

**OUR READERS WRITE:**

**McKeough wrong, rural area**

R. R. 2, Rockwood, Ontario, November 14, 1975.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir:  
I never had much time for Darcy McKeough as a planner or politician. The reports on his visit to Halton Region have convinced me I was right. As a politician I watched him debate Energy with Ralph Nader on national T.V. Nader made McKeough look like a bumbling idiot. As a planner, the failure of regionalism, (his baby) speaks for itself, and only advertises his ineptitude.  
At Halton Region he reportedly stated we in the rural areas have paid too little, too long, I challenge that statement. We in the rural areas pay and pay dearly for what we get.  
We supply our own water, treat our own sewage, dispose of our own garbage, we pay more fire insurance (because of limited service) we pay more for hydro, telephones; we get less police protection, none of the urban amenities such as hockey arenas, swimming pools; libraries are further away and much less handsomely stocked; our roads are not as well

serviced; we have no transportation system; and limited telephone service. Our school children do not have the opportunity to go to schools for special skills.  
If some of us live in large homes on large lots, it is mainly because our municipalities were advised to implement zoning by-laws (at the government's insistence) stipulating large homes on large lots. Such homes are known now to waste energy and building materials, and the large lots are beyond the pocketbook of a person of average means.  
Let's put the responsibility not on the shoulders of the rural people, but fairly and squarely where it belongs, on the leadership at Queen's park.  
McKeough cited duplication under regional government. The Big Blue Machine printed the blueprint, the Big Blue Machine appointed the chairman to run the regional machine that was created from that blueprint.  
Regionalism has proven to be a tax gobbling monster, mired in its own "blue" tape, for which only McKeough and his cohorts can take credit.

William A. Johnson.

**No "free ride" in Esquesing**

Dear Sir:

I take objection to Darcy McKeough's statement at the Halton Regional Council meeting whereby he stated that "Esquesing residents have enjoyed a free ride for years... have used recreation services, school, fire and police facilities that are largely paid for by the urban dwellers... the guy in urban Oakville has subsidized the guy in Esquesing and the guy in Esquesing has had pretty damn good service."  
Prior to his lashing out at Councillor Howitt he should have investigated our position. Some politicians seem to take great delight in making portions of the public believe that they are carrying the load for others, thereby creating unnecessary dissension. Mr. McKeough is a man with a responsible position, sounding off in a very irresponsible way. He gives the impression that the rural residents are free loaders, paying little and taking all. Perhaps that is indicative of the rural area of Chatham where he resides, but the "free ride" just does not exist here.  
Each and every rural dweller (we are no longer "Esquesing" residents) of Halton Hills must, above all, be self-sufficient. We are totally responsible for the disposition of our garbage, arranging for and maintaining our water supply and sewage disposal and renting street lights. We do not have hydrants, paved roads, sidewalks or storm sewers.  
Regarding fire protection. Capable and able as our local fire departments are, when one lives so far from the fire hall and there are no hydrants available, you can consider your house and its contents a write-off. Your "freeloaders" also have to pay more for fire insurance because we are several miles from the nearest fire hall and the lack of hydrants.  
With regards to police protection, we are pretty well on our own and have to protect ourselves. Until August 1975, we called on the Ontario Provincial Police based at Milton which is about 15 miles from our home. There have been numerous crimes committed in our area. Some of these crimes weren't reported to the police because of the distances involved and there were just too few police available for us to bother.  
We are personally in a good position to compare taxes versus facilities and services in the urban and rural areas. We moved from an urban area several years ago. The tax on that house was \$150 less than what we paid on moving into this house. Upon purchasing this land, the taxes were immediately raised 400 percent and

that was before any improvements e.g. the building of our home. We now pay \$600 yearly and when you include the burden put on the rural resident to pay and maintain for all of those things that McKeough's urban resident takes for granted, it is not the "free ride" that he so boldly claims.  
Not relating to taxes, but to make Mr. McKeough mindful that we pay our way, I would like to point out further expenses that we have. Rural hydro is more expensive, keeping in mind also that hydro is used every time we get a glass of water, flush a toilet or that the sump pump is in operation. An electric pump also is responsible for the drainage of water from our laundry room sinks.  
Bell Telephone rates are exorbitant. For a private line, the cost of a single telephone is \$17 a month and because there is no bus service, we are on our own for transportation. Most of us have to own and maintain two vehicles. We did not move to the rural area to save costs. We knew it would be an expensive undertaking, one that would involve more of ourselves than urban living.  
Because of this government, there are some of us who cannot dispose of part of our land in order to reduce taxes because the land is "frozen". The Conservation Authority is a dictatorship who says you cannot sell your land, yet they do not offer to buy it from you. The Niagara Escarpment Commission works along the same principle. Never before have we been so governed and so manipulated.  
On the plus side, we have a good school to send our children. But to this school the children board a bus which must seat 3 and 4 per seat because the bus routes have been doubled up "to save money" at the expense of the children's safety.  
We so called "Esquesing" residents are at the receiving end of one thing only and that is the provincial government's powerful control over us. They can tax our small acreages to the point where we bleed, yet they toss "authorities" and "commissions" at us to prevent us from getting rid of part of our land to reduce the tax load.  
A large number of Halton Region's taxpayers live in the Oakville area. A large number of eligible voters also live there. It is reasonable to presume that Mr. McKeough is a politician first and a finance minister second. I wish he would tell it like it really is. We haven't been given a ride, we are being taken for one!

