

# Free Press Editorial Page

## Dissatisfaction shows

It was Hill for Halton Hills again on Monday, when the former Esquesing township reeve was returned as mayor of the new town for a second term.

In Acton, the charter councillors G. W. McKenzie and Les Duby were returned, with another previous councillor Peter Marks joining the ranks. All will be a credit to Acton and maintain the high standards we electors want. Another gentleman of council, Joe Hurst, heads into retirement with the thanks of his fellow townsmen.

Both Ed Wood and Gord Dawe hit a responsive note when they spoke of the problems of regional government. The mayor, too, spoke of a private member's bill in an attempt to change the system.

A Milton candidate with an anti-region stand polled a surprising number of votes.

No doubt there will be more about this in the future.

In Sudbury, in a referendum asking if people were satisfied with their regional government, the

answer was a resounding "No" 20 to 1. Perhaps this should be on our ballots next election.

Meanwhile, a local group is meeting to see what can be done to improve the situation.

As far as voting against the government, that's a standard reaction. Often veteran members such as Tom Watson are put aside in the interests of change.

There is no doubt the increase in taxes in Esquesing, much of it attributed to the board of education, was the cause of the loss of his seat by the long-time school board member. Bert Hinton says the costs of education can be reduced.

Tom Watson declared at the Meet the Candidates night that costs could not be reduced; in fact he said costs had been cut this year and results were already showing the decision to be wrong.

Mr. Watson is the victim of the voters' dissatisfaction with rising costs; it remains to be seen what will be done about them.

## Left out in the cold

The phones rang constantly at the Free Press Monday night as Acton voters tried to find out the result of the day's voting.

Apparently we made a mistake in not arranging for private election coverage. We had enquired about facilities in the Gordon Alcott arena in Georgetown, where election headquarters was. We learned it would be necessary to install our own phone line for the one night to be able to phone out results, and we felt the cost was too high. There were two public phones in the arena that night, one that turned out to have a sign Out of Order and the other in constant use.

We had learned cable TV would be providing the election service, and local TV and radio stations were also planning to cover Halton Hills.

All this coverage proved disappointing.

Cable TV's results were inaccurate and slow, and as a result a setup relaying Cable TV results

from a home to the Free Press had only one poll heard from by 10.15 p.m., while in actual fact many polls were in by then.

Radio coverage centred on Oakville and Burlington.

There was no use in people phoning the town of Halton Hills number or the arena number; there was no provision for information for the public. Some Esquesing people even called the old Esquesing town hall, where they had always got results in past years. Again, nothing.

In Milton, the election officials had asked the newspaper particularly to offer an election night phone service so the people could get information without calling election headquarters. There was plenty of co-operation.

We apologize to the people of Acton for not providing our own election service. Acton people who did not wish to drive to Georgetown arena to see the master boards were left out in the cold — again.

## A right to complain

Voter turn-out was about a third — nothing to be proud of.

One good suggestion: everyone who votes should be given a lapel pin reading "I have a right to complain." Then let those who didn't bother to vote keep quiet.

been concerned. They're the people who help keep our town going — remember to shop at home.

## Can we afford Santa?

Santa Claus is an over-weight, over-age, over-priced myth, and Canada can't afford him any more, a writer declares in the current issue of The United Church Observer.

The Rev. Terry Shillington of The Pas, Man., says the yearly worship of Santa Claus "baptises our children into a lifestyle which is proving to be suicidal." "Far more than the incarnation of Christ, the coming of Santa Claus symbolizes the spirit of our culture: spending and getting. In fact, Santa might be called the patron saint of a people unsurpassed in wealth, yet with an incredible hunger for more," he writes. "This preoccupation with getting things is a lifestyle we can no longer afford. We simply cannot go on producing more, consuming more and throwing out more garbage. Surely both the times and the gospel make it imperative to teach our children radically different values."



A FINE BIRCH TREE near the Legion by the lake was maimed by either someone's axe or a beaver recently.



