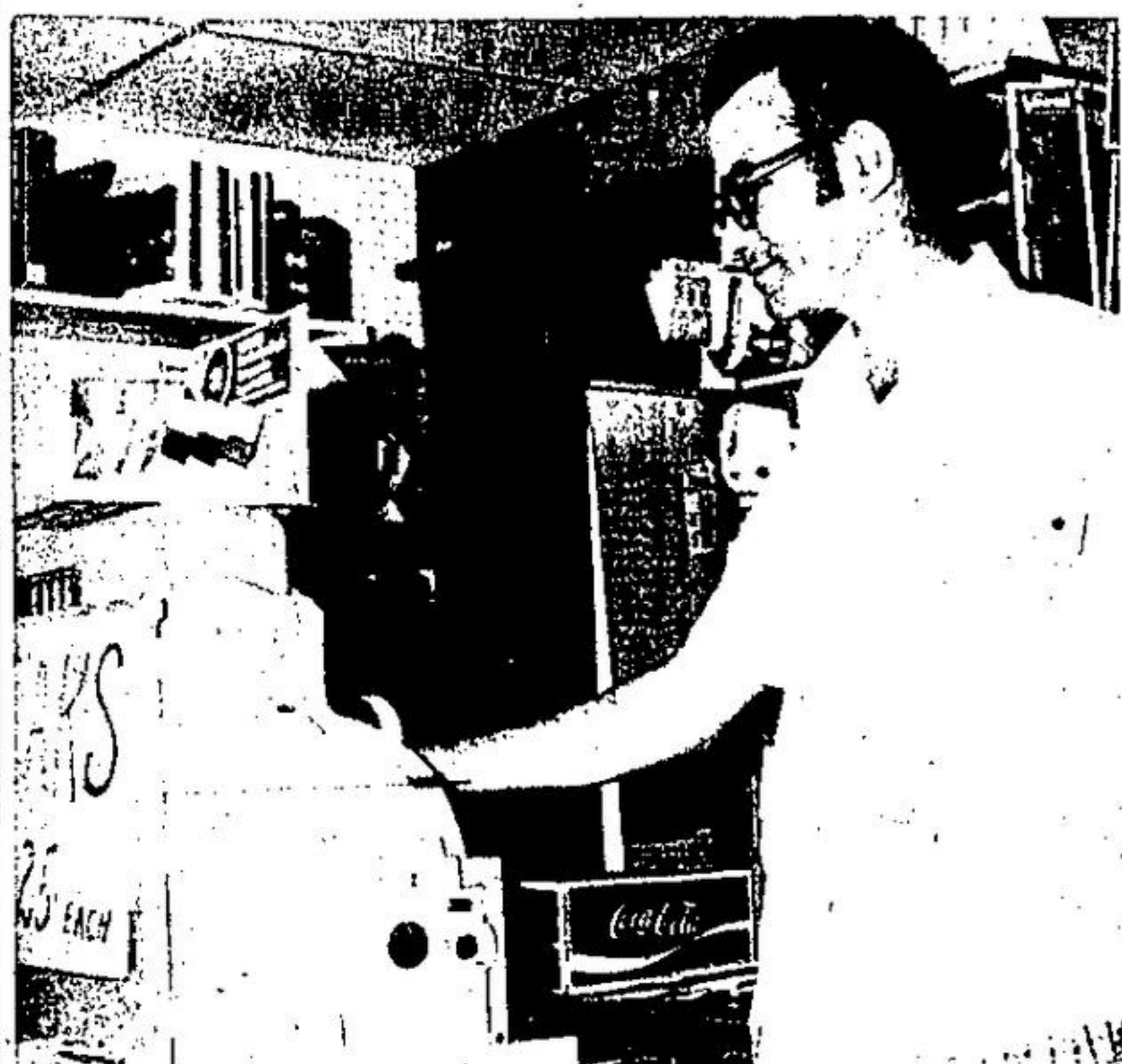


The general store... Still the centre of community activity



BILL COOLEY, owner of Hornby General Store says business is on the 'up'. The tiny store is kept busy with the Post Office bringing villagers in daily.



HAROLD FORD (left) and Charlie Tyler, custom of a friendly chat while meeting at the Limehouse General Store.

