

Never-ending grind

# MP's work is never finished

It was shortly after 8 a.m. when Dr. Frank Philbrook arrived in his office in Parliament Hill. Secretaries Lise Long and Jane Archambeault had arrived before him and had opened mail and placed a pile of it on his desk.

In a way the day was unlike many others. That was due to the fact the federal Tories were hosting their leadership campaign and because of it, many of the standing committee meetings had been cancelled. Usually on a Thursday there's time for only a quick look at the mail, then he's off to a committee meeting. Dr. Philbrook sits on three heavy committees, External Affairs, Health and Welfare and Finance, all of which have a host of sub-committees.

With those meetings cancelled, the day found Dr. Philbrook in his office. The night before he had been in the riding for a function in Georgetown with the Georgetown Y.

A flying trip there and back landed him back in Ottawa at 2 a.m. "That's something I have to think about, whether or not a two hour meeting in the riding is really worth 10 hours out of the week," he said.

When we joined Dr. Philbrook shortly after 9 a.m. he was busy handling constituent problems. There was time out of a hectic schedule to be interviewed and then it was off to a luncheon to hear Mr. Ortolini, president of the Commission of the European Economic Community, and then on to the House of Commons.

Dr. Philbrook listened to the tributes offered to Robert Stanfield who that weekend stepped down from his position as leader of the official opposition.

Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, NDP leader Ed Broadbent and Social Credit chief Paul Caouette all offered glowing tributes to Mr. Stanfield.

MPs from across the country questioned the Prime Minister and his cabinet ministers on a wide variety of matters.

B. C. pen Several MPs questioned Solicitor General Warren Allan about the second incident at the B. C. penitentiary where hostages were taken.

Other questioners probed cabinet ministers for answers to questions that involved the Alberta Oil sands, an alleged increase in future oil imports, the freedom of fishermen in the Lake Winnipeg area to sell their catch, the request for assistance to those claiming native land claims in B. C. and a host of other subjects.

Questions went on and on with as many as 50 MPs jumping to their feet, hoping to have a question heard.

"Question period is primarily for the opposition. If I really fight I may get to ask one question per month," said the Halton M.P.

Speaks in caucus For government members the opportunity for questions comes during caucus meetings.

"Caucus", says Dr. Philbrook, "is where democracy really works and where our differences are fought out. You have to come out of that with a single voice or it's sheer confusion."

"We've had a problem with leaks. As a result a minister who might have something critical he wants to share in confidence, may hesitate."

Keep channels open According to Philbrook, the biggest challenge he faces as a relatively new MP is "knowing what's going on up here. That's being brutally frank. People usually think in terms of coming here and doing something, fighting against something wrong or fighting for something that should be done. Opening up channels and getting contacts lined up is a big first step," he said.

Dr. Philbrook said he didn't consider it a conspiracy against backbenchers but rather a constant battle to stay in the game.

"You have to keep a line on what's coming up in the house and then, everyone has a specialty and you have to be careful not to miss your chance to speak on it in the House."

an evening sitting and heading back to the office.

Only night shift workers and the occasional motorist are on the streets when the MP leaves his Parliament Hill office and walks to his

hotel room in downtown Ottawa. By then the hubbub on the Hill has died down but activity will return as usual, early in the morning.

The morning will come quickly and it, like other

mornings, will see Frank Philbrook caught up in a rigorous schedule. The job demands many characteristics and talents, but above all else, stamina is a must.



DR. FRANK PHILBROOK takes time out of a hectic schedule to be interviewed. His spacious office is tastefully decorated and features knick knacks and curios from his days in India and in the medical profession.

## Special high school course study rejected

Halton Board of Education rejected a plan proposed by Trustee Edna Robinson, Thursday, which would have seen a special committee set up to find ways of cutting costs in high schools.

Coming on the heels of a report filed with the board last week showing there are 194 classes in Halton high schools in which there are 15 or less students enrolled, Miss Robinson wanted a special committee set up to look at the problem.

She wanted the committee to study secondary school curriculum and come up with adjustments which would reduce high school operation costs. The committee was to report back by next October after examining program costs, use of school facilities and staff and the needs of students.

"It would be easy in our financial situation to cut a lot of courses but this might hurt

many of our students. We have to examine today's students needs and present economic conditions to come up with answers," Miss Robinson explained.

Trustee Bill Priestner was concerned the committee would bring in recommendations which would set down policy telling principals what courses they could offer and what they couldn't. He thought each school's costs and courses should be examined by the principals taking the school's needs.

