

Secrecy shrouds council's Focal deliberations

Recent developments in the Focal Properties Ltd. housing controversy have left us frankly confused and apprehensive.

While there appears to be no hard evidence that town council, and Mayor Pete Pomeroy in particular, have indeed opened the floodgates to development, whether deliberately or inadvertently, the very fact that such accusations are being made leaves us wondering whether those doing the accusing have been privy to some confidential, politically-inflammatory information.

The most outspoken critics of council's decision to defer any development commitment concerning a large tract of land on Georgetown's southern urban boundary have suggested in no uncertain terms that the town is playing right into the hands of developers who have land interests in that area, most importantly Focal Properties.

While ratepayers' spokesman Lawrie Duggan drew upon consultants' conclusions about limitations in residential growth in order to condemn the move as a prelude to development which cannot be supported, Ward 4 Coun. Harry Levy presented some incendiary remarks about the mayor's conduct in the matter.

Neither man's comments served to shed much light on what's really been happening behind the scenes, but confusion over the handling of the matter suggests that Coun. Levy may have been partially right in contending that the mayor could be more open about the issue.

Generally, Mayor Pomeroy cannot be faulted for his ongoing efforts to resolve the Focal issue to the benefit of a majority of Georgetown residents. He has repeatedly called the matter the single most important issue facing Halton Hills and has gone on record as opposing Focal's plans in their present format.

However, discussions are taking place in the mayor's office which are presumably aimed at formulating possible concessions to the developer so that one or more housing proposals might proceed in keeping with council's ambitions for Georgetown's future

growth. To what extent council as a whole is cognizant of these discussions and their effects is not clear. Judging from Coun. Levy's criticisms of Mayor Pomeroy during a recent meeting, there is much about the issue which council does not know.

Needless to say, voters here in town know even less, and that's what bothers us most.

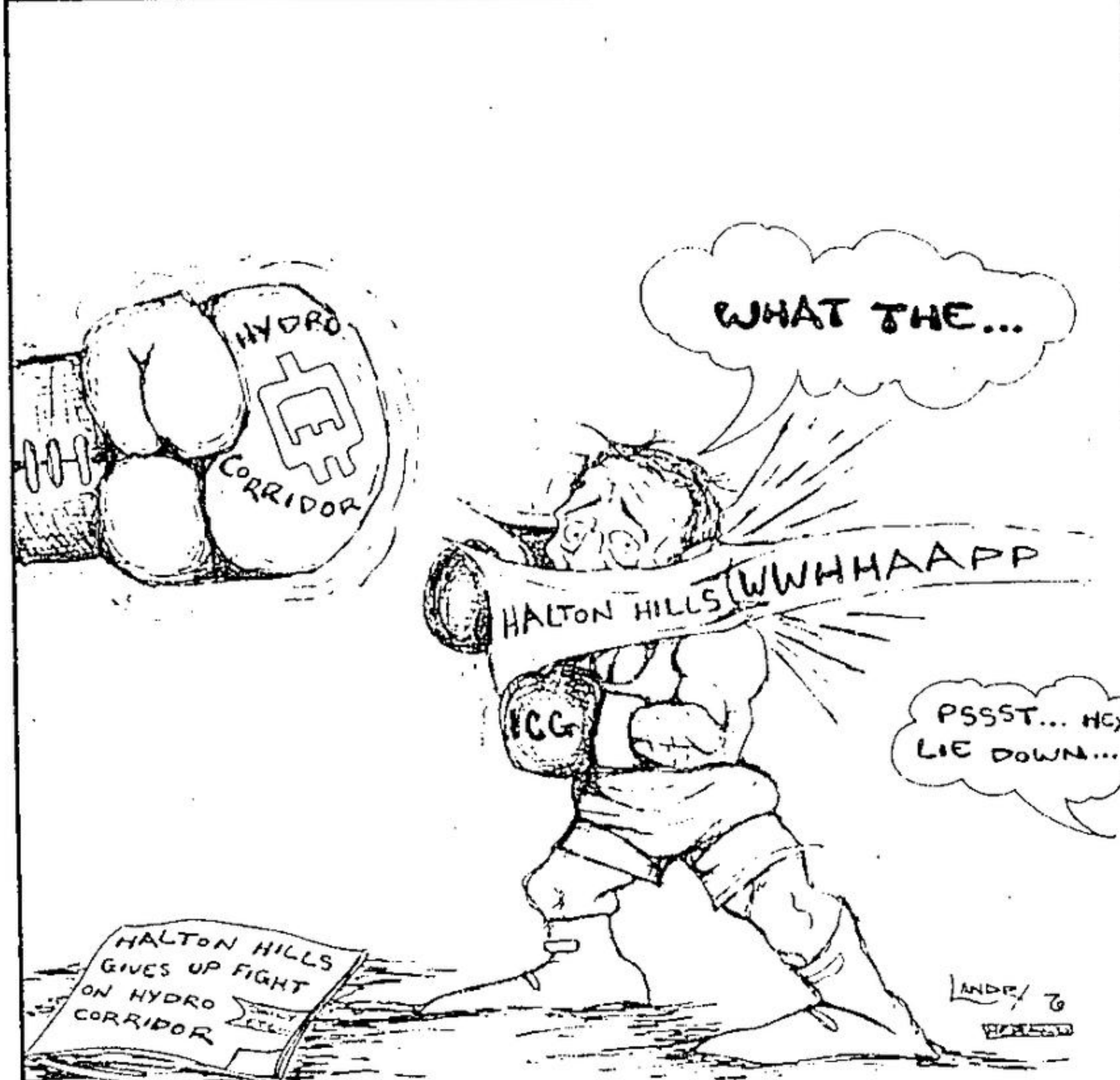
Again, Mayor Pomeroy should be commended for what appears to be his sincere efforts to keep the public informed of at least any concrete developments in the matter. He called a special press conference, for example, to ensure that newspaper readers would be aware of his controversial notice of motion the week prior to council's debate on the issue.

