

Pete Pomeroy and the hydro controversy

The poor turn-out at last Wednesday's Georgetown Area Ratepayers Association meeting didn't stop Mayor Pete Pomeroy from saying some pretty important things and sharing a few strong words with the handful of listeners on hand at GDHS.

The mayor's comments on the major issues facing Halton Hills council are reported in depth elsewhere in this issue, but what readers won't find there is a look at the town's second mayor as a strong-willed and determined community leader intent upon taking certain, calculated risks in the interest of getting Georgetown, in particular, moving again.

At least that's our impression after comparing the Pete Pomeroy at the GARA meeting with the rookie councillor-mayor we saw in action during three years of council meetings.

Sometimes we wonder, though, about the mayor's sometimes single-minded attitude toward issues that concern us, particularly the landowners' battle against the Bruce to Milton hydro corridor.

PAINFUL SURPRISE

After hearing the mayor frequently pledge his support and that of town council to the Interested Citizens Group for two years, it was somewhat painful and surprising to hear him breathe a sigh of relief while recalling how the Supreme Court let the town off the hook concerning the OMB's order to rezone farmland for the corridor.

From what he said last week, it appears the mayor's only concern once the corridor "seemed" inevitable was that Queen's Park was making Halton Hills its scapegoat for the strategic blunder of Ontario Hydro.

"We solved that one," Mayor Pomeroy told GARA, while outside the battle raged on between farmers and Hydro.

Apart from such relatively minor problems, however, the mayor's speech was one of promise, and one which probably warrants the respect and support of most local residents.

If voters can waive the cynicism which grows on them during election years (councillors hit the campaign trail again this fall, too), the mayor's state of the union address confidently recounted the current ad-

ministration's accomplishments since late 1976, when the then-rookie Coun. Pomeroy took control of a ship that was stranded motionless in a Sargasso Sea of development disputes, economic woes and lacking facilities and services.

In deference to the previous administration, we never found Halton Hills' first mayor, Tom Hill, particularly inactive in terms of municipal progress, but rather handcuffed by a mostly reluctant council which he could not motivate and by increasingly-complex issues for which no one had yet offered solutions.

Thus, much credit goes to the Pomeroy administration for pinpointing solutions that seem, at the very least, to have Halton Hills headed in the right direction.

NEAR FUTURE

Rental accommodations are becoming available slowly but surely, the mayor pointed out, and a fabulous new cultural facility appears destined to become a reality in the near future. Ambitions apparently run high concerning the area's lack of industry, as well.

Of the 18 or so separate topics covered during the mayor's appearance, only one remains a big question mark in our mind, and we suspect in the minds of most ratepayers.

Reviewing the issues which accompanied his rise to political prominence locally, Mayor Pomeroy reminded listeners that several councillors lost their jobs over the town's proposal to sink \$1 million into a new administration building on Trafalgar Road.

Despite the public outcry which saw the idea scrapped in 1976, the mayor said he has come to realize what its proponents were saying all along, that a centralized headquarters is essential if town staff is to be deployed effectively and economically. Certain funds are now being socked away toward a modified expansion of the existing town headquarters, he explained, which will probably be undertaken next year.

We wouldn't challenge the desirability of a centralized administration, but something tells us the mayor may be walking on eggs when he tries to promote the project in these ongoing times of financial stress.

We'll all know for sure soon enough.



Television debate controversy so much 'show biz bafflegab'



Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau of The Herald

I don't know about you, but I could easily work up a full head of anger over the ridiculous, phoney, bafflegab that surrounded those unsuccessful negotiations for a television debate involving the three party leaders.

Media manipulation is one thing, but this time it has become ludicrous.

There should be another televised debate involving Prime Minister Joe Clark, Liberal leader Pierre Trudeau and New Democratic Leader Ed Broadbent -- and this particular campaign desperately needs some head-to-head confrontations. But as this is being written, it doesn't appear a likely prospect.

The idea was scuttled when, after a series of meetings and modifications, the Liberals rejected the final proposal claiming it was because network journalists would be involved.

