

Too much, too fast

Too fast. Last week's one vote decision by council to go ahead with the planning and tendering of the town's \$900,000 municipal complex was made too fast.

Councillors, seeing that they themselves were not strongly committed either for or against the project, should have held back on the third reading of the bill to give the people a chance to express their feelings on the expenditure.

It's too much money to be spent on too contentious an issue at too tenuous a point in the town's still early history. And to make it on a one vote majority, with two councillors not present, that's not acting responsibly on behalf of the town's taxpayers.

Where was the extensive financial report treasurer Ray King was supposed to present to council? It was supposed to outline just where all the money was going to come from to pay for the expensive project.

All it seemed to do was point out that \$600,000 in municipal debentures is ready and waiting for the town to pick up if and when it needs it.

Councillors should have been given a list of municipal properties that can be sold and--realizing that it would only be a guesstimate--some idea of the amount of money that could be raised through that means.

It may have required a little more time to carry out but it would have better explained what's in store for the town's taxpayers. Councillors are no further ahead now than before asking for the report. That's not acting responsibly.

And what about the matter of priorities? How does this green light for the new town hall affect the repairs to the old Georgetown Memorial Arena or--in even more of an uncertain state--the badly needed addition to Georgetown's library facilities?

For no other reason than good public relations it would be wise for councillors to finally stand up and give an accounting of the library project. Where is it going? How's the financing coming along?

There's been a great deal of behind the scenes work going on and from the few reports that we've heard it appears that any news the councillors would be presenting would be good news.

So why not tell it? Hopefully it's not going to be a tidy election tidbit that will be tossed out when it's politically advantageous.

Why are we rushing into this? Well according to the architects, if we don't get a huddle on we may not be able to get construction going this fall or winter. For the few weeks that it will mean it seems like a small gun to be putting to our heads.



SEXUAL MISADVENTURE?

Politics has its lighter moments

By Derek Nelson Queen's Park Bureau

So, the third session of the 30th parliament of Ontario has recessed until October, and you wonder whether that means the silence of the tomb has fallen upon the red sandstone Taj Mahal from where our provincial laws emanate.

That's not exactly what happens. The civil service still conducts its business from the complex of mini-skyscrapers around Queen's Park, although few government workers actually have desks in the legislative building itself.

Select committees of the legislature still meet, when they aren't flying off to examine trucking in England or insurance in Sweden, as two of them probably will this summer.

The cabinet still deliberates Wednesdays, and cabinet committees meet other days. The press gallery still reads press releases, and thinks about filing stories on them.

And perhaps most important for the general public, the tour guides are still there to conduct tours for anyone who drops in on a hot, summer day. While the building isn't air-conditioned, the walls are so thick it takes a long time to heat the interior, and that means it often feels cool by comparison.

FAVORITE LINE

Agriculture Minister Bill Newman's favorite line nowadays is some variation of "you don't know anything about agriculture," a charge he usually delivers at the New Democratic Party from the top of his lungs.

They set him off by asking questions he considers nonsensical.

But he changed tactics in a recent response to a question about the effects of fluorescent lighting on the nutritional value of milk.

It went like this: "Milk is the single most economical, freshest and most nourishing food we have. It is the closest thing to the perfect food we know in Ontario."

"When the commercials are over, could he answer the question," one MPP interjected. Although oral answers are supposed to be kept short another interjection asked him "how many chapters" he was going to have, as the minister read out about the "significant contribution to our knowledge of milk packaging."

A short version of the answer would have been: Yes, there is vitamin loss from milk under fluorescent lights, but it is minimized by rapid turnover of cartons in Ontario stores.

SELF-EXPLANATORY

A comment printed in an Ontario government publication by a person riding

FROM HERE AND THERE

Travellers secret weapon

Should moral considerations enter into a traveller's plans to visit a foreign country?

Such an idea may seem strange to Canadians who think of travel only in terms of pleasure. Carefree, we go to any land that appeals to our desire for new adventures or a return to familiar scenes. If we're rewarded with interesting sights, beautiful views, picturesque people and masterpieces of art or architecture, that's about all we ask.

All of which seems perfectly innocent and "broadening." Yet behind the scenes in many countries are countless cases of human repression, exploitation, jailing and execution without trial, cruelty and torture. Such incidents are reported almost daily in news media. And our reaction is: "Thank God I don't live in that country!"

toward the Ontario Science Centre for a visit: "The frustrating reality which comes to mind is this sort of obligatory self-control inherent in traditional museum visits."

Come again?

SEXUAL MISADVENTURE? Then there's the thought-provoking information that sometimes pops up in government reports, one of the most recent being in the provincial coroner's report to a legislative committee.

