

Free Press Editorial Page

Why less injuries? . . .

Authorities are now trying to find out why deaths and injuries due to traffic collisions took a sharp drop in Ontario, in the first six months of 1970.

Ontario Department of Transport figures show that 109 fewer people were killed and 1,751 fewer injured than in 1969. This is a reduction of 14.7 per cent in the number of deaths and a 5.1 per cent drop in the number of injuries. Collisions resulting in injuries or fatalities also dropped by 3.9 per cent in the same period.

Although the steady decline in fatal and non-fatal collisions followed the introduction of the .08 per cent blood alcohol content legislation in December, 1969, there is no intent to jump to quick conclusions about the turn of

events. The Department of Transport is also investigating whether increased seat belt use might be a factor in the reduction.

The Department's caution in naming the breathalyzer as the real deterrent to accidents is understandable since all the evidence is not in. But to most people it is as plain as the "nose on your face" that the introduction of the test has made drinking drivers more cautious.

Many people who drink take a cab now, rather than risk running a police gauntlet or taking the test. This has resulted in a sharp drop in the number of collisions.

It is difficult to equate the sudden drop in collisions with a sudden switch to the use of seat belts simultaneously with the new blood content legislation.

Students need jobs . . .

Two senior members of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce are spearheading a drive to solve the perennial summer job problem which students encounter during vacation.

Basic idea is to alter the university and college calendar so students can take time off to work at various times of the year. They claim this would prevent a glut in the job market during the summer months.

One federal government official told The Financial Post the idea has merit not only for solving the summer job problem, but by splitting the academic year into smaller units, it could make higher education more accessible to employed adults.

Perhaps the idea would also take some of the pressure from high school students who also find it next to impossible to obtain employment during the summer months.

Often, parents depend on June or Johnny making enough money

during the summer vacation to clothe themselves for the year. When jobs are not available, it puts a strain on family budgets, as well as the students!

At one time it was considered next to impossible for students to study during hot summer months. Certainly concentration in hot, humid weather is no easy chore for teacher or student, but the success of the three semester system at several universities seems to discredit the theory that it can't be done.

Staggered vacation periods might disrupt the old family style summer but benefits would far outweigh the liabilities of such a scheme.

We understand the entire concept of time off from classes was dictated when Canada had a rural economy and the children were needed to help on the farm during the growing season. Naturally, the schools closed when no one showed up.

But times have changed — or have they?

Figures reveal truths . . .

After reading so much speculation about the cost of consolidated school boards in Ontario, it was refreshing to run across an article by the Minister of Education, William G. Davis refuting much of the theorizing that county school boards are costing the taxpayer more money to operate percentage-wise.

Mr. Davis' latest figures on the cost of education as researched by the Department of Education compares the cost under the new larger units of administration which began operation January 1, 1969, to the costs of smaller units in the previous three years.

According to the figures, the rate of increase in cost under the new larger units decreased by 5.67 per cent in 1969 as compared to 1968, and decreased 6.56 per cent this year as compared to 1968. This refutes some of the criticism directed at his department for loading taxpayers with education taxes caused by escalating education costs which critics said small boards would not have caused.

It is also worthy of note that percentage rates declined in spite of the fact that more students are enrolled in Ontario schools and are remaining in the school system longer than at any other time in the history of the province. There is also the fact to consider that the new boards have introduced or extended programs for students

which were not available under the old system of individual boards.

We think it is worthwhile to reproduce the figures supplied by the Minister:

In 1966 the costs of the elementary school boards were \$527,084,000, which represented an increase of 15.38 per cent over the previous year. In the same year the costs of the secondary school boards were \$351,363,000, an increase of 16.73 per cent. Total cost of elementary and secondary school boards in 1966 was \$878,447,000, an increase of 15.92 per cent over 1965.

In 1967 the total cost of the elementary school boards was \$618,718,000, an increase of 17.39 per cent over 1966, while secondary school board costs were \$429,424,000, representing an increase of 22.22 per cent.

The total cost of elementary and secondary school boards in 1967 was \$1,048,142,000, an increase of 19.32 per cent over 1966.

In 1968 the total cost of the elementary boards was \$748,963,000 an increase of 21.05 per cent over 1967.

Secondary school board costs for 1968 were \$513,417,000, an increase of 19.56 per cent.

The total cost in 1968 was \$1,262,380,000, an increase of 20.44 per cent over 1967.

