



ALTHOUGH SNOW is still deep in the bush, streams are taking on a deep, fast flowing appearance as they wind through areas like this near Hilton Falls on the Bruce Trail. Pussy Willows are popping and there's a scent in the air that even the birds interpret as Spring.—(J. Carpenter Photo)



## Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

One last boot in the behind for March and then let us leave it and the whole perishing winter that has embattled this land, this year, and move on to higher thoughts.

March is known for very little, beyond giving everyone the last, and worst bout of flu for the year.

However, we'll give it its due. One of its oldest associations is with Julius Caesar. Wealthy, dictator of Rome, outstanding general, and well on his way to becoming the first emperor of the mighty Roman Empire, he was a victim of March.

Big Julie was taking part in a procession during the Feast of Lupercal, which is neither here nor there. As the parade wended its way to wherever it was going, through the terrible traffic of Rome, which is still terrible, a seer (this is usually a chap who can't see, except into the future) stepped in front of Caesar's chariot. This is a custom, I understand, that is faithfully followed by pedestrians in Rome to this day.

Anyway, the old croaked in sepulchral tones. "Beware the Ides of March." Now, in those days, the Ides of March meant the fifteenth of March. This was just a few days away. And when a seer tells you to beware, you'd better be wary. Those seers don't mean you're going to wake up on the given day with a hang-over, or even worse, a hang-nail.

Unfortunately, Julius was a bit deaf in one ear and also had his annual March cold and was coughing so loudly he couldn't have heard the last trump. So he missed the message.

You guessed it. Right on the nose, on the Ides of March, he was filled full of cold steel. Not by student activists, or black militants, but by trusted, nay, beloved fellow-members of the Roman Senate.

It should, perhaps, be pointed out that the Roman Senate differed in some respects from the Canadian Senate. In those days, senators were not just old politicians put out to pasture, or party bag-men. Some of them were under 40 and they all knew how to handle a shiv.

That sort of thing just couldn't happen in the Canadian Senate. The worst that could occur would be tripping over a cane, or being run over by a wheelchair, or bludgeoned to death by a speech.

However, that is all, as the saying goes, ancient history. The only lesson to be learned from it is that when you hear a seer, don't sneer. Especially in March, Ides of

Another event for which March is reasonably well-known is St. Patrick's Day, the 17th. Perhaps "reasonably" is not the

word here, since it is a celebration of one of the patron saints of Ireland (the other is King Billy), and who ever met a reasonable Irishman?

I'm almost pure Irish, on both sides. But let them keep their precious saints, both Patrick and Billy. In Ireland, where the bog-trotters can bash each other's brains in, their favorite sport.

Must say, it makes my blood run a bit cold, though, when some Canadian with eight drops of Irish blood in him decks out in a green tie and a shamrock and gets into that "Top o' the mornin'" routine.

And it makes me want to throw up, every St. Pat's day, when a Jewish comedian starts tossing around "Begorra's" or an Italian tenor, all misty-eyed, warbles, "When Irish eyes are smiling."

It's as incongruous as a Canadian seventh-generation United Empire Loyalist making a big fuss about St. Wladislaw's Day, or Channukah, or Buddha's birthday. Each to his own, and vive la difference.

See how the month of March gets me worked up? Other months rhyme with something pleasant. June with moon and swoon. July with fly — to Europe or somewhere. September with remember, but March does with such delightful connotations as starch and arch (as in fallen).

The only other thing for which March is noted is the vernal equinox, the 21st, the first day of spring, ha ha. Vernal suggests green. Take a look out. Snow white or mud brown. Equinox is from the latin: equus — horse; nox — night. Spells nightmare, March, right?

Adieu, farewell, auf wiedersehen and au revoir, March. May you rot in July.

about the outcome of talks with the two factions of Cypriots but was happy that the last two years had seen the situation on the island a lot calmer.

His position as head of the church and also president of the country drew some questioning from our group. We wanted to know if leadership in the future might be separated from the church. Makarios emphasized he did not want the state to interfere in church affairs and suggested he had been elected president because the people felt he could offer leadership. He said he hoped to be relieved of his duties as president to devote his full time to the church. It was an answer which was not new, but we found it difficult to accept its credibility.

Enosis figured in our discussions with President Makarios. Enosis is the desire of Greek Cypriots for union with Greece, and it has proven a troublesome political factor. The president suggested Enosis couldn't proceed on wishful thinking. He maintained it was something for discussion between Greece and Turkey, not by the two Cypriot factions.

There were interesting aspects in the discussion on local government. President Makarios pointed out the Turkish people on the island (the minority) proposed one Greek and one Turkish local government in the settlements and then amalgamation for the federal system. He maintained that federation would not be possible unless preparations were made to move the population from one area to the other so that Turks could be concentrated in one area.