"We felt it would be nothing more than a glorified press conference," said Liberal Campaign Chairman Keith

Davey. From the beginning, Pierre Trudeau said he didn't want journalists in the two-hour production. Last year, he said, the three network reporters "seemed to be spending most of their time taking Mr. Clark off the ropes."

NOT HAPPY

Mr. Clark who wasn't all that keen on last year's debate, now claims to be bitterly disappointed with the Trudeau rejection. And so does Mr. Broadbent, who has everything to gain from such exposure. The prime minister, trailing badly in the public opinion polls, says his Liberal opponent is being undemocratic in refusing to participate.

I recall being hit by a touch of cynicism last year during the negotiations leading up to the debate -- as the three major TV networks insisted that their star reporters -- or television personalities -- be on the platform, and there were silly arguments over the pros and cons of plastic podiums, unbreakable water glasses, and the relative merits of stools and chairs. It was the type of nonsense that goes into a Miss Canada pageant.

It was the same this year, with the networks insisting that their reporters be involved "to move the debate forward through a series of key issues." And when the Liberals objected to the proposed panel of journalists, the networks offered to reduce them -- or promote them -- to one-at-a-time moderators. A dozen individuals negotiated for hours, all of them apparently obsessed with projecting, or protecting, their own heroes whether they be politicians or journalists. Finally, the Liberals said no.

What really annoys me about this entire chintzy affair is that, while we sit around waiting for a badly-needed debate, these individuals have been imitating a group of show-biz tycoons, offering lame-duck excuses, outbursts of bravado and other childish nonsense.

I don't believe for one minute that the diluted presence of journalists is the chief reason for Mr. Trudeau's final refusal to participate. But in any event, why should the networks insist on having their own "personalities" on the set? And if Mr. Clark is as gung-ho as he suggests, why doesn't he do something about it? Why go through these silly negotiations with the networks?

What Clark could do -- and so could Trudeau if he really wants a debate without journalists -- is simply hire an auditorium, challenge the other leaders to a debate, and the three could select a moderator -- I would suggest a non-academic, non-journalist, who enjoys a scrap -- and have a good old-fashioned free-for-all. Why should the networks dictate any formats?

ALL SHOW-BIZ

And it's patent nonsense for them to suggest -- as they now do -- that it's already too late to schedule a debate. If the three party leaders decided to meet head-to-head, the networks would be there, fighting furiously for the best camera positions. Let's not kid ourselves about that.

Trouble is, my idea is entirely political. I keep forgetting that this campaign is a "controlled media event". And that, I assumed, is show biz.

Won't get fooled again

It frankly alarms us to think that recent progress in the continuing mid-East stand-off could conceivably turn the election tables in favor of Joe Clark's Conservative government, despite the fact that Ottawa's decision-makers apparently had little, if anything, to do with making that progress.

Let's keep Canada's role in the escape of six American diplomats from Iran in context while this election campaign rolls along; Clark had nothing to do with it and we'd bet that neither did Flora MacDonald.

Nevertheless, the feeling of national pride and patriotism that has enveloped this country since the safe return home of the Americans hidden in Iran's Canadian embassy seems to be shifting public favor toward those currently in command: the beleaguered Tories and their woeful leader.

Local candidates, of course, have adopted their respective party lines about the incident: "Congratulations, Ken Taylor" from all three major party representatives, but "Where were you, Joe?" from the Liberals and New Democrats, who correctly point out that the PM has been slow to acknowledge his own lack of involvement in the breath-taking escape.

To begin comparing Clark, then, to a genuine leader-in-crisis like Jimmy Carter, who has made strong statements concerning the Iran and Afghanistan situations and has begun formulating new policies concerning them, would be a lie and a great disservice to the Canadian electorate.

The anticipated visit here Friday by External Affairs Minister Flora MacDonald (she's the one who nearly edged out Joe for the top Tory spot) should fan Conservative campfires now glowing over the Great Escape.