Based on the estimated expenditures of the new larger units of administration, the total cost of the elementary school boards in 1969 was \$855,747,000, an increase of 14.26 over 1968. The cost of secondary school boards was \$593,113,000 an increase of 15.52 per cent.

Total cost of elementary and secondary boards in 1969 was \$1,448,860,000, which represents an increase of 14.77 per cent over 1968. This year the cost of elementary school boards is \$969,220,000, an increase of 13.26 per cent over 1969, while secondary school board costs will total \$480,780,000 an increase of 14.78 per cent.

The 1970 total is \$1,650,000,000, an increase of 13.88 per cent over 1969.



BILL STUCKEY'S CAMERA caught this night shot of the Fair midway which operated three evenings.



and Pepper by hartley coles

All the talk about the coldness and impersonality of the big city is hard to discredit when you've experienced a trying day in the big smoke. But it isn't necessarily true.

The other day this fuzzy faced fellow was squiring three relations in Toronto, one of whom was my wife, when an incident happened which changed my impressions and gave me a warm glow for our city cousins.

Intersections being few and long between, we decided to jay-walk across one of the principal streets which runs east and west in downtown Toronto. We waited until traffic was almost nil. Then I dashed across the road expecting the others to follow.

I made the other curb with no difficulty and turned to assist the three ladies. But they stood frozen on the far curb, eyeing a street car which was rumbling up.

The street car pulled up almost even with them. Then it stopped. The driver gestured in mock sweeping bow motioning them to go across.

They were thunderstruck for a fraction of a second. Then they got the idea. With much giggling and laughing, they proceeded slowly across the street. The conductor, grinning, turned on the power and proceeded westward.

Several people witnessed the incident. Some were surprised. Others like myself were amused and pleased that their city folk aren't such cold fish after all.

The intricacies of the computer age are often cited as proof that people today lack the ability to poke fun at themselves. But this sign outside our glass-enclosed roomful of computing machinery shows that we aren't all that humorless:

ACHTUNG:
Alles Lookenspeppers
Das computermaschine is nicht fur gefingergelassen und mittingrabben.
Ist easy schnappen der springenwerk, blown fusen, und poppencorken mit spizen-sparken.

OUR READERS WRITE:

Commends — not critical

Dear Sir:

An open letter to the Acton Chamber of Commerce and the citizens of Acton:

A few weeks ago I was quoted in this paper as saying, at a council meeting that the Acton Development Commission criticized the Chamber of Commerce for the poor state of repair of the sign announcing entrance to the Town of Acton, at the south side of town.

I wish to state publicly that neither the Acton Development Commission nor myself have criticized the Chamber of Commerce in this regard. In fact I would like to commend the Chamber for being the one organization interested in placing signs at the several entrances to the town.

The Acton Development Commission did write to the Chamber of Commerce requesting permission to use the sign at the

south entrance to town if the Chamber of Commerce had no immediate plans for the sign. As we have read in this paper recently, the Chamber of Commerce is actively investigating a modernization of this sign.

Since the Acton Development Commission is interested in all development in the Town of Acton, I am sure that the Chamber of Commerce could call on them for assistance in this project. I also hope that all organizations in town will co-operate with the Chamber of Commerce in seeing suitable signs are placed at all entrances to the town.

In closing I would like to thank the Chamber of Commerce for its active interest in the development of the Town of Acton.

Yours sincerely
Bill Coles.



Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

I don't advocate taking the law into your own hands, but can't help feeling a glow of satisfaction when a human being, in this age of anonymity and conformity, reacts to an intolerable situation with a fine individual rage.

We all have a wild streak in us, a spark ready to catch fire, but we usually manage to smother it under the wet blanket of society's manners and morals. And a good thing, too, but sometimes a pity. There is no better purge of tension than a good blaze of anger once in a while.

Sometimes this streak is warped, and it comes out in vandalism, sadism or blind violence.

But within every man, however humble and unassuming, hides a black panther. And within every woman, behind those smiles and make-up and hairpray and deodorant, lurks a leopardess.

Just recently I went out to get some corn at a roadside stand. There were two bushel baskets and this god-awful woman and her slob of a husband were going through every ear of corn, ripping down the husks and throwing the discarded stalks. This is the epitome of bad taste.

