

Opinions Vary From "Garbage" To "Very Worthy Analysis"

Georgetown councillors polled on their opinion of the Plunkett Report were more cautious than those of other municipalities.

The councillors said they only received their copies Monday night and had no time to read far less digest the contents.

Deputy Reeve Young, who received his copy Thursday night when it was first disclosed, said "they put Georgetown in a boat all by itself and cut us adrift."

Cr. Pat Patterson, there is unquestionably a difference of opinion where regional government is concerned. Mayor researched Niagara, Jones researched Ottawa, Plunkett researched Halton and Peel. None of the three agree. No planning authority has come up with the same report. There is no question regional government is a must. All concerned are trying for a solution to regional government and when three so-called experts cannot agree — Who am I.

Cr. Fred Harrison. "With what I've picked up in newspapers, I'd say I disapprove. Reeve George Leslie, Esq., says, "I haven't had a chance to go through it yet."

Deputy Reeve W. Leslie, Esq., says, "I can't see how a man from Montreal can come up here and lay out a plan in a few months for what it has taken our fathers and forefathers a century to build up. I don't like it at all. The way it is, is OK."

Cr. Tom Hill, Esq., says, "Where has democracy gone? They have taken all the wealth to the south and left the north poor."

Cr. George Currie Esq., says, "I just got it Monday night, wouldn't give an opinion yet."

Deputy Reeve Charles Menzies, Milton: "We have now become the poor relations to the south. The rich municipalities will be put together, leaving us with strictly a rural farming area. I should think there would be some very warm discussion on this."

Milton Mayor Sydney Childs: "It's going to be a ball at the start." Reminded that the north would still retain the county seat he replied: "Yes, but who is going to sit on it?" "I am not favourable towards the Report. We were hoping for annexation."

Austin Ledwith, Milton Reeve: "Milton is getting squeezed out. We will be getting further and further away from the people. We will have two representatives on County Council — Georgetown will have all the say."

William Coulter, Reeve of Nassagaweya: "We still have the county seat. Both Peel county and Brampton have gone into debt to pay for new local government facilities. We have done the same thing with the new Administration Building. It would be a very foolish move to leave these buildings in a state of non-existence."

Reeve Robert Speck, Toronto Township: "Improbable and impractical. It will mean an area of well in excess of 3,000 people. It is far, far too

removed from the people. We have seven representatives for a potential population of 1,000,000 people — imagine running for mayor for that one!"

Mayor McLean Anderson, Oakville: "I don't think that the provincial government could come up with anything as interesting as this. I'm delighted. If this report is implemented the ratepayers can't help but win. It cuts out all inter-municipal bickering."

Warden H.H. Hinton, Milton: "I'm extremely interested in the report, and I want an opportunity to assess it fully. I think Mr. Plunkett and his assistants have made a very worthy analysis of the situation."

Warden J.J. Graham, Peel County: "I hope we will look at this report with cool heads. It is obviously a comprehensive document by a competent man with a competent staff. I have heard a lot of negative comment which disappoints me, because I feel we should look at the document as a whole, and not at its conclusions."

Reeve Gordon Gallagher, Burlington: "As far as the southern municipalities are concerned, I feel that if the mayor is to be elected at large it would be difficult for Oakville and Burlington to elect a mayor when the area to the east of us will be representing 60 to 70 per cent of the population. The report has some merit, and deserves considerable study."

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PLUNKETT REPORT

(continued from Page 1)

governed by a fourteen man council, including a mayor elected at large. The councillors would represent districts in the following manner based on representation of approximately 1,000 persons.

Urban	No. of Cns.
1. Acton	1
2. Georgetown	3
3. Milton	2
4. Bolton	1

Rural	No. of Cns.
1. Albion	1
2. Caledon & Cal. East	1
3. Chingy & Toronto Gore 2	1
4. Equeusing & Nassagaweya 2	1

Mayor elected at large 14

The mayor would have veto power over the council. He with two council members would comprise an executive committee. If council wanted to disapprove the mayor's veto, it could reaffirm its vote after a 48-hour waiting period, and it would prevail.