"We are a uniting state and they want division." He predicted that if the Greeks agreed to federation the Turks would later ask for partition of the island.

Reflecting on the problem, I wondered if there might not be some food for thought for Canadians as we consider the French problem which we experience in this country and that which we saw in Cyprus between the minority Turkish element and the majority Greek element.

As I thought about the tremendous economy boost which the presence of the six-nation U.N. force provides on the island, I wondered how the Turk and Greek Cypriots, who had managed to live together under a variety of influences from the pre-Christian era, suddenly became so antagonistic to each other that they required this major presence on their island. The barbed wire and sentry posts are all very

(Continued on Page B3)

## Conflict and Contrast

Jim Dills was one of 18 weekly newspaper men from five provinces selected for a two week study tour including Israel, Cyprus, Germany and England. He writes his observations and conclusions in this series.

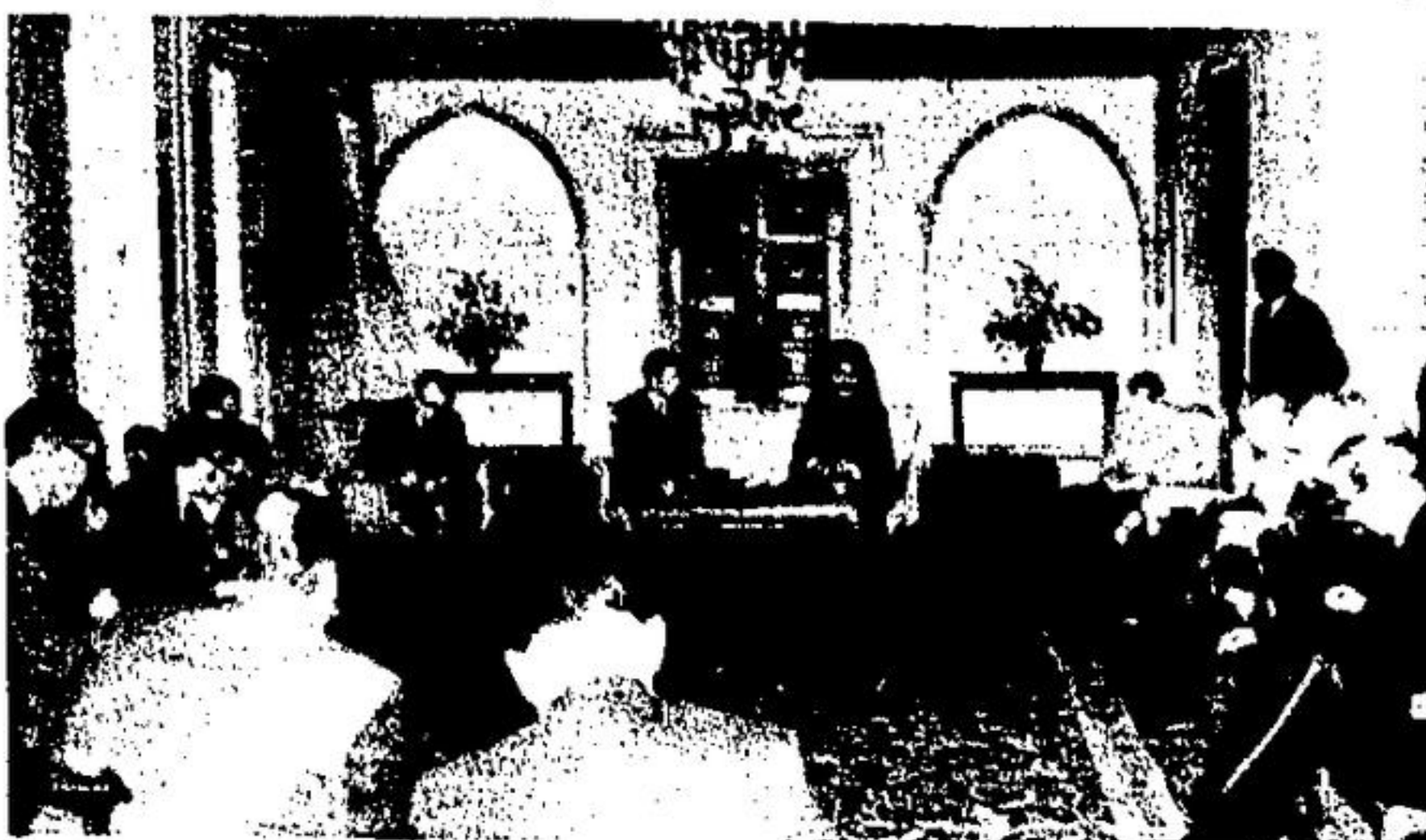


I reflected on our coming interview with Archbishop Makarios as our bus drove along the street and the contrasts were evident with shattered buildings on one side and new construction on the other. Barbed wire surrounded the Palace where we were to meet the Archbishop. It had been the government house when the British occupied the island and the huge British coat of arms still stood in bold relief over the entrance of the sprawling yellow building with its red tile roof. The sky was overcast but the pleasant temperature indicated the hot, sultry kind of summer days that would come with the summer season.