By Doris Lindauer
Herald Staff Reporter

With the invention of the automobile, the horse and buggy were forgotten. With the shedding of the bustle the bikinis ruled supreme. With the disappearance of the fox trot the jitterbug faded. With supermarkets springing up at every other corner, the old country general store has become obsolete. Or has it?

Have those buildings which once served as the centre of a community, the centre of activity, the centre of gossip, the centre for just passing the time, disappeared?

As far as Halton Hills is concerned, no. Ballinafad, Limehouse, Terra Cotta and Hornby all still have general stores and all are doing tremendous business.

Bill Cooley, owner of the Hornby General Store, stated that in the past year business has increased by 25 percent. However, the hustle and bustle atmosphere of the larger supermarkets is absent from the area's general stores.

"Because of the Post Office in the store you see the same people almost every day. Everyone still meets and talks in the store. It's a very friendly place. One thing I've learned is that I have to keep up on my current events or I just get lost in the conversations."

The Hornby General Store, which was built in the late 1800's, still carries some hardware products along with canned foods, fresh meats and fruits.

"We still carry hardware material but not as much as we used to. The farmers are disappearing from this area. There are under ten dairy farmers left in Hornby now, whereas ten years ago there were at least 30," explained Bill.

The Limehouse General Store did, at one point, carry foods, hardware goods and other miscellaneous articles but now the store only sells food products and a few other necessities. However, it still remains the only store in Limehouse.

Vi and Matt Stevens, who were strangers to Limehouse when they moved to the area, have owned the store for six years now.

"You get to know everybody in Limehouse. You have so much contact with the people. It's a dropping off spot for people on their way home. Once they have reached the store they then know that they have made it," commented Vi.

No one is sure when the Limehouse store began, however a brief, unofficial history of Limehouse states that the present post office was built in 1898, thus one could assume that the general store began at that time.

Sam Gishby, a resident of Limehouse since 1910 recalls those days when the general store was the meeting place in the village next to the church.

"Everyone would stand around and talk. They would rather talk than do anything else. It used to be a really busy place. I remember when there was no stove to keep the place warm so often our conversations were cut short, especially in the winter. I also remember coming in and buying a double loaf of bread for five cents and a dozen eggs for seven cents."

Vi explained that even if the store is not a general store in the true sense it "still is the centre of activity."

"It's still an important part of the community. It's the heart of the village. It's still a place where people come when they have no other place to go. It's a good place for those lost souls to come. It's a nice atmosphere. The rat race is left behind in the city."

One of the busiest general stores in this area is in Terra Cotta, for it not only serves the village residents but the many campers who stay in the area.

"In this location there are a lot of summer people who come in and do a large amount of grocery shopping. With the village people it is mostly last-minute articles or things forgotten after doing their weekly grocery shopping," explained Heather Warn, owner of the Terra Cotta General Store.

However, once again the store has not lost its atmosphere of years ago.

"In the winter we always have the coffee pots going. People will stop in and have a friendly chat. With the Post Office there are always people coming in. Often people will stop in just to have a coffee," continued Heather.

Mrs. Harvey Puckering of Terra Cotta did a bit of reminiscing on the years when her mother owned the store, from 1921 to 1946.

"It was the centre of the community. I always said

that the men would do more wood chopping around our stove than they did in the bush. We used to have benches set up around the pot belly stove and they would gather around and talk for hours. Of course in those days we had no closing hours. We would close whenever the last person left, often it went on to 11 or 12 o'clock at night."

The store, built just before the turn of the century, still remains open in order to accommodate the people in the village. Opening on the most days at 7:30 in the morning the store serves as a day's beginning for a lot of commuters.

