

Trinity reconsiders bank change over South Africa loan



Bank of Nova Scotia President J.A.G. Bell told members of Trinity United Church's congregation about his bank's policy on loans to South Africa Friday.

Trinity United Church will reconsider changing its bank in the wake of a plea by the Bank of Nova Scotia's president and other unusual events.

A special after service meeting has been called for Sunday so the congregation may again debate transferring its funds from the Bank of Nova Scotia.

Church officials are arranging for a panel of experts to be on hand to answer congregation questions about banking, international loans and South Africa.

Some congregation members believe that by changing banks, they will help Black people in South Africa. The theory goes that if banks refuse new loans to the South African government that will translate into pressure on it to improve the treatment of Blacks.

Bank of Nova Scotia President J.A.G. Bell, in a surprise visit Friday, told about 30 Trinity congregation members that refusing new loans could harm South African Blacks.

By making overseas loans to South Africa and other such places the bank is able to exercise some influence, pointed out Bell. "Suppose we pull out of

South Africa? What happens? What's there will be lost." Bell predicted there would be "a Haiti multiplied a hundred times over."

"The bank," said the president, "can't take a public position and say it cannot give loans to someone." He went on to say he believes the bank's decisions "will stand scrutiny on moral issues."

The main example of Bank of Nova Scotia's attitude towards people, cited by Bell, was the institution's work in the West Indies.

"In the Caribbean we are known as the Black man's bank. I don't think that could happen if we had any kind of racist policies," said Bell.

The bank president, who described himself as a United Church member, also said "In no way, shape or form do I relish us being at odds with the church in Canada."

"It certainly came as a shock to me that a church would not consider doing business with us," remarked Bell.

Trinity's decision to switch banks took place after a "hot debate" during the congregation's annual meeting in February.

The congregation asked its board to transfer its

banking practices to the Toronto Dominion or any credit union.

That resolution was "carried by a substantial majority" according to Rev. C.P. Beaton. The preamble recognized two points: that other Canadian churches plus those in the U.S.A., Britain, Africa, Europe and the World Council of Churches have urged major international banks to cease lending funds to South Africa.

Also recognized was the fact that the Toronto Dominion bank and credit unions have a policy of making no new loans to the South African government under the present apartheid system.

Church members have been arguing the pros and cons of the resolution ever since. Another remarkable event soon followed: the church board, which is responsible to the congregation, balked. It refused to carry out the congregation's wish. Back to the congregation goes the bank resolution for reconsideration Sunday.

In the memory of senior church members, going back a quarter century or more, that's never happened.

"The new board wouldn't do it because there was

too much dissension," according to Rev. Beaton. The 24-member board "just didn't feel comfortable with it."

Meanwhile church members searched for information on banking practices and South Africa. One such talk, between board member Ralph Denny and local Bank of Nova Scotia manager Reg DiCola led to the surprise visit of the Bank of Nova Scotia president.

Trinity's decision to switch banks can be seen as a result of the Task Force on Corporate Responsibility which has urged changes.

At the root of problem, as a task force and church target, is the South African government's long standing policy of separation of races, what's become known as apartheid.

Bell, the bank president, remarked that "we won't miss a dividend" if Trinity withdraws its funds, which according to one estimate, is less than \$50,000.

Bank of Nova Scotia does loan business with 106 countries, according to Bell. He stressed that it

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Acton region taxes up \$35

The average taxpayer in Acton will fork over an extra \$35 this year to keep Halton Region operating, Councillor Dave Whiting has predicted.

Last year, Whiting said in an interview this week, the Acton ratepayer with the average local property assessment of \$4,498 paid about \$70 in region taxes.

This year, he warns, that figure will soar to \$105.

Work on the 1981 regional budget is nearing completion, Acton's lone voice at region said, and the latest figures show Halton Hills ratepayers facing a 52 per cent tax increase, down from the 68 per cent or \$49 average jump predicted in early February.

