

## Region failing

Amalgamation of municipalities into a regional system will bring about an amalgamation of services and a resultant cut in costs.

Amalgamation of municipalities into a regional system will provide an improved system of planning the orderly growth of this area.

Let's not get this wrong. Those were two of the principles behind regional government weren't they? Right? Okay, well then what has happened?

Costs today are high and, as the region prepares for the end of the start-up funds from the province, the future looks no brighter. In fact the financial future of Halton is anything but bright. So forget cutting costs.

And as far as providing for the orderly growth goes, well regional council decided to take a sharp stab at that last week during its bi-weekly coffee clutch. Two proposals which would have put the region on the road towards an official plan were voted down by council.

The official plan of Halton, which could be the Bible on which all future development and growth throughout the region is based, was put in definite jeopardy. As one member of the planning committee questioned, "Where do we go from here?"

It's a good question. Where will the region go from here? Without overall guidelines the piece-meal, helter-skelter type of development which is taking place in Halton will continue. The region's position, until that plan is drawn up, on such things as rural development, industrial-residential balance and preferred growth areas will remain as unclear as if the region wasn't in existence at all.

Some of the reasons for turning down the two proposals—a regional housing policy study and a transportation study—were not all wrong. The costs for the studies were high and nobody seemed to know exactly what would be done with them once they were completed.

But to give them a blanket refusal with no suggestions on what should or could be done next is wrong. If the region is to justify its existence it must start playing the role it was meant to.

As one councillor commented, perhaps the thing to do would be to look at the official plan of each municipality in Halton with a specific set of goals in mind. The goals would relate to where, when and how development would take place in Halton as a whole and how each municipality's existing plans could fit into that overall growth.

The factor that we are worried about is the time element. Development of any official plan, particularly one covering such a broad area as Halton, is a long, long process. It entails both government consideration both regional and provincial, as well as citizen input.

We are probably looking at a minimum of two years before an official plan for Halton is even close to being sent to the OMB for its official sanction. Two years in the present hectic, pressure-filled life of Halton could be critical.

So let's get on with it gentlemen. We would hope that the planning committee will not become gun-shy because of its failures last week. Rather we hope they come out fighting with a much improved plan.



### Viewpoint

# Capital punishment: murder by the state?

By Gerry Landsborough

Is capital punishment right or wrong? Since 1967 death by hanging has been the mandatory sentence in Canada for killing a police officer or a prison guard on duty. Even though this is the law on the books, all five condemned men who have killed law officers since 1967 have had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment.

Our present Solicitor-General Warren Allmand is against capital punishment. "It is evident that capital punishment may satisfy the strong sense of moral and emotional outrage that many of us experience when murder is committed—there are however other crucial issues involved. The more I have studied the question of capital punishment the more I have become convinced that capital punishment is not the solution to murder."

Today many people are outraged by the above, and very often, unfortunately, their outrage is one of dollars and cents. A Gallup Poll in April showed that 69 percent of

Canadians favour the death penalty. To me that translates, 69 percent of Canadians believe in coldblooded murder. If we believe murder to be wrong how then is murder by the state right?



Dr. Paul Hauck states that the belief that "bad people" ought to be punished is one of the most evil ideas ever concocted by man. History tells us that when man lived in

barbaric times murder was no less prevalent than it is today. Most people who advocate the death penalty argue that the up-keep of the "bad person" is the matter of real importance. Up-keep is money and, in a materialistic society, money is often the be-all and end-all. What dollar value can we place on a human life and consider ourselves to be civilized? Does everything have a dollar value?

If 69 percent of Canadians want cold-blooded murder, then 69 percent of Canadians would appear to be uncivilized.

Victoria Police Chief, J. P. Gregory, advocates the death penalty. In a recent story in the Star he stated the following: "If hanging as a method of execution is objectionable to some people and I am one, then surely it would be a relatively simple matter to change. An overdose of heroin...combined alcohol and barbiturates...air embolism, poisoned food or drink...there are many, and perhaps the condemned could be permitted to indicate his preference." Now that's what I call civilized. As I said before, if

murder is wrong and many of the above are ways people murder how does one justify the other?

It is argued by some that you have to have some type of deterrent. But the cold, hard facts are that, if a man or a woman is going to commit murder nothing is going to deter them. It applies the same way when someone is going to break into your house. Locks don't keep them out.

In effect capital punishment becomes a question of he did wrong so he must be punished. The problem with that is that violence begets violence; aggression begets aggression; murder begets murder—justified or otherwise.

It is my opinion that, until man can give life he is not justified in taking it away, for any reason. Cost is a very poor standard of measurement against taking a human life. In order to really consider ourselves civilized we have to reach the type of thinking that allows that if we believe killing to be wrong then all killing is wrong: war, abortion, murder, justified murder. It's something

once just can't have both ways.

Again another favourite argument on behalf of capital punishment is, what about the wives and children of the slain officers who are left? Capital punishment has never proven to be a deterrent. Existing data shows no proportionate increase from 1968 to 1973 in violent offences. It is sad and unfair, for those who are left but who never said that life is supposed to be fair? I recently heard of a woman whose husband worked for a company for 33 years. The company then went broke and the chap died. His widow received nothing to show the man's 33 years service to one firm, since it went out of business. Is that fair?

A mother lived in a tent in downtown Toronto to be near her son who was in the hospital in this great land of opportunity. Is that fair?

We cannot advocate capital punishment on the grounds of what is and what is not fair nor can we advocate capital punishment on the cost of the up-keep of the prisoner, this places a price tag on human life. We cannot

justify coldblooded murder by the state as an "eye for an eye." That was changed by a new philosophy supposedly practised by Christians, over 3,000 years ago.

