

Free Press Editorial Page

Time is running out...

The frustrations of politicians at the local level are building into a tremendous pressure as the province still tries to contain the need for larger units of government. The term regional government has gone largely undefined and has thus taken on, in the minds of many, the feeling it is the ultimate answer to a host of problems.

But time is running out for the province to take steps to define regional government and implement it on some logical basis. That time is running out, is evident in several developments.

Education will be placed at the county level at the beginning of 1969 and all school boards and Boards of Education in Halton will be merged.

Burlington Council has approved an application to the Ontario Municipal Board to obtain city status. Despite the advice it will cost \$160,000 more to operate as a city rather than a town, the municipal officials are opting for the city title.

Oakville councillors, hearing Burlington was considering city status, proposed an amalgamation of Oakville and Burlington and designation of the whole area as a city. Burlington chose to go it alone.

Peel County council has proposed to the province that legislation be adopted to form the Regional Municipality of Peel. Municipal Affairs Minister Darcy McKeough reportedly promised a

reply to the brief within a month. Halton County has a committee, patterned after the Peel group and including the same expert as Peel used, to draft a somewhat similar proposal for this county.

The Plonkett Report on local government has been duly interred, despite the high hopes local legislators held for it to provide the final word on everyone's interpretation of regional government.

The Smith Report on Taxation has been received with its endorsement of larger forms of local government and the Select committee has reported on that report. It too called for early action on regional government noting particularly that people were more ready for it that government action would indicate.

The only other outstanding report on the area seems to be, of all things, a report titled the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Transportation Study. It's the report for which a group of officials set out to consider transportation and ended up setting several possible development patterns for a vast area of the province. A special meeting on the study was held here recently.

Municipalities have been given to the end of the year to comment on this report, which would indicate little action on it may be evident before mid-1969.

Time is running out, though.



THE BRILLIANT COLORS of autumn have faded in the November haze, while nature's harvest of berries and fallen leaves await first snows in the quiet stillness. (Staff Photo)

Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley



Last month, I wrote of my annual love affair with September. It seemed to hit the spot. Fan mail doubled, from two to four letters. I even received a declaration of love from a lady who shall be nameless.

But October is another matter. I think we Canadians love it in a different way, this most glorious month of the year. It's the month when we wake up, come alive, feel the blood coursing through our hardening arteries.

It's a shattering experience for someone from another country to visit Canada in October. They are used to a change in the fall. Their leaves turn pallid browns and yellows. But when they see a vista of woods and water on a golden Canadian October day, they are literally stricken breathless.

We say, "Pretty, ain't it?" An Irishman might say in awe, "Dear God, Himself has dumped a rainbow, all but the blue, into your woods. And the blue He has flung, entirely, into your water."

But the vast, mad artist's palette, thrown across the country, is only part of the October scene and mood.

There's a quickening of the spirit that infects everyone. Fall fairs, those stubborn relics of a pioneer day, add their special flavor. Parades and pumpkin pies, hot dogs and horse races, and the warm, yellow wine of a Canadian October day, are unforgettable.

Hunters go into their special trance in this month. They crouch in duck blinds, they crawl through fences, they curse their misses. (And sometimes their missuses, who can't see the point of it all.)

Golfers go goofy in October, desperately trying to get in the last few rounds, losing balls by the dozen among the fallen leaves, and praying for one more good weekend.

Sailing enthusiasts snatch every chance to get out in that perfect weather the month so often provides: nice breeze, warm sun, water so blue it makes your heart leap. And so cold it makes your hands ache.

Off the cuff..

First there was a bit in one magazine that a scientist at Lethbridge, Alta., discovered certain varieties of seed grow better if you point them north. And faster. Then in another magazine two days later, researchers at Kansas State University had found white meat is juicier if you cook a turkey upside-down. Finally a Manitoba crop report full of bad weather, water-logged fields, immature crops, frost damage, sprouting in the swath, and rotting. But it ended with the sentence "Wild roses were in bloom in the ditch two miles east of Cross September 1." Somehow the world is alright.

-Ont. Federation of Agriculture Bulletin

Free Press

back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, November 4, 1948.

More Hydro shortages and no improvement in sight. So be prepared for more cuts. Apparently no one knows how bad the Hydro mess really is.

The United Church was re-opened this week with an impressive service after extensive renovation. There is a new choir arrangement for seating and a chancel effect to the front of the sanctuary.

The curling rink walls are to be made safe so the youngsters of the town will be able to enjoy skating there.

