

# Must consider sweeping changes in Plunkett report . . .

The release of T. J. Plunkett's Peel-Halton Local Government Review by the Minister of Municipal Affairs has generated widely divergent opinions by the "politicians" of the area. From the views expressed last Thursday evening even before the report had been published it was quite evident the crying towels were going to be needed in great quantity. When the report was in these "politicians'" hands they were not long in jumping into public print with their condemnations of its recommendations and their suggestion by inference, the lack of potential qualifications of the author.

We were pleased to note that the elected representatives of this area exercised a good deal of intelligence and were not stampeded into comment on the report before taking the time to thoroughly read and digest its contents.

That there will be change in the structures and methods of local government is inevitable. The basic powers and responsibilities of the county were set out in the Municipal Act in 1849 and in the intervening years have not been altered substantially. While there have been some modifications and amendments, the basic responsibilities have not been changed although in some cases they have been extended.

Since 1849 every business and every citizen's way of life has vastly changed through increased knowledge gained from experience. To suggest that in the intervening 116 years we have not gained in knowledge, sufficiently to devise a better form of local government, in keeping with today's requirements, to us is depressing. If all the accumulated experience of this period has not prepared us to devise a more efficient form of government than that which was required in 1849, then we had better get back in the buggy whip and square nail businesses.

The fact that the study was instituted in the first place, and the minister's request that written comment on it be submitted by December 31, 1966, indicates there will be changes in local government in Peel and Halton. We are prepared to support in principle the establishment of a regional type of government in this area. We believe that the people of the area will accept and endorse any change that will provide a more practical and efficient form of local administration.

We do have some reservation, as we are sure many others have, in the detail and methods suggested by Mr. Plunkett. We hope, and there is no suggestion to

expect otherwise, that the representatives of this area, will study the recommendations in depth and from their knowledge and experience submit to the minister their constructive suggestions, to improve Mr. Plunkett's recommendations.

The recommendation of the report is that Peel and Halton be divided into two new counties. The division between the two new centres would run horizontally rather than vertically. In the county which Mr. Plunkett calls the Urban County of Mississauga would be Burlington, Oakville, Streetsville, Port Credit, Brampton, Bramalea and the Township of Toronto. This county would be administered by a council of 18 members plus the mayor. One board of education of 18 members would administer the school system.

Perhaps the point of greatest interest to this area is the proposed Rural County of Peel-Halton. In this county Mr. Plunkett has put everything that was left over in the area he studied, the communities of Acton, Milton, Georgetown, Bolton and Caledon East and the townships of Nassagaweya, Esquesing, Chinguacousy, Caledon, Albion and Toronto Gore.

The proposed Rural County of Peel-Halton would be administered under a two-tier structure. A 14-member county council would be made up of one representative elected from Acton, three from Georgetown, two from Milton, one from Bolton, one from Albion, one from Caledon and Caledon East, two from Chinguacousy and Toronto Gore and two from Esquesing and Nassagaweya plus a mayor elected at large. This county council would primarily be responsible for planning, roads, welfare, parks, assessment, garbage disposal and debt management.

"The towns of Georgetown, Acton and Milton and the Village of Bolton should be regarded as urban service areas and the Rural County of Peel-Halton empowered to charter them as such, to assign responsibility to an elected public service commission for the local administration of any or all of the following services: water supply and distribution, sewage disposal and collection, garbage collection, zoning, road and street maintenance, fire and police protection and recreation." This second tier of government would be composed of three members. Education would be administered by a county board of education - constituted by the same representation as the county council. Hydro com-

missions would be continued in their present form.

"A tax rate should be levied for all county services. In the case of the urban service areas an additional rate must be levied to cover the cost of locally administered services. The collection of taxes for all purposes will be undertaken by the county although the rate for the urban service area should be set by the local public service commissioners."

"To provide a close link between county and these local public service commissions, it is recommended that elections for both the commission and county council be consolidated. In other words an individual should be required to run for the dual office of chairman of the public service commission and also as county councillor."

The recommended term of office is three years. Also recommended is provision for an executive committee of the mayor and two councillors to exercise the duties and responsibilities normally assigned to a board of control under the municipal act. The removal of the administration of justice and the registry office from the jurisdiction of the local government and their transfer to the provincial government is also recommended.

This then is the basic recommendation of Mr. Plunkett. It is from this point our local representatives will start and make their recommendations. Throughout the report we detect the line of reasoning that Mr. Plunkett feels the rural county of Peel-Halton "is primarily rural or agricultural in character, demanding a limited range of services", and "the northern municipalities should retain their present character for some time in the future as it would be imprudent to permit any large scale development in these municipalities."

It would appear to us that there has not been enough consideration given the boundaries of Peel-Halton. On the south boundary we have Milton as a projection into Mississauga. Any growth through annexation in Milton would in-

volve intermunicipal negotiations which would undoubtedly be very involved.