"There's no way around it," Whiting said of the large hike.

Taxes to support the regional level of local government are going to soar "because the region needs the money to get on its feet and get going" after two years of deficits in numerous accounts.

The deficits, both in 1979 and 1980, weren't discovered until last year and were in a number of accounts.

In 1980 the region determined it needed to raise \$2.6 million in Halton Hills. The province offset that amount by contributing \$1.4 million in grants so the region had to collect just \$1.2 million through local taxes.

However, this year, Whiting noted, the region needs \$3.1 million from Halton Hills, but expects to receive about the same amount in provincial grants. So, he explained, the region must get \$1.7 million or \$500,000 more, through the municipal tax

levy.

Provincial grants are based on population, not on how much money is needed. When the region has the kind of financial woes it faces this year, mostly because of the deficits, it impacts more on Halton Hills taxpayers than say Burlington ratepayers, because the south hasn't been receiving as much support per capita as the north from Queen's Park, Whiting stated.

Besides covering the deficit the region must collect more money so it can spend on measures being taken in the treasury department to avoid future financial problems. Whiting said he is pleased to see the region now doing the kinds of things to improve control over finances which he was calling for in the November election before he was elected for the first time.

The 1981 budget is trimmed down about as much as it can be. Whiting said, noting he has been leading the attack on social services spending and is one of the tight fistled councillors. However, cuts are very tough to make, especially in social services, because the province says the region must run a number of very costly programs.

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School taxes rise \$21.93

Education taxes are going up \$21.93 in Acton and \$22.75 in Esqueping on an average assessed home this year.

After receiving Halton Hills allocations from the Halton Board of Education the town treasurer's office determined the education tax hikes.

Based on an average assessment of \$4,457 and a 4.92 mills increase education taxes will go up \$21.93 in Acton. Esqueping's average assessment is \$4,596 and there will be a 4.95 mills so taxes will go up \$22.75.

Turn inside for more on the finalized board budget.



It's a bird . . . It's a plane . . . It's Superman

Superman musical director Suzi Berber, right, goes through a number with the Supergirls. They are left to right, Tammy Allsop, Sandra Krusch, Tanya Mokrytski, Denise Dilbey and Sandra Bendicks. Superman runs at Acton High School April 8, 9 and 10. More rehearsal photos on page 3, This Week Thru the Lens.



John Laiter and Walter Palasz show off the colorful feathers of Dija Dija, a ring-necked pheasant responsible for the start of Pine Hill Pheasants. The Laiters and Palasz produced 800 pheasants for Canadian markets in 1980 and are the only pheasant breeders in a radius of 50 miles. Photo by JENNIFER BARR

Roast pheasant local fare

by Jennifer Barr

Pheasant under glass is a luxurious and expensive delicacy few people have a chance to experience.

John and Sophie Laiter and father Walter Palasz raise 1,500 pheasants a year, the only pheasant producers in a radius of 50 miles.

Farming ten acres on the 25 Sideroad south of Rockwood in North Nassagaweya, the Laiters like to think of pheasants as an everyday dish. (It must be easy when you have a freezer full of them.) John passes out recipes for roast pheasant or pheasant creole as an everyday occurrence. At \$4.50 a pound retail pheasant is cheaper than some steak and not much more expensive than most meat.

Pine Hill Pheasants came into being last year when John hit on what he considered the perfect way to put his land to work. Living on the property for five years, the Laiters had experimented with cattle (they still have a few) and planting spruce trees (they still have lots).

But a small flock of 25 ring-neck pheasants two years ago proved so successful, John couldn't resist going into commercial pheasant raising.

He and Sophie laugh at the problems they encountered during their first year of major operation.

"It seemed so easy with 25," Sophie comments.

When two pens of 750 birds were planned, the problems started.

First, the cost seemed high—\$4,000 per pen for special nets, heated brooder houses and heavy duty chain link frost fence.