Miss Robinson said she would hope the committee wouldn't come up with a lot of restricting regulations, but after the study it might be decided "it isn't a good idea to continue certain programs or else limit their availability to a few schools." She doubted the committee would recommend minimum class sizes and maximum course offering levels since each

school is different.

Trustee Bill Lawson said he suspected all principals are already looking at class sizes and the number of options available at their own schools, in light of financial restraints.

Trustee Tom Watson said it would be wrong for the board to set up a committee to look into high school curriculum after spending five years encouraging principals to develop programs to meet their students' needs. He thought principals had the good sense to keep costs in mind.

Director of Education Emerson Lavender said the principals' association in Halton is planning a special workshop in April to deal with the question of class size, time tabling and options and has invited the board to participate in the talks.

Trustee Ernie Bodnar said no amount of fiddling with

## Many new bookworms boost library figures

The annual report of Acton library shows a hefty total circulation of 51,297 for 1975. Circulation for the preceding year was 36,375.

This was the first full year the library has been open five days a week. Total of open days last year was 256.

The report, presented to the Halton Hills library board, also shows 486 withdrawals of

magazines, 1,542 of records, 297 of 8 mm films and 116 of 16 mm films.

Book circulation for Acton is broken down into 32,806 adult books and 18,491 junior books.

Numbers up Librarian Mrs. Isobel Watson is pleased to report a "great many" new members this past year, both adults

and children. There were 493 new members in 1974 and 861 new members in 1975.

The Acton staff recorded 993 reference questions and 508 hours of research.

During the year the shelves acquired 825 new books, 437 of them fiction, 364 non-fiction and 24 reference books. There were also 86 new paperbacks which are not included in the regular statistics.

During 1975 there were 31 more records acquired.

In the juvenile section there were 342 new books in the fiction category, 205 non-fiction and 16 paperbacks, and eight new juvenile records.

Out they go As usual the task of culling out discards was part of the year's work, and a total of 703 books left the shelves. (Some are sold).

There were 43 visits made to shut-ins as well.

Circulation in January has been away up, Mrs. Watson says. The cold, snowy weather seems to be good for reading at least.

## Board spurns French dues

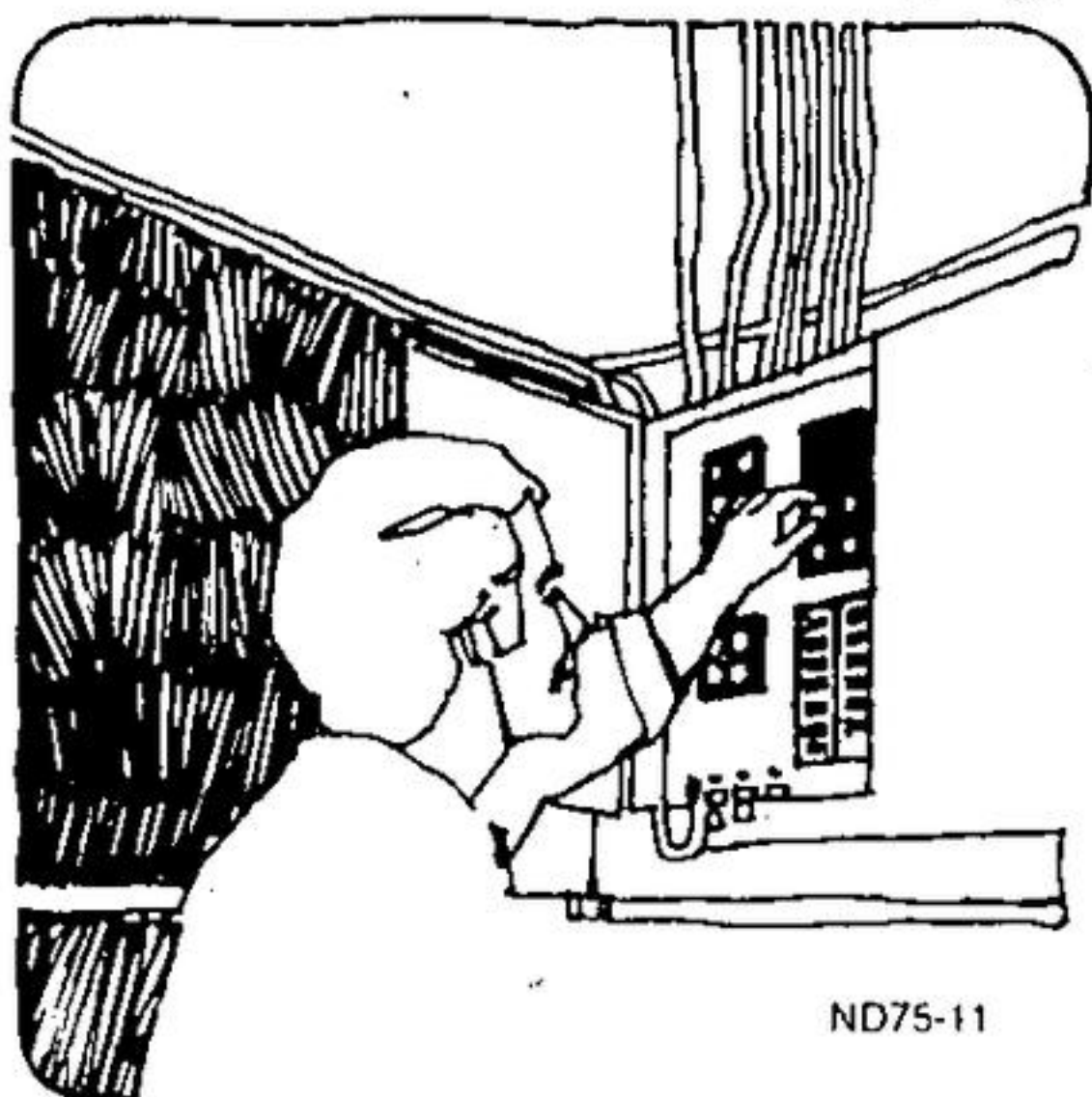
Halton Board of Education saved \$400 Thursday by deciding not to send a representative to a convention this month in Ottawa and refusing to pay its dues for membership in the L'Association Francaise des Conseils Scolaires de l'Ontario.

