income taxes—a tax holiday—for a few months. By adding to consumer spending right now, some of the worst of winter unemployment would be averted, he says.

The Gordon suggestions merit thoughtful consideration. We can't afford another decade where growth averages only a little more than 1% a year. This is the way to economic, political and social disaster. —The Financial Post.

Guard Seasonal Happiness

Christmas, traditionally the season of festivity and happiness, will be marred for many if seasonal fires and accidents are allowed to take their usual toll.

Christmas tragedies could be averted by greater care in choosing of toys and decorations.

Safety experts advised that chemistry sets, fire arms, and toys requiring alcohol, kerosene or other inflammable liquids should not be given to small children. As a final safeguard, use of such toys by children of all ages should be supervised by adults.

Christmas trees and decorations, symbols of festivity, are potential fire hazards, officials warned. To help minimize the dangers, they recommend the following precautions:

1. Choose a small tree; it is less hazardous than a large one.
2. Keep trees out-of-doors as long as possible; remove them as soon as needles start to fall.
3. Never place trees near fireplaces, heaters, doorways or staircases.
4. Always turn out electric tree lights when room is unoccupied.

5. Use a pail of water as the foundation for the tree.

6. Presents should not be placed under tree until Christmas Eve; wrappings should be safely disposed of as soon as possible.

7. Candles are hazardous; use electric decorations, but check that they do not overload electrical circuits.

8. Choose electrical gifts of approved makes, bearing reliable seals of inspection.

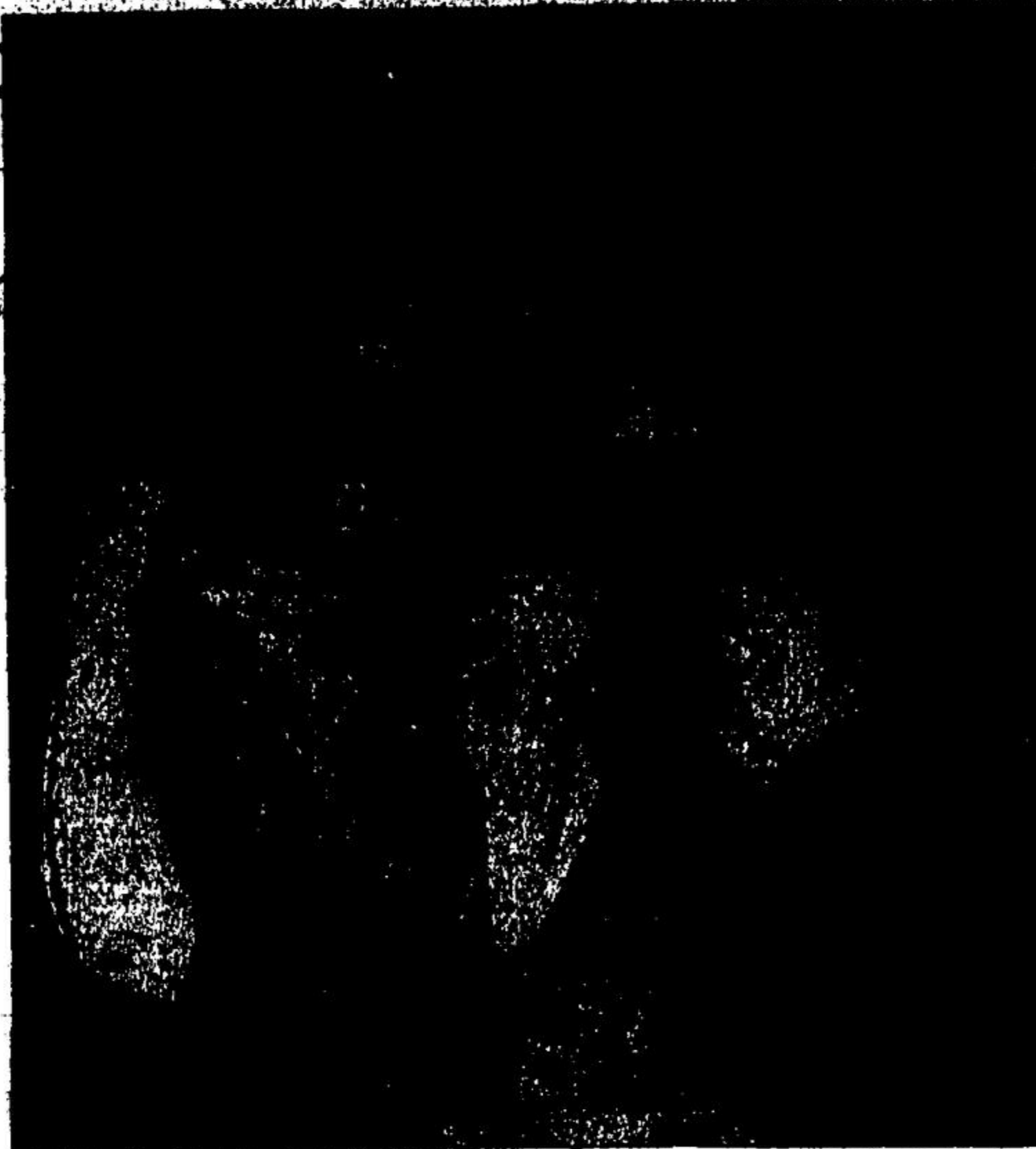
9. Avoid grease accumulation in stoves and burners; keep children out of the kitchen while stove is in use.

