

County Farmers Will Battle Proposed Assessment Change

Halt County farmers are digging in to fight proposed assessment changes in Ontario which they claim would increase their tax.

The decision to press opposition to the assessment policy was made at a special meeting of Halt County Association of Agriculture of last Wednesday, two days after the Ontario Legislature's select committee on farm reform published its 'program reform' report.

Refusing to be swayed by the Legislature's select committee report issued Monday, the Halt County Federation of Agriculture resolved Tuesday night to press its own policy changes in Ontario.

During a closed portion of a special meeting of the federation's select committee to meet with Lawyer Plante of Brampton. The plan to plan further action was stated for this week.

Halt East MPP James Snow opened at last week's federal meeting to explain the proposals contained in the select committee's report. Snow chaired a special sub-committee with the 13-member select committee to study farm assessments.

"We say that if a farmhouse is receiving the same services as other houses it should be assessed the same," Snow said. "This is only fair."

One director said this recommendation alone would immediately raise assessment up to 80 per cent, while another said: "Whether this is right or not doesn't concern me... it is just going to mean more taxes."

Snow said the committee was mainly concerned with assessment, not taxation, since the two policies are different. However, the committee recognized that a land tax policy alone will not solve the problem of equalization, but that a land use policy will also be required.

Snow said the Smith report relied on the Assessment Act in defining a farm, but his committee felt there should be a better definition and thus recommended what it did.

To be classified as a working farm, a farm must produce livestock or poultry, cash crops, tobacco or Christmas trees.

Horse Farm

"If you have a horse farm and don't grow at least \$3,000 worth of hay, you would not be classified as a working farm," Snow said. "We're probably going to have the horse raising people mad at us over this."

Flower and sod growers would be excluded as working farms under the new classifications, but greenhouse operators would be included if the value of their food production was more than \$3,000 a year.

Also classified as working farms would be intensified operations such as broiler and turkey farms, mushroom farms and hatcheries, if they produced a minimum of \$3,000 in agricultural sales.

Five Years

A farmer could qualify as a retired or semi-retired if he has worked the same land for five years and had reached 60 years of age, Snow said.

The committee's recommendations are designed mainly to solve the problem of unfair equalization in the Golden Horseshoe area of Halton, Peel and West Huron Counties and areas around urban centres, Snow said. They recognize that the value of working farms is the same in these areas as they are 100 miles out in the country and should be assessed the same unless they are being held mainly for speculative value.

He said the committee recommends that once property has been assessed at its actual value then the mill rate should apply to only 60 per cent of that assessment, instead of 70 per cent for all residential, recreational waste and other such lands.

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Working Farm

The sub-committee's main recommendation was a proposal to define a 'working farm' as a farm which has ever had "guts enough" to make such a proposal.

The earlier Smith Report on farm assessments, which the select committee studied for three months, proposed no such definition, but Snow said the five-year study recommended farms be assessed on the basis of market value.

The "working farm" definition is based on gross annual value of agricultural products at the rate of \$30 per acre, with a minimum total of \$3,000.

300 Acres

The man with 300 acres would have to show that he has produced \$9,000 in crops to qualify for farm tax rates. On units of 10 acres or less, the maximum \$900 would apply.

Snow noted that \$30 per acre might not be equitable in certain areas. He said the committee recommended a Farm Classification Board be set up to resolve regional differences.

If the definition is accepted, equalized means that the speculator would not enjoy the advantage of lower property taxes provided for the real farmer.

County Council

Early last week the Federation asked county council to defend its vote on conversion of the county assessment commissioner system until after the setting with its lawyers.

Supporting the request county council went ahead with its vote because the assessment commissioner system was rejected.

Besides recommending that farms be assessed according to their actual value and use, the select committee proposed that farm dwellings and other parts of the farm holding be classified residential for assessment purposes.

THE DISTRICT AT A GLANCE

YUKON — While on a western trip an Erin resident, Austin Pines, made some important archaeological finds at East-end, Saskatchewan. He found a section of a jaw bone and another section containing teeth of a dinosaur. Found in a collection of earth, the parts are estimated to be between 50 and 150 million years old.

BRAMPTON — Residents of Bartley Bull Parkway are protesting a plan of Peel Village Developments on Kennedy Road north that will bring 2,000 apartments to the area. A delegation has protested to Brampton Planning Board on the basis that the new apartment dwellers would create traffic problems.

