

Special report from Paris

# Farmers' strike works silent battle is won

Journalist Lucius Smejda of Chicago, formerly a resident of the Milton area, submits another report on the farming picture in France, where he is continuing his studies. This week he reports on the success on the French farmers' apparent victory in their non-violent strike for better living conditions.

FRENCH FARMER VICTORY

While students and unions shook the country in protests and marches, the French farmers won a silent battle. Their astute political strategy succeeded where years of waiting and patient demands failed. In their one-day general "professional" strike May 24, they demonstrated "farmer power" in restraint. Very few cases of violence were reported but French farmers turned out en masse. Blocking traffic with tractors, they distributed leaflets containing their complaints and proposed reforms. They did not continue into chaos (as the rest of France), however, this easing De Gaulle's headache.

May 29 an "agricultural summit" of the European common market was held at Brussels. The original objective was to lower milk produce prices. However, more than 6,000 dairy farmers (from the six countries) marched around the city and encircled the conference to show their disapproval and their force. A favorable accord was hastily signed (butter prices were increased).

June 5 to 18, fruit and legume producers manifested their discontent. They dumped potatoes, artichokes and lettuce. They stopped trucks and trains coming from Spain and North Africa to confiscate their cargoes. This was the extreme of "violence."

In the meantime a definite eight point program of demands was presented to the government on June 7. It asked for better living conditions for all farmers. The reply came June 19 in a press conference of Mr. Pompidou, the prime minister. Smaller families are assured of a minimum income. New credits (\$2,200,000 to be loaned at lower rates) will be facilitated. Fruit and vegetable prices will be



LUCIUS SMEJDA

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supported. Taxes on farm-income will be lower. Farmers will pay 85 per cent less than other Frenchmen for health and accident insurance. Retirement benefits will be increased (\$14 million for 1969).

The mainstay of French farmers seem content with the proposed measures. As the spokesmen of two of their largest organizations (FNSEA and CNJA) said June 22, "this responds to our demands." The farmers remain wary, nevertheless in waiting for concrete action.



THE TRADITIONAL picture of farmers building a load of hay on a wagon drawn by horses has been replaced in this area by bales of hay being loaded with modern farm equipment. Grass this year is thick, due in part to heavy rains. (Staff Photo)

## Surveyors will come calling at 352 Ontario farm homes

This summer, county home economists will visit 352 homes to ask questions on family attitudes toward social, economic, and land use changes in the rural community. Hopefully, the home-makers interviewed will be the same ones visited in a similar survey conducted in 1959.

The Longitudinal Study of Ontario Farm Families, announced this week by the Home Economics Branch of the Ontario Department of Agriculture and Food, will be a co-operative one.

Other participants are the Special Committee on Farm Income of the Ontario Department of Agriculture and Food, and the Department of Geography and Planning of the University of Waterloo.

This year's study is a follow-up of the 1959 Special Study of Ontario Farm Homes and Home-makers, when the home economists interviewed 352 farm home-

makers in their own homes. Half of these farm women were Women's Institute members. Half were their nearest non-Women's Institute neighbors. The farm homes were situated in each and every county and district of the province.

Home economists this year will visit the same 352 farms. If a new family occupies the farm, the new homemaker will be interviewed. However, every effort will be made to get in touch with the former homemaker as well. The findings of the 1959 study

were used to update programs to meet the needs and interests of homemakers of the 1960's. Findings were used so successfully that Women's Institute membership has increased.

Despite declining farm population, membership of Ontario's 1,373 Women's Institutes in 1968 totals 32,597, an increase of 637 over 1967. The educational program of the Home Economics Branch reached more than 50,000 rural women and girls in 1967, an increase of 20 percent over the previous year.

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ERIN TOWNSHIP School Area Board

## Free Press Farm Page

### Haltom makes good showing in D.H.I.A.'s 1967 program

By H. J. Stanley, Agricultural Representative

During 1967 a total of 37,921 cows in 1,242 herds in Ontario were enrolled under the supervised Dairy Herd Improvement Association milk testing program. These herds belonged to 76 different associations with a supervisor in charge of each. Three of these associations are in Halton County.

Haltom Centre D.H.I.A., under the supervision of Howard King, placed fifth in Ontario with the 483 cows averaging 11,676 lbs. of milk, 455 lbs. of fat, for a Bred Class average of 110 and 115.

In sixth place was the Halton West Association of Gordon McCormack, with 488 cows producing 11,761 milk, 466 fat, for B.C.A.'s of 111 and 113. The Halton East Association of Frank Chisholm was 32nd, with 432 cows giving 10,663 milk, 412 fat, with B.C.A.'s of 103 and 106.

