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Another study? An undeserving Region council

While it's interesting to see regional government continuing its efforts to make Halton a haven for new industry, along with the twin blessings of jobs and tax assessment, it is also distressing to hear of yet another study being launched - using taxpayers' dollars - to "appraise the situation".

Somehow, as the middle ground or "no man's land" between the pompous but long-established provincial government and the earthy but amaleurish municipal government, the region has become a wasteland of planners, statisticians and speculators both privately hired and publically elected.

As the new "kid" in town, the region has been prone to the egoinflating influence of its provincial father as much as worrisome prodding of its municipal mother. Yet the child remains airy-headed, directionless and slothful in the midst of near-calamity.

Two images come to mind while searching for metaphors: one sees regional chairman Jack Raftis attempting to calm council members who are angered over reports of sewage sludge contamination by assuring

"everything's under control". Another image presents itself readily to any passing motorist on Highway 25: the regional headquarters itself, a sprawling factory of "functionals" and "contemporaries" that reflects in its water-filled moat the kind of modern aesthetics which characterize regional government.

The building is like an automobile bought as a gift for a child much too young to drive. Region officials felt that five years was too long a time to wait for the new headquarters when it was opened earlier this year.

We, however, feel differently. The "great accomplishment" of Halton region's first half-decade was the completion of the first official plan, a comprehensive guide for municipal planners which will supposedly remain in effect for another 20

But the official plan has yet to receive provincial approval; it is instead being passed around the ministry of housing while civil servants employ their bureaucratic tools to try and pry off the barnacles of dispute, dissent and dissatisfaction that have already attached themselves to the plan in its infancy.

The official plan was itself borne out of numerous public meetings and lengthy studies, which to a great extent are necessary, but only when the final result pleases the great majority. It is, however, a strong and vocal minority - many of its members farmers whose liveliehoods might be challenged by certain aspects of the plan - which is keeping the plan in ministry hands, still the subject of some intense, if intermittent, concroversy.

The region of Halton must be something of a record-noider when it comes to the numbers of studies launched into a single issue; the issue is landfilling, and the region's failure to simultaneously resolve outstanding problems and satisfy the taxpayers continues to make headlines.

We predict a solid waste nightmare in Halton during the next two to tive years, as the region desperately fends off challenges from disconcerted voters and continues to plead its case in courts of law.

And this week comes news of a \$10,000 questionnaire-type survey by which the region hopes to evaluate the size of its labor force and the occupational skills available. The information collected will be presented with unabashed pride to corporate investors who express interest in Halton as a site for industry.

Asked whether he feels the region is correct in inviting new industry to urbanize predominantly-rural Halton, Chairman Raftis expressed confidence last week that the taxpayers are willing to trade a slice of their abundant farmland for much-needed industrial assessment and additional jobs.

This is probably true, as is the contention that survey results like those being sought here will assist regional officials in selling Halton to the big-money investors.

But it's a bitter pill to swallow when we must give our infant children spending money they haven't earned so they can buy gas for that car they never deserved.

Blackwell let Ontario go wet

Editor's Note: The political ingenuity involved in the 1945 revival of the open bar in Ontario is described today by Don O'Hearn in this series looking back over his 35 years at Queen's Park,

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

Mention Les Blackwell to anyone today and you get a blank stare. Even in his own time his real importance was known only to those few quite close to government and the legislature.

As the unusually strong second man in the Drew government Leslie Blackwell was a power.

Politically the boldest move of the Drew regime was to introduce the sale of hard liquor by the glass after the 1945. election. This was almost entirely a

Blackwell production. Drew was involved in setting the original policy. In fact it well could have been his idea! But then it was left to Blackwell to put it through.

Blackwell devised the approach of giving bars automatically to municipalities of over 50,000 population, which then covered the province's five major citles and only them, and requiring a local vote for all other municipalities. For years after there were local votes, and eventually, the province became almost entirely wet. But the strategm worked. Liquor never really became an important issue

SETTLEDSTRIKE Blackwell was influential in many other things.

One was a very bitter strike in the auto industry in Windsor shortly after the war.

