

## Values education, another look

Wednesday night's cheek to jowl confrontation between Concerned Parents and the Halton Board of Education has finally thrown some oil on the stormy seas of values education.

From it came the realization that the stormy seas may, indeed, have been a tempest in a tea cup. A justified one but, nevertheless, just a minor tempest.

It was a situation bred by a certain amount of misinformation, a poor start, a personality conflict and, finally, a failure of our education system to respond to criticism in a proper manner.

Through it all, however, the values education system appears to be a program well worth exploring. As was pointed out, at present it is only an exploratory program. Its success and subsequent adoption into the full Halton system is far from proven.

Thus far, with the exception of Concerned Citizens in Georgetown, the program has met with a great deal of enthusiasm from parents elsewhere in Halton.

Values education programs, and not just random and incomplete attempts at such, have been initiated in 12 schools in Halton. Only one—Pineview—is located in the north.

All the criticism levelled at values education programs have, unfortunately, been aimed at the wrong target: incomplete and immature values programs instituted without the direction of the board. Thus the resultant misinformation.

One of the prime targets of all the debate locally has been the use of the "Three-Dimensional Portrait," a questionnaire aimed at turning children's attention inward. Well it turns out that the portrait is only a minor part of the entire values education program and one which the people motivating the program have now decided should not be used without prior examination and approval by parents.

The administrators of the values education program would probably prefer that the portrait had not been used at all, now that they're fully aware of the criticism it would draw. All in all, the portrait got the values education idea in Georgetown off on the wrong foot.

Personality conflicts between principals, administrators and parents have also crept into the battle over values education. When dealing with a subject as important as the

development of children the only way to handle these problems is to sit down and deal with them point-blank. There should be no behind-the-back actions by either party.

Complicating everything, the board of education, unfortunately has dealt very poorly with the local criticism of the values program. The board's administrators, perhaps because of their desire to see all the wrinkles of the program ironed out, have, in fact, dealt better with the situation than the trustees did.

Anger and irritation seemed to pockmark the differences of opinion. But they shouldn't have. The parents' concern offers valuable feedback which the board should look for and encourage, instead of trying to undercut.

Fortunately the times are changing. The appearance last Wednesday by board of education's new chairman, Judy Alexander, was encouraging. Perhaps communications between parents and board are finally going to take a turn for the better. Our local trustees could well take note of Mrs. Alexander's handling of the situation.

The prime thorn of contention which was brought out at the Wednesday meeting and which has been shown through the entire, in-depth examination of the values education program by Concerned Parents, is that a certain number of parents are willing and, in fact, are insistent upon having some control of the curriculum through which their children are developing. That demand is quite justified.

The board, perhaps, should consider instituting meetings between parents and teachers prior to the start of school terms at which parents are advised of the subjects to be covered and the manner in which they will be taught. Text books to be used could be available for parents to peruse. This meeting could be reinforced by normal parent-teacher interviews throughout the year.

It appears that the dispute over the values education program is not aimed specifically at the role of the program itself but rather at the methods by which it is suffering through its own birth pains.

With parents, teachers and administrators all adding input the program could well develop into an important asset for the important figures in all this hooplah, the students.

## Scout-Guide congratulations

This week Halton Hills marks a special week in the lives of over 1,000 local youngsters. It's Scout-Guide Week and, although special events marking the occasion in town are few, the week itself is worthy of special notice by all.

The traditions established so many years ago by Lord Baden-Powell still stand. The skills and knowledge gained through participation with the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Cub Scouts and Brownie movements will, the involved young people will find, serve them well as they grow.

But tying knots and cooking over open fires are not the prime assets gained through such organizations.

Comradeship is. Learning, through very important stages in all our lives, how to work with others is.

Learning how to work within a set system is.

Learning the full meaning of responsibility is.

Learning what leadership entails is.

At such a time we all tend to congratulate the leaders for their work throughout the rest of their year. It's fully deserved.

