

Point is made, now let's go

The point has been made. A large segment of the population in Halton Hills has voiced disapproval of the \$900,000 cost and financing arrangements for the municipal complex addition.

Now's the time for the 1976 council to get on with the legislative process and send the bylaw on its way into the bureaucratic maze at Queen's Park.

Any further delay at this time will only delay the final solution of the question of financing the project, and whether council needs a majority of electors to approve the spending of money to construct the addition.

It now becomes all a question of time. Should the Ontario Municipal Board approve the dispensing of a vote of the electors, then the proposal will proceed normally since the bylaw approving the project has been duly passed. The only alternative is to repeal the bylaw to prevent the project from proceeding.

However, with a petition signed by more than 1,700 people, and reported opposition growing each day, it's unlikely, according to one municipal source, that the OMB would approve financing without a vote of the electors.

And that's how it should be. But the judgement of the OMB will

remain unknown until the matter is placed before it.

To delay any further action beyond September would be to miss the most opportune time for a referendum: the municipal election in December.

It's possible that some decision may be made by the OMB before November, the latest date a question can be placed on the municipal ballot. However, since it still remains an uncertainty whether a decision will be known, council should consider taking this action voluntarily.

Not only would this save the town added cost in holding a referendum separate from the municipal elections, but it would resolve prior to the appointment of the new 1977 council the fate of the municipal project.

It does not seem fair to those seeking office in December, to be left to clear away the confusion and dissent among council members created this summer, without a clear indication of whether the public does in fact support or oppose the addition.

The right way is a referendum, and council should seriously consider such. The public will ultimately have a strong voice in whatever decision is taken, and now's the time to see that the record is set straight.



Columnist replies to MP's critical letter over Olympics: A political football

By GERRY LANDSBOROUGH This week Viewpoint reply's to Dr. Frank Philbrook's (Liberal M.P. Halton) letter in the Aug. 11 issue of the Herald, referring to a past column on the 1976 Montreal Olympics.

First let me say that Dr. Frank Philbrook is not your average politician. We have met and talked on several occasions and I have both a great deal of respect for his views and a personal liking for the manner in which he presents them.

Now that our mutual admiration society is off to a good start - we'll get down to the matter at hand.

Frank, you asked for some positive statements regarding the Olympics - well held on to your hat because here they come.

First, let's take a good look at the cost. It rose from an estimated \$350 million to a cool \$1.4 BILLION.

A billion is a nice easy figure to roll around on the tongue but in terms of dollars it works out to \$232 per man, woman and child in Quebec or ??? Liking Cadillac's is nice too - but we can't necessarily afford them, and the less expensive model gets you there just the same.

One positive thing the Olympics did create was a spirit of unity - of "Canadianism" at least for a little while. People in shopping plazas crowded round the T.V. sets to catch the events. Unfortunately ask your average Canadian to name an

athlete or two - and the answer you get is usually something like "you know the blond guy" or "that kid from Poland."

Canadian athletes? What Canadian athletes? This is not to take away from our talented young people who have trained long and hard for the events - but to point out that the average Canadian doesn't know who our athletes are.

From my way of looking at things some of our athletes in terms of the funding that other countries make available are so badly behind that they aren't even playing in the same ball park.

Even with overwhelming changes we probably wouldn't see any definite changes within our lifetimes.

It takes money and public support to train top-notch athletes and the government at both the federal and provincial level doesn't seem inclined to dip very deep at this point in time.

The spirit of the Olympics should be one of the highest of competition built on athletic prowess without any political overtones whatsoever.

The Canadian government does not recite matters by stating that it is not the first country to allow politics to enter into the Olympics. It missed a golden opportunity to show that Canada is a country that could be big enough to keep politics out. Politics and athletics are like oil and water, they just don't mix. They cannot mix - to try takes away

from their very purpose. The Olympics should be a place for athletes to come forward based on ability as opposed to nationality.

The opening and closing ceremonies were super spectacular. Unfortunately the "Indians" taking part in the closing ceremonies were white Quebec school children as opposed to any of the nine tribes of native people found in Quebec.

Another positive statement regarding the Olympics is the question of status of the athletes - why only amateurs - why not the best in each field in the world.

Though many of the above are not necessarily government problems - the government could do a good deal more than it has to make things better.

I believe the cost to have exceeded the over all worth - in my mind it is much akin to spreading a picnic table with the finest table linen - the table cloth is really incidental its the picnic that really counts.

As far as Canadians being too quick to criticize themselves - until people in this country are willing to get off their duff and do a bit more "gut level" thinking things aren't going to change much.

Sorry Frank, but that's about as positive as I can get and probably definitely not what you had in mind.

Till next week - think about it.

On Parliament Hill

Must be reason for assessment of bilingualism

By STEWART MacLEOD Ottawa Bureau Of The Herald

There must be some reason why the government decided to spend more than half a million dollars for an assessment of its bilingualism program, but so far no one has explained it.