Yet the mayor should also be criticized for allowing far too many discussions about the Focal proposal taking place behind closed doors, a practice he promised to limit as much as possible at election time a year ago. These days, however, he seems to be all too ready to accept the town solicitor's advice, brought on by the spectre of pending legal clashes, to shut out the public whenever Focal is to be mentioned.

We share the opinion of many area residents that the Focal problem, complicated and far-reaching though it is, has been prolonged too far, and we tend to support Coun. Levy's comment that there is no firm indication Focal's \$27 million lawsuit against the town would ever meet with success in the courts.

And, we do not sympathize with Mayor Pomeroy's complaints that council is too reluctant to approve proposed developments; such arguments have no place in municipal considerations of major housing plans.

Finally, we feel the taxpayers of Halton Hills not only have a right to see the Focal issue resolved during the current term of council (or soon after if legal confrontations prove necessary), but also a right to see the resolution evolve openly, candidly and forcefully, without concessions and with the full knowledge and consent of council.



New Democrat's 'pecking away' eventually uncovers solutions



Queen's Park
By Derek Nelson

TORONTO - Just pecking away, MPP Floyd Laughren (NDP-Nickel Belt), calls it.

Being an opposition MPP is often a lesson in frustration. You have no power to make decisions.

But sometimes, just maybe, hammering at a point time and again produces a reaction in government ministries.

Laughren is NDP finance critic, so his speeches in the House tend to cross the whole range of economic problems Ontario faces.

But, being from the Sudbury basin as he is, he invariably works in a mention of mining machinery in his condemnation of the Torv lack of industrial strategy.

To Laughren our difficulties in that area are symptomatic of what we face in other

sectors, from electric products to consumer electronics.

GETTING WORSE

Here's Laughren: "In mining production, we are number three in the world. We are second in the world in consumption of mining machinery and first in the world in importing mining machinery.

"In 1965 this country imported 59 per cent of its mining machinery (requirements). The latest figure I have is that it has risen to 91 per cent.