However let's also pay tribute to the young men and women involved in

the Scouting and Guiding movements. They're taking one of their first steps towards maturity.

## Ontario's Liberal are happier after this year's convention

By DONO HEARN  
Queen's Park Bureau  
Of The Herald

The Ontario Liberals are a happy, happy crowd these days.

The annual meeting they held in Windsor last weekend was the most enthusiastic meeting they have held in 30 years, outside of leadership conventions. And it probably was

better than most conventions. The 1,800 delegates who were at the meeting, an impressive number, were tasting blood.

And for the first time since 1943 they came across like a hockey team that felt it would be winning rather than fighting it out for last. It was a genuine, happy crowd rather than one which was trying to fight

glumness with false optimism. Underneath the enthusiasm there was one development which was disturbing some, and perhaps a good many, of the delegates. This was that they weren't getting their fingers into policy.

Ostensibly policy was being discussed at various seminars. But any discussion was essentially superficial and half-hearted. For the people at the

meeting knew they would only be talking about policy and not settling it.

They had been well-warned in advance by leader Bob Nixon that he personally would be setting the party program. He would listen to policy advice, but he would be settling it. The observer this was a most welcome development.

Traditionally in our British system it has been the party leader who has set policy - and lived or died on it. Lately, largely through the influence of the CCF-NDP, we have been moving away from this approach. The old CCF started the practice of "policy" conventions and would draw up its election platforms from these.

The approach never really worked. It would end up in some 20 chickens. Arson is not the main consideration of the police but rather a stranger that has been seen around the premises, especially the chicken area. The fire is believed to have been caused by paper lighted to provide light for the children at dusk.

30 Years Ago  
Smith and Stone will have its own newspaper for the staff and management to inform the members of the plant of upcoming events. It will also contain information about company employees serving overseas. The paper will be monthly and the first edition will include a contest to name the publication.

Police have been called to investigate a fire at Notre Dame de Beauregard Farm which destroyed a chicken house and killed

Flooding in Glen Williams has subsided. Residents can begin cleaning up in order to move back into their homes.

20 Years Ago  
Negotiations are being completed to permit Delrex Developments to acquire

additional land along Highway Seven. The farm of A. E. Shain will make a total of 11 farms that will comprise the newest housing area of Georgetown.

John Elliot is Georgetown's new station manager for the Canadian National



### IT'S GIRL GUIDE AND BOY SCOUT WEEK...

## Thanks for the brandy snifter, whoever you are

I dislike surprises. Oh sure, they're nice to add a little excitement to the normal, day-in and day-out routine, but life's little uncertainties tend to keep me awake at night.

Like I have this brandy snifter. Beautiful. It completes my collection of one, which makes any situation in which brandy sniffers are useful, all the more appealing.

A candlelit dinner in the apartment, complete with a nice bottle of Medas. Then adjourn to the living room. Perhaps some flaming brandy to add a final warm touch? Well, my dear, I'm afraid I have only one glass. We'll have to share...

Which is totally getting away from the subject at hand. Surprises. This brandy glass used to contain a rose. A very nice rose. I might add, thanks to Fendley Florists (free plug). It arrived last Wednesday morning.

Wednesday mornings tend to be rough times for me editors. That's when our readers who have noticed a mistake or are mad about an article in the paper call us. It's a three-coffee morning versus two-coffee mornings on Monday and Tuesday and one-cup mornings on Thursday and Friday.

Who ever sent the present obviously knew this because the card enclosed with the snifter-rose said that it was sent "to help you make it through."

So now I'm wandering around trying to figure out who the heck sent the bloody thing. As I said, I really enjoyed getting it, but it's disturbing when you have to look people square in the eye and figure out whether

there's a hint of a rose hidden behind their eyes. It's one of those problems you like to have.

The worst surprise that I ever experienced along those lines happened about four years ago. I came home late one night to find a note taped to my front door.