The complete responsibility for the administration of justice, Mr. Plunkett suggests, and the operation of registry offices, should be taken over by the Province.

He recommends a single elected, one-level Board of Education be established in each proposed county with an elected board of trustees equal in number and for the same terms as the members of the respective proposed county councils.

A Director of Education should be appointed responsible for implementing the decisions and policies of their respective Boards.

In each of the four urban cases, Acton, Georgetown, Milton and Bolton, the County should provide for the establishment of a three-member elected Public Service Commission to assume responsibility for the administration of purely local services. Election of these bodies should be at the same time and for the same term as the County Council.

Plunkett estimates the 1988 population of Peel-Halton to be 81,000 and Mississauga to be 296,000. Assessment would be \$67,000,000 in Peel-Halton, and \$488,000,000 in Mississauga, if the realignment took place immediately.

Plunkett claims taxes in Mississauga would remain at the level they are now, and in Peel-Halton may even drop slightly. To ease financial stress on ratepayers, he suggests an annual Provincial grant of \$450 per capita in Mississauga, and \$3.76 per capita in Peel-Halton.

He warns however, that unless present municipal means of financing education is generally altered, a much higher proportion of property tax dollars will have to go for schools.

He offers an alternative to Peel-Halton concerning police protection. He suggests it either establish a county police force and scrap all present town forces, or turn over the area to the Ontario Provincial Police.

If it were decided to establish a county force then a police commission would be needed, but, says Mr. Plunkett, there seems to be no great need immediately for a Hydro Electric Commission or a Library board.

According to this report, the residents of both the present Peel and Halton Counties work near their homes, not in Hamilton or Toronto, as was generally understood before the research work was undertaken.

Now What Happens? — Nothing Unless Municipalities Prod

by Gwyn Kinsley

What happens after the report of a regional government study is made?

The answer: Nothing, unless the regional municipalities want it to happen.

They can make it happen by applying to the Ontario Legislature for a bill to accomplish what they would like to see done in their own particular bailiwick.

The government may prod a little here and there gently and subtly but will not initiate any drastic reform by forcing marriages on municipalities. It was local impetus, for example, that led to the formation by provincial statute of Metro Toronto, and the statute was later amended only after a royal commission inquiry, extensive hearings, and local complaints and demands.

PILOT STUDIES

Starting in 1964, pilot studies of local government in four regions were organized by the municipal affairs department in co-operation with the municipalities concerned. The formal request for the studies came from the municipalities.

Two of the studies have been completed. The report on the Ottawa, Eastview and Carleton County review was made last year, the report on the Niagara Region last month, and the report on the Peel-Halton region.

The fourth report, on the Port Arthur-Fort William region, is not expected until mid-December.

TIME FOR BILLS

Dr. Lorne Cumming, former deputy minister of municipal affairs and now special advisor to Municipal Affairs Minister

J.W. Spooner, points out that in three cases, regional municipalities have time to seek legislation at the session of the legislature starting next January — if they so desire.

The procedure would be to apply for a private bill, which is given first reading in the Legislature and then handed to the Legislature's private bills committee for thorough study. It is at the hearings of the private bills committee that the public can have its say, for or against. Many a private bill is amended or killed at this stage before being reported back to the house for debate or routine passage.

There is no indication at this time that the municipalities in the study areas will take advantage of the legislative route.

TIME FOR STUDY

Still, he made many far-reaching recommendations, and the municipalities have had only a month to study them. It is undoubtedly too early to expect any more for legislative action from the Peninsula.

It will take some time, too, for the Peel-Halton municipalities to digest and discuss the Plunkett report on their region.

There are some startling suggestions in the report — not at all surprising, considering the diverse and rapidly developing nature of the region.