"So once again a high domestic consumption is being met by imports, not local manufacturing."

The solution, of course, is to build the equipment here instead, a process usually labelled "import replacement."

That's why it was interesting to see a press release from the Industry and Tourism ministry about a manufacturing opportunity show to be held in Sudbury November 7 and 8.

GOOD IDEA

"Canadian manufacturers interested in replacing \$20 million worth of items now imported annually by six of Ontario's largest mining firms are invited to participate" the release said.

The companies with staff present will include Inco, Noranda, Demson, Texas-

gulf, Falconbridge and Algoma Steel, all giants in the field.

When he heard of it Laughren said he was delighted. As a first step he was glad to see it.

Not that he was claiming credit. The trade shows in one form or another go back to 1962, although this is the first to deal specifically with mining machinery.

NOWHERE?

On the other hand it is hard to believe the constant NDP criticism of the decline in our mining machinery manufacturing has not had some effect on government thinking.

Just pecking away, as Laughren says. He'd like to go further. Rebuilding the industry should not be left to the passive chances of a manufacturing opportunity show alone.

The government should enter into joint ventures, reducing the risk to the investor in exchange for the rebuilding of our manufacturing sector and making it subject to a provincial industrial strategy.

If that didn't work Laughren would go further, by taking the Crown corporation route and having government manufacture the equipment.

Maybe, maybe not. But at least Laughren is offering a solution to what is one of our major economic problems.

Recalling the Frost years

By DON O'HEARN
Queen's Park Bureau
Thomson News Service

Unless you happen to be in your mid-forties or more, the name Leslie Frost probably does not mean all that much to you. A name from the past of some importance, but that is about all.

Yet Leslie Frost was one of the most remarkable politicians in the life of the province. He was the outstanding vote getter in Ontario history. Probably no other leader had the grip on the public he had as "Old Man Ontario".

No other leader had as inauspicious a beginning as did this eventual goliath. For Frost won the leadership as a relative unknown to the public and at a largely engineered convention. He actually built this tremendous future.

THE PLANT-GATER

One of Frost's great strengths in government and politics, perhaps his greatest, was that he was a realist. From day one as a leader he knew that his prime problem was his obscurity and, again the realist, he tackled the problem pragmatically and immediately.

He tackled it in his own way. He got down to earth and set out to make himself known by the most direct method possible, by personally meeting people.

It is safe to say that nobody has ever travelled as intensively in Ontario and certainly nobody has ever shaken as many hands on as many fronts as he did over a two years period in 1949, 50 and 51.

THE ROAD

I travelled a bit with Frost in that period

and had a good first-hand experience of the campaign. He would call on a Friday, ask if I could get away the next week, have his driver, Morley, pick me up on Sunday night and early Monday morning we would be off from Lindsay (even then it was a strict rule with Frost that he spent his week-ends at home in Lindsay) for the north or south, the east or the west, usually by car, sometimes in the Ontario Hydro amphibian.

This call to travel was no particular personal tribute. Although I had been in the press gallery only six years I was by then pretty well the senior member.

WILDERNESS JOURNEY

Whether it was a plant, a hospital, a home for the aged or any other locale he would enter, walk up to the first person available, put out his hand and say "My name is Frost. I work for the government".

It perhaps wasn't all that much fun to be along. There was one trip I recall to the iron mine at Wawa, some 100 miles north of Sault Ste. Marie on the Algoma Central.

The trip on a special two-car train was practically all through wilderness. About half way, in seemingly the most desolate part of the country, the train stopped.

Then he would patiently, but steadily, move through taking every hand. This was Leslie Frost in action, and I can't think of a better expression of Leslie Frost the man: patient, diligent, hard working, publicly astute and politically astute, publicly friendly, and above all down-to-earth.

Is Levesque's white paper trying to deceive Quebecois?