DUCKS AND SWANS gather at the swimming hole every day for a dunk and a feed. The open water at

Fairy Lake is home these days for the wildfowl.



## Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

Most Canadians are pretty long-suffering. We seldom take to the barricades, set fire to the flat, or hurl bricks at the police.

Canadian men put up with nagging wives for years, and accept it, on the whole with meekness. Nowadays wives not only nag, but they are, many of them, the crudest of materialists and the most militant of women's libbers. The husbands still go along without much more than an occasional snarl. "All right, then. You can put the bloody garbage out."

Canadian women put up with undemonstrative, insensitive louts of husbands for years, chaps who were knowledgeable about beer and hockey and poker, but wary of emotion and callous about the finer things in life.

Nowadays, most husbands are still louts, but quite a few have escaped into the esoteric world of macramé, needlepoint, going to the ballet, and having their hair "done" every two weeks. And the wives haven't complained much, except for the occasional venomous, "I remember when you were always trying to drag me into the bedroom."

In fact, we are such non-complainers that everybody walks all over us. We shudder and whimper under a punitive tax system, but there's nary a bomb for the tax collector.

We get royally and regularly screwed by everybody from mechanics to merchants, from supermarkets to surgeons, from restaurants to repairmen, and we grumble a bit, but almost enjoy it, as Confucius advised about rape, when it seems inevitable.

We put up with dumb insolence from

postal clerks, and stupidity from sales clerks, and bad manners from beer slingers and lip from hotel flunkies. And we pay up, mutter a bit, and fade into the woodwork.

We accept shoddy workmanship from Canadian manufacturers, and go back for more. We eat fifth-rate meals in highway restaurants, vow we'll never go back, and stop at the same place next time, hoping for a miracle, only to be served the greasy, badly-cooked food and watery coffee we got last time.

We are humble and contrite when some jumped-up pipsqueak of a civil servant, or some ulcerous creature in an employment office, tells us we haven't filled out the form properly.

Maybe we deserve it. Maybe it's time we reared up on our hind legs and started bitching about all the second-rate goods and third-rate service that are shoved at us.

Maybe it's time we started yelling, and causing public scenes, and demanding proper service, and shouting for the general manager or the head waiter, and complaining bitterly and heatedly when we encounter stupidity and insolence and slipshoddiness.

We weren't always like this, you know. A couple of generations ago, Canadians weren't such patsies for the greedy. My mother was on good terms with the local merchants. But they had to produce, and they had to compete, and if they didn't, they were in trouble.

She trusted people about as far as she could throw them up in the air, and she was five feet two. She had a set of scales in the house, and she weighed every sack of

flour or sugar that came in. If it was underweight, she'd skin the supplier alive, with her tongue.

And I wasn't always such a dumb, complaisant member of the flock myself. I remember one incident. It was about two years after the war. I had spent a year in a sanatorium, and was on pension, but I was going to school, and working at hard labor during vacations, to support a wife and kid.

I had quite a lot of visits to the Department of Veterans' Affairs. There I was treated, by one guy, a civil servant, like something that had crawled out from under a stone. This guy would say, "Take a seat," and ignore you for one, two, three hours. He had lost an arm in the war, and flaunted it, with his sleeve neatly pinned up. To him, I guess, secure with his pension, and his forever job doing nothing, we were scum, whose only purpose was to irritate him, and force him to do a little paperwork.

One day, my flashpoint occurred. I'd taken an afternoon off work, lost half a day's precious pay, to see a senior official at DVA concerning grants for advanced studies. One-Arm waved me to a seat, and stood around shooting the breeze and drinking coffee for an hour — an hour and a half. I blew.

"Listen, you one-armed bastard! I've got one lung, and I think I've seen as much service as you have. If I don't get to see Mr. X in five minutes, I'm coming over the counter!"

