

Free Press Editorial Page

Cart before the horse . . .

Having built the cart, the province is now attaching the horse, the London Free Press says, referring to the recent takeover by Queen's Park of assessment function from the municipalities rather than doing it before getting into regional government.

It is criticism like this - typical of complaints from the press and municipalities across the province - that no doubt has been a factor in the government decision to hold a series of information sessions across the province.

A team of Ontario cabinet ministers will hold what a government press release describes as a series of "frank and informal" dialogue sessions on municipal government reform throughout the Province this summer.

The meetings are designed as a further means of two-way communication between Queen's Park and municipalities.

Provincial Treasurer Charles MacNaughton and Municipal Affairs Minister Darcy McKeough plan to attend all meetings in the series. Other cabinet ministers, including

Prime Minister John Robarts, will participate in some of the meetings. Provincial administration is the only realistic method of reforming antiquated assessment practices and ensuring uniformity but surely the step should have preceded the establishment of county, school boards and introduction of regional municipal government, the Free Press says and adds it is also an essential preparatory move toward the taxation reforms promised by the Robarts government.

"The new policies encompassed by the legislation Municipal Affairs Minister McKeough submitted to the legislature are sound in principle but the municipalities have quite legitimate objections to the way the province initiated them. The assessment takeover should have come first, not as an abrupt afterthought."

Whether the belated explanations which are contemplated will assist in an acceptance of the proposals remains to be seen.

The Huron Expositor



ROCKWOOD CONSERVATION Park provided a beautiful setting for the Ontario Canoe Cruisers regatta, last weekend. Pretty Sue Paulser and Tom Jack of Toronto show perfect paddling form in their double canoe. (Staff Photo)

Dubious about market . . .

Although some segments of the press and other communication systems would have us believe there is a strong desire in Britain to enter the European common market, the reverse seemed to be true when this writer visited recently.

There was much unfavorable publicity about the common market countries and the advantages of Britain "going it alone" were played up. One London newspaper published a comparison of the prices in Britain for common food staples as against the same prices in France and other common market members.

In almost every case the British food prices were lower although there were two items which were a

shade higher in price. The British, taxed "up to here," now seem dubious of the advantages of joining the economic block.

Some government spokesmen admitted that there would probably be an adjustment period before prices found their true level. But the Britons we talked to are wondering if General De Gaulle didn't do them a favor by blocking Britain's entry into the common market.

The working people in England find it difficult enough on an average wage of 20 pounds (about \$52.00) a week to make ends meet without higher costs for food and other commodities.

Weather beaten . . .

A good example of the effect weather has on our lives was afforded by the recent heat wave when hot, humid air moved in from the south making most people in this district uncomfortable.

After two or three days of the heat - and no relief in sight - people began to act more irritable.

For instance last Thursday the long distance operator, obviously feeling very much under the weather, uttered an almost vicious, "Your number, please," in place of the usual cheery reply.

The person answering on the other end uttered an irritable "Yes?" when he picked up the receiver.

Ambition is retarded by heat. Even the most ardent booster of summer is sometimes forced to admit there might be something to this idea of winter, after all.

Tropical countries are supposedly crime-ridden when the heat is at its height especially for crimes of passion. And this seems to be true in the United States when hot weather invades the large cities. Race riots, robberies and arson increase in leaps and bounds and are not relieved until they get "cold air from Canada."

People obviously are affected by the weather - both for the better and the worst.

Et Cetera . . .

One ought, every day at least, to hear a little song, read a good poem, see a fine picture, and, if it were possible, to speak a few reasonable words.

-Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe



Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

"Bar the door, Matilda, and close them shutters! Henry, look to your flintlock! The Indians are on the war-path!"

Let's hope it doesn't come to that, but the Indians of Canada, a quarter-million of the natives of this vast continent have blood in their eye, whether it's a product of politics or bean wine.

And they don't need tomahawks, bows and arrows, and rusty muskets this time. They have two weapons which bring them right into the nuclear age. One is the white man's guilt complex, with which they belabor him at every opportunity. The other is the mass media, which they are using with a skill that would make a public relations man turn green.

There are some facts that have led up to the current confrontation. First of all, the Indians were victims of one of the greatest con jobs in history when the various treaties were drawn up.

Have you ever read one? They sound great, full of poetic stuff like, "As long as the rivers run to the sea and the grass grows to the sky and the mountains do not fall down . . . etc., etc." Then comes the crunch, in the small print. As long as the Indian stays on his reserve, and out of the white man's hair (especially the scalp), he and his children and his children's children shall receive an annual bounty from the Great White Queen across the Big Water.

For a whole Indian band, it might be 1,000 pounds sterling. Not cash annually, but only the interest thereon. Figure out sometime what the interest is on 1,000 pounds sterling in 1969. Yes, inflation has caught up with the Indian, too.

Treaty Day, according to old-timers, used to be a real fair at the reserves. Each Indian family received its share of the loot and avaricious merchants gathered from miles around to separate the Indian and his treaty money as quickly as possible. Today, he might be able to buy a few bottles of wine.

