

It's income tax time!

Play games and the RCMP will be over for a chat

Wayne Graham isn't exactly what county folk might call "a revereer." But from time to time, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Sergeant—who heads that force's Halton Region detachment—is called upon to enforce Canada's Income Tax Act.

Sergeant Graham, 39, an easy-going fellow with wavy brown hair who sports pin-striped suits, explained in an interview last week in his Bronte office just how the Mounties work in an average income tax case—such as "failure to file an income tax return."

232 charged
In Halton during 1975, 232 persons were charged with that offence. Said the sergeant: "The documentation will be sent to us from the Department of National Revenue. We in turn swear to an information or charge before a justice of the peace or a judge. A summons is issued by the court and the summons is served by a member of this force."

Plain clothes
The eight RCMP officers in Halton wear plain clothes, drive unmarked cruisers, and are armed with snub-nosed .38 calibre Smith and Wesson pistols worn in belt holsters. One officer, for example, would serve the summons at the home of a Halton Hills or Milton resident. If the wife answered the door and the husband had been issued was not home, the RCMP officer would "usually" not identify himself and walk away. Home or work
Sergeant Graham said, however, that the search doesn't end there, and the officer might go to where the husband works. "We go to where the person can be found—no matter where it is." But say the husband comes to the door. According to Sgt. Graham here's how it works.

'Seldom needed'
Said Sgt. Graham: "It's very seldom that it is necessary to produce the card. People will generally accept the badge as identification. Then I advise him of my reason for being there. In this particular case, I have a summons for him under the Income Tax Act for failure to file a return. The officer then explains the contents of the summons, and says when and where the husband is to appear in court."

Handed copy
"He is handed a duplicate copy of the summons. But what if the husband won't accept the summons, and tells the RCMP officer to get lost? Sergeant Graham said "if he refuses to accept the summons, it is simply placed on the ground or floor or whatever is near him—which constitutes a legal service of summons. And if the person decides to play games and doesn't show up in court, the legal fun really starts. Usually, a judge will issue a warrant for the arrest of a person who fails to appear in court when he's supposed to. But not under the Income Tax Act."

Tried in absentia
RCMP Sergeant Graham said a judge, once he is satisfied that a summons was served, may proceed "in absentia."

And he said a "rule of thumb" fine for failing to file

officers show up in plain clothes driving unmarked cars. However, the RCMP in Toronto have the vehicles if they decide to become visible. RCMP cruisers are flashy like the OPP ones. They are a purple-blue in color with white front doors. On the front doors are the RCMP crest—a huge buffalo head surrounded by maple leaves and topped off with a crown. Sergeant Graham said the RCMP in Halton are responsible for enforcing federal statutes, but are aided by investigators employed by various federal departments.

Income tax evasion
And he said, for example, a Halton resident charged with evading \$100,000 in taxes would be taken care of by investigators from the Department of National Revenue, and not the Mounties. The plain-clothes gentlemen from Bronte do other work as well, and if you sneak a color TV, jewelry, watch or camera into Canada without declaring it—you'd better not brag about it to a neighbor who might dislike you for some reason.

Said Sergeant Graham: "from time to time, the RCMP receive information on individuals who have returned from a trip outside the country, and may conceivably have brought foreign goods back with them. Then it becomes our responsibility to attempt to establish the status of the goods in Canada."

"In other words, were they legally brought into this country?" He said the Mounties will then visit the home of the person.

Onus on citizen
"The onus is on him under the Customs Act to provide documentation and or any other evidence to establish the status of the goods."

"If for some reason he is unable to provide that proof, the goods are subject to seizure. The RCMP in Halton are also involved in the pursuit of persons dealing in large quantities of illegal drugs, and make arrests under both the federal Narcotic Control Act and the Food and Drug Act."

Their biggest bust of late came six months ago, when RCMP officers and Halton Regional Police personnel raided a North Burlington farmhouse, and walked away with two shipping crates loaded with marijuana valued at \$130,000.



RCMP SERGEANT WAYNE GRAHAM directs the Halton Region operations of Canada's national police force. The 19-year RCMP veteran is a native of Owen Sound.

Sporting family

The guy in charge of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Halton is nuts—nuts, that is, about his 14-year-old daughter Rhonda who is very successful as a competitive synchronized swimmer. In fact the whole family is "sports-minded," according to Sergeant Wayne Graham who lives in Mississauga.

Besides the involvement of the children, both he and his wife Donna enjoy water skiing and swimming. Other children include Tracey, 12, and an eight-year-old boy named Dana.

Loves athletics
Sergeant Graham, an Owen Sound native, has always been athletically-minded. In 1956, he played for the Owen Sound Indians—an Intermediate A lacrosse team—which won the Ontario championship that year.

And then in 1968, as a physical education instructor, the RCMP sergeant coached a lacrosse team at the Mounties' training academy in Regina.

For that reason, Sergeant Graham said last week, a photo of the team now hangs in the Lacrosse Hall of Fame in New Westminster, British Columbia.

McKeough fields C. of C. questions

Yes, replied the Hon. Darcy McKeough, he would introduce regional governments again knowing all he knows now. McKeough was replying to a question from Paul Nielsen of the Acton Chamber of Commerce, a guest at the annual dinner meeting of Georgetown Chamber Thursday night. He said the aim of the restructured government was to pass more responsibility to local government and already Queen's Park sees enormous differences in the number of problems they used to encounter with severances, septic tanks and such, which really never belonged in Toronto.

McKeough admitted in the question period there are areas where he would have liked to see one tier rather than two tier governments established but Halton was not one of them. He told this newspaper afterwards he felt two tier government was best for Halton.

