



THE UNBELIEVER was the title of a playlet at the Baptist church Christmas program Sunday evening. Playing grandpa, knees warmed by a blanket, is Grant Clark. Others in the scene are Linda Henderson, Paul McGinn and Lormer McGinn. There were songs, recitations and plays after the dinner in the church basement.

Region salaries under fire but councillors speechless

Halton Region Councillors were told they had prejudiced their own success and that of the regional government concept by acting in haste and setting their salaries as a top priority item.

W. S. Thompson of Oakville told the council Wednesday that he realizes taking part in public service was often a thankless job and noted the problems which elected officials had to contend with.

Thompson said many people were against regional government and some were dedicated to seeing that it doesn't work. He suggested the salary issue had been poorly handled and gave regional government opponents reason to believe regional government was going to be very expensive.

Both he and Leo Haber of Burlington, who also addressed council on that subject, recommended the resolution setting salaries at \$8,500 be rescinded and a citizens' committee be set up to recommend a salary.

Thompson, who is vice-president of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Association, noted pressure was being put on the province to set councillor salary limits as was once done.

Thompson said he did not view the councillors' positions as full time jobs. He said many still collected full salaries from another job. "If anyone quit their job to take this on full time, they couldn't have been making much anyway and it might be that this job is over their head," he said.

Others lower Listing other regional councillor salaries, Thompson noted Ottawa-Carleton paid \$9,500 for councillors and \$8,500 for the executive committee, Niagara received \$7,000, Waterloo \$5,000, York \$3,500 and Sudbury \$5,000. He noted many of these regions had complex problems that do not exist in Halton.

Thompson dropped a huge pile of mail and clipped newspaper editorials on the clerk's desk and suggested the file

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS
In England, Christmas is said to have been observed first as a holiday in 521 A.D. when King Arthur celebrated his victory in retaking York.

represented a substantial protest. Mr. Haber indicated Halton ratepayers would pay more per capita for council salaries than any other region in the province. He noted Hamilton-Wentworth would pay \$9

cents per capita and Halton would pay \$1.03. Negotiate Haber said the citizens who foot the bill should have the right to have a say in what the councillors would be paid. He re-iterated what Thompson had said and urged a citizens' committee representative of the county be established to negotiate salaries.

None of the councillors questioned either spokesman. None of the councillors offered a defence or explanation of why the salaries were set when they were, or for the amount.



SANTA'S HEADING down the aisle and the children turn in their pews at the United church concert to welcome him. He had candy for all of them. A good crowd attended the informal concert and carol singing.

Project growth to '78 - '79

There are presently 18,428 students in Halton's 15 high schools and school populations are expected to grow until 1978 or 1979 before they level out, according to statistics presented at the Halton Board of Education meeting Thursday by Em Lavender, assistant director of education.

Lavender said additional accommodation must be provided in the next five years, but the Ministry of Education's concern that maximum use is being made of all school facilities means the board may have to find alternatives to building more new schools.

Rated capacity of the 15 high schools is 21,760

students, indicating there should be 3,332 empty pupil places, but the board claims the effective capacity of the schools is only 90 per cent of the rated capacity so there isn't much room left.

Alternatives suggested include adjusting some school boundaries, transporting some high school students to facilities outside their area, using some public schools or using portables.

Significant changes in the accommodation picture could come from any changes in subdivision growth, the Ministry's position on grade 13, or a decision by Halton Separate School Board to build a separate high school, Lavender explained.

Near capacity Georgetown District High School has a rated capacity of 1,985 and enrollment of 1,802, his report showed. Plans are registered for 112 single family dwellings, expected to produce another 34 students for that school and proposed plans show another 750 possible students. Most of the homes listed as "proposed" are south of the west branch of the Credit River and development is at least three years away, he said.

Georgetown should reach capacity (or near it) by 1975, he said. Lavender said there is a need for more elementary school accommodation in Acton, too, and a full report on the Acton situation will be presented to the board in 1974.

At one point the board proposed a special vocational wing at the new Milton high school, to accommodate students from the north of the country who spend long hours each day on buses travelling to technical schools along the lakeshore. The Ministry of Education turned down the wing but Lavender feels the board should pursue the need with the Ministry.

"Some of the distances covered by these pupils is unreasonable," Lavender said. This year 330 special vocational pupils are being transported to General Brock and Wolfe Schools in the south and projections show that figure will grow to 417 by 1978.

DECORATING
When children need a change from the toys on Christmas day, a promising project could be to let them see what they can do with the family greeting cards.

Tape or staple cards to lengths of ribbon and hang them on walls or doors. Make a Christmas wreath by attaching cards to a circle of cardboard.

"Frame" cards with construction paper.

Marathon meeting

Members of Halton Regional Council and those people attending the regular meeting Wednesday had to either leave early or have a late supper.

The meeting started at 2 p.m. and wasn't completed until 6.45. Applicants for the position of chairman of the land division committee waited from 2 p.m. until 5.30 before any of them were eventually interviewed.

The meeting was held up during the discussion of committee reports. A great deal of time was spent when a hassle developed over staff appointments and salaries.

Regional salary hassle

Halton Region Council was criticized by Burlington member David Coons when the council approved the hiring of some people with salaries specified but refused to hire others in the same fashion.

The dispute surfaced when council approved the hiring of Purchasing Agent Roy Higgins of Burlington at \$18,260 and Deputy Treasurer Jim McQueen at \$19,500.

However Deputy Clerk John Byrne was appointed deputy clerk without any reference to salary in the resolution. Clerk Garfield Brown had recommended a salary of \$13,942. Coons suggested \$13,279. But council would not determine his salary until the personnel officer is hired and a report is filed.

Coons and a number of other councillors objected to different treatment for staffers but were unsuccessful in making any change.

★ NOTICE ★

There will be no Bingo at the Credit Valley Club this Monday, December 24.

Watch This Paper For The Next Bingo Date

Georgetown Elks Lodge No. 540

A MESSAGE FROM THE Halton High School Teachers

During the past week, a serious conflict has arisen over an emergency bill introduced in the Legislature by Education Minister Thomas Wells.

As a clear picture of the conflict has not been presented in all the media, we believe the time has come for improved communication between the teachers and the community in Halton County.

It's sufficient to say here that the proposed legislation has implications that go far beyond the teaching profession, and endanger the integrity of relations between employers and employees generally.

Our business is teaching, not political activism. The situation has, however, reached a point where direct action is unavoidable. We sincerely regret any dislocation caused to our students and their families.

We would welcome a response from parents and other concerned people in the community. Please write to the OSSTF representative at your nearest high school.

If you listen to our position and still disagree with us, that's fine. But we're looking for your support. By opening a dialogue and furnishing the straight facts, we think that many of you will agree with us.

We are District 9 of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation—the men and women who teach the young people in YOUR high schools.

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For A Christmas To Remember

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