10. Don't use gauze-like cloth for children's party dresses.

11. Make sure that toys and sports equipment are not left on the floors, especially near staircases.

Brief Comment

At first they said they'd write under water. Now they have them to do a good job on grease, butter, cellophane and so forth. Perhaps, some day, they might even make a ball point pen that writes well on paper. —Galt Reporter.



—Photo by Esther Taylor

"Tuning Up" Sugar and Spice...

BY BILL SMILEY

This is a trying time of year. Across the land, a lot of people are in a stew about something. Merchants who have gone to the hills on the overdrive, for a big stock, are sweating out the Christmas doldrums. Students who have had a ball all fall are groggy as they face Christmas exams with nothing in the belly. Housewives look forward to the Christmas chaos with sheer dread.

But I'm not worrying too much about any of them. The merchants will wind up a few dollars ahead of last year. The students will totter through on a mixture of luck and nerve. The housewives will emerge on Boxing Day bloody but unbowed. The people who have my deep sympathy, this time of year, are the men and women in hundreds of municipalities who are standing before a mirror, trying to look firm, intelligent and able, as they seek to muster enough courage to run for public office.

The annual nomination meeting is the best show in town. It produces enough high drama, low comedy and suspense to make some of the so-called masterpieces of W. Shakespeare look pretty flimsy. For ten years I attended every nomination meeting as a newspaperman, and on a couple of occasions as a candidate. I wouldn't trade it for a season's ticket to the Stratford Festival.

Before the meeting gets really warmed up, there's lots of fun. The mayor and the reeve have their heads together, figuring out how to skate over the thin ice of that substantial deficit. The expert newsmen in the crowd are sharpening the points on their questions. The practical jokers are nominating the local idiot, dead woman, and the town's loose woman. The inevitable drunk is on hand, not quite tipsy enough to be thrown out.

And sitting there, still as the grave, staring wildly into space, are the brand new candidates, who have thrown caution to the winds and decided to "go out for" a seat on the council or school board. It's a pretty tense business for them, I can tell you.

Don't talk to me about your Kennedy and Nixon. Those big fellows have staffs of advisors and consultants and public relations men and pressies and moguls and campaign managers and ward heelers and all sorts of things on nomination night. They're not alone.

But that determined-looking little woman in the fourth row, who turns alternately red and white, like a neon sign, is as lonely as a deal mite on a raft in the Sahara. She has keyed herself to a frightening peak of

nerves. She has never spoken in public before. And she is going to run for a seat on the school board and try to ginger up that all-male, inert body which is all talk and no action. She is fierce, but frightened.

And look over here. Young Punkiss is "going out" for council and he looks it. There's a fine film of sweat on his face and he grips the back of the chair in front of him with the same expression as a kid on a roller coaster. You can't blame him. He's going up against Doc Socum, and everybody in town owes the Doc. Punkiss has only been in town for 12 years and has a lot of nerve to try for a seat. There's some pretty raggedy material going on the ballot this year.

There, the speeches are starting. Listen to old George giving it to the mayor about the sidewalks. Old George knows a thing or two about those sidewalks. He helped build them, 52 years ago. There's Joe Slush, with a skinful, going after the reeve about the taxes on his place. Says he won't pay a cent till they pave the street, put in a sewer, and install a street light in front of his house. His total taxes are \$18, and he's two years in arrears. There, the chief is ushering him out, same as last year.