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The United Auto Workers had the whole downlown area of Windsor jammed with cars and there were hundreds of OPP standing by. The situation looked both hopeless and potentially dangerous.

Blackwell tackled it by first getting Labor Minister Charles Daley to good minister in this field but in above his head on this one) off to Europe on a sudden trip which had unexpectedly come up. Then Blackwell went to Detroit and called the leaders of the union and the company

He kept them there in a bull session and in 24 hours had the strike settled.

But most characteristic of him were his integrity and his toughness.

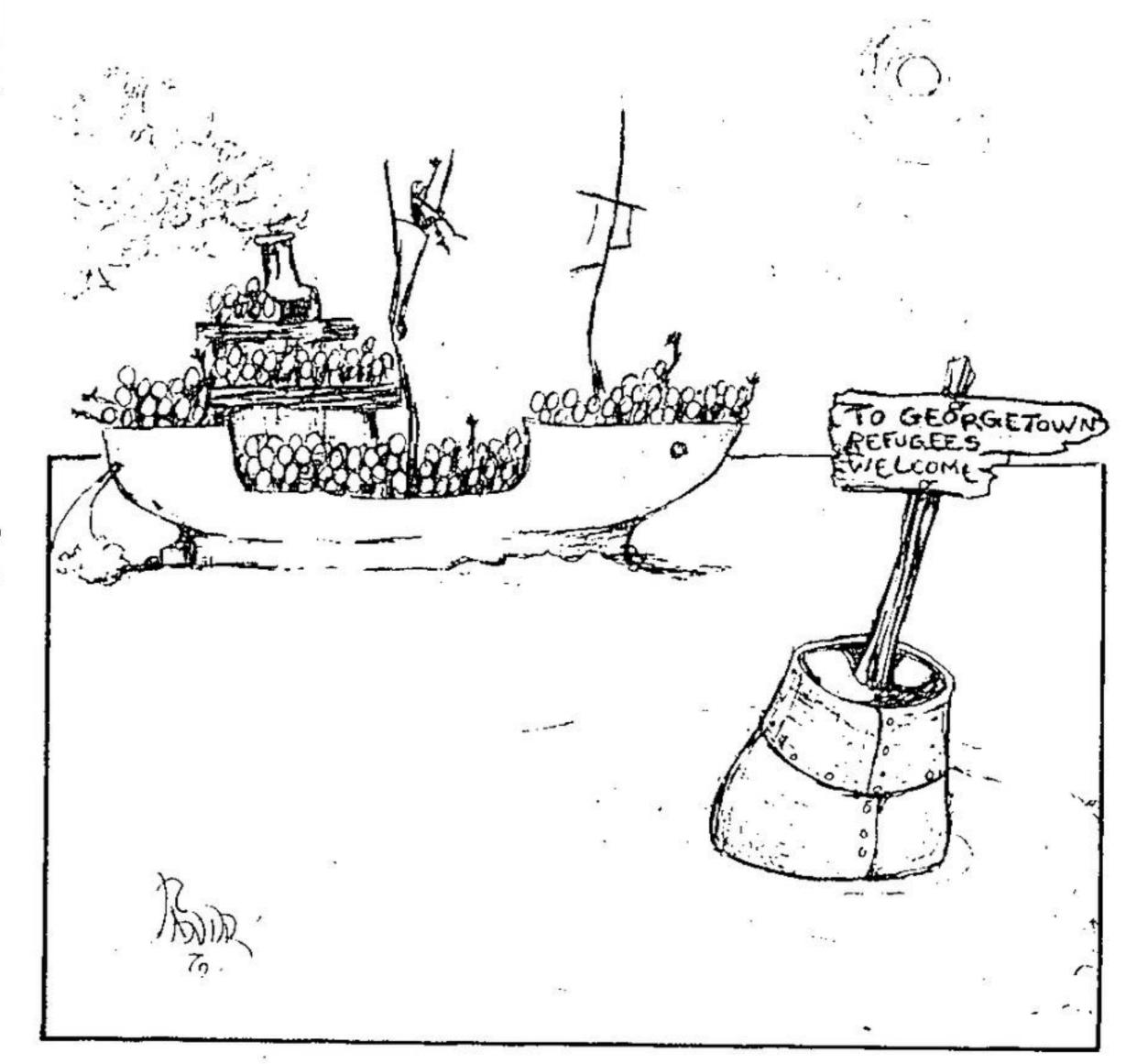
In the 1940s there was still a lot of hanky-panky and greedy hands in politics. This particularly applied to racketeering in liquor licences.