No consideration has been given the area of influence exerted by Milton as an economic force on its surrounding district. It would appear to us that Mr. Plunkett has been unduly concerned with the retention of the present northern boundaries of Burlington and Oakville. Two alternatives present themselves. The first would naturally be to extend the southern boundary into Burlington and Oakville in relation to Milton's area of influence. The second alternative would be to move the southern Peel-Halton boundary north to 401 highway and include Milton in Mississauga County.

A similar situation is evident on Peel-Halton's northern boundary. Where Mr. Plunkett's area of study was confined to Halton's northern boundary, Acton's area of influence extends north to encompass a portion of the present Wellington County which could conceivably be added to the proposed Peel-Halton.

Two other suggestions we expect will receive consideration by local representatives are the institution of a two-tier form of government and the preservation of the status quo of hydro commissioners. We can see no advantage to establishment of local boards of commissioners to administer local services in the urban municipalities. There is no reason all these functions cannot be handled by the proposed rural county of Peel-Halton. Hydro commissions should be amalgamated throughout the area for the most efficient use of manpower and equipment - even over the objections of Ontario Hydro.

Nothing is all bad because it is old and conversely everything new is not perfect. However, through a blending of their experience and knowledge with the vision and enthusiasm of the future, we are convinced our local representatives will present some sound and reasonable constructive recommendations to the minister by the December 31st deadline.

## Free Press Editorial Page

### Warden Hinton reports

## On study tour in Europe

After a three week government study tour in Europe, Halton's warden Bert Hinton, county clerk Garfield Brown and Burlington deputy warden Frank Rogers arrived back at Milton last Thursday, just in time for the release of the Plunkett report. Regional government was a subject of their particular concern in England, the Netherlands, Germany and Scandinavia and they approached the newly-issued report with keen interest.

Referring to the Goldenburg report which reduced 13 Toronto municipalities to six, warden Hinton said this week that while in the U.S. and Europe he discovered Toronto is highly respected throughout these other countries for the far-seeing changes. He feels strongly that Halton, too, "will have something that is the respect of the whole world."

Greater London just recently faced such similar amalgamation (when Acton, England, council was abolished in favor of Ealing, for instance) and the program is working well. Mr. Hinton saw there that although "small details" were bothersome at first, "parochial reactions will be forgotten."

This success in England enhanced his interest in Tom Plunkett's report. Although Mr. Hinton feels it must be studied most thoroughly, he thinks the report is an excellent one.

"It would be a real break for the taxpayer. It might not reduce the budget but you'd get far more for your dollar." At the meeting Thursday of officials of Halton and Peel his reaction had been "we should be able to get two good councils out of this group of excellent men here tonight." To consolidate many small boards seems to him a good idea.

His recommendations: the change would have to be implemented by the provincial government which after due consideration of the reactions and ensuing reports would make it mandatory; the councils must be elected directly by the people.

The three men from Halton were sent as county representatives to the Ontario Municipal Association government study tour in conjunction with the British council, which has a courses department and study tour section. The county contributed a part of the cost.

Eighty men - all Canadians - undertook the tight schedule which covered a maximum of ground and topics. There was scope for special interest and warden Hinton sought out welfare programs.

The series of official receptions for the group began with one at Ontario House September 7, discussions and tours of specific projects began at once and there was little time for sightseeing or visiting relatives.

The Greater London Council - the county council for all London - showed the government structure there. Just recently the number of councils was cut, and this is where the Canadians learned amalgamation works.

"Not that everybody agreed at the start," added Mr. Hinton.

He went with one group to visit the borough of Hamersmith which has about the same population as the proposed Mississauga county. No employees lost their jobs because of amalgamation there.

All the elected people serve without pay in England.

Even the boroughs are on the two-party system, as are local governments in the U.S., Germany and Sweden where he has visited. "I think it's undesirable myself," commented Mr. Hinton.

Alton planned subdivision was toured, and the completely new town of Harlow, planned to relieve the congestion and post-war housing shortage of London. He was particularly impressed by the paths which take pedestrians safely under or over the streets.

September 13 they divided into six, and the warden went to inspect the county and city of Bristol, the county of Gloucestershire and the county town, Gloucester, for three days.

Bristol is the most advanced area in Britain for the comprehensive system of education - and there is much opposition there due to tradition. Screaming is highly contentious.

Here, again, they noticed what the Plunkett report recommends for the north - a two-tier government with the county council elected separately and having the real powers, the boroughs electing their own council for particular needs.

Monday the 19th the group divided in two, one section off to Hamburg and Stockholm, the other to the Netherlands and Denmark.

Mr. Hinton was in the first hall, who were introduced at once to local government and the role of central government. They visited a suburban municipality outside Hamburg.