MILTON — The O.P.T. is not to be allowed to discontinue four passenger trains through Milton according to an order from the Railway Transport Board. The Board said the four trains which the railway asked permission to discontinue did constitute a passenger service and could not be discontinued until the regulation cited.

OAKVILLE — Children are more likely to be driven to violence by their parents than by the TV set, says a report just released by the Oakville-based Peace Research Institute. Based on a study of 126 public school pupils here it says TV violence is more an effect than a cause.

ACTON — Georgetown's contract with the local cable television company will be used as a model with alterations to suit the Acton situation following Acton council's agreement to cable TV established there. Acton's Hydro Commission has requested copies of the Georgetown contract for each member to study.

ORANGEVILLE — Dr. H. T. Dalz, medical officer of health, told 25 post graduate students from the U. of T. last week that the rate of suicide in Dufferin County is 46.9 per 100,000 population. The country with the highest rate in the world, Sweden at a rate of just 7.2. He said no reason for Dufferin County's high rate has been found.

Life Pin Acknowledges 25 Years W.I. Service

The Ashgrove W. I. meeting was held on Tuesday evening, September 17th in the basement of the United Church with Mrs. W. Stringer as hostess. A large number of members, visitors and a few husbands attended at eight o'clock. President Mrs. John Riddell opened the meeting with the ode and creed. Secretary, Mrs. Fred Nurse read last month's minutes and called the roll which was answered with "A place I would like to visit and why."

Yarrow places seemed the most popular answer, but one lady said she was happy right here at home. The Guelph area convention in October was announced with the hopes someone from our W.I. could go at that time.

Ten dollars was voted to Mental Health Association, the resolutions to be presented at the convention were voted on and all were in favour that all packaged foods be prominently labelled in ounces and pounds. Also that too many TV programs contain too much violence and should be carefully screened from young children.

The hat course was announced and leaders will attend in Milton, October 16 and 17.

Mrs. W. Bird presented Mrs. T.J. Brownridge with a life membership certificate and pin for her faithfulness and loyalty during twenty five years for which she expressed her thanks.

The program was then turned over to Mrs. Francis Thompson who after welcoming the husbands & visitors called on Mrs. Arthur Riddell for the motto, "The use of travelling is to regulate imagination by reality and instead of thinking how things might be, to see them as they are." A piano duet by Barbara Brownridge and Ann McClure and reading by Mrs. John Bellbody was followed by a travelogue with pictures on the Yukon and N.W. Territories. Miss McNabb showed colored

PLENTY OF 'DOGS' BURGERS AT FAIR

The Georgetown Agricultural Society now has its quota of eating places for the big show. Those having booths, other than those coming with the midway, are Ballinacree Scout Mothers, The Barbershoppers, Hornby Ladies Guild, Junior Farmers and Glen Williams Girls softball team.

They promise lots of hot tea and coffee, hot dogs and hamburgers, as well as pie and ice cream. The Juniors will be providing good wholesome milk, for it's the "greatest."

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Synagogue, Mackenzie Home on Silverwood W.I. Tour

Silverwood Women's Institute chartered a bus, and with invited guests made a trip to Toronto on September 17th.

First stop was at Beth Tzedec synagogue where Rabbi Fromman welcomed the ladies and an enjoyable tour of the beautiful large building filled an hour. Then to the Grandeur restaurant in High Park for dinner.

Next stop was Toronto city hall where the group finished up on the observation platform and enjoyed a view of the city from each direction. Next they visited the restored home of William Lavan Mackenzie on Bond Street. This proved most interesting, especially the print shop. The old stove and furniture of 1859 era, being post-war light, certainly are a contrast to today's modern homes.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Marchington visited Mr. and Mrs. K. C. Lindsay at Lake Dalrymple recently.

George Burgess is home after a visit with relatives at Orono.

The September meeting of the Silvercreek Women's Institute was held at the county museum at Kelso. Members gathered around the fireplace on the ground floor for their meeting, and then had a tour of the rest of the museum where they saw many newly acquired antiques. Mrs. W. R. Norton, Mrs. Don Lindsay, Mrs. George Jurt, Mrs. Bruce Lindsay and Mrs. Harry

Scott were guests of the Eastern Star on a recent bus trip to Kitchener. The ladies had a trip through the Schneider plant.

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