It was well known that a licence cost \$10,000-\$15,000 in Toronto, \$7,500 in Sudbury and so on. These were straight pay-offs. And they weren't going into party funds but into the pockets of top

officials. This drove Blackwell wild and finally he wouldn't take it any longer. One morning he called me down to his office and said "Don, I'm calling them in this afternoon and telling them if they don't stop I will jail them. And I mean it."

That afternoon I watched the four top PC party officials in the province stride in the attorney-general's office and half-anhour later I watched them glumly file

Blackwell, of course, didn't jail them and I can't say for sure whether the toll gate was ended, but you didn't hear about



Press kept at distance maybe it's a good idea

By STEWART MacLEOD Ottawa Bureau Of The Herald

Prime Minister Joe Clark has had his trials and tribulations during his first days in office, but he can pause and give thanks for one blessing-he hasn't had to endure the fondling and fawning of an overlyfriendly press.

I haven't researched this project back to Confederation, but so far as modern history is concerned, Clark may well be the first prime minister to assume office without celebrating an initial honeymoon period with the press. And while this may appear, at first glunce, to be painful problem I suspect it may work to his advantage in the long term.

We all remember our honeymoon with Pierre Trudeau in 1968. Trudeaumania was in full flight and we wrote glowingly about the new era dawning in Ottawa. The new prime minister couldn't walk across the lawns of Parliament without a horde of reporters in his wake. We loved his youthful, vigorous zest. When he dated, it was a monumental event. His news conferences were cultural happenings. His every word was carved in stone.

But from the beginning Trudeau recognized the dangers in his journalistic honeymoon. "The media," he said, on more than one occasion, "have a habit of

devouring their heroes." . That swinging hero of 1968 has, I suppose, been devoured, at least for the time being. No one seems to pay much attention these days as he drives to his

By DEREK NELSON

Queen's Park Bureau

Of The Herald

ple involved in the existence of an

ombudsman to look into complaints

against actions by the provincial govern-

Ombudsman is in the unique position of

the parliamentary jargon, rather than an

legislature, has the power to take action,

to fix errors and it is the government that

has to respond to the ombudsman's

complaints about bureaucractic wrong-

Pat Lawlor (NDP-Lakeshore), chairman

of the select committee on the ombuds-

man, was on his feet in the legislature just

recommendations that were going now-

here against the opposition of the minist-

MEAN SOMETHING

members, four of them Conservatives,

seven cases, one dealing with the health

ministry, and six with the Workmen's

Compensation Board, they felt the ombud-

ombudsman's boss, to say so. And for it to

Lawlor wanted the legislature, the

and three each Liberals and NDP.

To help resolve that difficulty MPP

He presented a special report of seven

The committee is composed of 10

Their views were unanimous. In all

doing against the private citizen.

before the session recessed.

ries or boards involved.

sman was right:

reporting directly to the legislature.

instrument of the government.

ment.

TORONTO - There's a tricky princi-

While paid for by the taxpayer, the

He is a "creature of the House" to use

Yet only government, and not the

new office to restructure his life as the leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

PEARSON LOVED Five years before Trudeau assumed the prime minister's mantle, Lester Pearson came into power, a genuine hero, the man who brought Canada the Nobel Peace Prize, perhaps the most likeable and approachable human being to occupy

that high office. There was a honeymoon alright, a good deal different than the one we had with Trudeau but nonetheless a real honeymoon, "Mike" Pearson was one of the boys, and we all loved his down-toearth, self-depreciating humor.

Like Trudeau, Pearson enjoyed a highly positive press during his first years in office. Even his bungling was forgiven on the grounds that he obviously meant well.

