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New police news system is inefficient

In a supposed effort to "improve relations" between the Halton region media and its police force, the force's acting chief W.I. Harding has unveiled a new procedure for turning information over to the press.

In the past, officers at the district offices of the regional police have given members of the press copies of police reports detailing the occurances of the previous week, with confidential information removed.

It was a pretty straight forward approach and one that tended to avoid mistakes. Names, places, crime, et cetera were all clearly spelled out in the report. If a reporter was incapable of copying down the relevant information properly, he or she would not likely remain at their job long before an editor or police representative became aware of the mistake.

This once a week distribution of the police news by the force has been found efficient, accurate and desireable by many police forces across Ontario, including the Halton force. Dailies receive their information, once a day, if they

Under Acting Chief Harding's new plan all of this will end. In future, reporters will be expected to make daily visits to their local police station to receive oral reports from the district commander, the staff sergeant or the duty inspector. These men, supposedly highly trained in policing will spend their time reading through the reports, formerly given to the newspapers, and read aloud the relevant occurances-something a relatively literate 11 year-old could

Whether or not a reporter really will have to make daily visits to the police station still seems up in the air. It has not yet been made clear whether or not the police will only release information relating to the previous day's occurances or, if instead, they will be able to backtrack and read reports dating back to the report-

It's obviously an extremely inefficient and rather stupid way for our local police to dispense the news.

Certainly, we'd like to think that the time of top officers in Halton's district police offices could be better spent doing something other than reading a list of occurances to reporters.

Making a conservative estimate, it would probably take a reporter about half an hour to go over one day's occurances with an officer, allowing time for the officer to spell out names, places and so on. With five newspapers covering Halton Hills, not to mention radio and TV, the local police's top staff could be spending at least 21/2 hours a day telling reporters what the force did the day before.

Under the old system, a relatively junior officer spent about 30 seconds a week, handing out police reports to the press. Sounds like an inefficient change.

Obviously both the police officers' and reporters' time could be much better spent than fiddling around with police news under this new system.

Halton regional police and its problems are legend, it's probably one of the most controversial police forces in Ontario. Regressive moves like this latest one by the new chief will do little to improve the force or relations between it and the Press.

We think the new chief's time would be better spent trying to come up with real solutions to the regional police force's problems instead of coming up with useless new systems like the new news distribution plan.

Seniors' plight shows town hall need

The determined search of the Acton Golden Age senior citizens' club re-states the urgent need for funds to turn the town's beautiful town hall into a functioning community centre.

The Golden Age Club has been meeting regularly in the town hall building until its closure last March. Since that time the club has been meeting a mere twice monthly in St. Alban's Parish Hall. Club members have expressed a desire to meet five days a week. Certainly if the membership and interest is there for five days a week activity, every effort should be made to see that it is made possible.

Organizations like the Golden Age Club perform an invaluable function in communities like Acton keeping senior citizens in touch with each other, active and actively enjoying their retirement years. Rather than having to turn their

back on social contact, senior citizens clubs help our elderly citizens maintain an active social

It's a shame that because of a mere lack of space, Acton's senior citizens are being deprived of the vibrant, active club they seem to want.

A brand-new community centre housed in a remodelled Acton town hall would provide the perfect locale for a five-day-a-week senior citizens club. We hope the plight of the Acton Golden Age club will serve as yet another reminder and incentive for Acton residents, business and industry to donate to the town hall reconstruction fund.

At the same time, it would be nice if the town council or some local organization could come up with a temporary home to house a five-day-a-week seniors club until the new town hall becomes a

Ratepayers' chief keeps watchful eye

It's nice to see people like Laurie Duggan, president of the Georgetown Area Ratepayers Association are determined to keep Focal Properties and the town council, on their toes.

Mr. Duggan presented council Monday night with copies of a stock brokers newsletter article in which Bruce McLaughlin, hopeful developer of the controversial 1,740 home Focal development predicts a "favorable decision" from the town concerning the development.

The brokers' newsletter goes on to say a development agreement for the subdivision has been reached between the town and McLaughlin.

It's nice to know that if, in fact. the newsletter's information was correct, at least someone would be watching to ensure the final Focal deal was not made in the backroom between the developer and the

However, council was quick to clarify that neither the newsletter nor Mr. McLaughlin were correct in their assumption and statements about the deal.

Still, thanks to Mr. Duggan at least council knows what the other side is saying publically about the Focal dispute. It never hurts to know the thinking of one's opponents in the development card game.



While Tories flop in Quebec Grits endangered in the West



Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau Of The Herald

If we are going to pause and shed a cear for the plight of the federal Tories in Quebec, it's only fair that we express similar sympathies for the sorry state of liberalism in the West.