Ken Taylor's subtle but effective little plan to save his allies could earn the man some kind of berth in any election race he wants to enter, as far as many Canadians are concerned these days, but for this sudden and unprecedented act of heroism to fuel the Tory campaign so close to the election would be not only suspiciously coincidental but a blatant manipulation of means to suit the ends.

Manipulation, we stress, by a government that has done nothing but monitor the increasingly-important mid-East crisis and offer occasional gestures of empathy to the U.S.

Let's keep the Great Escape in perspective - it doesn't belong in the campaign speeches of any candidate in this time of dangerous domestic situations of even greater concern to Canadian voters.

George Ashe's 'electrical future' gives focus to energy search



Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau of The Herald

Talk of an energy crisis in Ontario is misleading: We have lots of energy. What we lack is oil.

The provincial government continues to believe heating oil supplies this winter will be, as the current jargon has it, "tight but manageable".

There may even be a world glut next summer, but production cutbacks and Third World political instability make the oil import scene unpredictable in the long run.

Thus the debate at Queen's Park about our future energy needs is important. The course is being set now for our destination at the end of the century.

The problem is oil. In 1978 oil accounted for 41 per cent of Ontario's energy consumption, more than half of it used for transportation purposes.

OTHER ENERGY

Natural gas accounted for a further 22 per cent, mainly for home heating, while uranium, wind-power, and coal used to generate electricity took an additional 31 per cent.

The worrisome aspect of this is that oil consumption continues to rise, the

exact opposite of what the energy ministry wants to happen.

The ministry goal is to halt per capita growth in oil consumption by 1985, through a combination of conservation and fuel substitution.

Whether it is a realistic target without some kind of rationing (by price or lack of supply) is still very much an open question.

Meanwhile we have exactly the opposite problem to oil with electrical energy. We produce one-fifth more than current demand plus a reserve requires.

The consensus is the surplus will be around at least for a decade.

ONE ANSWER

The obvious solution is to use electricity as a substitute for oil wherever possible. But just how realistic that is remains a matter of dispute.

Opposition energy critics are dubious, and prefer to concentrate on non-conventional renewable energy sources such as solar and synthetic liquid fuels.

Until last year the Energy Ministry seemed to agree.

NEW PATH

But now, and without discounting the need for renewable energy advances, a different outlook seems to be growing.

MPP George Ashe, parliamentary assistant to Energy Minister Job Welke, had a few comments about the possibility of using electricity to replace oil in a recent speech.

He spoke of the electric car, which General Motors hopes will corner 10 per cent of the auto market by 1990.

Railways could be electrified, and in fact, Ashe brought a resolution before the legislature a while back that urged the

federal government to do just that on the Toronto-Montreal run.

And, as oil prices soar, electricity for home heating becomes more and more competitive, especially for new homes.

Maybe Ashe is too optimistic. But at the very least it is one direction we should be trying to go with energy policy.

Advertisement for the HERALD newspaper, listing awards and contact information.

Halton's History

From our files

THIRTY YEARS AGO--During the month of January, 605 school days were lost by pupils because of mumps. The shield for best monthly attendance was presented to the pupils of Miss Wilma Stull.

A detailed report on the dental condition of Georgetown Public School students was recently received from Dr. B.J. Meara. It would suggest that the children of Georgetown are consuming sweet foods to an excess. There is a rapid increase in cavities in the senior grades. It is to be hoped that they will learn the harmful effect of refined sugar before it is too late.

The town clerk's report for 1949 showed 20 old age pensions granted, 31 death certificates and 16 marriage certificates issued.

Council was told by the public school board of the need for immediate planning for the erection of a new six-room school to take care of the growing enrolment. A population survey indicates that the present enrolment of grade pupils will increase from 385 to 500, and in kindergarten from 16 to 77. A six-room school with assembly room, teachers' rooms and other accommodation would cost in the neighborhood of \$180,000.