We already have an Official Language Commissioner who issues an annual report - it's really an evaluation of the bilingualism program and the issue is frequently debated by our elected representatives and constantly studied by various government departments. No issue is subjected to greater public scrutiny.

And the government, acting with the approval of Parliament has never wavered in its determination to establish an effectively bilingual public service.

So it isn't clear why it was necessary to commission another outside study when there never have been any plans to make fundamental changes in the current bilingualism program. However this report, prepared by Montreal linguist Gilles Bibeau and weighing more than 32 pounds, did provide Treasury Board President Jean Chretien with another opportunity to say the government will continue with its current program.

The study found all sorts of flaws in the program, which costs nearly \$400 million a year, and Prof. Bibeau described it generally as "an imposing machine which has numerous deficiencies and whose overall perceptible yield is not very great."

MANY REJECTIONS There were 23 recommendations for making the program more effective, but Mr. Chretien made it clear that most would be rejected. He said they came from "well-intentioned theoreticians" who can think in terms of perfection while the government must think in terms of reality.

situation more responsive to the particular needs of the student population - namely, public servants and also more sensitive to the concerns within the public service about the total system." He offered some other complicated praises as well.

And the study produced some nice new phrases such as "threshold of bilingualism", and the minister responded with "receptive proficiency", but none of these expressions are going to bring about basic changes in the current program. In fact, when Mr. Chretien held a press conference following publication of the report, he devoted most of his time to defending what the government is doing.

And 18 months after he commissioned this expensive study, he was criticizing it for "unsufficient analysis of underlying facts."

NO NEW POLICY "We are not trying to establish a new policy," he declared. "We're trying to put into place the policy accepted by Parliament." After reading all 12 volumes of the study he said that the government will stick with the general direction of its language policy.

And perhaps this is just as well, because the Bibeau commission had recommended that a Canadian Language Authority be created to monitor language policy, set objectives and conduct research into the teaching and learning of languages. This was recommended despite the existence of an official languages branch, not to mention the creation of an evaluation and analysis group a year ago to do exactly what Prof. Bibeau suggests.

If there is one thing we can do without it's another language authority.

Perhaps the most constructive aspect of the report involved the comments made by Mr. Chretien as he rejected many of its recommendations. "In the 14 years I've been in Ottawa there has been tremendous progress," he told his press conference. More French-speaking people are coming to Ottawa and more of them feel comfortable here. And he was confident this trend would continue. But he could have said this without spending half a million dollars.

My Thoughts . . .

AIB makes it tough to buy a home

By BOB RUTTER I bought a house last year. It's been tough living through the first year with hefty mortgage payments and all the other costs associated with a new home.

But it's been worth it. If I had to do it again it would have been earlier in my life. But for the young couple just married, making a living wage in the \$10,000 wage bracket, it's going to get tougher. And I see no way out of it.

The anti-inflation guidelines have locked in many of the people who are in a position to buy, either this year or within the next two years, so that the wage increases will be no more than maybe two per cent or so above the cost of living.

Unless something is done to overcome this disparity, construction, which is a key industry in the economy, will drop because no one can afford to buy new housing.

A simplification, yes. Admittedly there are several other factors, including mortgage interest rates, which play an important part in the ability to pay for housing.

But I am afraid when I hear a friend say he's purchased an Ontario government

subsidized low-income home in Guelph and he had to qualify as low-income by earning (both he and his wife) between \$11,000 and \$19,000 a year.

Gosh, \$19,000 a year! If that's considered low-income would have been earlier in my life. But for the young couple just married, making a living wage in the \$10,000 wage bracket, it's going to get tougher. And I see no way out of it.

And as far as \$11,000 annually is concerned, that's about the average weekly wage reported by Statistics Canada for May. There are many people below that level.

Qualifying for a mortgage other than those government subsidized means having to earn in many cases as much as \$20,000 or more.

Certainly the federal government must be looking at this problem, particularly since Canadians are locked into a 10, eight and six per cent formula under the anti-inflation guidelines.

It may be a fatalistic outlook, but should the construction and real estate industries suffer setbacks then we may just be heading for a depression. I hope not.

From here and there Comedy of errors

Few members of Parliament can be more thresome than Tom Cossitt, the member for Leeds, a man who must devote himself full time to the single task of prying into the affairs of Prime Minister Trudeau, particularly those having to do with expenditures at the prime minister's residence.

Mr. Cossitt's latest concern involves an expenditure of \$9,000 to change the wiring on the prime minister's \$200,000 gift swimming pool, to bring it in line with provincial regulations and to replace some worn out wiring.

He called the wiring a "comedy of errors for the taxpayer," which, we suppose, it

might be, not knowing who was responsible for the original installation.