Planning has produced roads like the spoke of a wheel, with railways, subways, satellite towns and green belts. Mr. Hinton toured subsidized housing for the aged here, as he had done in England.

After an inspection by field glasses of the east-west German line with its barren swath of land and pillboxes, the group flew to Stockholm September 22. The role of central government in relation to local authority came first here again. Housing was a particular problem, with most of the property in the city owned by the government. Cost of homes is prohibitive. There are many huge apartments that didn't appeal to Canadian owners of private homes. The cost of living is high.

Problem of amalgamation is compounded by the fact Stockholm is the great centre of population.

The men were impressed by Skasen museum, Uppsala, the university town, Dag Hammarskjöld's grave in the fam-

(Continued on Page B3)

## Free Press Back Issues

### 20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, October 3rd, 1946

Trustees V. B. Rumley, L. Lovell, Dr. F. G. Onkes and J. Chapman with chairman G. A. Dills presiding when the school board met in regular session on Friday evening. Principal Stewart reported there were 115 students enrolled at the continuation school. Mr. McKenzie reported the enrollment at the public school was 346 pupils.

Splendid congregations attended the 102 anniversary services of Acton United Church last Sunday. Dr. R. B. McClure and Rev. G. W. Porter were the guest preachers. Mr. Campbell McArthur of Rockwood was guest soloist. The choir under the direction of Mrs. Grant McDonald gave fine anthems, Miss Ethel Franklin was at the organ console.

The L.O.F.E. met at the home of Mrs. Clayton with the Regent Mrs. Matthews presiding. The annual award to the student acquiring the highest scholastic standing in grade 8 was won this year by Ted Rachlin.

Large congregation attended the 81st anniversary services of the Presbyterian Church in Rockwood on Sunday. For the morning service Rev. J. V. Mills of Waterloo was special preacher with Rev. Fred Williamson conducting the service. Special numbers by the choir were much enjoyed. Mr. Shepherd and Mr. Wiggins of Preston contributed vocal and duet numbers.

### 50 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press of October 5, 1916

The frame is up for Mr. Alex Crawford's house on Mill St.

A county battalion auxiliary was organized at Milton on Tuesday for the purpose of furthering the matter of securing colors for the 164 Battalion. Acton was well represented by Mrs. Torrance Beardmore, Mrs. C. H. E. Smith, Mrs. Wyant, Mrs. Whitman, Mrs. Havill, Mrs. (Dr.) McNiven.

The following officers were elected for the High School Literary Society for the year 1916: Honorary President, Principal W. H. Stewart; President, George Anderson; Vice-president, Herbert Richie; Secretary, Alice Johnstone; Editor, Olive Mowat; Reporter, Annie Martin; Critic, Pearl Baker; Treasurer, Violet Smith; Current Events, Willie Ross; Sporting Editor, Harold Kennedy.

One day last week Dorothy, the seven year old daughter of J. M. Denves, public school inspector, Milton was on her way to school with her sister, a large fruit wagon stood in the front of the store of S. R. Bews, Main St. She started from its rear to run across the street and was knocked down by a motor car. The little girl's head was hurt and her collar bone broken and one of her lungs ruptured. At first her recovery seemed doubtful, but a note to The Free Press now says she is doing nicely and while not yet out of danger has splendid prospects for a complete recovery.

Wouldn't it be worthwhile considering the making of Knox Street entrance to Exhibition Park a motor entrance for future fairs? This would avoid the constant element of danger of autos entering at the congested entrance on Park Avenue.

## Free Press Church Notices

**THE CHURCH OF ST. ALBAN THE MARTYR ANGLICAN**  
Corner Willow and St. Alban's Drive  
Rev. Ritchie McMurray, M.A., S.T.B.

Trinity XVIII  
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1966  
9:00 a.m.—Holy Eucharist  
10:30 a.m.—Church School  
10:30 a.m.—Matins

**TRINITY CHURCH (The United Church of Canada)**  
Minister: Rev. Dwight I. Engel, B.A., B.D.  
Organist: Mr. George Elliott, M.A., Ph.D.  
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1966  
CHURCH SCHOOL  
Church School—Juniors (up to Gr. 4) at 10 a.m.  
Seniors (Gr. 5 - Gr. 8) at 11:15 a.m.

**SERVICES OF WORSHIP**  
10:00 a.m.—Trinity United, Nursery provided.  
11:15 a.m.—Churchill (Churchill Rd. N.) Sermon Subject "Good Talkers."

**ACTON BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Founded 1842  
Pastor: Rev. Stanley Gammon  
Res. 144 Tidey Ave., Ph. 853-1615  
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1966  
9:45 a.m.—Church School, Adult Class.  
11:00 a.m.—Morning Worship, "The Magnificence of Christ."  
7:00 p.m.—Evening service cancelled for Hillsburg's Anniversary.