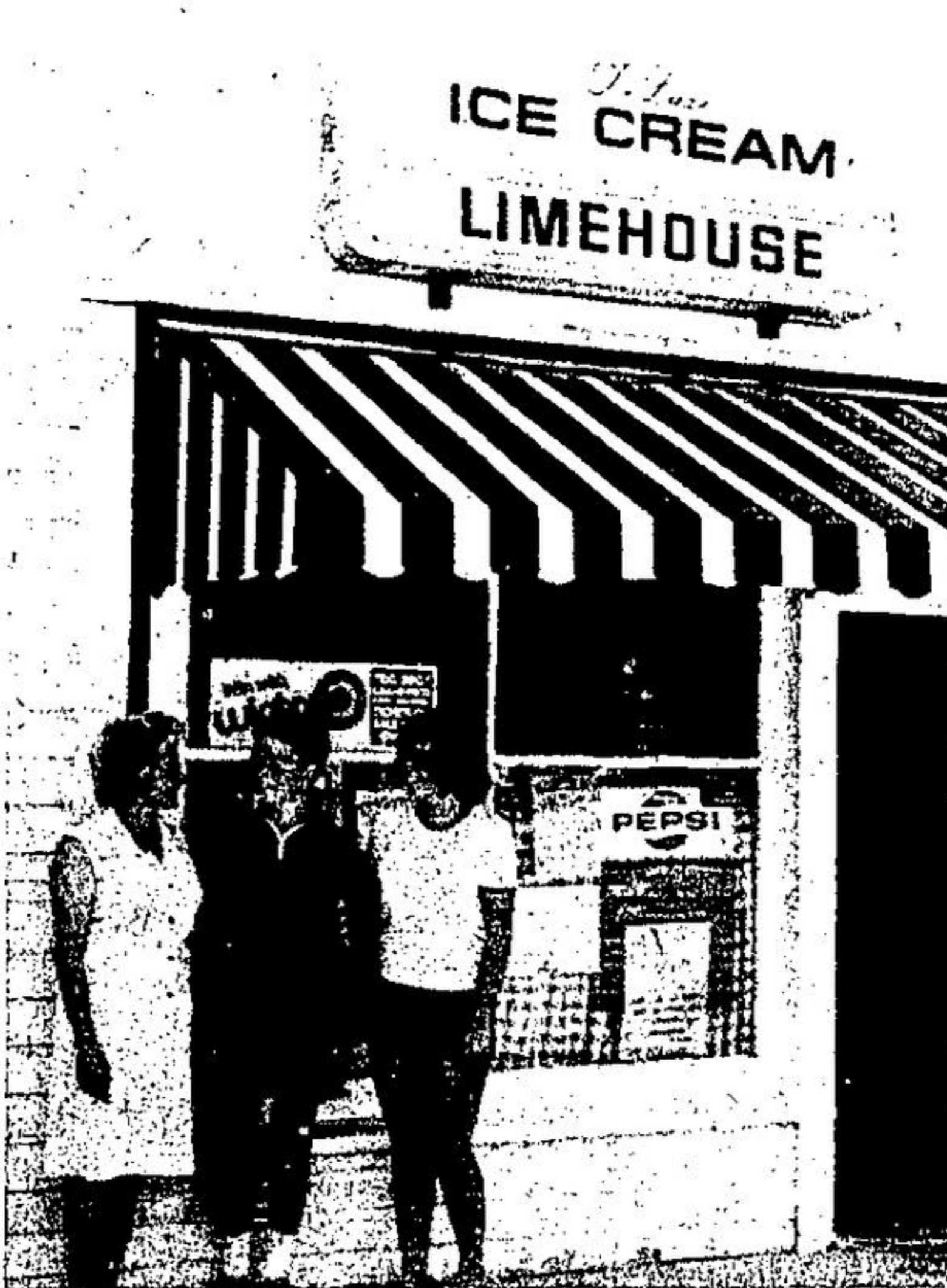
"In the morning many commuters stop in for gas or

coats to running shoes to fresh meat, the store thrives with activity.

Penny Shorthill of Ballinafad, whose mother owns the store, explained some of the everyday happenings at the store. "Often the men will come in to do some shopping for their wives and they end up standing around talking for hours. The older men in the community will sit on the bench outside, talk, reminisce and gossip."

Mrs. Rita Shorthill, a resident of Ballinafad for 50 years talked about those years when the general store was just about the only place to go.

"I remember going down to the store in the morning



IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR at the Limehouse General Store. The Stevens have owned the store for the past six years. From left to right are Vi, Peter, and Laura Stevens.

cigarettes or what have you," stated Heather. "When school is open children will wait here for the bus and often when it rains or snows heavily they will wait in the store. So, over the years it hasn't changed much at all," concluded Heather.