(Mrs.) S. Moore, R. R. 1, Limehouse.

**Education: All is not well**

R.R. 2, Rockwood, Nov. 10, 1975.

To the Editor, Dear Sir,

It is obvious to me that all is not well in Halton's educational system. As a candidate in the last provincial election, I received input on education from educators, parents, students, and from taxpayers who help finance the system but have no one at school.  
Concern regarding our educational system was so great that I decided to accept the responsibility of coordinating all those mentioned above into the newly formed Halton Education Action League. There are, and have been, other groups formed in Halton. The weaknesses of these groups have been that they support and present the views of only one segment of those mentioned, i.e. parents, elementary school teachers, secondary school teachers, or whatever.  
The Renaissance Committee, that started off in great form, has seemed to bog down on sex education and the literary merits of certain books utilized within our schools.  
The Halton Education Action League (HEAL) is concerned with all aspects of Halton's education system. We welcome input from all groups, and on all subjects. There are many individuals and groups who have concerns about education, but for one reason or another cannot, or are reluctant to voice their concern. We invite these people to contact HEAL. We will discuss your problem, take it to the appropriate place, school, school board, or Ministry of Education and get you straight answers.  
Currently HEAL is concerned about the expenditure of your tax dollars on a new addition to the Halton education building in Burlington. We are concerned because to date there have been three different explanations as to where the money came from. Even the exact amount of money being spent is doubtful, and the reason for the expenditure also varies. At a ratepayers meeting in Nassagaweya we were told the money (\$800,000, \$900,000 or \$1,000,000) was money left over from the old municipalities (Esquesing, Nassagaweya, etc.)  
At an all Candidates' Meeting this money

was surplus from our educational budgets over the years, and at the picketing of this new extension, we were told the money came from provincial grants. The point is, we as taxpayers should know exactly where this money came from.  
The next concern is Halton boasts the lowest cost per elementary school student. If this is so, and this money has been skimmed off our elementary school budget, your kids, my kids, have, or are, being short-changed. No wonder they have trouble reading, writing, adding and subtracting.  
The need for this new addition, as previously pointed out, varies. I was told by a trustee the extension was necessary for storage of materials bought in bulk, T.V. video equipment, etc. I was told that staff housed in portables had to go from the portables to the main office to research, or to use washroom facilities. My arguments on these counts were that we have quite a number of empty or near empty municipal buildings that could be used for storage, and that I would sooner see adults inconvenienced by using portable units than I would children, particularly in inclement weather, however I now learn that the new addition will provide space for a trustee's executive lounge for the elite, the Chairperson will have a new office, there will be provision for a board-room, and an innovation of which I personally disapprove strongly, a kind of bearpit where secretaries, typists, etc. will toil away under the supervision of their masters, a sort of new open concept.  
In these times of austerity when we are being asked to tighten our belts, I think the executive lounge could be dispensed with and the space put to better use. The board-room could be dealt with similarly. Any large groups could meet in the auditorium of the nearby school. In my opinion our children come first, not administrator and executive comforts.  
What amazes me is we already have one administrator to every six teachers in Halton. The old adage of too many Chiefs and not enough Indians applies well here.  
I think our elected representatives should start "cutting" the administration by making the first goal one administrator to 10 teachers, with further reductions in the near future.

William A. Johnson

**Pet of the week**



GLEN, right, is monarch of all he surveys from his vantage point outside the home of his owners Tom and Marilyn Hughes at Five Sideroad and Fourth Line, Erin Township. Now he is training his 'nephew' Josh, the pup on his left to be as good a watchdog as he.

**Cheque pickups**

The Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services has established temporary cheque distribution points in the region of Halton for family benefits and vocational rehabilitation recipients. Family benefits or vocational rehabilitation recipients with identification or signed authority may pick up their November cheques between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at the place closest to their residence in the following locations on the dates specified: Georgetown Health Unit, 130 Guelph St., Tuesday, November 25. Acton Multi-Service Centre (Acton Y), 40 Mill St. E. Monday, November 24. Milton Health Unit, 155 King St., Wednesday, November 26. Burlington Health Unit, 481 John St., Monday and Tuesday, November 24-25. If you have not received your family benefits or vocational rehabilitation cheque by November 28, please telephone the Oakville office.

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