I can still remember what it said. "Weekend party in Apsley, July 3 to 5. Come alone." There was a map but no signature. It was also, I should mention, done in very feminine handwriting. So I made a point of trying to be there.

The weekend arrived but, thanks to an erroneous map, I didn't. Whoever had sent the map made a mistake somewhere in about 12 left or

right turns. Not knowing who I was going to visit, there was no way I



by  
BILL  
JOHNSTON

could telephone. So I spent the entire weekend travelling the back roads

near Apsley (believe me there are a heckuva lot of them) looking for someone familiar.

I never did find out who that unidentified note writer was. I prefer to think that it was a long, lanky, seductive red head who could see no other way to get me alone. Probably was a neighbor.

Anyway I still sort of expect someone to walk up to me sometime and ask me "Hey, why weren't you in Apsley?" I've gotten over the initial curiosity about it, but it still creeps into my mind occasionally. Now I have to add that brandy snifter.

## Future shock now?

By Gerry Landsborough

You hear a lot of talk these days, about the amount of violence on TV and what it is doing to the children. Incidents such as the recent case in Ottawa, where an older youngster demanded money from a four-year-old. When he didn't get what he wanted he set the youngster on fire. The boy was taken to hospital where he was treated for burns to 40 percent of his body and is reported to be in serious condition.

In Mississauga youngsters purchased chemicals from a local drug store which they placed in a section of pipe and built a bomb. The pipe-bomb was exploded in front of the Tecumseh Park Public School, fortunately there were no injuries or property damage. In Metro an incident where a Grade 9 High School teacher was hit by a student with a

metal object in his hand. The wound took 16 stitches to close. The teacher Barry Donath decided to quit teaching. "The violence becoming more and more evident on the street is becoming more evident in the high schools too, and it is going to get a lot worse. I am obviously not leaving teaching out of fear of violence, but because of the frustrations of trying to cope with the responsibility of teaching without any real authority. The list of violent acts could go on and on.

The above leaves parents and educators today faced with grave concern for the future welfare of tomorrow's citizens.

The message of violence through the media is one that violence always wins. Ontario's Chief Justice George A. Gale said "with the daily diet of violence served up by television and the news media it is little wonder that children eventually go out and try to practise

what they have seen."

To place all the onus of violence in today's society on the media alone would be somewhat unjust. The entire world seems to rotate on the principle that "might is right." What chance does a youngster have who has watched and listened to real war, brought into the livingroom in living color, assassination, murder, a steady diet of violence and violent acts?

We seem to live today as though we believed that each man is indeed an island unto himself. It is ironic that as the world itself becomes smaller and more accessible - communication becomes more difficult. How can we communicate a message of non-violence to our youth if we purchase hand guns to protect ourselves against violence. The guns themselves being a testimonial to murder. Hand guns are for killing - nothing else.

I have read where more teachers are becoming victims of the frustration of trying to reach youngsters who shouldn't be in school and don't want to be. In allowing 13, 14 or 15-year-olds to leave school the solution? If jobs are no longer available to the unskilled family-man, how can unskilled teenagers expect to find work?

So often we see great change in society that is brought about not by those who have reasoned things through but by a pass-the-buck kind of legislation. Whereby each group relies on someone else to have done the initial investigation that would suggest the benefit of the change.

While in truth no benefits could be shown only change itself.

Dr. B. Spock tried to free parents from the rigid upbringing of the Victorian era. Like a swinging pendulum we went from one extreme to the other. Now there are those that feel returning the strap as corporal punishment in the home and in the school is barbaric.

We cannot effect immediate change upon the media or the world at large but perhaps we can effect immediate change in home discipline.

One would wonder which is more barbaric or violent in the long run, a smack on the hand with a leather strap as a final limit or no limit at all. Instead an anything goes attitude where teachers can be hit, classrooms turned into shouting matches, nine year-olds playing truant, the "I want it all now" school of thought - yet nothing behind it to earn it.

It is strange what we consider to be barbaric.