Ottawa Report
By Stewart MacLeod

A common federalist reaction to Premier Levesque's white paper on sovereignty-association is that it is a deceiving document, designed to lull Quebecers into a false sense of security. "The Parti Quebecois knows it can't sell pure independence to the people of Quebec," says former prime minister Pierre Trudeau, in a typical comment, "so it's coming back to the step-by-step procedures."

What the Quebec government is doing, he says, is trying to fool the people.

I suppose it depends on what you happened to expect in the white paper. And having watched Premier Levesque dilute his original "independence" option down to a foggy form of "sovereignty-association" which seemed to differ little from the "renewed federalism" proposed by provincial Liberals, I had expected the white paper to go even further in this respect. In fact, with public opinion polls indicating that a vast majority of Quebecers oppose any formal breaks with the Canadian federation, I thought the white paper would, in some convoluted

way, peddle sovereignty-association as just another form of federalism.

This would seem to be Levesque's logical strategy as he prepares for next spring's long-awaited referendum.

SEEMS FORTHRIGHT

Not that it matters a great deal, but unlike Trudeau and other federalists, I was surprised by the document's forthright approach. Sure, it's slathered with jobs of clap-trap about the negative aspects of federalism, and it's full of unnecessary appeals to the emotion, and it is deliberately naive about attitudes in English-speaking Canada toward any economic arrangements with an independent Quebec. But apart from the predictable shortcomings, the white paper, I thought, was surprisingly candid about "sovereignty-association."

What it means is independence. And even if the all-important referendum question continues to try and fudge this definition, the white paper provides ample material with which to clarify the options.

"Sovereignty would reside entirely in the state of Quebec so that Quebecers would be ruled by a single government and would pay taxes only to Quebec," says the white paper. If that's not political independence, I'd like to know what is.

"The time has come to be our own masters," says Premier Levesque, in an emotional contribution to the white paper. "We Quebecers are a nation, the most firmly anchored nation on this continent." In the Canadian federation, Quebecers have developed a strong inferiority complex, he goes on. "We have the chance

to get rid of it once and for all and we have no right to let this chance go by."

INDEPENDENCE FIRST

As expected, the document tries to dispel fears by emphasizing the continuing economic links the Parti Quebecois would try to negotiate with the rest of Canada. But it's clear that these attempts would be made only after political independence is achieved. Working with a complete "international personality," Quebec would establish its own parliament, its own supreme court and new criminal courts. It would claim complete jurisdiction over all its existing territory - and an enclosed map even sweeps in Labrador - and it would control the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Quebec passports would be issued.

After clearing up the independence issue, the white paper strays into an economic fairyland with proposals for various economic associations that probably could never be negotiated and, if they were, they probably wouldn't work. Even with the existing federal structure, it is difficult to reach a consensus on monetary and fiscal policies. And even by stretching the imagination to the limit, I can't envisage Ottawa sharing this indecision with an independent Quebec.

But there is no need to dwell on association - it's sovereignty that's the issue. And I for one feel much better about the coming referendum campaign now that the white paper has made it abundantly clear to Quebecers that they will be voting on nothing less than complete independence.

Halton's History

From our files

THIRTY YEARS AGO - Dr. J.M. Mather, Halton Medical Officer of Health, and Dr. B.J. O'Meara newly-appointed county dental inspector, attended a meeting of Georgetown board of education last Wednesday and explained in detail how the new dental system will work. The local board at a previous meeting voted to provide free dental treatment for all public school children.

Call the past week's weather Indian Summer, or whatever you wish, but you will have to agree it was really enjoyable. The week's average of 55 and 34 degrees are 13 and 6 degrees above normal respectively. The last November thunderstorm recorded here was in 1943 and it only lasted an hour; so the one we had last week was really unusual and quite prolonged.

TWENTY YEARS AGO - Georgetown's revolutionary gyro-plane, the Avian, is ready for flight. Company spokesman Bill Carr told the Herald yesterday that the firm was pleased with the way the cupler-like craft had breezed through an extensive series of ground tests and the test pilot has been given the nod to take it up whenever he feels ready.