And if you go back to 1957 there was a similar attitude toward John Diefenbaker when he wrestled the government away from the St. Laurent Liberals who, most people agreed, had become too arrogant and removed from the people. Diefenbaker was the man who would restore a sense of pride in Canada. Finally, "the average Canadian" would have his day in court.

By 1962, Diefenbaker's cabinet was splitting in all directions, and he was getting a journalistic roasting for everything from nuclear warheads to devalued dollars. His honeymoon ended with a resounding crash.

Pearson's honeymoon didn't end with any dramatic suddenness, but his image was clearly turnished through a long

Ombudsman poses question,

occupies the middle ground

Otherwise, there is no sanction for the

With that Lawlor touched on the key

If, after all his investigations are

concluded, he feels a government minist-

ry or agency made an error with a citizen

he goes to the bureaucracy and tells them

OLD TALE

ago, when the umbudsman's office was

first established, over the North Pickering

em for resolving ombudsman-government

conflicts, which included setting up the

select committee to hear arguments from

But what happens if they in turn tell

That in essence happened four years

The resulting crisis produced a syst-

office of the Ombudsman," he said.

problem for an Ombudsman.

mean something.

him to get lost?

both sides.

expropriation question.

series of ministerial scandals, the divisive flag debate and the continuing controversy over bilingualism and blculturalism. The nitty-gritty of domestic politics had clearly taken its toll.

ROCKY START As Joe Clark looks back on his predecessors, he must be grateful that he wasn't swept into office with a similar blast of journalistic cuphoria. There is something to be said for starting at the bottom and working up.

A toreign correspondent who travelled on the Clark campaign remarked that he had never seen such an "anti-candidate sentiment" among the accompanying press. There were even anti-Clark jokes being passed around and, since Clark tended to follow a set speech, reporters even helped him finish sentences in unison. He was hammered by the press for his performance in the television debate and, since his election as prime minister, he has absorbed a severe pounding for his ill-conceived policies on the Middle East, for his unpopular promise to "privatize" Petro-Canada, and for certain cabinet appointments. When you think of it, Joe Clark really got off to a rather rocky start.

I suspect he is grateful. Right now, with a new minority government and with most Canadians obviously willing to give him a chance to prove himself, it matters little what journalists say about the new prime minister. And by the time it does matters, the cycle will probably have changed. As Clark's people see it, any change can only be for the better.

Halton's History

From our files

ROWANWOOD OFFERED AS GIFT

THIRTY YEARS AGO-Rowanwood, palatial home of Mr. and Mrs. J.H.C. Waite, Main Sreet South in Brampton has been offered to Peel Memorial Hospital as a gift. One of Brampton's lovellest homes, it contains 17 rooms, has a large swimming pool and beautiful rock and flower gardens cover the four acre property. It is valued at \$100,000. In making the gift, Mr. Waite informed the hospital board of governors they could use the property as a nurse's residence or sell it and use the proceeds for other hospital

The new plastic glass boat produced in Georgetown by Kippin-Ker, a new company formed by Leonard J. Bell, head of Georgetown Clay Products, made a good showing at the Civic Holiday boat races in Orillia when it placed second in the class for 10 hp outboard motors in a ten-mile race.

Two cases of poliomyelitis have been reported in Halton by Dr. James M. Mather, Medical Officer of Health, One is a 24-year-old married woman from Zimmerman and the other a seven-year-old girl from Campbeliville. Both victims have some paralysis, Dr. Mather reporteed. The cases are in widely separated points of the county and give no Indication that there is danger of an epidemic.

MALICIOUS DAMAGE

TWENTY YEARS AGO - Two Glen children ages 9 and 12 have been charged with causing malicious damage to Glen Williams Public School Monday, which according to Esquesing school board trustee Ern Batkin may run close to \$5,000. Damage to the windows alone will run into hundreds of dollars. All of the windows along the back of the building and in doors throughout the school were shattered. Inside, radios and clocks were demolished, water color paints were upset, light globes broken, and almosteverything moveable was overturned. In one room, duplicator fluid was poured over the tiled foor, and re-tiling will be necessary. The Glen School is the fourth rural school to experience vandalism in the past few months.