Then a freak cold spell killed 400 of the 1,500 day-old pheasant chicks delivered in June. For

three days the Laiters nursed more than 1,000 peeping chicks in their basement until brooder heating and circulation problems could be solved and the weather become more June-like.

Later losses cut down the pheasant population that season and John decided to work with only one pen and half the planned number of birds.

Pheasant mortality can be high with predators such as owls, weasels, and neighborhood dogs out to get the flighty birds.

When day-old pheasants are ordered from the hatchery an even mixture of males and females are sent. Males are noted for their elegant and colorful plumage which is often used for making feather jewelry and decorations. Females look like coconuts, small brown and round.

All pheasants suffer from unpredictable bouts of hysteria making them difficult to control and handle.

The Laiters have to handle their birds several times during the 20-week growing period. They are de-beaked twice as chicks and young birds so they don't cannibalize each other.

According to the Laiters the odor of de-beaking and cauterizing several hundred pheasant beaks on a 95 degree day would kill a strong man.

Birds are caught for de-beaking and any medication necessary with a fish net. John tells of the surprised looks of Acton Canadian Tire store staff when his son went looking for a fish net in late November.

Birds are harvested for market a month before Christmas when females weigh 2½ pounds and males weigh nearly three pounds.

A processor takes care of preparing and packaging the live birds for table while John does the marketing. Owner and manager of Erin Country

Inn, John originally planned to serve pheasant in a fine dining room. However, the Erin Country Inn is doing well as a tavern John says, so he switched plans and now serves gourmet burgers.

Other restaurants as far away as Halifax and as close as Millcroft Inn, Orton, and Mohawk Inn, Campbellville, serve Pine Hill Pheasants. Many are sold gift-boxed as Christmas presents and to supermarkets. Some are sold live as breeding pairs or trios and others are purchased for their feathers.

John has even had empty-handed pheasant hunters come in off the road to buy a brace.

Getting into the pheasant business is not easy. There's licensing to be obtained through the Ministry of Natural Resources. Information on raising pheasants is hard to come by as there is only one book available in Canada.

Expenses are high with day-old chicks costing a dollar a piece; processing costs another dollar a bird, plastic bags are another dime each, not to mention prepared food to grow the birds for five months. Add to that the initial investment costs of buildings and pens and it's easy to see why pheasants bring \$4.50 a pound.

John and Sophie are confident the business will fly more easily next year now that their trial period is over. John has great plans for selling birds along airline routes. Flying frozen birds by plane seems to be easier than training them to fly under their own steam.

Pine Hill Pheasants are available locally at Lovells Meats, Chudleighs on Highway 25 and at the farm. Instead of struggling with hamburger this weekend or wondering how to afford steak, break-out and roast a pheasant.

Beardmore takes steps to solve runoff

Beardmore is taking a number of steps to solve industrial waste problems at the tannery and further action is being considered.

In February Beardmore was named as having one of 11 industrial waste disposal sites in Ontario with chemical runoff problems by a consulting firm for the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.

Chemical runoff was found in ground water and Black Creek during the study last fall of an old Beardmore dump site, the present disposal site, filter beds and spray irrigation system, all of which are contributing to the ground water problems. As well some leachate was detected. Chemicals are getting into Black Creek through the creek bed. It

isn't a surface problem, ministry officials previously said.

John Budz, senior environmental engineer at the

inside

The Citizen of the Year will be honored in June. Turn to page 5.

A man who killed a fisherman near Speyside last year has been found not guilty of manslaughter. More on page 7.

Oakville office said following the meeting with Beardmore officials "the company has agreed to establish on site ground water and surface stream monitoring to determine the extent of the contamination."

In addition, Budz said, Beardmore has agreed to further reduce the problem by "undertaking a water conservation program." By reducing the amount of water used in industrial processes Beardmore will reduce the waste water volume.

Budz said Beardmore will also institute in plant changes to "minimize chloride levels."

All actions agreed to so far have affect on Beardmore property only.