Statistically, the stories are much the same. While the Conservatives hold only two of Quebec's 75 seats, with little hope for an early improvement, the Liberals possess only three of the 77 seats west of the Ontario-Manitoba border. And while the Tories have no provincial organization to help them in Quebec, the Liberals are forced to cluster around mere skeleton organizations in the Western provinces.

Furthermore, for the first time in 110 years, there isn't one provincial Liberal government in Canada

· If the Liberal problems in the West need any additional emphasis, those three lonely MPs from the area are all parliamentary rookies, entering the Commons for their baptism of fire. Until they learn a few things, the party will not only lack answers about western problems, it won't even be able to ask effective questions. In time, Lloyd Axeworthy from Winnipeg-Fort Garry, Art Phillips from Vancouver Centre and, to a lesser extent,

Robert Bockstael from St. Boniface, may become prolific performers, but in the meantime the Liberals' once-mighty western wing is in a pitiful state.

EXTINCT SPECIES

The last semblance of a western organization was held together by former transport minister Otto Lang who was personally defeated in Saskatoon East. Lang has since left polities, and the organization he godfathered, has sunk out of sight. And there is not much point in looking to the provincial parties for help in the West. They are virtually an extinct species.

In many ways, Liberal misfortunes in the West are more formidable than the Tory tribulations in Quebec. At least the Tories have a general idea of what they must do to rebuild a grass-roots organization in Quebec, but the Liberals are in a state of confusion over their approach to the problem. Unlike the Tories, who emphasize team-work and organization, the Liberals have a leader who overshadows everything in the party. Pierre Trudeau is both their greatest asset and their great-

That recent Gallup Poll merely emphasizes the dilemna facing the Liberals. It clearly indicated that while the leadership of Trudeau was the biggest single reason cited for voting Liberal, it was also the biggest single reason for voting against the Liberals. While 40 per cent of those polled voted Liberal because of Trudeau, about 27 per cent said they voted either Tory of NDP because of the same

In the case of Prime Minister Joe Clark, only seven per cent said they voted for the Conservatives because of him. And

10 per cent said they voted for the Liberals or NPD because of him.

DIFFICULT DECISION

This is certainly food for thought as Liberal strategists plan their next move. If 40 per cent of Liberals voted that way because of Trudeau, and the party still managed only three out of 77 western seats, it's worth pondering the possible results without Trudeau.

Even with the return of the 27 per cent who voted for other parties because of Trudeau, the net loss might be more than the three surviving Liberal MPs could

It's one of the problems of charismatic leadership, especially after a long, 11-year reign. The maintenance of basic, grass-root organizations tends to deteriorate when it becomes obvious that elections are being won on the dominent personality of the party leader. Even in defeat, Trudeau is an awesome presence within the party. He inspires extreme reactions.

As the Tories face hostility or indifference in Quebec, it is invariably aimed at their party not the leader, "Joe Clark is not an issue," says one senior party

But with the Liberals in the West Trudeau is the overwhelming issue. And there are no moderate reactions. You can find any number of Liberals to tell you the party will never be revived on the prairies so long as Trudeau remains leader, and you can find just as many to argue that his continued leadership would be disaster-

Until the party faithful decide one way or the other - or until Trudeau makes the decision for them - it's difficult to envisage an effective party rebuilding program in

Halton's History From our files

FIRE GUTS HOME

Thirty Years Ago -- Last member of an old Georgetown family, Miss Jessie Ruston died on Monday, August 8 in her 83rd year. A life-long resident of town, she was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Ruston, Mr. Ruston operated a drug store for many years in the building now occupied by MacCormack's Drugs.

Fanned by a high wind, fire completely gutted the 14-room farmhouse of Harry Laidlaw, 1st line west of Brampton, a week ago Friday night. Mr. Laidlaw was returning to the house from his evening chores in the barn when he noticed the roof on fire. Running to the house, he warned his wife and daughter who were doing the supper dishes in the kitchen, unaware of the fire upstairs, then called the fire brigade.

DR, VARIAN DIES

Twenty Years Ago -- Last year's headache, staggered classes, will be absent when Georgetown's five public schools open their doors this September. The public school board met with the contractor of the latest addition, George Kennedy Public School, Jast Wednesday and were sufficiently impressed with the progress made to make the announcement.

A man who gave his name to one of Georgetown's industries died last week. Dr. Russell Harrison Varian, 61, inventor in 1937 with his brother, Sigurd, of the klystron tube, died aboard a cruise ship near Juneau, Alaska, of a heart attack. The Varian brothers founded a \$20 milliona-year electronics firm which established a branch in Georgetown five years ago.

