

WE WANT OUT

Committee's regional government brief declares

Actonians should control their own destiny and perhaps local government should be restored here, declares the brief on regional government prepared by the Actonians for Action committee which is being presented today (Wednesday). The enforced marriage of Acton and Georgetown in the new system of regional government was poor political judgment and proved to be disruptive and detrimental to the future of Acton, the brief states. The strongly-worded, four-page presentation cites widening disparity between Acton and Georgetown, loss of identity and increased costs under regional government.

The brief is in response to a request from a committee of regional council studying Bill 151 which instituted regional government here.

The copy of the brief is being presented today to Don Gordon, chairman of the committee. Other copies are also going to councillor Pat McKenzie who sits on the committee, councillors Les Doby and Peter Marks, clerk-administrator Doug Pritchard and M.P.P. Julian Reed.

Regional government should be re-evaluated with intensive input from Acton citizens, the brief declares.

Following is the complete brief:

A brief to the Committee of Halton Regional Council Reviewing Bill 151

Sirs: We believe that there are three major criticisms that can be directed towards the Regional Government structure created by Bill 151 in 1973. These criticisms are directed principally at the implementation of Regional Government in the area of what is today called Halton Hills.

First of all, it is obvious after almost three and one-half years of Regional Government that one of the main prerequisites of a successful regional system, a strong community of interest between the amalgamated parties, has failed to develop in Halton Hills. Provincial theoreticians claimed that strong community of interest was a necessary, if not vital, ingredient, and yet proceeded to legislate the amalgamation of two geographically separate urban municipalities, Acton and Georgetown, which historically have had very little, if any, community of interest between them. Experience over the past three and one-half years has actually indicated a widening disparity between the former towns of Acton and Georgetown. We believe this has been caused by a feeling of a gradual, demoralizing loss of identity.

This loss of identity is the second area of serious dissatisfaction with Regional Government, particularly Halton Hills.

The urban areas of Oakville, Burlington and Milton all retained, after the implementation of Bill 151, autonomy over their own area councils. Such was not the case in Halton Hills. The merging of the urban centres of Georgetown and Acton into one area council structure has had far-reaching repercussions.

Disappearance of Acton's Town offices and council chambers, transfer of administrative and works department personnel out of town, dissolution of most former boards which allowed

and encouraged citizen input into local municipal decision making, have all contributed to the feeling of loss of identity. Transfer of control of local water and sewer concerns to Regional Works personnel, with vastly inferior knowledge of and experience with local requirements has created much bad feeling in Acton. Frustration over the erosion of control over our own urban situation is widespread. Indeed, the disappearance of Acton's name itself has produced strong resentment to the restructured government now operating in Halton Hills under Bill 151.

Previously, nine elected officials from the community of Acton handled the various elements of municipal government. Today, under Bill 151, three elected officials, earning three times the salary of our former councillors, are spread too thin in their efforts to represent Acton's interests in the administration of Halton Hills. We feel it is almost impossible for three people to satisfactorily look after day to day needs of the Town of Acton in the areas of town administration, works, planning and recreation.

Experience has also shown over the past three and one-half years restructured government under Bill 151, that outsiders, albeit duly elected to Halton Hills council, have acquired a controlling interest over the destiny of the Town of Acton. This is made possible by the unbalanced representation at Halton Hills Council. By virtue of their larger numbers, Georgetown councillors now are able to influence votes on Acton issues in spite of the wishes of Acton councillors. Such is not possible in Georgetown, where at least they have enough strength to retain a semblance of control over their own autonomy. Control over decisions affecting local Acton people has passed into the hands of a controlling majority of ten non-Acton residents, who may or may not support the wishes of Acton's own three elected councillors. We do not accept that this situation is either just or

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The Acton Free Press

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ACTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 1977

Twenty-Six Pages—Fifteen Cents



BUILDING PRODUCTS OF Canada employees and management celebrated three years of accident free work Monday. A party was held in the plant with special guests, including Halton Hills' mayor Tom Hill, A special cake, with all the employees names iced on, is held by Hector

Daigle, representative of Loc. 603 of the United Rubber Workers on the right, and BP plant manager Brian Lockhart on the left. Company officials came from Montreal and Toronto for the event.