The Baptist, Acton's oldest church, celebrated its 100th anniversary on Sunday with Rev. Frank Petch of Hamilton as guest speaker. There was also special music which was much enjoyed.

Television sets are coming on the market and the price range is between \$700 and \$800. But they are not essential to living in these parts yet.

Esquing's new community centre was officially opened this week at Stewarttown. It will contain the municipal offices, council chamber and assembly hall to hold a lot of the social gatherings in the township.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, November 7, 1918.

In addition to the prizes referred to last week as won at Georgetown fair by Jordan Lawson, son of Chief Lawson, he won Mr. Fred J. Barber's specials for best map of the County of Halton and best map of North America. When it is known that Jordan does his drawing with his left hand, the right having been incapacitated through infantile paralysis, the credit to this bright young draftsman is all the greater.

The campaign for the Victory Loan started off particularly well in Acton District. The 100 per cent honor banner was won by the Acton Tanning Company and Beardmore and Company the first day. Braden At Milton, on Saturday, October 26, to Mr. and Mrs. J. A. E. Braden, Barrister, twin children, a son and a daughter.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, November 2, 1893.

When Esquing council met in the council chambers at Esquing there was a big list of claims for sheep killed, amounting to \$105, from Mrs. Robert Starrett, Alfred Owens, J. C. Cook, Wm. Hoare, Christopher Cook, Wm. Shortill, A. D. McLean, Thos. Anderson, Robert McEnery, John Eccles and John Evans.

Messrs. Newton and Sons of Lincolnton have not definitely decided on the rebuilding of the woollen factory which was burned down. It is very doubtful if Lipehouse will ever again hear the hum of this important industry. Georgetown capitalists are very anxious to secure the enterprise for that town.

Successful in passing their examinations at Lorne school were Alice Brown, Miza Gamble, Maggie Barner, Richard Lavin, Joseph Lynd, Mabel Alexander, Lizzie McDonald, Lexie Gamble, Jennie Cameron, Ada Alexander, James McDonald, Annie Quantic, Nellie Brown, Clinton Swackhamer, Ada Townsend.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Canadian Champion, Milton, October 29, 1868.

The Grecian bend is being introduced into the wilds of Erin. One young lady (previously supposed to be sensible) has adopted it. A number of gentlemen in Milton the day after the County Show were practising the Grecian bend, or a bend of some kind, at least.

In Wellington Square on Monday night, some sacrilegious rascals broke into the Temperance Hall and broke open the Sunday School library desk, scattering the books around the hall and carrying off a small book containing the voluntary contributions of the scholars. They then went to the Presbyterian Church, broke into the vestry and carried off some towels; from thence they proceeded to the Roman Catholic Church, but it is not fully known what they took from it. It is not fully known the amount of their depredations as it was not discovered until Wednesday.

Cry from the heart...

Perhaps the best comment on the recent budget in which a two percent increase in personal income tax was included, is this eloquent and indignant letter from a small businessman in a recent magazine.

Dear Editor:

I regret that the condition of my bank account has delayed payment of my subscription.

My shattered financial situation is due to the effect of federal laws, provincial laws, municipal laws, county laws, corporation laws, liquor laws, traffic laws, by-laws, outlaws and inlaws.

These laws compel me to pay excise taxes, municipal taxes, business taxes, custom taxes, sales taxes, and federal and provincial income taxes.

In addition, I am forced by the strong arm of the law to pay for a business licence, dog licence, hunting licence, fishing licence and marriage licence.

For my own protection, I carry life insurance, hospital insurance, liability insurance, burglary insurance, property insurance, fire insurance, rent insurance, compensation insurance, mortgage insurance, accident insurance and old age insurance.

My business is so governed that I am regulated, inspected, disrespected, suspected, rejected, dejected, examined, re-examined, summoned and fined, until I have no time left to devote to the business itself.

I can tell you in all honesty, sir, that but for a miracle which has occurred I would not be in any position to forward the enclosed cheque. The wolf that comes to so many doors these days has just had pups in my kitchen. I sold them, and you get the money.

Yours etc.

What others say.

I'm inclined to wonder about the value to the county of the Warden flying to Palm Springs California to receive an award for a county film. The award was given by a group of film-makers and could conceivably be received by the man who made the film. I understand the county councillors were polled by telephone for their opinion on the junket with a majority voicing support. I still doubt the necessity of such a jaunt. Jim Dills in The Canadian Champion.