One of the oldest and biggest general stores left in Halton Hills is in Ballinafad. The first general store to serve the community was built in the 1840's and after a fire destroyed the wooden structure, it was rebuilt in 1906 and that structure still serves the community as it did "way back then."

Still selling everything from horses saddles to winter

and it would just be full of people who were just standing around talking. I guess it was more gossip than anything. The atmosphere of the store hasn't changed at all over the years. They still have everything from a needle to a hog, as I always say."

Perhaps the large supermarkets do draw the people for their weekly shopping but then there is always that "slam, bam, thank you mam" atmosphere. People simply will not let the general stores die off, at least not in the smaller communities. They are needed, if not only for convenience sake than to serve as simple means of escape from the hustle and bustle of the outside world.

Tempest In A Teapot

This is the second in a series of excerpts from the unpublished book "Tempest in a Teapot" written by Halton Renaissance founder Rev. Ken Campbell. It traces, in documentary form, the events leading up to, and the establishment of, the HRC. The work is slated for publication at the end of August.

Chapter Three;

Defying Caesar

The next day I prepared the letter to the mayor of our municipality, announcing my intention to withhold the payment of the educational portion of our property taxes as a protest against the domination of public education by the new "state religion" of "secular materialism."

Fr., Feb. 22-74

Mrs. Anne MacArthur, Mayor, Town of Milton, Ontario.

Dear Mrs. MacArthur:

This is to protest against the "moral pollution" to which high school students are being irresponsibly and indelicately exposed in our public educational system. As the father of two high school girls who have grown up in the Halton school system, I have become increasingly alarmed at the filthy literature which is recommended reading in the Halton High School libraries. Because of the accelerated program in the earlier grades, my daughters began this year in Grades 10 and 11 at ages 13 and 14 respectively. They are certainly too young to be discriminating in such matters, nor should they have to sift through such recommended literary sewage in search of the ennobling and beautiful of great literature.

God knows, and all of us as parents are aware, that there's enough moral corruption in our society with which our children have to learn to cope, without such influences being officially fostered within our public educational system.

When my 15-year-old daughter came home yesterday to report a visit to a Grade 12 Health class studying human sexual compatibility of four representatives of a

university Gay Liberation Movement, (two homosexuals and two lesbians), that was the last straw! Human sexuality cannot be taught in the moral vacuum that exists in such a classroom.

As Christian parents we seek to teach our children to love — not just tolerate all others made in the image of God. At the same time we recognize that there are those whose perversions of man's noble role in God's universe is of such a twisted nature that as the Scripture warns "It is a shame even to speak of the things that they do secretly." To foist such twisted sexual styles on 15-year-old Grade 12 students is too much!

In previous conversations with our high school principal, I have found him to be a gentleman who is sympathetic to the concerns I have expressed and willing to be as helpful as possible. However, I recognize that the solution to this problem lies in a sphere beyond his jurisdiction. Thus, I am addressing this letter to you as mayor of the municipality in which I pay property taxes from which the school system is financed.

In seeking to fulfill my responsibilities as a parent and as a citizen concerned for the future of our country, I refuse to pay another cent of property taxes for the support of this educational system until there are some radical improvements. This disease demands surgery not a bandaid!

Sincerely
Ken Campbell

A copy of that letter, together with a personal letter to our principal, was delivered by my wife to the Burlington high school

office Friday afternoon, Feb. 22, at the same time as I was taking my letter to the Mayor's office.

Dear.....

I appreciated the opportunity to speak with you by telephone the other day and for the explanation of the basic policies which you observe in the discharge of your administrative responsibilities at.....

Although I had been quite disturbed for the past few weeks over the apparent lack of discrimination in the selection of books for the library and in the authors who are recommended for reading in the classrooms, our conversation had been helpful in putting things in perspective as far as I was concerned. My wife and I had concluded that we would have to work closely with our children in training them to be discriminating in their reading material.

However, my concern about the more basic problems relating to the philosophy which appears to be all too dominant in our public educational system, was triggered to alarm by the report which my daughters brought home Wednesday of the visit of the group from the Gay Liberation Movement to a Grade 12 health class.

As I indicated to you when you graciously invited me into your office for a visit last Fall, I deeply appreciate your splendid work as the principal of..... Within the context of your sphere of responsibilities, your service is tops. Hence my reaction to the aforementioned report was to set the wheels in motion in the larger social-political context in which I'm convinced the only adequate solutions can be found.