Capital punishment is the revenge of a still barbaric society. It states you are bad so you must be killed. Definitely clear thinking. Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin—to name only a few—believed in the right of man to decide another man's death. Can we justify the murders these men committed? We cannot murder the murderer and consider ourselves any different.

Murderers are people who, somehow, couldn't take the stress society places on all of us. If the court finds a man who murders is sane, then must we consider those who do not murder insane. If that's not the case then those who murder a really not sane in some area of their thinking. Yet we, who are supposedly sane, are 69 percent in favour of coldblooded murder by the state.

One really can't have it both ways. If murder is wrong then murder by the state for any reason is equally wrong.

## Life is for living

By Bill Johnston

What a way to start a Thursday. I received a letter from a long-time reader of the Herald who was extremely upset about these "editorials" of mine. She claimed that I was condoning the use of drugs and alcohol in them.

I totally agree with two points which she made in her letter. Yes, the young people of today need a lot of experienced advice, concern and help. Yes, alcohol and drugs are a definite problem.

Pardon me as I blush, but that's the way it is, folks. I hold no qualms in saying it either.

Life is for living and to live you must experience as many things as you possibly can see, do, taste, smell or hear.

How or where you obtain your enjoyment is strictly up to you, with two exceptions. Your enjoyment must not be to the detriment of others and it should not be harmful to yourself.

Which is much easier said than

done. For only ourselves totally control how, where or even whether or not, we enjoy our lives.

As far as what I say or write in this paper is concerned, I would be fooling myself to believe anything that I write will have any great effect upon anyone's life. It's a dream that we would like to hold onto but just that, a dream.

So what I write in this column is strictly stories of some enjoyable times I've had in the past. Their purpose is not to convey any great

social message or theme to the thousands of readers of the Herald but perhaps to create a bit of enjoyment in their lives.

A belated Happy Mothers Day to all the mothers in the crowd. Perhaps the mothers-day gift to beat all mothers day gifts was the one I heard about. The fellow had shopped high and low to find the right "something" to present to his mother. Finally he found it...A dining tent.

## Are Georgetown's sidewalks safe?

Letter to Downtown Shoppers

After an absence of eight years it has been my real pleasure to return to Georgetown. My wife and I look forward to enjoying this our first home and also engaging, in the life of what has always been an active community.

Unfortunately, last Thursday while shopping, my wife was accosted and impeded by a drunk on the sidewalk of Main St. This occurred in broad daylight and within 40 yards of the police station. Thanks to the efficiency of the police charges have been filed.

My interest is to whether there is a continuing problem on Main St. Some citizens have informed me that the corner of Main and Mill St. is frequently misappropriated by a number of persons. I find it outrageous to discover that many women are obliged to cross the street in order to avoid lewd and scurrilous remarks.

Since this abuse occurs at our town centre, does this mean the community as a whole finds it acceptable? Does the council find it acceptable? Do the downtown merchants find it acceptable? Staff-Sergeant Ward has indicated that the police are always prepared to help

citizens if they encounter any problems of this nature. At the present time though, no one is complaining.

If, in the past, you have walked on rather than get involved laying charges, then please indicate by at least writing a letter to this newspaper. Let's make the council and police commission aware of our concern. Drop into the Towne Sewing Centre and inform Mr. Charlie Crimes, the president of the Downtown Businessmen's Association.

This is our community and we all have the same rights (including the troublemakers I've been discussing) But,

when one person finds it necessary to cross the street to avoid the unpleasantities of a group of loiterers then he or she has just been robbed of those rights. Further, the loiterers have assumed a power and authority solely through the use of physical swagger and social crudeness. If no one responds to this letter, then clearly no problem exists. If such be the case, I will discontinue my inquiry with the knowledge that our experience was but an unusual and isolated incident.

Yours Sincerely  
Michael Prait  
Albert Street,  
Georgetown

## Labor troubles on the horizon for this summer

BY DON O'HEARN  
Queen's Park Bureau  
Of The Herald

Another summer of trouble in the construction industry would seem to be ahead.

The Construction Labor Association of Ontario, representing some 1,200 companies in the province, and about half of the construction industry has been issuing warnings. And they appear serious enough to warrant attention.

The association says that demands by the construction trades for contracts coming up for renewal this year are completely unrealistic.

And figures cited bear it out. Thus plumbers in Windsor recently settled for an end package of \$12.86 an hour which, by the time the contract expires in April of 1977, would mean the normal Windsor plumber would be receiving \$23,218 a year in wages and fringe benefits.

In Ottawa carpenters who now receive a wage-fringe package of \$3.56 are asking for a further \$7.40. This would bring them to \$30,324 annually. Other large demands the association puts forward are Oshawa electricians; \$9.46 on top of \$9.35 for a \$36,698 total and a 98 percent increase and Kingston sheet metal workers for a \$4.01 boost for a 65.8 percent increase and a \$29,776 total.

The association doesn't say so, but you suspect that many of these demands, or close to them, will be granted.

Its complaint is about the bargaining approach now followed in the province and for this it largely blames the government.

Under this approach a good many contractors bargain individually. And some of them, it is felt, settle too easily; if they are small this can be a question of either settling or going broke.

But when they settle they set

a precedent for other workers in the particular trade, as when one trade settles it sets an example for other trades. And the consequences is an inflationary spiral.

The construction association wants wider bargaining areas, and blames the government for not making this compulsory. (At present any wide bargaining within the industry is voluntary.)

And this would seem to be one occasion where industry-wide bargaining, undesirable as it may be in some cases, is needed.

The reason why construction trades were able to get such high rates in the past was that their work was seasonal. But the association says this no longer applies. Statistics Canada data shows that construction workers in Ontario average 38.2 hours a week.

The annual earnings figures that have been used are based on a 50-week year at an average of 38 hours a week.