A THIRD PICTURE of Sir Harry Brittain follows up the two that appeared here last week. In this one, the crest that he presented from Acton, England, to Ac-

ton, Ontario is clearly shown. It hangs now on the town hall wall, just outside the council chamber. Free Press editor H. P. Moore is pictured with Sir Harry.

Salt and Pepper

by hartley coles



To see yourself as others see you can be a lesson in humility as well as being enlightening.

Take the community we live in. It hasn't had the explosive expansion of towns closer to Toronto. Nor have we stood still. Growth has been steady and it seems the town now stands on the threshold of large development.

People here are waiting to see whether Acton is going to be like some of its neighbors—a dreary succession of subdivisions and shopping centres—or a well planned, balanced community.

Two nearby daily newspapers took a keen look at Acton last week. One was impressed by the audacity of the residents of the town who weren't afraid to tackle the giant CNR operation with one hand and protest the decision to stop blowing the Beardmore and Co. whistle with the other. The second ran an article by a former resident saying the old town really hasn't changed much despite a few new homes.

"Now for we pseudo-sophisticates in the great urbanized industrial dormitories of southern Ontario," says the first mentioned editorial, "The sources of hometown Acton's civic concern may be pretty corny stuff. A train station. A factory whistle. Small potatoes to we big city folk with our complex, complicated and confounding problems."

"However," the paper points out, "hasn't society for most of we little people become too complex, complicated and confounding?" It goes on to make a case for getting rid of some of the big city complexes by paying more attention to the simple things of life. Although it doesn't say so it could have added as practiced by the simple people.

"The materialistic society—the affluent society—isn't a very happy society," the editorial continues, "... one of the reasons is that far too few of us are taking time for the simple things of life... and even the simple protests."

How does that make you feel? Like you're some sort of anachronism left over from the ice age? Take heart. The writer is patting you on the back. "It may be mucky mouse stuff... and ho-hum stuff... but it helps to give life meaning and existing a purpose. It's great for community spirit and community identity," he maintains.

A few of the fellows who fight the

traffic each day from the city or the lakeshore and find peace at night in our borders must be wondering about that sophisticated stuff. They'll probably be asking how life differs in a town like Acton from cities like Oakville or Guelph.

The electric lights have been here for quite a few years. We even got indoor plumbing. We aren't such terrible hicks as you fellows in your "ultra-expensive megalopolistic environment" might think. A few of the local blades have traded their pinto for Mustangs—with wheels. Some of the folks has got television. A few has even got colored tubes.

Affluence? Some of the yokels has enuff left over from their pay packet each week to put some of it in the bank. Some of their kids has got two pair of socks since they started wearing shoes. Some of these go past grammar school, through high school and even on to university.

According to the article written by a former resident the town still retains the charm of an easy pace. There hasn't been much in the way of change.

Tain't right. I passed at least a dozen people last Friday afternoon I didn't know. Couldn't have happened 10 years ago. The old town's bursting at the seams. Don't believe me? Try and find a place to live!

I'm afraid, in spite of what superficial observers say or write, that we aren't much different that our city cousins. We are just as harried. We worry about whether the train stops or not because sometimes we are in a hurry to go somewhere and we'd like to be able to hop aboard.

We like the five o'clock whistle because we haven't got time to consult our watches. Have to hurry so we can sit around the cracker barrel at the general store and swap stories. We even got two "jolly boxes" over on the east end. Some folks call them government dairies.

It's true we don't worry none over big problems like the city fellows. That "Archer" in front of the Toronto city hall, for instance. Looks more like a whale's tooth to some of us. Others call it great art. Big problem. Glad we haven't got it.

Nearest we came to a puzzler like that was when the dredges pulled a big log out of Fairy Lake last year. Some folks said it looked like the Loch Ness monster. Others said it looked more like a water-logged log.

You see. We're not much different from our city cousins.

THE ACTON FREE PRESS

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Founded in 1975 and published every Wednesday at 44 Willow St. Acton, Ontario. Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulation, the CMAA and OWMA. Advertising rates on request. Subscription rates available in advance. \$2.00 in Canada. \$7.00 in all countries other than Canada. Single copies 10¢. Authorized at Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa. Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with reasonable allowance for signature, will not be charged for, but the balance of the advertisement will be paid for at the applicable rate. In the event of a typographical error advertising goods or services at a wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is merely an offer to sell and may be withdrawn at any time.

Bills Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd.

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