"Tell me, what is this death by sexual misadventure about?" MPP Vern Singer (Lib-Wilson Heights) asked.

"I was too much of a lady to ask," MPP Gil Sandeman (NDP-Peterborough) said. "The husband came home ahead of time," another committee member said.

"All Vern wants is the address," MPP Mike Breugh (NDP-Oshawa) suggested. "I would think some of them were people with weak hearts," the chief coroner explained.

One ministry official told the committee he was surprised there are only 11. "Sexual misadventures cover a very interesting field. In fact, we have an FBI agent come to our seminars at least once a year...to speak six hours on this subject."

No one asked why Ontario doesn't have its own experts.

RICHARD WHO?

MPP Gordon Smith (PC-Simcoe East) has waged a semi-successful personal

HELP!

Don't waste a second, pick up! Mail boxes, crammed with newspapers, circulars and various other articles are becoming real problems for our local mail carriers, the Georgetown Post Office reports.

Someresidents mail boxes are not cleared regularly posing a problem for the carrier who is trying to deliver a letter quickly and be on his way. There's no place to put the mail, the post office reports, and for that reason they're asking residents to clear the mail boxes as soon as possible after either a newspaper or advertising circular is placed in it.

campaign for several years to have the Aug. 1 civic holiday declared Simcoe Day in honor of Ontario's first Lieutenant-Governor, John Graves Simcoe.

MPP Donald MacDonald (NDP-York South) once suggested another early pioneer, a Loyalist merchant and later judge called Richard Cartwright, on whom Mr. MacDonald wrote his university thesis.

So Mr. Smith speaking during a recent debate on Simcoe Day, said he interviewed 100 students about Simcoe, 88 of whom identified him (roughly) correct historically.

The same students were asked about Cartwright and 37 did not know who he was while 63 identified him "as the star of the TV show Bonanza."

Mr. Smith rested his case.

On Parliament Hill

What about the 24 near misses last year?

By Stewart MacLeod Ottawa Bureau

As I said earlier I am no expert on flying procedures, but having a passing acquaintance with publicity procedures, I am not particularly impressed with the way the air traffic controllers and the striking pilots are conveying us it's not safe to fly.

In fact, I am singularly unimpressed. This organized campaign by striking pilots to leak out stories of near-misses in the air is getting entirely out of hand. If there has to be a protest over the use of French at five Quebec airports, there must be a more effective method than describing how two planes nearly collided over Edmonton.

We have now been told the chilly details of 13 near misses so far this year, and somehow the pilots managed to relate them all to the bilingualism issue. It's passing strange that they don't talk about the 24 near misses in 1975, when Bilingualism wasn't an issue.

Now we're told that the skies are unsafe anywhere in Canada because, even if French is not being used outside Quebec, the controllers are too preoccupied with the problem to concentrate on their duties.

CANADA QUARANTINED

And we have the head of the U.S. Air Line Pilots' Association saying that Canadian skies are unsafe because the controllers are "in a confused state of mind because of coercion, threats and intimidation..." Pilots from nine U.S. airlines have decided to "quarantine" Canadian air space.

European pilots, who hear bilingual control systems operating all over the world, are saying it's unsafe to fly into Canada. These pilots associations really stick together.

There may be many good reasons why there shouldn't be a bilingual control system in Quebec, but all interested parties seem to be becoming so emotional, if not irrational, that we have lost sight of the technical issue.

As a preoccupation with problems is

Queen's Park

A dream castle on Bloor Street

By Don O'Hearn Queen's Park Bureau

TORONTO--An indignant employee of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education has written a letter criticizing some remarks I made about a study of Grade 13 the Institute is participating in.

He didn't say so directly, but, in effect, he was accusing me of bias.

And let's give the man credit. Certainly I don't agree with bias in anyone doing my job. It is something to be avoided.

But in the case of OISE I probably am biased. Biased to the extent of prejudice, over which probably, about the only control is to write about it as little as possible.

DREAM CASTLE

The reason for whatever amount of bias there is goes right to the roots.

It is based on the firm belief that education today, particularly in the primary and secondary fields, is detached from reality. It is ethereal, and particularly it is remote from the public.

And for this, if not the blame at least a major onus I put on OISE...

Operating out of a dream castle on Bloor Street (probably the most sumptuousness is really sumptuous) it has directed from the clouds studies which in turn have lifted education on a cloud and not down with the people where it should be.

NO SKELETON

An element and a breed apart, which can't even talk sensibly to the public.

A prime example! The project which has caused this discussion is called an "interface study".

Now just what in the devil is an "interface" study? Do you know? Does your letter carrier know? Does the manager of your supermarket or his clerks know?

