

OUR READERS WRITE:

Regional government is working

Mrs. Kay Dills
Editor
The Acton Free Press
59 Willow N.
Acton, Ontario
Dear Mrs. Kay Dills
Enclosed please find a copy of a letter sent to Mr. R.F. Nixon, M.P.P., in response to his expressed opinions that Regional Governments have failed.
I would be most pleased if you would include this in the next issue of your newspaper.
Sincerely yours
R.B. Morrow
Regional Chairman.

Mr. Robert Nixon, M.P.P.
Brant-Oxford-Norfolk
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ont. M7A 1A2
Dear Mr. Nixon:
Recent press reports indicate that, in your opinion, all Regional Governments have failed.

Contrary to your expressed feelings, I submit that the future of local government is greatly enhanced by the creation of Regional Governments and that our citizens have much to gain, in the future, by the opportunity to deal more effectively with modern-day municipal problems through the reorganized local government structure.

The following comments will reflect, in particular, Halton Region, but to a significant degree relate to the principle of Regional Government formed in other areas of Ontario.

To state that the Region is Failing is to indicate your support for a return to the former County System and would indicate, for instance that police services in Halton would be improved by a return to five separate forces, rather than one effective and coordinated force greatly enhanced by a much improved system of communications.

It must follow, as well, that you believe that a strong balance to the ever-increasing influence of Metro Toronto, and an effective voice at the Provincial level is better provided by separate municipalities quarrelling amongst themselves, rather than the strong representation provided to local government by the Regional Council.

Regional Government has provided the vehicle by which the Province has returned, and will return, an increasing number of former Provincial powers to local government. Local government officials have requested these powers for years. To oppose this transition is to indicate your support for a large centralized Provincial bureaucracy which gives little or no power to local government and where civil servants are making decisions which should be the responsibility of elected representatives.

Do you really believe that the environment in Halton will receive a better chance of protection by the operation of seven separate garbage dumps, or by one properly engineered and operated landfill site, complying with our present environmental standards? Resource recovery, which opens new possibilities for the protection of the environment and the preservation of farmland, has been made possible in Halton, only as a result of

Regional Government.
The Region has received an "AA" rating for municipal borrowing which has resulted in lower costs than would have been experienced by our separate municipalities.
The Region will soon be providing badly needed municipal water to the citizens of Norval, a further example of a service made possible by elimination of arbitrary and irrational municipal boundaries that formerly existed.

There are many other areas, such as planning social services, public health, water supply and sewage treatment where more responsible decisions can be made, a higher degree of service can be provided, better cost control initiated and more effective use of personnel implemented by working together as a Regional unit.

Further, it must be recognized that the former County system was implemented over one hundred years ago, when modern-day municipal problems could not be foreseen.

Today, our country faces a serious crisis, in part because of the unwillingness of the Federal Government to be flexible and recognize that as our society changes, government must accept the challenge to respond.

Fortunately, the Provincial Government recognizing the pressing need for the reorganization of local government did what was necessary, despite knowing, full well, that the required change would not be a popular issue.

Approximately twenty-five years ago, the Provincial Government instituted Regional Government in the Toronto area. Without doubt, there were many then who adopted the popular and emotional position that "Metro Government" would not serve the citizens well, and would be a failure. Today, there are few who would say that the Metro system has not played a significant role in the development of Toronto as a large city with a quality of life second to none, in North America.

Twenty-five years from now, there will be few who will say that the Region of Halton has not played a positive role in promoting a sound social structure and the effective provision of necessary services to support that society.

No, Mr. Nixon, the track record of Regional Government has been one of success, not failure. The future will, more conclusively, show that the correct decision was made.

Being an elected official myself, I am aware that it is relatively easy and emotionally popular to oppose governmental changes. I'm convinced, however, that any responsible person who studies the facts will come to the conclusion that local government reorganization was necessary, and that its implementation has provided local government with the legal and political framework to successfully meet the changes of the future.

Sincerely yours
R.B. Morrow
Regional Chairman

Letters to the Editor are welcome!