He could have cleaned me, even with his one arm, but he turned pale, bustled about, and in three minutes I was talking to the boss. It was that old civil servant's panic about getting a bad report.

It was cruel, but I've never regretted it. That jerk needed straightening out.

Isn't it time we started straightening out all the jerks? If anybody treats me civilly, I'll respond in kind. But from now on, if he doesn't I'll holler. Who's with me?

## Report from Queen's Park

By Julian Reed  
M.P.P. (Halton-Burlington)



There has been considerable discussion this week about a ruling of the Ontario Highway Transport Board to allow Greyhound Lines of Canada Ltd. to run buses on routes between Toronto and Sudbury which are at present served by Gray Coach, a subsidiary of the Toronto Transit Commission. Gray Coach spokesmen have said that the company will appeal the decision to the Ontario Cabinet, but the Minister of Transportation and Communications has told the Legislature that he agrees with the Board's reasons for giving the ruling — complaints of poor service by Gray Coach, and the need for competition on the routes in the public interest.

Leonard Moynihan, president of the Amalgamated Transit Union, has charged telegrams of support for the Greyhound service from union locals, read in the House by the Minister, were paid for by Greyhound, and that although more jobs might be provided, they would not be in Ontario, because Greyhound would then have an across-Canada service, with drivers from the United States, or from Winnipeg driving through Ontario.

A vice-president of Greyhound admitted in a telephone interview, reported in a Toronto newspaper, that the company paid "thousands" of dollars to bring 70 witnesses to Toronto to support the company's application.

Liberal Leader Stuart Smith has stated bus service to many small Ontario communities is threatened by the Transport Board decision to permit an American-controlled company to operate on the two main Ontario routes under discussion. Gray Coach officials said this week that Greyhound will skim the profits from these two money-making routes, making it impossible for Gray Coach to continue to provide service on money-losing routes, in the rest of the Province. Stuart Smith and other Opposition Members have tried repeatedly to persuade the Minister of Transportation and Communications, or the Premier, to delay issuing Greyhound with the necessary permits, until the Cabinet has had an opportunity to consider the major policy change.

The Transportation Minister also announced this week that anyone convicted of rape, indecent assault or

trafficking or importing narcotics will be barred from driving a school bus under new provincial regulations which will take effect in February. He told the Legislature that regulating a driver's moral character will ensure that children "are safe in every sense of the word."

The new regulations will also make sure all school bus drivers have a safe driving record, and their licences will be withdrawn if they accumulate more than nine demerit points on their driving records, or if they have been convicted of two or more motor vehicle offences under the Criminal Code in the past five years.

Liberal MPP for Kitchener, James Breithaupt, raised in the Legislature the fact that the Minister of Government Services, Margaret Scrivener had indicated in a recent newsletter to constituents that the Government may introduce entrance examinations for universities, and has asked Ontario's principals and headmasters to produce a plan for a province-wide investigation of standards in testing and marking.

The Minister of Colleges and Universities has said that university entrance examina-

tions may be introduced, that the idea is being studied, but he didn't care to suggest that "it will happen next Fall." According to the Education Minister, universities are "inclining in this direction."

The Provincial Government is to produce a detailed report on the follow-up care provided for 19 teenagers who have died in the last two years after being released from provincial training schools. The Minister of Correctional Services told the Legislature this week that nine boys and one girl between the ages of 14 and 17 had died in the year ending March 1975, while they were still wards of the province, and that there had been ten similar cases in the previous year. He said the teenagers had been free from training schools for an average of 17 months before their deaths.

Margaret Campbell, M.P.P. (Liberal—St. George) asked the Minister to include in his report information regarding the case-load of the after-care workers handling each teenager who had died, and Stephen Lewis commented that the report would probably show that the probation officers concerned probably had such heavy case-loads that "nobody had time to look after them. I think you will find what is true of all services in Ontario—that after-care is desperately inadequate."

See you next week.