TWENTY YEARS AGO--"Could we ask our solicitors to come to council next week and explain how the town could expropriate land for industrial purposes?" was a question asked by Coun. Fred Harrison at Monday's council meeting. Mr. Harrison said that last week a man was in town looking for land to build three factories for rental and hadn't been able to locate any.

Patricia Bonnar, age 19, of Brampton, is lucky to have escaped a horrible death early Friday morning when the car she was driving plunged off the north end of Main Street and made a spectacular 125 foot dive into the Wildwood arroyo. The car, a 1958 Edsel, was battered to the extent of an estimated \$1,200, however. Mrs. Bonnar received only two minor cuts to her forehead. Some of the trees down the side of the incline were broken off 12 feet above the ground. The car landed on its wheels on an ice-covered creek 50 feet below the level of the highway.

An age-old cry of taxpayers was echoed when Mr. J. Jeffries contended he was not getting his money's worth for his taxes at a meeting of Esqueness Township Council Monday. He said Esqueness has no fire protection and no schools within walking distance. Mr. Jeffries said he feels his taxes should be reduced.

Georgetown Raider followers may get a sneak preview of things to come in the intermediate "A" play-offs this Friday night. A 194 romp over a shaky Orillia Club Monday night satisfied the minds of that northern club's executives that to finish out the schedule and vie with Milton and Georgetown in the upcoming round robin semi-final would be so much rubbish. The Orillia decision to call it a day solved problems all over the place.

Slashing this year's roads budget to \$105,000 plus a \$20,000 reserve fund for reconstruction of Main Street caused a brisk debate Monday at council. Prior to the debate, a motion was carried that this year's tax rate include a \$20,000 allotment for a \$75,000 improvement job on Main Street.

TEN YEARS AGO--Marijuana, Hashish and LSD were among the drugs confiscated by a police in a raid on a Georgetown house Saturday night. Sixty charges are being laid against 38 people found in the house when nine police officers in two squads broke up a party in the raid which was the result of several weeks of investigation, according to Georgetown Police Chief Harley Lowe. The youngest of the 38 was 15 years old. Three were adults and the rest between the ages of 16 and 21.

There is every possibility that sessions of the provincial judge's court will resume in Georgetown soon after an absence of six or seven years. It is understood that negotiations are almost concluded to have the court convene twice monthly in the banquet hall of the new Masonic Temple on Highway 7.

The 1974 International Plowing Match will be held in Halton County - if the local Plowman's Association can find a farm on which to hold it. Esqueness Reeve George Currie said the search for a site will be difficult. He said no farmers in his neighborhood would be interested, because it runs the farm.

Centennial School will become a middle school in the fall, associate supervisor Ron Campbell told Park Parents and School Association last Wednesday night. The change at Centennial School from a senior public school, with only grades seven and eight to a middle school with grades six, seven and eight is part of a pilot project in the county involving three schools, one in Georgetown, one in Burlington and one in Oakville.

ONE YEAR AGO--Former Halton Regional Chairman Ric Morrow has emerged as a persuasive new mediator in the long-standing dispute between Focal Properties Ltd. and the town of Halton Hills. A luncheon date with Ernie Bodnar, local representative for the development company that wants to build some 1,740 homes south of Georgetown, led to Mr. Morrow's appearance before council Monday night, where he outlined a proposal for a comprehensive feasibility study to be undertaken at Focal's cost.

Halton Regional Police Commission is looking into the possibility of asking the province to either re-open the jail or increase compensation for the work put in by Halton Regional Police officers as prisoner escorts and turnkeys. Police Chief Ken Skerrett noted in a letter to the commission that having three court locations and detention centres in Toronto and Hamilton adds to the confusion and inefficiency of the operation in relation to court procedures and the escorting of prisoners.

Plans for a 102-unit residential subdivision near the intersection of Mountainview Road and River Drive in Georgetown were unveiled before town planning board Tuesday night. The board referred the proposal, as presented by Bob Clipham and Alan Arbuckle on behalf of C and H Investments, Ltd., to the planning department for further study.