An amendment to Georgetown's subdivison bylaw, giving a subdivider the alternative of a cash-per lot payment in lieu of maintaining a 40 per cent industrial-commercial ratio was passed Monday by council. The new legislation provides that prior to application for a building permit, the subdivider shall deposit \$400 for each lot for which a permit is to be issued. If in a 2½ year period the 40 per cent ratio is not maintained, the town can use the deposit for retiring debts incurred by capital school custs,

The era of the pin boy at the local bowling alleys is history. The Lucky Strike, owned by Hary Chappel and managed by Bill Anderson, underwent a face lifting during the off months, and the innovation that sounded the death knell for the scurrying pin boy and at the same time will make available the latest convenience for bowling bugs is the automatic pin setter. Four of the machines have been installed on a rental basis, with an option to buy, at a cost of \$5,500 a unit.

NUDIST COLONY CLOSES

Ten Years Ago -- Flooded basements, caused by a heavy rainstorm on July 28 have caused a second "flood". Deputy Clerk Mrs. David Shrubsole produced a sheaf of letters at Monday's council meeting, "about 50", she said. They are damage claims which have been forwarded to the insurance firm which handles Georgetown's liability insurance.

Sunbathing nudists have been forced to abandon their new home in the northwest corner of Nassagaweya Township. "The water in the lake just disappeared," said Mrs. Irene Pries, who with her husband, John, recently opened a new 42-acre mudist resort, Sunny Acres, on the Guelph Line near 30 Sideroad.

ARSON DESTROYS MAIL

One Year Ago - Financial constraints on health care spending by the provincial government has forced temporary layoffs at Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital, it was revealed Friday by the hospital administrator. "So far the layoffs have been voluntary," Fred Morris says, "and we hope we'll be able to manage to keep it that way. People have been taking extra time off without pay and if their workload is down and we don't bave to hire replacements."

Georgetown post office report arson last week destroyed some pieces of mail and sent other mail away with seorched edges after someone tossed lighted matches into a mailbox. Ed Quackenbush, post office supervisor, suggests that anyone depositing mail in the box at the corner of Stockman Crescent and Delrex Boulevard should get in touch with the person their mail was intended for and find out if it arrived.

One year after the fact Family Law changes working



Queen's Park By Derek

Nelson

Queen's Park Hureau Of The Herald TORONTO - Every once in a while it is

nice to report that government actually did something worthwhile. And that seems to have happened with

family law reform. The bill setting out new parameters on male-female legal relationships passed the legislature in the spring, 1978, session.

The bill setting out new parameters on male-female legal relationships passed the the legislature in the spring, 1978, session. Family assets, regardless of legal title, were to be shared in case of marriage break-up.

Now, with more than a year of experience on how it is working in practice, most people seem quite pleased. Even MPP Evelyn Gigantes (NDP-Carleton East), a harsh critic of the bill when it was before the House, says she is

pleasantly surprised. The NDP voted for the principle of the bill, but against the version that finally

passed the legislature. They felt it didn't go far enough in specifying a 50-50 split on assets if the marriage broke-up.

They also didn't like a phrase that said support obligations could be ignored if a judge found one persons's actions "so unconscienable as to constitute a gross repudiation of the relationahip."

SPLIT BUSINESS

Gigantes, for example, rightly pointed out that judges in the past often exercised a double standard when it came to defining proper behavior for men and women, usually to women's detriment.

But these fears have - so far - proven groundless. The conduct clause has yet to be called into use.

The bill is performing as intended. In three landmark cases, for example, wives received a substantial share of a man's business property on marriage break-up based on the woman's direct contribution to the business, as well as her keeping the home so he'd be free to work

In short, as one legal official in the attorney general's ministry said, "homemakers are being fairly compensated." One of the fears of women's groups and the NDP is that they wouldn't be. MEN TOO

Men too are benefitting. In one instance a husband obtained a small amount of support money from a

more financially secure wife, something unthinkable under the old law.

The ministry official also noted there appears to be a tendency for judges to emphasize the need for a partner to become self-sufficient as soon as possible after marriage break up.

Support payment periods are being shortened.

GOOD JOB

It's also interesting that people in general appear to understand the law, since that isn't the usual reaction to a new

There is one exception.

Those living common-law longer than five years are not liable for sharing of assets, contrary to widely-held belief. They do however, remain obliged to give support payments

That aside, and if the more recent decisions continue along the line of the first year's results, the bill will have been remarkably successful in bringing a degree of equality to men and women before the law.

In addition, it's good to see that Judges aren't fuelling the suspicision they are all male chanvinists, but are being fair.

Although it is true one can't do it often, when government does do sontething right it should be told so. Take a bow, Queen's Park,

theHERALD A DIVISION OF CANADIAN NEWSPAPERS

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