This is so typical of education today. It talks really only to itself. And from this talk it dreams and follows the rosy path of idealism, ignoring the long slow climb up the hill which is the fundamental road to good basic education. The road which instills the foundation, the discipline, the power of application, the broad outlook and the seeds of reason which are the skeleton of a good education?

Are our young people getting this today?

The evidence is that they aren't. A very bright Grade 13 graduate preparing to enter university and, complaining he hasn't had anything on the construction English for four years. Universities complaining about the illiteracy of freshmen students. Bob Nixon, being, oh, so right, in the last election when he complained that graduates of high school couldn't even spell or do simple mathematics.

There has to be a lot of sympathy for teachers, the rank and file of the educational establishment.

As a community their sincerity is really not to be questioned. But they can only be as good as their leadership.

And this has been much too much dreamy and precious...with OISE as chief dreamer.

Viewpoint

A column about thorns and roses

By GERRY LANDSBOROUGH

This week Viewpoint tosses up a thorn and roses column to be awarded as follows:

One large bouquet of thorns to the contributors of the Rand report - that suggests that alcoholics can resume social drinking. Most alcoholics can think up enough excuses to drink on their own time without so-called experts backing them up with a "don't be duped by the old A.A. routine."

Alcoholism like diabetes is a lifelong condition. Many alcoholics have a body chemistry that makes alcohol a definite toxic substance - can diabetics go back to eating a few cream puffs without effect? What we need in this country is a lot less experts reports and a whole lot more of good old fashion common sense.



More thorns to that man about town exhibitionist lawyer F. Lee Bailey. He's looking for a new trial for Ms. Patty Hearst. His immortal words go as follows "I guess she is doing as well as can be expected. But it is going tougher and tougher for her in there - to be a celebrity at prison is damn tough." Sort of gets to you doesn't it? Maybe we could all send her a cheer-up note, after all she's just a crazy mixe.' up kid trying to do her own thing. It would appear that Mr. Bailey is singled handedly trying to prove that right and wrong has nothing to do with it it's just the looong green-stuff that matters.

A bouquet of roses - big red ones - to George McCleary a trustee on the Metro Board of Education for the following. It seems the Metro School Boards finance committee accepted a \$375,000 meeting for expenses - food, hotel rooms, staterooms, etc. The board refused however to make public the actual bills. To which Mr. McCleary replied that anyone should be able to scrutinize bills charged to the taxpayers.

"I just don't happen to think that when your living on the taxpayers you should live like a king." I think Mr. McCleary is absolutely right - now all we have to do is convince all the little kings in all the little kingdoms of education scattered all around Ontario. Down with the monarchy - no more taxation without explanation.

METRIC

Here's a large bundle of thorns to the Canadian Metric Commission which has failed miserably in providing Canadians with metric information. We won't even mention Celsius. What happens when in a few years time they decide that the whole thing was really a very bad idea to begin with? We will

have an entire generation of Canadians who can't figure anything out - come to think of it I wonder if it's any different from this generation of Canadians?

Thorns go to Joe Clark leader of the Conservatives who was reported to be against a national referendum on capital punishment as it would create a dangerous precedent. Well as you know dear reader we are dead against capital punishment - however we question Mr. Clark's statement on the grounds that asking for public opinion creates a dangerous precedent. It's our opinion that if our government leaders placed a bit more emphasis on public opinion we wouldn't be facing some of the fiascos we are now. But then since when has your average politician ever listened to public opinion? Only at election time and then with two tin ears. But that's democracy for you everyone is free to listen or not to listen.

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MERCURY

Thorns again to Rene Brunelle the minister responsible for co-ordinating Indian affairs. It seems our red brothers can't understand why the tourists can eat fish from the Wabigoon river system. Commercial fishing by the Indians was banned in 1973 due to the high mercury content. Minister Brunelle said during a meeting with Indian leaders that it would not be possible to shut down the river system to permit only "fun-fishing" (catching fish and throwing them back) because enforcement would be impossible. Our red brothers on the Whitledge and Grassy Narrows reserves find that hard to swallow because they can't go fishing even though the tourists can. Maybe we could redo the Whitledge and Grassy Narrows reserves in plastic grass flowers and trees with the "fun fishing." I mean, after all, they are only Indians and do you mean to say they get hungry too? Who cares. Lets all hear it for Dominion Day.

Last but not least a bouquet of roses for the crazy people in Canada and the United States who are buying up exposes of the private sex lives of J.F.K. and that poor Washington Senator in Elizabeth Frys Washington Fringe Benedicts. Has it ever crossed your mind how these prominent men ever found time to stay out of bed long enough to run the country. It takes crazy people to pay money to read such tripe. However, an exchange of keeps the country going - so in a way we owe them a debt of gratitude... ironic isn't it.

Till next week hang in there.