In the individual herd section Stan Waters of R.R. 2, George-

town placed third out of 1,200 Holstein herds, with an average production from his 20 cows of 14,644 milk, 565 fat, for an average B.C.A. of 141. Galbraith Brothers, of R.R. 1, Burlington, the top scoring Holstein herd in 1966, placed eighth with their 25 cows averaging 13,534 milk, 566 fat, for an average B.C.A. of 136.5. In 13th place was Denzil Lawrence of R.R. 1, Milton, with an average B.C.A. of 135. C. A. May and Son, R.R. 2, Hornby, was in 17th place with a B.C.A. of 134; C. Barth, R.R. 1, Glen Williams, was 24th, with a B.C.A. of 131; and Walter Egger, R.R. 6, Milton, was 27th with a B.C.A. of 130.5.

For the Guernsey breed, Halton Gunby of R.R. 1, Burlington, was fourth with a B.C.A. of 119.5. D.H.I.A. provides the farmer not only with the milk and butter fat production of each cow in his herd, but also provides him with the cost of production on his farm. Thus, he can pick out his weaknesses in comparison to others and attempt to improve them the following year. Anyone interested in joining D.H.I.A. should contact one of the supervisors, or the Agricultural office.

### Ontario Hydro ups rates to rural customers here

Ontario Hydro has announced an increase in rates to its 500,000 rural customers -- the first general increase in 15 years. The new rates will be reflected in bills mailed on and after Oct. 1, 1968.

The increase will vary from customer to customer according to classification and the amount of energy used. The average will be 9-1/2 percent.

A detailed explanation of the changes is being mailed to all rural customers. From time to time during the 15-year period since 1953, relatively minor rate adjustments have been made to meet changing conditions on the system. The last one was in 1966 when 173,000 customers received decreases and 165,000 small increases.

Chairman George Gathercole said the increases reflect the "inflationary pressures of higher costs on the Commission for equipment, supplies, property, salaries, wages and borrowing." Mr. Gathercole said that a variety of cost-saving procedures, including automated techniques, consolidation of work areas and promotional load building, adopted by the Commission

had enabled Hydro to hold the line on rates. "However," he said, "our rural system operated at a deficit last year, and an upward adjustment of rates is now essential."

He estimated the increases would "barely meet rising costs -- but should carry us through the next two years without further adjustment."

Earlier this year Ontario Hydro increased its rates to municipal electrical utilities across the province for power supplied. Urban dwellers receive power from the electrical utility in their community, while rural customers are served directly by Ontario Hydro.

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### Berry club sees machine

By Stuart Nurse  
The members and leaders of the Halton 4-H Strawberry Club attended the annual Strawberry Night at Vineland on June 27. History was in the making as an experimental strawberry picking machine was demonstrated. Compressed air was used to raise the berries, while rows of metal fingers picked them. Though only in the pioneer stages it is a very interesting development. A machine that carried pickers was also demonstrated. Solid bed planting, herbicides, insecticides and the problems of grading were also discussed. Especially interesting to the members were the sample boxes of various strawberry varieties.

### Give a "brake"

Now that school is out, there is an additional hazard on our roads -- children. Maybe not on the sidewalk by your farm, but when you go to town they are out in full force. Since they do not have the wide open spaces your children have to play in, they are apt to get out on the road or dash out from behind a parked car. So give these city kids a "brake", won't you?

### Rural Learning Association plans leadership training

Peter Hannam, R.R. 2, Guelph, was re-elected president of the Rural Learning Association at the first meeting of the new board in Toronto. Mrs. Freda Kamstra, South Gilles was elected vice-president and Brian Ellsworth, R.R. 1, Ridgeway, executive member.

Other members of the Board are Mrs. Jane Coulson, Barrie; Roy Coulter, Campbellville; Mrs. Dorothy Houston, Earlton; Mrs. Beatrice McCue, Keswick; Ronald Slade, Kincardine; and Mac Young, Thamesford.

R.L.A. has initiated and assisted with 26 programs during the 1967-68 year. These programs have included a provincial marketing conference; residential courses on organization and community development, leadership, forums, folk schools and discussion groups on leadership skills; and inter-personal and inter-group relationships, as well as an inter-provincial youth travel and exchange including farm visits and leadership seminars.

Future plans to date include a provincial leadership training course for the week of February 9 - 15, 1969 at Geneva Park. Theme of this course will be "Communications and Community Development." The Rural Learning Association

became incorporated in July 1966. It is an adult education organization in Ontario whose objective is to serve in the most effective way the adult education needs of rural people.

The office is located at 30 Bloor Street West, Toronto 5.

### Farm safety serious problem

A farm safety survey being carried out by Wellington County farm safety council already shows that farm accidents present a serious problem, Guelph Township Reeve J. L. McAninch told county council.

Chairman of the agricultural committee, his report also recommended that James Milne, chairman of the reforestation committee, be authorized to have a lane leading to the county tract at the Little property in Puslinch township. Following a meeting with Grand River Conservation Authority and forest representatives, they discussed development of the pond there. Surveys will be made before any work is done.



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