

Cole's reign finishes in controversial debate

In his characteristic style, Halton's outgoing Medical Officer of Health Dr. Peter Cole leaves the region this month with two controversial recommendations.

Today council will be asked to encourage the province to take comprehensive steps to crack down on drinking and driving as well as to support the legalization of heroin in Canada for pain relief in the terminally ill.

Both recommendations were approved by the Health and Social Services Committee last Tuesday after some debate.

Cole came down hard on those who drink and drive in his proposals which include:

- a one-year licence suspension for a first impaired driving conviction plus a lifetime suspension for a further conviction.
- six months in jail for refusing to take a police administered breathalyzer test.

—that doctors be empowered to take blood samples from unconscious victims in vehicle accidents for alcohol tests.

—that the Liquor Licence Board stop granting approval for Happy Hours in licensed establishments.

—that the province put more money into promoting safe driving and moderation in the consumption of alcohol, and also require that alcoholic beverages be labelled with the warning "Excessive use of this substance is harmful to your health."

Cole supports the legalization of heroin with the strong backing of Dr. Ken Walker of Niagara Falls, a syndicated newspaper columnist known as W. Gifford-Jones.

According to Walker, medical studies indicate heroin is more potent as a pain reliever than morphine, though there are



Dr. Peter Cole

widely diverging views in the medical community on the need for it.

Heroin is legal for medical use in other countries, notably Great Britain, but is currently illegal in Canada.

Fire damages way up

The number of fires in Halton Hills this year is running ahead of the 1982 pace and damage totals are up substantially.

Councillors recently received a report outlining the fire department's activities for the month of October from Halton Hills Fire Chief Bill Cunningham.

A fire department press release noted that October had been the worst month of the year so far for fires.

Up to the end of October of this year volunteer firefighters in Acton and Georgetown had responded to 307 calls compared to 270 after the first 10 months of 1982.

Damages in fires have also soared. The damage total has leaped from \$385,091 between January and the end of October of 1982 to \$1,127,513 in the same time period this year.

So far this year five people have died in fires in Halton Hills and 10 firefighters have been injured on the job. As well 10 members of the public have been hurt in blazes.

Last month there were 30 fires in Halton Hills compared to 21 the same month last

year. Of the 30 October '83 blazes, eight were building fires and two were open fires. The other 20 were classified as "other". Two fires were the result of negligence and nine were produced by poor maintenance. Another nine October blazes were the result of accidents while 10 were classed as "other".

Police sword not weapon

Halton Police are ordering a commemorative sword, but there's no danger it will be swinging at the public.

A letter from Police Chief James Harding asked the Town's permission to use the Town coat of arms on the sword. It will accompany the coat of arms belonging to all the Towns who make up Halton Region.

The sword will be for decorative purposes only, and negotiations are now going on with Wilkinson Sword Co.

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Halton makes second dome bid

Metro Toronto has made a fast break towards the goal line in the province's domed stadium game, but Halton Region is doggedly clinging to Cabbagetown's jersey in a bid to pull ahead.

Key points in Metro's bid to have the dome located at the Canadian National Exhibition grounds are its proximity to existing transit routes and a proposed lottery backed by twelve leading corporate sponsors that promises to raise \$50-140-million towards the cost of construction.

In a supplementary submission the provincial government's Stadium Study Committee, Halton has responded to both areas of concern, ones that were raised when Halton representatives made their first pitch to the committee October 19.

Accessibility of the stadium to Toronto residents plus construction funding from other than tax revenues are both favoured.

Halton is trying to brighten its chances by endorsing the Metro lottery proposal and the new submission encourages the committee to consider the proposal "wherever the stadium is to be located."

Metro's lottery suggestion has the support of McDonald's Canada Ltd., Dominion Stores, Wardair Canada Ltd., Coca-Cola Ltd., Canadian Tire Corp. and other major corporations.

Halton's new submission says that while the region has contacted only two of "the more prominent" of these prominent firms, it feels the corporations will take part in the scheme "regardless of the stadium location."

During the region's initial presentation, committee members expressed concern that many Toronto residents may have trouble getting to Halton's proposed site at the intersection of Hwy 403 and the proposed Hwy 407. A 1979 survey indicated 23 per cent of Metro households do not own automobiles.

Halton is suggesting major transportation companies can provide special service to the site, "with minimal inconvenience."

"Presently such services are provided to CNE stadium in Toronto, Kingswood Music Theatre at Wonderland and Ivor Wynn Stadium in Hamilton for various events," the submission says.

The submission also notes the site is along the northern route of the proposed GO-ALRT line which will link it to Oakville, Mississauga City Centre, North York and Scarborough Town Centres.