Mayors, mall, money! town hall to benefit

Grand opening ceremonies at the old town hall Thursday, June 30 at 7 p.m. will herald the beginning of Back to Acton Days, the exciting first presentation of the new Business Association. A weekend end of activities is planned, ending with the firefighters' fireworks on Sunday night. The Dominion Day weekend coincides with the merchants' ambitious promotion. Although most stores are

closed Friday, July 1, special events will continue. The enthusiastic planners expect to draw people to the downtown area for three full days; and Mill St. will be blocked off from the tracks to the main corner for most of the time. Willow will also be blocked off to the town hall. The town hall has been chosen as the focal theme for the bash, since it attracted so much interest in town

recently. Two per cent of gross sales on the three days will go toward the new town project. They are also cashing in on the concern over the town's identity with the Back to Acton theme. Former mayors—Ben Rachlin, John Goy, Dr. Frank Oakes and Les Doby—have all been asked to participate in the special opening. A special flyer which will

go out in the mail next week will outline the program, along with presenting the ads of all the co-operating merchants.

Special booths will be open on the mall and Thursday night there will be a roving concert by members of Acton Citizens' Band.

Friday afternoon there will be a bluegrass concert at the old town hall including Halton Hills Daredevils, Kent Tocher, The Country Ds, Earl Burt and others.

A barbecue and beer garden will be staged Friday and Saturday on Mill with a street dance Friday night.

There will be kids' movies and free babysitting.

Other features arranged so far: bake sales, crafts, antique cars, CB demonstration.

More plans are being finalized each day so there will be more in next week's Free Press.

There will be a 50-50 draw and another draw for an afghan supplied by Acton Yarn Barn. Proceeds are for the town hall project.

July 1 coincides with The Great Canadian Birthday Party. There'll be parades and special activities in Ottawa. The theme is "Canada—I want to shake your hand."

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Back at Mill this Thursday?

Halton Hills engineering department and expectant merchants understand King Paving contractors could be back in town Thursday, to continue their interrupted work of reconstruction of Mill St.

First task will be to remove the faulty curbing - the cause of all the delay in the project.

New curbing will be installed by hand probably, rather than with the large and intriguing machine which did part of the job last fall.

Work will begin at the Canadian Tire end of the street.

Town engineer Bob Austin thinks that as soon as a block of curbing is done, the sidewalk installers will also be able to start to work. They will be continuing the project of interlocking paving stones, instigated by the merchants of the Business Improvement Area.

The paving will begin as soon as possible.

"There will be inconvenience when the street is closed off," Mr. Austin reminds Actonians.

The paving will definitely not be done before Back to Acton Days.

Two plants stolen from inside home

A baffling theft occurred Monday morning at the Sharp home on five sideroad north of town, and police are investigating several clues.

Two large plants were stolen from the living room of the house, which sits well back from the road. Nothing else was taken.

"It's incredible... and disturbing," say family members. They are offering a reward for further information. Anyone who can help with information is asked to contact the Guelph O.P.P.

One plant taken must have weighed 70 pounds, and would be very difficult to lift and get

into a car. It is a croton plant, which has beautiful big leaves in shades of green, yellow, orange and dark red, depending on the age of the leaf. It is a triangular yellow pot. It's about five feet high, and its value is between \$100 and \$150.

The other is an ordinary Wandering Jew, but a huge hanging specimen valued at about \$25.

On sale Tickets are already on sale for an afghan and cash draw, with proceeds toward the town hall. The draws are part of the Big Back to Acton promotion.

Hinton on headships:

Halton teachers gutless

Halton high school teachers were branded "gutless" and accused of selling out to the Halton Board of Education in the chairmanship issue, Thursday, by Trustee Bert Hinton.

As reported in this paper last week, teachers and the board reached a compromise agreement on their dispute over a board plan to strip a large number of teachers of their title and extra pay as department heads, minor heads and assistant heads,

and replace them with a much smaller number of school leaders to be called chairmen.

Director of Education Em Lavender announced the compromise at Thursday's Halton Board of Education meeting. Trustees approved the plan.

The long simmering dispute boiled over in December when Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation placed an embargo against the board

barring its members from applying for chairmen's jobs in nine Halton schools which hadn't already dropped the old department head system. Six schools voluntarily dropped the old system of school organization in favor of chairmanships.