The board's French Language Advisory Committee had recommended \$300 be spent to send a member of the committee to the Association of French Languages Committees of Ontario annual convention in March. Association dues totalled \$100.

Trustee Tom Watson said the results of the committee's work benefits less than 40 Halton students. He suggested in light of the board's financial constraints, the convention and membership in

the provincial French language association were two things "we can do without."

Watson observed he has been a member of the committee for the last five years and has never been able to see much benefit in either the convention or attendance at the convention for Halton.



## More on Philbrook

For more photos of Dr. Philbrook at work in Ottawa, see the centrespread of today's Real Estate Marketplace section.

## Pet of the week



PERCHED ON HER owner's shoulders, Cheeky, with a mouthfull of cabbage, poses for her picture. Cheeky, a 7-month old hamster, is owned by Tammy McDonald of Church St. W.

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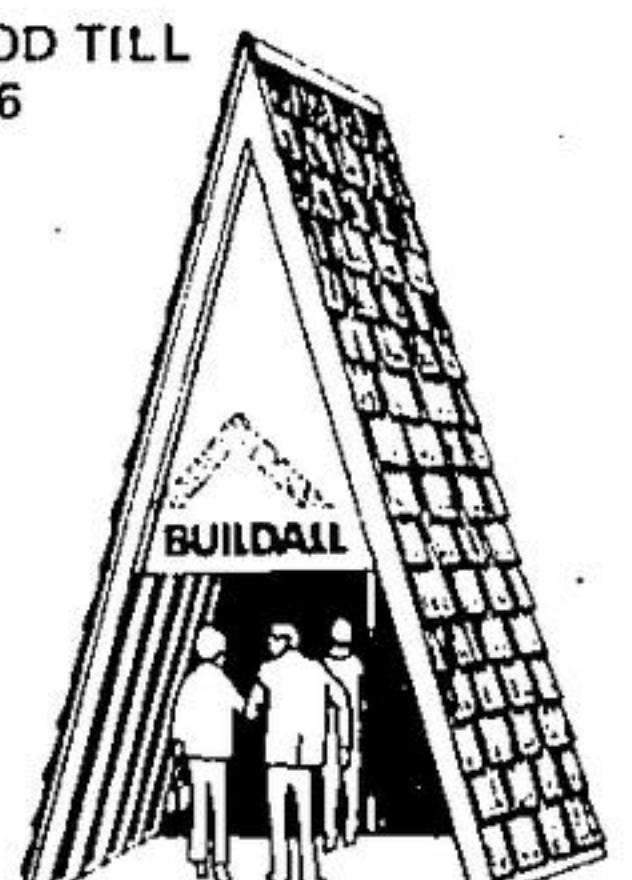
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With those messages dealt with and out of the way, there was time for a bite to eat before joining the House for