The palace is an impressive building and we were escorted to a large room, seated,

and the black robed figure who heads the Greek Orthodox Church and the Island's governments moved silently in to take his place for one of the first press conferences he had permitted in the past six months.

To questioning he spoke glowingly of the contribution of Canada in maintaining the peace as one of the member nations in the U.N. force. The contingent, he said, is discharging its duties in an excellent way and enjoying the confidence of both sides. He foresaw, unfortunately, no early end to the need for U.N. forces on the island but expressed the hope that withdrawal, when it came, would be in stages and up to 1,000 U.N. troops would remain until settlement had been reached. He was not optimistic



NEWSMEN ON THE CWNA study tour were received by Archbishop Makarios in the Government House, behind barbed wire and sentries. The building is the former Governor's

Palace from the time when Cyprus was a British possession. Its elegance is still evident although grounds are not particularly well kept.

## Free Press Editorial Page

### Not the way it looks . . .

At the most recent meeting of Acton council the subject of the education levy was raised. While there was no official notification the rate was lowered, several councillors were aware Acton could expect a 4.58 decrease in the mill rate for educational purposes.

The deputy-reeve reminded council that they were forced to cut things from the municipal budget when the education levy was raised. He suggested now the school rate was less it was time to get cracking on some of the other things that needed done in town.

At this point the mayor brought up the fact that council was criticized last year for a decrease in the mill rate when actually the general levy for municipal purposes had increased by 3.1 mills. Because there was a reduction in the school rate last year,

this enabled council to cut 2.4 mills from the overall tax rate.

The confusion over whether council cut or raised the mill rate stems from the interpretation.

The ordinary ratepayer does not look at the educational levy and the general rate for municipal taxes separately, as councillors do. He is concerned about the total amount of taxes he has to pay each year. Last year there was a reduction.

Some ratepayers felt council should have left the mill rate where it stood the year before to get some much needed projects done around town.

At that time the Free Press took the position that there was a tax cut because ratepayers would pay less in taxes. We said there are disturbing things about cutting taxes when the town needed improvements. "Postponing major expenses has often

only succeeded in compounding problems and inflating costs when jobs finally have to be done."

We would still take that position.

But councillors concerned about the question are right. The general purpose levy was raised 3.1 mills and this is really the only area of control council has over the tax rate. They have no control over spending of the Board of Education.

Council obviously felt a 3.1 hike in the general purpose rate was sufficient for one year.

Others felt the tax rate could have been left where it was and extra money could have been used in places where it was needed.

Obviously it is a problem in semantics between council and ratepayers. We hope this helps to clarify the confusion.

### Was county council underpaid? . . .

We would be remiss indeed if we allowed the large increase in county council fees to pass without comment. Last year county councillors' fees, mileage, expenses and convention trips cost taxpayers \$37,939. This year \$68,700 has been set aside for the very same expenses. Almost \$23,000 of the extra \$30,000 for expenses of the 14 councillors is in the form of increased pay.

The warden's salary was upped from \$8,500 to \$10,000. Councillors' per diem fees of \$30 were dropped in favor of a flat rate of \$3,000 per year.

Last year's council fees totalled \$19,548 for a \$1,500 average. This year they will total \$39,000, almost double.

Perhaps the most surprising development, however, is that county council has decided no member will be docked for missing meetings, a new wrinkle designed to see everyone receives their full share of the common pot.

The Milton Canadian Champion comments that theoretically this means a member of council would not have to attend another meeting this year and yet could still collect the \$3,000.

Although Acton pays only one-fiftieth of the county budget and the townships of Nassagaweya and Esquering have proportionate shares, ratepayers will certainly be interested in the reasons for the large increases. A modest amount would be accepted without too much criticism but size of the increases opens up only two possibilities:

(1) Either county councillors have been vastly underpaid in the past or (2) they are inviting criticism for dipping so far into the public purse.

The \$3,000 honorarium for each councillor now puts them on a par with

the county board of education whose trustees receive \$250 a month. However, county councillors also receive a stipend from their own municipalities which puts them well ahead of their confreres.

The following table of county council's spending for administration in the past two years is a useful guide to compare the increases. Note the \$3,000 budgeted this year for public relations. Perhaps county councillors assumed the public would not accept the increases kindly and also budgeted towards explaining the reasons to the public.