Monday — Mission Circle 8 p.m.  
Wednesday — Prayer and Bible Study 7:30  
Thursday — Choir, 7:30.  
Friday — B.H.F. 7:00. Adults 8:15.  
All visitors welcome to our services.  
Doctrines we preach and believe: The Virgin Birth, The Deity of Christ, His Bodily Resurrection, The Second Coming.

### 75 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press of Thursday, October 8, 1891

The St. Thomas Times says Mrs. Little of Acton, widow of the late Mr. R. Little who was public school inspector for Halton and one of the foremost educationists of the province, has been in the city during the last few days. Her object was to excite interest in kindergarten work to which she has largely devoted her attention since the death of her husband some years ago. Mrs. Little has been engaged three and a half years in kindergartens of Hamilton, and now holds a directors' certificate, qualifying her to take full charge and train assistants. Beside this she spent some time in England examining and comparing work. Hamilton has 12 schools training assistants and teaching children.

The Reeve and all the members were present at the regular meeting of the council on Monday evening. Clerk Moore read the minutes of the previous meeting and they were confirmed. Bailiff Hemstreet was present and requested the council either to put in a crossing on Riger St. across Main or give him permission to do so at his own expense. The members contended that it was a bad precedent to allow private crossings. Mr. Hemstreet said on Sunday the teams were traced across the path.

The finance committee presented their 19th report. Henderson McRae and Co. Cretone for reading room curtains \$3.29, H. P. Moore advertising \$7.24. Mr. Daniel Graham was appointed trustee officer along with his many other duties. Mr. C. C. Henderson left on Monday to resume his studies at Toronto University.

Fine fall weather was experienced for Rockwood Fair on Thursday and Friday. As a result the exhibition was an unusually successful affair.

## THE ACTON FREE PRESS

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## Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

What do you think of long hair on boys? I imagine your answer will depend on your age and sex.

If you're a 13-year-old girl, you'll probably roll your eyes toward heaven and ejaculate, "Yummy!", or something of that sort.

If you're a male junior executive in the late twenties, you'll probably sneer, "Revolution!", while secretly wishing you were 10 years younger and could have a go at it yourself.

If you're a young swinger, late-teens, early-twenties, your reaction is probably, "The Greatest!" This group, female, are fan followers. Fifteen years ago, they wouldn't even look at anybody who didn't have a crew cut.

Males whose forties are fading along with their own hair will probably grumble, "What they need is a year in the army!"

Females of the same vintage are quite likely to coo, "It's sorta cute really!", as long as their own young male is clean-cut and beardless.

If you're over 50, you probably look with mild amusement, or mild disgust, on the current crops of sheep-dogs, male. You know it doesn't amount to much. You remember the flat-chested flapper, the rumble seat, the coonskin coat and a lot of other items that appalled the oldies of the era.

Personally, I don't agree with any of the above reactions except the last one, though I haven't yet reached that age group. Or that fine plain of tolerance.

To go back over them. Long hair is seldom yummy. And it is seldom revolting, though it can be. It is not the greatest. Greatest anything. A year in the army solves nothing. And all sorts of things are sorta cute; monkeys, baby alligators, infant pigs.

They roll their eyes to heaven, when the subject of long hair comes up. But they don't ejaculate, "Yummy!" At least that isn't what it sounds like.

Creep up behind a principal and say, even quietly, "Haircuts." I guarantee he'll jump a foot and a half and turn on you with a decided tic below his left eyeball.

A principal confronted by a few shaggy heads exactly like an inspecting brigadier in the army, who arrives at "C" Platoon and finds that six of the bodies stiffly at attention are wearing white sneakers instead of spit n' polish black boots.

And what about the principles? This is what the culprits purport to defend: individualism; freedom of expression; non-conformity. You name it. It's all the rage these days. And the muddled kids are aided and abetted by parents, "liberal" thinkers and misguided editors.

After that comes the emotional hogwash. Einstein, Sir John A. Macdonald, Jesus, would all have to get a haircut if they went to high school today.

Can you imagine Christ in a crew cut? He was a conformist in the things that didn't matter, an individualist in things that did.

Sir John and Einstein had other things on their minds, and didn't have time to worry about hair-cuts. But I'll bet they didn't spend several hours a day combing and admiring their locks.

Guess I sound like an old fuff. But I know how the kids suffer when the sacrilegious scissors start their desecration.

I still have a psychic scar because the Germans made me shave a magnificent beard in prison camp. And I'll never forget the wave of anguish that swept me the day I stood before a mirror and saw half of my fine, handle-bar, fighter-pilot's moustache shaved. But there was no going back.

You do look pretty silly in half a handle-bar. But let's hear your opinions on boys' long hair. Write your editor.