The Stadium Study Committee is expected to make its recommendation on the dome stadium location sometime in early 1984, and has to choose from a number of municipal bids.



Raggedy Ann and Friend beg to be cuddled in this oil painting by Eunice Melton. Many others were shown at the Artist's exhibition.

Citizens blast land purchase—municipal complex at drop-in

Council urged to fix Trafalgar Rd. offices

It is ridiculous for councillors to say they can't fix up and expand the 29-year-old Trafalgar Rd. Town offices when Ted Tyler and his group are obviously succeeding in restoring the over 100-year-old town hall in Acton.

That observation was made by Acton resident John McHugh at Friday's council drop-in, attended by about 15 Acton and Esqueping taxpayers.

Citizens at the drop-in agreed with McHugh's comment, noting Tyler's group is restoring the old hall for less than half the money that council said it would take to fix it up.

The citizens criticized council's purchase for the Stevens' property down the road from their present quarters for \$600,000 and plans to build a municipal complex there in the future. Councillors Ross Knechtel, Russ Miller and Rick Bonnette attended the drop-in while Councillor Dave Whiting was away on vacation and Councillor Jake Kuiken was tied up with business.

Listen to the people
Miller observed councillors should be listening to the public's input and if they had for the last year the Town coffers would have

\$500,000 in it that won't be there after the land purchase closes next March.

Esqueping resident Ralph Denny said a letter from Georgetown Hospital administrator Fred Morris praising the controversial land purchase and plans to build a complex, published in local newspapers, show there's only two areas of Halton Hills, Acton Esqueping wasn't mentioned.

Give councillors 'hell'
It is time for citizens to give councillors "hell", Tom Watson said, and he suggested Town fathers and mothers get used to being in hot water because they'll be hearing a lot more from people in the near future.

He showed the councillors a pile of petitions which he reported were signed by 95 per cent of the residents of Lakeview and area. He said the remaining taxpayers in the area who didn't sign the petition weren't home when citizens came to their doors.

Councillors had plenty of time to go to the public and find out what they thought of their action and plans, but didn't.

Miller said he knew citizens wanted no part of the Stevens' property purchase, but he and colleagues Rick Bonnette and John McDonald, who also opposed the deal, were

being made to feel like they are "crazy" by their fellow councillors just because they "listened to the people."

Former Acton councillors like Les Dudy and Pat McKenzie always thought when the time came to expand Town offices it should be done at the Trafalgar Rd. site, but now they too were thought of as having been crazy by today's councillors, Miller declared.

Knechtel shot back that no councillor has said that, and Miller countered that by the way the majority voted, in effect that was what they were saying. Knechtel said all he was doing was disagreeing with Miller's view and that was no reason to call him "stupid."

Following up on Watson's comments regarding the response to the petition in Lakeview, Christine Houston said she isn't finding support for council's actions as she circulates the petition in the Churchill Rd. North area either. Miller said there is strong response to the petition in and around Georgetown, fresh petitions are being taken regularly to a store in Glen Williams.

The Town staff has taken over from the
(Continued on Page B2)

Union heats up debate on Manor absenteeism

Staff at Halton Centennial Manor and their supporters have fired their first broadside at Regional Council in the continuing battle over employee absenteeism at the home for the elderly.

In a written statement to the Health and Social Services Committee last Tuesday the "reckless desire to fire" employees accused of chronic absenteeism was condemned by Robert Sveva, from Local 101 Canadian Union of Operating Engineers and General Workers, which represents service and maintenance staff at the Manor.

"Given the extensive amount of time and effort both the union and management have spent in this area of labor relations, the union can only express the greatest degree of contempt for council members such as Mr. Whiting and Ms. Joyce Savolins who obviously spent little or no time... looking into the absenteeism situation," he said.

He denied that there were 34 "problem workers", saying at one time there were 34 employment records with absenteeism which warranted some inquiry. He said inquiry proved that only a small percentage appeared to be abusers and the others were

off for legitimate reasons such as pregnancy or surgery.

This contradicts statements by the Manor's outgoing administrator Rick Kaufman that the 34 have shown persistently poor records over the last four years. He said typically sick leave was taken to create long weekends.

Sveva said the statements by council members had seriously strained relations between the union and the region, and that they had "painted all Manor employees with the same brush."

His sentiment was shared by Alice Lee, a shop steward at the Manor who said in an interview, "They are lumping us all together and people are upset."

She said a majority of sick leaves were certified legitimate by the employees' family doctors. On the two occasions when employees were fired for absenteeism, grievances were filed and both were reinstated with full pay by arbitrators, she said.