It's not easy, of course, to condemn the self-appointed secret agent in charge of prime-ministerial snooping for his efforts, even though, like the CIA he sometimes gets carried away. It never hurts to keep an eye open for possible abuses of power, large or small.

But Mr. Cossitt ought to keep in mind with respect to the pool that Mr. Trudeau can't take it with him. It stays with the house. Will our man in Leeds, we wonder, be equally as vigilant if the day ever comes when Joe Clark and Maureen McTeer get to use the pool?

(Kitchener-Waterloo Record)

On The Home Front

Come on September

By SUSAN DE FACENDIS Either the days are not long enough or I am so totally disorganized as to be beyond all help.

For ten months out of the year, things are haphazardly accomplished around my house on a hit and miss basis, but July and August are, quite simple, lost months.

Now if one could turn off the world for eight weeks this would be alright, unfortunately commitments have to be kept and I have difficulty in getting this message across to my children.

Louisa, fortunately, has been no problem at all this summer. She took on a volunteer job with the parks and recreation department at a day camp. While one child less around the house may not appear on the surface to make much difference, it adds up when one can then also eliminate her constant group of five or six friends.

My children do not believe in straying, they bring their friends home and while in theory this is very nice, in actuality I appear to be running a day camp of my own. By three o'clock each afternoon I reach breaking point.

HIGH JUMP Richard for instance, inspired by the Olympic coverage he absorbed, has set up a high jump pit, in the front garden of all places, complete with poles and crossbar.

If it can be believed, he and a friend raced a garbage truck around the block at seven o'clock one morning, in order to reach two mattresses that had been placed outside a house the previous night for garbage pickup.

Guests at who's home the mattresses now reside? - and who has about ten youngsters practicing high jumping at any given moment?

Teresa meanwhile, has decided to play house on the driveway with her group of five accomplices, their equipment consisting of every doll, crib, blanket and carriage they could muster up between them, a not inconsiderable amount I can assure you.

Not content with merely turning the front of our house into something resembling the town dump, they also demand constant sustenance. After all mother, high jumping and playing house are thirst and appetite-promoting occupations. Water, kool-aid, peanut butter sandwiches and hot dogs disappear from the house with bewildering speed.

Meanwhile, back in the kitchen, which I now wish was a far-removed padded cell, the hands of the clock spin crazily around, I am torn between meeting the deadline for a column; praying that the vegetables won't rot in the garden until I have time to freeze them; getting dinner started so that I can reach my evening job on time and trying to write the lyrics for two songs as a favour for a friend.

BATON TWIRLING Having finally opted for the lyrics, I turn on the tape recorder. Immediately, this is the cue for Teresa and her friends to abandon their dolls in favour of practicing their baton twirling. Have you ever tried writing a tender love song, while momentarily expecting to be hit on the head by a flying object?

Three o'clock - and mother stages her big freak-out scene. Children scatter in all directions, as leaves blown in an October wind.

"Boy! Is your mother ever crabby," comments a reluctantly departing six-year-old. "Yeah!" agrees Teresa. "I wonder what the matter is with her?"

Come on September!

Queen's Park

Lord Thomson is responsible for feature

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

Lord Thomson of Fleet was personally responsible for this column. It was back in 1948.

The then Roy Thomson was having a discussion (it was about his friend Leslie Blackwell who was contesting the provincial Conservative leadership).

While we were talking, he suddenly veered off to ask me: "Don, what about a daily column out of Queen's Park?"

My immediate reaction was that there wasn't the volume of business to warrant this (we were a much, much smaller place in those days), and I told him so.

"Well, all I know," he said, "particularly from my experiences in the smaller centres, is that the lives of a great many people are being run or influenced from that place. And as a publisher I feel that, if I can let them know how and why this is being done, then I have a responsibility to do so."

Note the word "responsibility." A NEWSPAPERMAN The column didn't start right away. But soon after someone else did begin it and when he boomed out in a week or so Roy asked me to take over and I've been doing it since.

was that at heart he was a newspaperman and a conscientious and intelligent one.

The world, including many of his colleagues, tended to think of him in terms of a dollar sign.

But those closer to him early knew also that behind the dollar front in which he revealed there was very much a newspaperman - a man who in his very first days in the business in Timmins used to take his pad and pencil and cover his own stories.

THE POLICITIAN Then there was Roy Thomson the politician. He had politics in his blood - and incidental good fortune.

In the 1951 provincial election he wanted to run, and mentioned it to me. I told him bluntly he would be bored to death within a week.

In 1963 he did run federally and despite plant-gating, door-knocking, coffee parties and the other standard campaign mechanics, which he faithfully followed, he was defeated. It was unquestionably the best thing that could have happened to him. As a back-bencher he would have been miserably bored. And as a cabinet minister he would have been hopelessly frustrated by red tape.

Of course, this was in earlier years. He later used to volunteer that losing that 1963 election was the best thing that had happened to him.