## The Free Press Back Issues

20 years ago

Taken from the Issue of The Free Press of December 6, 1956

Graduation certificates and proficiency awards were presented at the Acton high school commencement exercises held Friday evening in the Legion auditorium before a capacity audience. Presentation of the Honor Secondary school graduation diploma was made to Joseph Jany by principal E. A. Hansen, who also presented the Secondary School graduation diplomas to: Robert Coon, Wayne Currie, Edward Footitt, Norma Hobson, Elizabeth Jany, Edna Jennings, Robert Landsborough, Donna McMillan, Joy Peal, Elizabeth Ritchie (Comm.), Lorne Saunders and Delmar Watson.

Intermediate certificates were presented to the following: Robert Allonby, Keith Anderson, Albert Benton, Helen Brankiewicz, W. Frank Cooper, James Denny, Gail Dobbie, Mary Jane Force, Elizabeth Gibson, Marjorie A. Gibson, Carol Hansen, Michael D. Hurst, William Johnstone, Robert C. Kerr, Olga Kril, Marie Lambert, Ruth Landsborough, Lynda Mann, Shirley Mason, Merilyn Mellor, Donald Moffatt, Jeannine Molody, Margaret Morrison, Dianne S. Newton, Catherine Norton, George Oakes, Jean Parker, Laurie Ritchie, Marilyn Rogvaldson, Faye Sagaskie, Ellen Spicee, Helen Synott, Valene P. Varey, Ruth Wilson and Marilyn Young.

50 years ago

Taken from the Issue of the Free Press of Thursday, Dec. 9, 1926

Mr. Hillmer was elected by a majority of 350 in Halton.

Hillmer was elected in the towns and Pettit in the township. The number of votes polled in Acton was 981, in Georgetown 980, in Milton 957. The rural polling places adjacent to Acton, Dublin and Knacbull, amply maintained the old-time reputation for polling "dry" votes when the great moral issue of temperance is at stake. The condition of the roads had much to do with the outcome of the election.

Premier G. Howard Ferguson was returned as Premier of Ontario.

The post office department is urging that Christmas mail be forwarded earlier than usual this year. Christmas Day falls on a Saturday and unless the mail reaches many places by Thursday night, they will not reach their friends on rural routes as there will be no delivery on Saturday.

Over 1000 citizens voted in the provincial elections but only 340 in the municipal elections. Elected to council are L. E. Atkinson, John Nicol, E.T. Theiford and Frank Holmes.

Wonder what has become of the old-fashioned girl who at this time of year had a dresser full of dollies and fancy work for Christmas giving.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, Dec. 7, 1876

The afternoon stage between Milton and Brant has been taken off because of the state of the roads.

Eramosa Council met at the Centre Inn on the 28th inst. Ten dollars were ordered paid to Mrs. Lamb for the use of the council room during the year and \$10 to the trustees of the Lockwood Town Hall for the use thereof for Division Court business.

Ladies seem to have no settled idea yet as to the style of headgear to be worn this winter. This state of suspense weighs heavy on the old man's mind and purse too.

While we are not able to boast of any very extensive building operations in Acton during the past season, it is nevertheless satisfactory to note that quite a perceptible progress has been made towards filling up the vacant lots. Last year we figured up the cost of new buildings at about \$30,000 but this year's total will fall considerably short of that sum, owing no doubt to the prevailing stagnation in all kinds of business throughout the county. The building operations this year comprise quite a number of private dwellings, the handsome brick church commenced last fall by the Methodist denomination has been completed this season at a total cost of about \$7,000; a beautiful brick church as been erected by the congregationalists, Mr. D. McNair has built an imposing red brick store and dwelling adjoining, two stories, with mansard roof, at a cost of \$3,000, Mr. Ed Mathews a frame grocery store, Mr. R. Fisher an addition to his tin and stove shop and additions to dwellings and places of business have been made during the season. Progress of a much more extensive character is expected during the coming year.

## THE ACTON FREE PRESS

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