Edward James Rogers of R.R.1 Georgetown became understandably angry Monday afternoon when someone shot at him with a .22 rifle while he was driving north on the 7th Line, shattering the windshield of his car. Mr. Rogers was just south of McCullough's corners when he was shot at, and in his haste to back up to attempt to catch the gunman, he lost control of his car and backed into the east

Contractors who use water from fire hydrants during construction jobs should be subject to regulations and pay for water used, said Coun. Ern Hyde, chairman of council's water committee, when the subject was discussed at the July 27 meeting. Works superintendent G.R. Bligh said there is no existing town legislation which bars this practice, and said he would recommend council considering levying a charge and establishing regulations.

BUILDING ARKS

TEN YEAR AGO - It wasn't forty days and forty nights - but the torrent which dropped something like three inches of water on Georgetown and district Monday afternoon put residents in the mood for ark building. The unusually heavy downpour resulted in flash flooding in some areas of town where storm sewers and natural ground absorption couldn't handle it. Town works superintendent Frank Morette told The Herald his department had over 200 calls from people asking for ald in pumping water from basements and mopping up.

When little Bethany Margaret Hill was born in Georgetown Hospital April 16, she weighed only one pound, twelve nunces. And a few days later, she had lost four and a half of those precious ounces. On July 16, Bethany arrived home at Limehouse with her parents Carl and Gwen, a healthy three-months-old who now weighs almost 61/2 pounds.

Eighteen-year-old Phillip White of Georgetown was sent to trial for the non-capital murder of his father, Robert White. Phillip is accused of shooting his father, May 4 with a .22 rifle following an argument at their Georgetown home.

Total income tax pald by Halton residents has soared by \$5,877,000 in one year. The federal tax department's annual "Green Book" shows Halton residents paid \$32,255,000 in 1967 the latest year for which figures are available. The number of residents in Halton earning over \$20,000 a year has also increased - 659 in 1967 compared with 495 the previous

After much debate about municipalities sharing the cost of a plumbing inspector. Georgetown has decided to go it alone. Halton County announced it would no longer carry out plumbing inspections after September. Council on Monday decided to advertise for an inspector, with a salary of between \$6,000 and \$7,000 and a car allowance.

FOCAL MEETING

ONE YEAR AGO-HAlton Hills mayor Tom Hill set speculation flying July 25 when he announced at a planning board that a Focal Properties representative has approached him to try to arrange a meeting between council and Focal without town staff or legal advisors

Halton Hills is seeking an injunction against Ontario Hydro to prevent Hydro starting construction on the north-south power corridor which was the subject of Monday's Ontario Municipal Board hearing. The hearing was adjourned, but the town has sought an injunction against the corporation saying construction on the line has started without waiting for the

decision of the hearing. Halton Region Conservation Authority staff faced the possibility of a dam fallure, the second in less than two months, when water began sceping out of a toe drain at the Kelso Dam July 14. Authority general manager Murray Stephen, told authority members that the 85-acre reservoir was lowered by four feet July 17 to case the pressure. Tests done earlier showed that the dam itself did not . appear to be leaking, but no source for the water could be located. Water flowed at

the rate of 300 gallons a minute.

theHERALD A DIVISION OF CANADIAN NEWSPAPERS COMPANY LTD 123 Main 31 South, Georgetewn, L74 1ES

WILLIAMEVDOKIMOFF Publisher & General Manager MICHAEL HOLLETT Managina Editor

out the blatantly partisan stuff, such as

the North Pickering dispute, where the

respond adequately to Lawlor's plea is

still up in the air. We'll know by the fall

Whether the government will, in fact,

Tories dissented.

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The results, from the point of view of Lawlor (and past chairman Michael Davidson (NDP-Hamilton Centre), who resigned on the issue) have not been good. When the commmittee's last report was produced in the House none of the

involved cabinet ministers even took the courtesy to show up and listen. ONE SAFEGUARD

Now their latest report was before the House, and Lawlor bluntly said "we want this taken seriously. It hasn't been up to

this date and it is high time it was.' Which is really the point. If the government wants an ombudsman, and makes him a servant of the

House, then it should bow before decisions of that chamber expressed as unanimous committee recommendations.

Having all three parties agree screens