Second, the Indian culture, or what's left of it, is quite dissimilar to that of the White man's. It is based on communal, rather than cut-throat society. The romantic refers back to the "noble red man". The pragmatist calls him "a shiftless bum". Neither is anywhere near the truth. He is a human being. He's neither red nor any more noble than the rest of us.

Third, the paradox exists that the Indian has special privileges (medical care,

Off the cuff . . .

Some people make things happen - some watch things happen and some people don't know what happened.

Littering is not just a bad habit, it's an expensive one. Last year it cost the Department of Highways more than \$970,000 to clean up along Ontario's highways. Keep a litter bag in your car and help keep Ontario clean this summer.

free education, no taxes on the reserve, etc.) and yet he is underprivileged (inferior housing and education, plus plain old discrimination, social and economic.)

And now, the Federal government, with a cold logic that seems to seep down from Mr. Trudeau, says, "Put up or shut up. If you aren't happy about the way we run things, do it yourself." This, after years of treating reserves with all the largesse and benevolence usually associated with an orphanage.

The Federal government proposes to dump the Indian problems on the provincial governments and the Indians themselves, all in the course of five years, then fold its tent and steal off into the night. The provincial governments want the Indian problem like they want the Black Plague. So do the Indians.

For the latter, the Canadian government's new policy is a smoke-screen to cover failure. For the young Indians, dissolution of the reserves is like burning your boats behind you. For the middle-aged and elderly, it is terrifying.

Indian leader Wilmer Nadijwon of Cape Croker put it succinctly, if over-simplifying, when he said the new legislation would allow an Indian to sell his property for two bottles of wine. That doesn't solve a problem. It creates one.

The Indians don't want assimilation. They want help to get on their feet and some redress for 200 years of being considered second-class Canadians.

Some reserves are worthless, mere slum areas. Some are extremely valuable as potential resort areas. How does everybody get a fair share if these lands are handed back to the Indians themselves, for disposal as they see fit?

You're not going to settle that one in five years, Pierre Elliott.

Free Press back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, August 4, 1949.

The last three days of July will go down in history with present and former residents of Nasagaweya. From coast to coast they came back again to visit in the township that was marking 100 years of incorporation as a municipality.

There has been many a packed dance at Brookville hall but Friday's topped them all.

A fine Centennial parade started off the Saturday program. It included five members of the Brookville band of 1895, Nasagaweya Women's Institute float depicting four stages of history, Nasagaweya Federation of Agriculture float, old huggies and many others. Norma Brown and Jack Wood received prizes for best decorated wheels and Grace McKay won the bicycle prize.

J. E. Whitlock was master of ceremonies for the program and Reeve Wm Vanackle gave a whole-hearted welcome. Murray McPhail introduced the guest speaker, the Hon. Thos. Kennedy. Council was introduced, Geo. Stokes, Max Storey, Edgar Ellenton and Stan Nurrah. Warden Mrs. Mary Pettit was among many who brought greetings.

Andy Frank was in charge of the fiddlers' contest won by Mrs. J. O'Rourke, John McGregor and Tom Saunders.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, July 24, 1919.

The Peace Day celebration last Saturday was an event which will long be remembered. The Great War Veterans' Association took the matter in hand. Never were homes and businesses better decorated. The Royal Grenadiers Band of Toronto came on the 10 a.m. train and spent the entire day here. The streets were thronged for the parade at 1:30 featuring the Veteran Clown, Royal Grenadiers, Acton veterans, Georgetown band, Georgetown veterans, Acton school children, fancy dress parade, Boy Scouts' band and citizens in motor cars.

Harry Statham had the honor of driving three veterans of other wars, his father who

fought in the army of the north in the Civil War of the United States; Mr. Peter Gibbons who was a soldier in the confederate army of the south and Mr. Robert Laing who served in the American army in the war of the Philippines.

In a baseball match the veterans defeated town men 11-6. Veterans, J. Swackhamer, M. Collier, R. Clark, Geo. Huda, J. Kennedy, C. Leishman, G. Caswell, M. Soper, P. Holmes, town E. Masters, F. Massala, H. Kennedy, R. Brown, G. Anderson, C. McLeod, T. Savage, Joe Hynds, W. Stewart.

The concert at night attracted a large crowd. The dance in the drill shed was evidently run on standard time. Residents of that section claim to have heard the fiddles going well on to one o'clock by daylight saving time.

The day was a thriving one for the Veterans' booths for ice cream, cake, cool drinks, peanuts, candy and fruit.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, July 26, 1894.

Another year the council of this municipality has decided that 15 mills on the dollar will be sufficient to cover the expenditures necessary for repairs, improvements, and other demands upon the municipality. It is, of course, only by economical supervision that the rate is kept at the low figure. The amount to be raised by assessment for school purposes is \$1,400.