At the centre of the storm are problems of relations between the union and Manor administration and a lack of communication

with the region said Lee, as well as a vocal supporter of the employees on council, Milton representative Bill Johnson.

Johnson said that since last winter he has received repeated complaints from employees about actions taken by management at the Manor including:

—employees were ordered to use only the staff parking lot at a time when it was buried in snow.

—due to budget constraints, evening meals were discontinued for staff.

—staff were banned from making tea or coffee during shifts for either themselves or residents.

Johnson criticized management for "cracking the whip" with petty regulations. "This is not a correctional institution for God's sake," he said.

Lee said staff morale was low and Johnson said it would not be long before patient care was adversely affected.

Johnson said it is a mistake to compare Manor workers with other regional employees because their working conditions are more difficult.

A report by Halton's Director of Per-

sonnel, D.M. Camm, was made public two weeks ago and it revealed that in 1982 other regional employees took an average of 6.2 sick days off work while service and maintenance employees took 18.5.

"The amount of absenteeism and related loss of productivity in the Halton Centennial Manor is very serious," he said.

Johnson disputed this saying, "The employees do an outstanding job. They do a job that is not expected of any other regional employee."

"Nobody has violated the collective agreement," he pointed out.

Manor employees work rotating shifts and the home is in operation 24-hours a day, year round. According to Lee, this plus heavy lifting and exposure to patient illnesses, results in greater stress and sickness amongst employees.

Added Johnson, "Shift work at the best of times is a strain on family life. It is hard to have a social life if your days off are Tuesday and Wednesday if your friends are off Saturday and Sunday."

Region Briefs

No free lunch

Free lunches at the regional watering trough may come to an end for councillors, reporters and staff if the Administration and Finance Committee gets its way.

The committee is recommending those who partake of noon hour meals at the region's expense pick up the tab at a cost of six dollars a month from now on.

Halton spent over \$3,000 this year providing lunch for politicians, media and staff who stayed over the lunch hour for meetings. The meals cost from three to six dollars per person and were provided "as a courtesy" because of the distance people attending meetings had to travel from home, said Chief Administrative Officer Dennis Perlin, who recommended the change.

"I don't know of any businesses that provide free lunches for employees," said Burlington Councillor, Joan Little.

Councillor Pat McLaughlin disputed the need to charge for a courtesy that wasn't being abused. "I think this whole thing is a crock," he said of the proposal.

No summer schedule

When regional councillors take summer holidays this year they may be able to rest content that Halton's business will go on without them.

Council will be asked today to approve a 1984 schedule that will see no break in council and committee meetings through July and August, despite the vacation plans of Halton's politicians.

Oakville Councillor, Carol Gooding had recommended the Administration and Finance Committee cut summer meetings by half as is done in the Town of Oakville, but her colleagues were cool to the idea.

Councillor Joan Little stated council business such as contract approvals were ongoing and should not be delayed unnecessarily.

Said Councillor James Grieve, "It's pretty hard, when you are dealing with some developer, to have to say 'Sorry, you'll have to wait a few more weeks until we have another meeting'."

Mop-up needs top-up

Halton's Disaster Relief Grant Fund should get a \$6,000 infusion to cover grants paid out to Georgetown homeowners plagued by flood damage August 1.

Grants of up to \$250 were paid out to 28 homeowners in town to help relieve them of the costs of damage and clean-up when a heavy rainfall that holiday weekend resulted in sewer overflows.

The fund, established by Halton region in 1982, is to be built up to a total of \$50,000 by 1985. The Administration and Finance Committee is recommending the fund be "topped-up" to bring it up to its pre-flood level.

Costs increase

It looks like it will cost local industry more to ship garbage to Regional landfill operations in the coming year.

A charge of \$18 per tonne is being recommended to council by the Administration and Finance Committee to cover new and expanded programs in 1984.

The current charge is \$16.00 per tonne, but the committee says an increase is needed to cover \$100,000 in construction at existing Halton landfill sites plus the region's interim disposal method that must begin operation by mid-year. Council hopes to expand the Burlington landfill site for three years.

Contract signed

Halton children who cannot live at home, are on bail or are leaving the care of the Children's Aid Society, now have another hostel to provide them with temporary shelter and care.

Regional councillors recently approved a purchase of service agreement to finance a hostel in Burlington operated by Community Resource Services of Halton and the CAS.

Residents of the facility will be charged \$300 a month and the region will pay \$9.50 a day to cover the cost of shelter and personal needs.

The provincial Ministry of Community and Social Services pays 80 per cent of the total cost of the program.