Hence the enclosed letter. Be assured of my warmest and highest regards for you personally and of my confidence in the integrity and excellence of your administration as principal of.....

I trust we'll have opportunity for further helpful exchanges in reference to these matters in days to come.

Sincerely
Ken Campbell

At the advice of a journalist-friend, Rev. Les Tarr, Scarborough, a contributing editor to the quarterly publication of our Association (Encounter) I prepared a news release so that the press and the public would have an explanation of the action I was taking. Les warned that regardless of how

carefully I sought to identify the cause and nature of my protest, it would be misunderstood but that I ought to make the effort to be as clear as possible in my presentation.

An embargo was put on the news release dated February 24, 9:30 p.m. Thus there were two days between the time the letters were taken to the mayor's office and the high

school office, and the time the information

was released through the press to the public.

Had there been any reason to have retracted that position, the news releases could have been withdrawn prior to the embargo on the 24th. Since there was no reason to retract, the news broke.

There have been many who have

criticized taking this issue to the public through the press. Education is everybody's business and I was determined that the public be shaken out of its apathy and that the crucial issue — the unresponsiveness of public education to the parents and taxpayers — be identified and a public debate be instigated over that issue.

2. One of the guests that had contributed to this program in former years, Dr. J. Walker, a medical doctor of McMaster University was unavailable to present this part of the program this year. When we learned this from the Medical School at McMaster, they referred us to the McMaster Sexual Education Centre, who in turn agreed to arrange for a speaker or speakers to come and discuss interpersonal relations, including the interpersonal relations of homosexuals and lesbians.

3. Without our being further informed the four speakers arrived Tuesday morning and I became aware of who they were immediately before they were to be with the class. Knowing the nature of the program, the effectiveness of previous classes, the discrimination and good judgment with which these students had discussed previous topics, and that four teachers would be present, I did not interfere with the program.

4. The assessment of the four teachers present is that the topic was intellectually dealt with, that aberrant behavior was neither advocated nor made to appear desirable, and that the students gained useful insight into this problem of human behavior.

I must take full responsibility for the circumstances, and there are some judgments and decisions of mine that you may well question. However, you are quite wrong to attribute these to "moral corruption...being officially fostered" or to attempt "to foist such twisted sexual styles". The very opposite is intended. This event and these books do lie within my jurisdiction and your criticism of them should be directed to me.

I would appreciate an early opportunity to discuss these concerns with you. Please call me so that we can arrange this.

Yours truly,
Name withheld.

The following is a summary of the events that culminated in your reaction and public expression of disapproval:

1. For the past four years our grade 12 physical education program has contained the issues involved in human sexuality. This topic has been dealt with in ways intended to foster respect for and sensitivity to the moral and spiritual issues. It has attempted to be as valid and as valuable to the real needs of our students and society as possible. In an area of controversy it has respected diversity of viewpoint, and by bringing in people from the community it has attempted to bring understanding to our students. The students are well aware that they may choose not to come or may leave if any part of this program offends them.

Chapter Four;

Tempest In A Teapot

On Monday morning, February 25, "the lid blew off the teapot" as the news media focused in on the story. Over the next two weeks I lost 15 pounds trying to keep up with the response of the press and the public to my protest.

To highlight some of the most pertinent developments of those 20-hour days, let me begin with an exchange of letters with our high school principal:

February 26, 1974

Dear Mr. Campbell:

I am sorry that in my absence to attend a headmasters' convention in Ottawa your concern was triggered to alarm. Had I been here I expect that you and I could have examined your concerns and our practices, and the events of last week. I expect that you would thus have had a better view of the context and the event, and that I would have had a clearer view of your concerns.

As I indicated to you when you called me on Tuesday, I invite your specific concerns about the book list that you complained of. I assure you again that when I receive it I will determine whether our policies are being followed, and that good judgment is being used.

This school is concerned that our students develop their greatest potential as moral, sound, discriminating, sensitive, and effective human beings capable of good citizenship, high endeavor, and personal fulfillment. We believe this requires the development of empathy for others, and understanding and respect for self and others.

In contemporary literature there are