	1970 Budget	1970 Actual	1971 Budget
Councillor Fees	22,000.00	19,548.00	39,000.00
Councillor Mileage	2,250.00	2,244.00	3,000.00
Councillor Expenses	250.00	209.00	250.00
Councillor Conventions	4,500.00	7,207.00	10,000.00
Warden's Salary	6,500.00	6,500.00	10,000.00
Warden's Mileage	1,000.00	668.00	1,000.00
Warden's Expenses	200.00	20.00	200.00
Warden's Conventions	1,000.00	544.00	1,000.00
Employer's Share - C.P.P.	250.00	287.00	500.00
Meals and Presentations	745.00	82.00	750.00
Public Relations			3,000.00
<b>Total - Members of Council</b>	<b>\$39,445.00</b>	<b>\$37,939.00</b>	<b>\$68,700.00</b>

### Education is being questioned . . .

In the early 1960's, education was virtually beyond criticism, a situation brought about largely by the Soviet challenge as symbolized by Sputnik 1.

Recently public enthusiasm has cooled. Canadians are still sympathetic toward the claims of education but they approach it in a more critical spirit. "Is the product worth the price?" "Can the country continue to afford it?" These are the questions both

educators and governments must ask themselves and then furnish the answers.

New priorities have emerged to make their claim on the tax dollar. A new dimension in health and welfare, plus growing concern over pollution, are but two of these new priorities. In the face of such needs, education must now justify, as never before, its claim on the public purse.

We are witnessing a revolution in the public's attitude to education—a questioning of something that never used to be questioned. (Until a few years ago, education was the most sacred of sacred cows in Canada: Today people are asking if Malcolm Muggeridge was not right in calling education "the great mumbo-jumbo and fraud of the age.")—St. Marys Journal-Argus

## Free Press back issues

### 20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 29, 1951

From Tokyo to Malton in 46 hours, Private John Keith Robertson arrived at his home on R. R. 1, Campbellville, last Saturday. The first Ontario soldier to return from Korea, he was wounded in the left shoulder and left eye after a week's combat. His father John Robertson was a township councillor some years ago.

At the regular meeting of the Acton Planning Board the chairman, Theron Jones, stressed that the board should proceed to work immediately on a master plan of the town. Included in the master plan would be the paving of roads, repairs to sidewalks and new sidewalks to be constructed. Future residential and industrial planning would also be indicated. Chilly gusts of winds, snow and a feeble sun greeted Easter. Special services were observed at Acton's five churches and a sunrise service, conducted by the young people of the Protestant congregations, was held in the United church at 7 a.m. Ernest West delivered the message.

At the Baptist church Easter Sunday marked the last service taken here by Mr. Stanley Woodcock, student pastor.

### 50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 31, 1921

There is a good deal of satisfaction here that Rockwood is really on the map for the Toronto-Sarnia highway route. They'll be satisfied whether it comes in by Goose St. or the Rockwood line.

The vexing question of Daylight Saving bobs up week after week with increasing persistence. That it will never become

generally popular has long since been manifest.

Easter morning's weather was rather showery for new Easter millinery.

Did you know that for 25 years after Acton was settled there wasn't a postage stamp in the place? The first postage stamp issued in Canada was in 1851.

Reeve Barber gives the annual notice to citizens to clean up their premises and comply with the Public Health Act. Residents are required to clean forthwith their cellars, drains, yards, pig sties, water closets, outbuildings, and other premises and remove there from all dirt, manure and other substances which may endanger the public health. The Sanitary Inspector will make a general inspection starting May 10. In summer dogs must be kept at least 70 feet from any dwelling and 50 feet from any street or lane.

### 75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 19, 1896.

Mr. William Smith, Nassagaweya, who was taken to the general hospital, Guelph, sometime ago and was found to be suffering from some unknown disease, died on Saturday morning last.

The patrons of the Rockwood cheese factory held a meeting to discuss next season's business. The poor season proved fairly satisfactory after all. Last Friday evening the home of Mr. Harry Gibbons, third line, was the scene of a very happy event. Shortly after eight Harry was sitting quietly by his fireside singing to his little daughter Hazel that sweet little song "She's the Only Girl I Love" when a rap came to the door. He quietly rose and went to see who the caller might be, when, lo and behold! a crowd of people numbering about 70, with baskets in hand, came marching into the room. It is needless to say

Harry and his wife were not a little surprised. After the friends had all got inside an address was read by Mr. William E. Swackhammer thanking them for the attentive and continued service to the Churchill Sabbath School and Church. Mrs. David Smith presented Mr. Gibbons with a beautiful gold chain with seal attached and Mrs. A. Smith presented Mrs. Gibbons with a splendid silver cruet stand. A delightful tea, for which the ladies of Churchill are noted, was served. The remainder of the evening, until about one o'clock, was taken up with songs and games.

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