From the outset of new contract talks teachers made it clear chairmanships would be an issue. When talks stalled in May a special joint committee was set up to sort

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Chamber tradition

Beaming vet Citizen of Year

A happy group of friends assembled Friday evening in the Music Centre to applaud beaming Dr. Frank Oakes, chosen this year's Citizen of the Year. The traditional evening is staged annually by the Chamber of Commerce with a feast, speeches, presentations and dancing on the program.

The event was successful - as it always is - since friends of the honored guest fill the hall to extend sincere congratulations and thoroughly enjoy themselves.

The role of main speech maker went to long-time friend councillor G.W. McKenzie, who brought smiles and laughter as he read the citation.

There was a huge bouquet for Betty Oakes and for Dr. Oakes presentations and letters from the Chamber of Commerce, federal government, provincial government, Halton Hills Council and Georgetown Chamber of

Commerce. Telegrams and letters were also read, heaping more praise on the night's recipient.

The Oakes' four children were here for the special occasion - Carolyn with her husband Ernie Gregory from Hamilton; Peggy Lawson with son Ted from Milwaukee; Frances with husband Russell Gaulton and daughters Joanne and Kelly, Grimsby; and son George with wife Eleanor and daughter Nancy of Etobicoke.

(Unable to attend were grandsons Steven and Kevin Oakes and Douglas Gaulton.)

Friend and past colleague councillor Peter Marks spoke and said there is no way our identity will die as long as we have people like Dr. Oakes. He presented a certificate of recognition.

Bert Hinton spoke on behalf of the board of education.

On behalf of Georgetown Chamber of Commerce president George Gray presented

Dr. Oakes with a reproduction atlas and John McDonald's book Halton Sketches.

Julian Reed presented a scroll from the province. Dr. Frank Philbrook M.P. gave a framed letter from the Prime Minister.

Chamber president Louis Charlebois joked as he handed over the traditional engraved plaque.

A telegram was read for M.P.P. George Kerr and a letter from region chairman Ric Morrow.

Thanking the Chamber of Commerce, Dr. Oakes recalled how he and Betty had picked Acton to live in and said that they have been happy to be part of the town. "If the politicians would leave us alone..."

Dr. Oakes enjoyed sharing a few of his reminiscences with his smiling audience. He remembers dear old Miss Bennett retiring at \$1600 a

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Town rejects hydro corridors

For the second time in less than a week, Ontario Hydro failed in a bid to get a zoning by-law and Esqueping Official Plan amendment to allow hydro corridors through town.

Last Tuesday Halton Hills planning board rejected the request and Monday council turned it down.

John Bousfield, representing Hydro, said there were two lines in question—Bradley to Milton and Nanticoke to Pickering.

He explained towers are up on the east-west corridor and the land is owned by Hydro. The public utility firm has permission to go ahead and put up the wire everywhere except in Halton Hills.

"How is the public interest being served by further delays on this route?" Bousfield asked. He added he wasn't referring to the public interest just in Halton Hills but

throughout Southern Ontario. Mayor Tom Hill said he didn't think there was much chance the town would change its mind and give Hydro the go-ahead for either the east-west or north-south corridors until residents get the independent study they are asking for.

Councillor Peter Marks said he was under the impression there is enough hydro in Southern Ontario right now and no industry was suffering because of lack of power.

Bousfield said Marks might be right but his opinion was influenced by the great haste with which Hydro wants to proceed with the project. He thinks it is badly needed.

Councillor Russ Miller said the town should stick to its decision not to approve the corridor. He said he wasn't impressed with the way Hydro "abuses people."

Councillor George Malby said council's concern was "with Hydro's lack of complete honesty with the people."

He was worried approval of the east-west corridor would prejudice the case against the north-south line and added he didn't know why Hydro was trying to come through Esqueping in two locations.

"Many taxpayers are spending a lot of money trying to extract some honesty from Hydro," Malby declared.

On a recorded vote Hill, Malby, Miller, Marks, Les Doby, Pat McKenzie, Pat Patterson, Mike Armstrong, Peter Pomeroy and Roy Booth all voted to uphold the previous planning board rejection. Councillors Peter Morris, Walter Blehn and Marilyn Serjeantson were absent. See more on the corridor inside.



ARMFUL OF honors are held by Betty and Frank Oakes at the Citizen of the Year dinner in the Music Centre Friday. Dr. Oakes was the man of the hour; the retired vet was active on council, school board, P.U.C., and in his church.