And so it goes. Don't tell me about the Roman senate, or the House of Commons. For vivid clips of personalities, for the rapid thrust of wit, give me a nomination meeting, every time. The chairman of the school board defends himself like a tiger when some pretty sharp questions come up about teachers' salaries. The chairman of the library board paints a sweeping picture of the town's cultural progress, with 300 more books borrowed than last year, and two new shelves added to the library.

But it's 11:30, and a lot of the spectators have drifted out. After all, tomorrow's the day the magistrate holds court, and there are some pretty interesting cases.

It's a pity, but by the time there's a chance for the new candidates to speak, there's nobody left but the chairman, looking blue, and the caretaker, who has to sweep up after the meeting, looking black. Little Mrs. Bantam, the candidate for school board, rises anyway. It's understood that she has prepared a pretty savage attack on the other members of the board, and has a bold, new platform to propose. She looks at the chairman, who is nodding, at the caretaker, who is muttering, and at young Punkiss, who has fallen sound asleep, while waiting his turn.

She bursts into tears and stamps out. Awakened abruptly, Punkiss leaps to his feet. His chance has come. Now is the time for that brief, witty and gracious speech he has prepared. He blurts: "Mr. Chairman, fellow ratepayers, I wanna thank my nominator and second and I elected I will do my best to the best my ability."

And from such gallant souls as Punkiss come our local legislation and that spark of fire that keeps democracy burning bright.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

Back in 1910

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, Dec. 8, 1910.

On Thursday night after midnight, as John Duffe Jr. was driving across the G.T.R. tracks on Mill Street an approaching freight train caught the rear of his buggy and hurled it with its driver some distance. Mr. Duffe was not seriously hurt nor was his horse but the buggy was badly wrecked and lay on the side of the street for several days, a silent evidence of the narrow escape of the owner.

On Friday George Hilson, Nagsawaga, appeared before Justices R. J. Campbell and J. H. Peacock, charged by his brother-in-law with housebreaking and stealing about 12 or 13 pounds of ginseng. The root is worth about \$7 per pound. Hilson was committed for trial.

During the meeting of the Board of Education Monday, the members received the official resignation of Principal Stewart, who is going to Parry Sound to accept a position at a salary of \$1,300 per annum. His salary in Acton is \$900. It was decided to have the secretary submit an advertisement in the Globe and the Mail and Empire for a male principal at a starting salary of \$900 per year.

A letter was also read from Miss Humphries, assistant in the continuation department, stating she had been offered a much more lucrative salary to take a position at the school at Markham. She stated she would remain in Acton if her salary was increased \$50 per annum. The board decided not to make the increase at the present time.

After nine weeks of suffering from what was supposed to be a simple bruise of the flesh and muscles of his right arm, the result of being run over with the wheels of his carriage, Postmaster Matthews went to Toronto this week in hopes of getting some relief and restoration of his arm. Examination proved the shoulder to be dislocated and a small bone fractured. The fracture has been reduced and progress toward recovery is being made.

Back in 1940

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, Dec. 12, 1940.

During the Public Utilities meeting Tuesday evening, it was decided to erect the annual Christmas tree in front of the Post Office rather than the Mill and Main Street corner. It was deemed advisable in view of the fact several lights had been broken formerly and accidents narrowly averted at the busy intersection. The tree will again be decorated with colored lights.

According to a sports item from Stratford, the H.L.I. stationed there will have a hockey team with several former Acton boys on the lineup. Frank (Twitter) Holmes will play goal for the team and Ben Bayliss will be on defense. Manager of the team is Corporal Harry Fair, who Acton boys recall on the Par's team when they played them. Jimmy Quinn, Elora, is also a candidate for the team.

The Force bowling team advanced into first place in the Guelph Commercial league Tuesday night by defeating the Hatters 5-2. The win puts them one point behind the Hatters who led the league previously.

This week Reeve J. B. Chalmers received a letter from Mayor Birkett of Acton, England, who acknowledges the contribution from Acton, Canada, of 222 pounds toward the purchase of a Spitfire fighter in the letter, the people of Acton were thanked for their generosity and support and it was pointed out that the plane would be named "Forest Actons".

In the latest list of war contracts announced by the Department of Munitions and Supply, an Acton firm has secured an order for materials. Beardmore and Co. have received an order amounting to \$2,000.

Acton Businessmen's Association during their meeting Monday night agreed to hold a social evening for the community and it will probably be held early in the spring. A letter is to be sent to the municipal council thanking them for having the streets cleared of snow.

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