I stood behind them, waiting, blood coming to a boil. Just as I was ready to hurl a searing bolt of invective at them, the farm kids rolled up with a wagon loaded with big, green, luscious cobs, fresh off the stalk. I walked to the wagon, grabbed a dozen, walked back to the stand and plunked their juicy carcasses right down beside old greedy-guts, who had just paid for a much inferior dozen. The look on her face poured oil on my troubled waters.

And then there was a flying instructor I was going to strangle as soon as we landed. However, he was about six-two to my five-eight, and I'd have needed a pall to stand on. So I settled by telling him to go to hell. Amazingly, he sidled off and that's the last I heard of it. People in authority are often cowards. Just show them your teeth and claws.

Another strangling I contemplated was that of a German sergeant who had put the boots to me. "Just as soon as I'm untied, I'll kill him, even if he kills me." But I wasn't untied for several days, and by that time we were buddies. I smoking his pipe and the pair of us jabbering away in a stew of French, German and English.

These were comparatively simple incidents, but they happen to most people. (Let's hear about some of yours.)

A couple of recent news stories convinced me that Man has not been turned into a grey cypher, even in this smothering society.

A chap in Miami had sent his prize dog, via airline, to Texas for stud purposes. The dog was worth \$25,000. The airline goofed, and somehow the dog was returned to Florida, where it was found to be dead of heat prostration.

Now, the logical, civilized thing to do would be to sue the airline. Of course, you might spend a year or two in the courts, with a possibility of losing the case and winding up with a mitt full of legal bills.

This fellow chose direct action. He went to the airport with an axe and started hacking at the underbelly of an aircraft. He did damage worth \$100,000 before he was stopped. Foolish, but somewhat admirable. This is no computerized man. More like the Charge of the Light Brigade.

Then there was this 24-year-old gentleman who was living with a 50-year-old lady in her trailer home. She threw him over for a 72-year-old rooster, who kicked him out of the trailer.

What could he do? Go to the police? Nope. There was no charge he could lay. The lady had transferred her favors to another and that was that.

But he wasn't felled. He struck back. He made a firebomb and set fire to the trailer, causing \$15,000 damage.

Boy, I hope I can be as jealous and resourceful as that when I'm 84.

Free Press back issues

20 years ago

75 years ago

Taken from the Issue of the Free Press Thursday, September 21, 1950

Last Sunday morning in Ebenezer United Church special services were held officially dedicating a new pipe organ. Rev. R. W. Pickersgill performed the dedication ceremony.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Fines, Ospringe, held a corn roast at their home in aid of the community centre.

One of the very first apprentices at the Free Press, Mitchell Cobban died September 11 at his home in Winnipeg.

The only man in Ryan's fashion show on Wednesday in Guelph was a brilliant success. He was five-year-old Peter Wolfe, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Wolfe, Acton. Little red-headed Peter stole the show from the professional models from Toronto when he bowed to the full house-backwards.

Mr. and Mrs. Ballentine, who have been operating the Television Lunch just at the edge of town on the highway to Georgetown, have closed the restaurant and are planning to make a private apartment of it.

Mr. and Mrs. Donald McLean will move to Harrow and Mr. and Mrs. Alf Long and family will live in their house on Church St.

Work is continuing on a new addition to Hinton's store. When it is completed the front of the store will be remodelled.

50 years ago

Taken from the Issue of the Free Press Thursday, September 30, 1920.

Next Thursday and Friday will be eventful days for Rockwood. These are the dates for the fall fair. The new instruments for the brass band have arrived. In a few months Rockwood will have a first class band of its own.

Mr. E. H. Near of Detroit motored to Acton on Saturday, a 280 mile drive in one day. He returned with Mrs. Near and the children who have been visiting here for several weeks.

The other morning when a mother in town took her lad's coat to mend a rip she found a package of Millbank cigarettes in a pocket. Naturally perturbed over the incident she inquired when and where they were purchased. The boy, who is barely fourteen years of age, gave the information that he had purchased the cigarettes and a bottle of pop at (name given) restaurant on Sunday morning. Information of this violation was laid before H. P. Moore, Police Magistrate and the case was heard on Tuesday afternoon. The owner of the store admitted he had forgotten to tell his cousin, who was the clerk, it was illegal to sell tobacco to children under 18 years of age. A conviction was registered and a fine of \$20 and costs imposed. The magistrate pointed out that not only was the law against the sale of tobacco to minors violated but also the law prohibiting sales of tobacco on Sunday.

A traction engine and thresher skidded off the road on the fourth line hill at Scott's on Friday evening. It took quite a gang of men to put it on the road next day.

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