The Treasurer was challenged by Doug Fishburn over his remarks about an imbalance of taxes in favor of rural residents, noting rural people supply many services for themselves and yet have to help pay for urban abuse of such things as water. Councillor Roy Booth noted Mr. McKeough had not mentioned the scramble for higher salaries with the introduction of regional government and the Treasurer said that was one facet of regional restructuring he would do over again if he had the opportunity. He said the large increases even lured civil servants to the regions from Queen's Park.

However, the worst distortion of salaries occurred at the lower levels, he avowed, where responsibilities were one-half to two-thirds lower but salaries went skyrocketing.

He noted one official in Windsor received \$57,000, \$8,000 higher than any deputy minister. The target for Ontario's new taxation system, McKeough told Stephen Saxe was delayed until 1978 because of difficulties encountered in reassessment. Terry Baines, noting Mr. McKeough was one of the architects of regional government, wondered whether regional government in practice was not too remote for people, and was he considering changes.

The Treasurer noted instances such as Prince Edward County where 20,000 people were served by 15 road departments, county road department and the province and suggested one department could do the job as well or better and avoid duplication but also noted there were other areas of the province where this would not apply. Changes, he thought, should now come from within the system, not from Queen's Park.

Mr. McKeough was introduced by incoming president George Gray, P.C. candidate in Halton-Burlington riding.

Reed disagrees with McKeough

Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed did not agree with Treasurer Darcy McKeough's assessment of regional government and rural versus urban taxpayers at Thursday's dinner meeting of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce.

Reed, from the opposition benches, said Mr. McKeough admitted there were duplications within regional government but charged Queen's Park would lose face if they changed the system. Increasing cost and duplication are real, Reed said after the meeting, and the question still remains whether to continue the duplications or effect a change. Reed did not agree with the

treasurer's statements on the rural taxpayer getting the best of things before regional government either. He said people who live in rural areas provide their own services and paid to participate in such things as arenas. Regional government has to be reviewed and must be looked at in the hardest possible terms, Reed insisted. He said areas which are running efficiently should be kept and changes made where necessary. If a service runs more efficiently at the municipal level it should be given back to the municipality, Reed said, suggesting there was more evidence to support his statements than Mr. McKeough would admit.

Light up

Give other drivers flare warning if your car stalls at night, urges the Industrial Accident Prevention Association. Throughout 1976, I.A.P.A. is urging people to check safety both on and off the job, to avoid injury. If car troubles forces you to stop at night, the I.A.P.A. suggests you pull off the roadway as far as possible. Set up flares to warn approaching traffic. The flares should be a minimum of 100 feet behind and 100 feet ahead of your vehicle.

Use flashers
Leave your parking lights on with the four-way flashers operating. The inside dome light will help too.

Mounties in Halton

An income tax return is "\$25 per day of lateness." That, by the way, adds up to more than \$18,000 if you're two years late. Pay fine or jail
The police officer explained that the judge will not only specify the fine, but also the time period within which the fine must be paid. The judge also says how long the person may go to jail for if the fine isn't paid in time. Sergeant Graham, at this point, said that a person who fails to file an income tax return isn't a bank robber. And the RCMP respect this. "We must not forget that there exists elements of discretion and compassion." No show for neighbors
For this reason, he said, the



ONTARIO TREASURER DARCY McKEOUGH is presented with a gift by Chamber of Commerce Director Bruce McIntyre, after the Cabinet Minister spoke at the Georgetown Chamber's annual dinner.

McKeough insists Rural people benefit most before Region

Ontario Treasurer, the Hon. Darcy McKeough defended the stand he took last fall on rural taxation in a speech before the annual dinner meeting of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce at the North Halton Golf and Country Club. However, McKeough refined his remarks because he said "not everyone fully understood exactly what I meant," as evidenced by letters he received and in the press. McKeough was quoted as saying to a regional council meeting in Halton last fall that rural taxpayers, were perhaps paying too little for services they received prior

to the formation of restructured governments. McKeough told members of the Chamber and their guests that when he spoke of services he was not referring to physical services to property such as water, sewage disposal, streetlighting and sidewalks because rural residents don't receive such services and "there is no reason they should be taxes for them." However, he said there were two general categories for which rural residents paid little or nothing prior to regional government—those which travel to the recipient and those which the recipient travels to, usually by driving

into town. The Treasurer said the most important service was police, where prior to regional government, part of a town resident's taxes went towards operation of a local police force. The same taxpayer would also be paying provincial income and sales tax, and portions support the operation of the Ontario Provincial Police. "But where was the OPP providing its service? The answer, of course, was," McKeough said, "not in town but out in the township, where the rural taxpayer had no local police force to support—only the OPP subsidized by

the taxpayer back in town." To some extent, said the Treasurer, urban and rural taxpayers would both benefit from the presence of both police forces, but again the rural taxpayer probably came out ahead. "It seems reasonable to suppose he travelled into town—to shop, work, or enjoy cultural or recreational attractions—far more often than the town resident travelled out into the rural countryside."

McKeough said a similar imbalance existed between town and township in regard to cultural and recreational services where the user goes to the service instead of vice versa. "Ask anyone responsible for operating a town library, community centre, arena, day-care centre, a YMCA and so on, and you'll find a fair proportion of users are rural people from nearby townships. Yet the fees that such people pay, as users, seldom cover the cost of those services, which are commonly subsidized out of town coffers."

The speaker said some townships did contribute to such services in neighboring towns but generally speaking it had not been part of the history of rural-urban relationships. He also claimed it was possible to show the very existence of a well-run urban community enhances the attractiveness—and hence the value—of rural property nearby. The commercial and industrial development it attracts also benefit rural neighbors at no expense to themselves.

The basic aim of restructured (regional) government were to enable neighboring urban and rural communities to share both the benefits and the costs of community resources in an equitable manner, he stated. STANDARDS
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