Urges Sun Life to stay

Dear Sir:
On Friday, Jan. 6, in the 111th year of our nation, the key Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada, announced with regret a decision to move its head office from Montreal to Toronto, mainly as a result of the Quebec Government's new language legislation restricting the use of English.
In a free country like Canada, it has a perfect right to decide on its location or on any other business matter in its own interests.

Furthermore, as an important Canadian multinational corporation situated in Quebec throughout its history, it evidently did not get to this stage without careful and responsible consideration, the reaction of its critics notwithstanding.

This landmark step is a direct result of the political and economic climate created there by the new separatist and socialist government which must accept most of the responsibility for this dramatic change.

However, the consequences, including the effect on other businesses, jobs and the general situation in Quebec, could seriously affect national unity. Therefore, all Canadians including our leaders, have a serious interest in the outcome.

Again, to put our house in order, Canadians are literally getting down to business.

On Jan. 10, soon after the news broke, the Toronto and District Liberal Caucus met to discuss the situation. As your member of Parliament for Halton, I was instrumental in persuading my colleagues to take a positive and constructive approach. We recognized both the constitutional rights of

the private organizations such as Sun Life as well as the legitimate aspirations of all Canadians including our French-speaking citizens. On that basis we urged all parties in the dispute to try once more to resolve the situation as amicably as possible.

Subsequently the Canadian Government, led by my colleagues Prime Minister Trudeau and the Hon. Jean Chretien and appreciating the contribution of Toronto area Liberals, have gained the co-operation of Sun Life to do its best in these difficult circumstances.

It now remains to be seen whether the Parti Quebecois will react responsibly. Obviously the people of Quebec have a special role to play in influencing their government to accept the realities of life and work out acceptable solutions with the rest of us.

The ball is now in their court. Aside from the immediate issues, this will serve as a test case as to how well Canadians can manage their own affairs, both between governments and with private sector, and keep Canada united.

Like the Quebec election itself, it represents both a challenge and an opportunity to continue building a better Canada together.

I and my colleagues in the Government of Canada prefer to see it more as an opportunity and trust that we have your understanding and support in resolving our differences at this crucial time in history.

Yours sincerely,
Dr. Frank A. Philbrook
Member of Parliament
Halton

1st woman chairman

The Sheridan College Board of Governors acclaimed Audrey Ryckman as chairman and elected George Farrow as vice-chairman at its inaugural meeting at the Oakville Campus, Jan. 11. Terms of office are for one year.

Ryckman replaces William Cooke of Brampton who was chairman for the past two years.

Ryckman said the major concern for the 1978 will be to work within the ministry guidelines and the financial constraints that have been imposed on the college.

Ryckman, a medical technician by profession, is a graduate of McMaster University. She serves with numerous community, church, school and sports organizations.

Ryckman, of Burlington, was appointed to the board in 1975 by the Council of Regents. She served as vice-chairman last year and this year becomes the first

New vice-chairman George Farrow, of Oakville, also received his appointment 1975.

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Filmstrip made by Acton man

Peter Saxon of Pinwheel Productions, Acton, has made up a sound-filmstrip, presentation to be sold to fire departments across Canada.

"The Canadian Firefighters' Basic Training Filmstrip Series" is made up of the various firefighting and lifesaving techniques. Canadian fire chiefs, captains, and training instructors who continually deal with teaching, have recognized the on-going problem of getting vast amounts of information communicated to men on a shift schedule.

When a new man joins the department, he must wait until the next training session to learn the various techniques. In the meantime, he would be called out to a fire. With this new method each man could learn individually, as soon as he

signed up. Georgetown firefighters are in some of the strips.

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Use trees

Because of the increasing concern about the cost of energy and its supply, rural homeowners should consider establishing shelter belts around their homes.

Using trees to deflect the winds of winter can save hundreds of dollars and will reduce the demand for fuel, says Burke McNeill, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food extension horticulturist in Halton.

Although there are many types of trees suitable for shelter, Mr. McNeill recommends evergreens such as spruce and pine.

But because these trees are slow growing, poplar and willow trees are often used to provide quick shelter until the evergreens are large enough to do the job.

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources offers trees for windbreaks.

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