Complaints have been repeatedly made to the Free Press of the practice of fast young men using the grand stand at the park as a place for playing cards and other objectionable games, not only on weekday evenings but also on Sunday afternoons. Their play is said to be accompanied by vile and profane language. The most objectionable feature is that young and innocent boys are induced to join them and while parents think them safe they are imbibing language and habits which will poison their whole future lives. The local constables stopped the contemptible practice last season and Constable Graham assured the Free Press he will arrest the next guilty parties he finds at the park.

Salt and Pepper



by hartley coles

"Are you English?" the distinguished gentleman in the tweed jacket asked as my wife and I sat in the Queen's Hotel in Cheltenham, England, eating a well cooked dinner of plaice.

"No, we're from Canada" was the almost simultaneous reply. "Just visiting over here."

"Canada, eh. That's a long way from here, woi?"

He fingered his beard, looked thoughtful for a moment, before he asked, "Did you see the investiture this afternoon? Lovely, went off like clockwork. Damn glad."

We looked sheepish. It was the afternoon of the investiture for Prince Charles. We were only a few miles from Wales. Had forgotten all about it.

Instead of paying homage we were trotting all over the Cotswolds, gawking at mediaeval towns like Broadway, Chipping Camden, Stow-on-Wold and others of that ilk, admiring the golden stone in houses which turn different colors with changes of light.

"You could have seen it, you know," the old gent persisted. "Color television in Room 61 and I was the only one there. Son just phoned me from Australia to ask how it went. Friend of Charlie's, you know. Went to school with him, just '21, but he's managing 200,000 head of sheep down under. Went there after a stay with old Hallie Selassie in Ethiopia."

Thoroughly impressed, wife started to draw old whiskers out with a deluge of questions. "Were you ever at Caernarvon?" she enquired in a tone that suggested she sensed a more interesting story.

"Oh yes. There all last week," came the reply. "Damn narrow streets. Could hardly get the horses through."

"Horses?" said wife, becoming really nosy. "What were you doing with horses there?"

"Training them for the investiture," came the offhand reply. "I look after the Queen's Household Cavalry. Worried about those narrow streets. But they pulled it off without a slip. Horses never missed a step."

By this time I'm kicking wife under the table and making slight shovelling motions with the dessert (pardon me) sweet spoon. She completely ignored me.

"What are you doing here, then?" she asked in a reproving voice which suggested he should be over in Wales to help out the Queen.

"My job finished. Everything arranged. Drove here from my farm in Wales this

morning. Devilish tired but sat down for the whole show. Went off without a clip. Damn fine prince, that Charlie. Chip off the old block."

"Was going to stay at the Rising Sun. Ah, my delightful up there. No room, though, so came over here to dinnuh."

"You drove over from Wales this morning?" asked wife in a skeptical tone. (She must have been recalling the time it took us to go 15 miles in England, let alone 150.)

"Made it in just ovuh three hours. One hundred and fifty miles. Good British car, you know. Flags on front. Royal Automobile Club put me onto the best roads. Going over to the Royal Show in Kenilworth now."

Out of a tweedy pocket, the old gent produced a program for the royal show. "Say your Mounties are ovuh there. Fine riders. Canada's a big place, isn't it? Never been myself."

"The Mounties in Kenilworth?" wife enquired.

"Indeed. I'll be having lunch with their commanding officer tomorrow at 2 o'clock. Wear red coats, woi?"

"Well, excuse me. Must toddle off." And away he went, out the door of the hotel.

I called the waiter over. "Could you tell me who the old gentleman was sitting beside us?" I asked.

"Never saw him before," admitted the waiter, glancing at the retreating visitor. Still curious, we paid our bill and followed his trail. But we lost him on Cheltenham's shady streets.

Next day we drove over to Kenilworth to the Royal Agricultural Show partly to satisfy our curiosity and partly to see an English farming show. The Mounties were there. No sign of our friend. It was the first time the better half had ever seen the Mounties' musical ride. She had to travel 3,500 miles and more to glimpse the red coats in action. They were the hit of the show and colored subject of the front page in several newspapers.

Never did find out who our table friend was.

Told an English cousin about it a week or so later and she asked where we were at the time. "Queen's Hotel in Cheltenham," I answered.

"You're liable to run into anyone hobnobbing with those toffee-noses," was her withering comment.

Photos from the past



MISS GARDINER'S class was pictured in front of the town hall. Front row, left to right: Ethel Woods, Ruby Allen, Beatrice Taylor, Helen Evans, Audrey Chalmers, Eileen Breen, Babe Rozell, Annie Gibbons, Frances Jennings, Evelyn Tubman, Kay Huard, Marion Nool, William Hall, K. Watson, Second row Charlotte Marshall, B. Smith, Margaret Arnold, Lois Cripps, Mary Ryder, Lorraine Jacques, Vic Elliott, Annie Holmes, Agnes Chisholm, Marjorie Mann, I. Talbot, A. Cory. Third row Lynne Cox, Rod Ryder, George Footitt, Harvey McCutcheon, George Lazenby, H. McPherson, Leonard Tubman, Cecil Gibbons, W. Tubman, F. Harwood, B. Blanche, B. Patrick, H. Woods.

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