



Acton firefighters spent more than ten hours at the scene of Good Friday's tragic farm house blaze. The early morning fire claimed two lives—a young boy and an elderly woman—and Halton Regional Police suspect arson. Flames lit the predawn sky for miles around. The farm's two-storey brick house, a barn and garage were consumed in flames. A nearby frame barn however, escaped flames. Two teams of Halton detectives plus the Ontario Fire Marshalls' office are investigating. A post mortem examination at the Forensic Science Laboratory in Toronto was scheduled for Tuesday. However, authorities decided to hold it later.

Photos by ERIC ELSTONE

Pigs invade region

Pigs on the loose? No, not exactly — just the Halton 4-H Swine Club. On Tuesday, Apr. 3, the first meeting was held at the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food office in Milton. This is the first time in over 20

years there has been a swine club in Halton. It seems now there are enough Miss Piggy fans! There are 12 members in the club, headed by president Paul Wilkin-

son, vice-president Ross McClure and secretary Gerhard Treviranus, all of whom were elected at the first meeting. The members have chosen to raise a gilt and

a barrow as their project. These animals will be judged at the fair in September. During the meeting two slide shows were presented. One explained

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Renaissance says reject compulsory Lord's Prayer

The Renaissance Commission on the Family suggests that the Lord's Prayer should not be imposed on students in a public (government) school.

During the past three months, a majority of the concerns brought to the Commission from all across the nation have dealt with the matter of schooling. A common problem is the imposition of values, attitudes, morals, ethics, customs and "religion" which is contrary to the family.

The Ontario Minister of

Education has received many communications dealing with these problems. She has tried to be responsible to the parents by directing that the local school boards follow the Education Act which provides for religious content in opening exercises and in limited teaching time. Boards have the option of deciding not to have such content if it is felt to be contrary to the community needs.

In response to this great expression of concern by parents, the Commission suggests:

1. The Lord's Prayer should not be imposed on any pupils of a public school—nor should any other prayer. The search for a "neutral" prayer is hopeless and should be dropped.
2. In a diverse society such as Canada, some families do not subscribe to the Christian Prayer and to use such prayers as "going through the motions" comes close to a mockery of religion and is a grave injustice to those of many other faiths and philosophies.
3. Parents have the

right to choose the education of their children as expressed in article 26 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Parents should have full knowledge of the content, methods and teacher qualifications and experience for all courses offered in the schools. Parents should have opportunity to then "enroll" their children/youth INTO such courses and programs rather than have to "opt out" which labels the child in a negative way. These conditions are particularly important in

the areas of special sensitivity such as those courses/programs involving human values, interpersonal relations, attitudes, morals, etc.

4. Catholic schools, other Christian schools, Hebrew schools and other schools consistent with the family orientation of other groups should receive full tax support. The "so called" public schools are not "neutral." These public (government) schools should not have a monopoly on the public taxation.

Government schools and government committees are not superior to the family. Such institutions and organizations exist to assist the families of the nation; families do not exist to serve or to be subservient to the government or to government committees or to government schools.

School boards earn concession

Several Ontario school boards — including Halton's — earned concessions from the province concerning changes in the Education Act.

Halton Board of Education Director Em Lavender informed trustees Thursday at Burlington that the ministry granted Halton exemption from teaching religious education in elementary schools.

Lavender also told trustees of the ministry's decision to defer indefinitely bringing in new levels for classes of emotionally disturbed and children with learning disabilities.

decisions are a comment on the receptiveness of Ontario Education Minister Bette Stephenson, Lavender said.

The new ministry regulations, if carried through, would have made mandatory the teaching of religion in elementary schools, plus raising the number of pupils in classes of children with learning difficulties. There were other implications.

The deferral of the class size decision depends on "an entire review of the regulation," according to Lavender. Earlier this year the Halton Board moved to

accept no other provincial education ministry expectation without the money to pay for it.

The expectation by the ministry concerning religion instruction in elementary schools was estimated by Lavender to cost Halton \$300,000 because the province provides no curriculum guidelines, no resource materials and no training for teachers. Halton would have to do it all.

For the past decade there has been no teaching of religion in lower schools. According to Lavender since the Mackay report on Religious Education the ministry's position on the

matter has been unclear.

For 25 years prior to the Mackay report schools provided two periods of religious education each week.