MORE PARKING
Provision of downtown parking facilities by the town, with costs involved to be paid by businessmen and property owners, was included in a petition presented to council Monday. Speaking for the Georgetown Businessmen's Association, Paul Barber said the 65 signatures on the petition represented over 90 per cent of the merchants. Three locations are desired.

Georgetown may be set back 10 to 15 years traffic-wise if a prognostication made by a Highway 401 engineer holds true. The super 401 will become the main route between Toronto and the Kitchener and Galt areas when the Milton to Guelph stage is completed some time next fall, and consequently a terrific drop-off in traffic will be noticeable, says the report.

Lummox types who have had to bear the "bull in a china shop" label given them by their more agile tormentors can bury their resentment. On Friday night, a full-grown bull owned by Ward Brownridge of R.R.3, Georgetown, entered the Lindsay Gift shop in the Delrex Market centre and for every minute of his half-hour stay was the perfect gentleman. The bull was part of an advertising stunt staged by the shop.

The Thursday Thimblers' Club of Terra Cotta is celebrating its tenth anniversary this year. The annual dinner was held at Claude Presbyterian Church and the members later visited to the home of Mrs. Harvey Puckering for a social evening.

Fresh hope that a provincial park may yet be located on the Forks of the Credit area is inspired by current efforts of the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, with the co-operation of Bill Davis, MPP for Peel. At its October meeting at the Terra Cotta headquarters, the Authority undertook several positive steps toward this goal.

TEN YEARS AGO - Triplett calves born at the George Henderson farm on Highway 7 near Georgetown's western limits last week, were kind of a going-away present from the graded Holstein mother. The gesture was irregular, however, since it was she and the rest of the Henderson livestock who were going away. They, plus feed, all went in a sale Friday. Mr. Henderson said the rare triplet birth is the first he's ever heard of in the district.

A majority of Liberal party electors in the Halton and Halton East ridings are opposed to the legalizing and controlling of the sale and use of marijuana, according to the results of a questionnaire prepared by Halton Liberal MP Rud Whiting.

LOWER AGE

Action to lower the federal voting age to 18 is a recognition of youth and the part youth is playing and will play in the future of Canada, Rud Whiting, (L-Halton) said last week.

In a spirited rebuttal to last week's criticism by Esquering council of the Halton county board of education, trustee Bill Lawson told Esquering Council Monday night, "the easiest way to get publicity is to take potshots at education". He maintained it was time the ratepayers knew whether they were reading politics or fact. He compared the suggested 50 per cent cut in board members' fees with the 100 per cent jump in council's salaries last year.

Jack McLeod, who moved to Montreal, from Georgetown a few weeks ago, was one of the men killed in a Newfoundland air crash yesterday. He was piloting a plane taking Brinco officials to Labrador City, one of the firm's properties.

Maintaining their leadership in the Millimetre frequency region, Varian Associates of Canada Limited have received the IEC Award for the Best Canadian Electronic Component for the second consecutive time.

ONE YEAR AGO - A comprehensive rehabilitation plan for Indusmin's Aclon area quarry has won two University of Toronto students third place in an international landscape architecture competition. Graduating students Paul Marsala and David Jonas are listed as third place winners in the Third Annual American Society of Landscape Architects National Crushed Stone Association Landscape Architecture Competition in the current issue of Interface, a publication of the Aggregate Producers' Association of Ontario. According to the report, the two students selected a multiple-use concept for the Indusmin quarry which names as possible after-uses, low and high-density residential, aqua-culture, agriculture, recreational, forestry and commercial-industrial utilization of the rehabilitated quarry.

Georgetown's Ian Clark is the best junior cross-country runner in all of Canada. Clark, a grade 12 student at Georgetown District High School, won the Canadian cross-country championships held at Vancouver's Stanley Park on Saturday. Ray Paulins, who two weeks ago won the senior OFSAA championship at Scarborough College, finished second some five seconds behind Clark. It was a run over a 8,000-metre course. Clark said his strategy for the race was to hang on Paulins' shoulder for first part of the race.