

Outdated bill slows contract negotiations

Halton region's 1,200 secondary school teachers are facing their first strike in the region's six-year history this spring unless the current round of negotiations prove fruitful in coming weeks.

Clearly, should the teachers follow through on last week's nearly unanimous rejection of the Halton school board's "final contract offer", students at 16 Halton schools have little hope of seeing an early settlement prevent the apparently imminent strike.

More importantly, the provincial ministry of education's failure thus far to introduce amendments which promise to at least relieve problems associated with teachers' contracts and contract renewals confronts those same students and their counterparts across Ontario with an ominous future of interrupted terms and a disjointed education.

A year after negotiations began here with the objective of ratifying a teacher's contract for the 1979-80 season, they remain stalled somewhere between the six per cent annual pay hike being offered by the board and the 2.4 per cent hike the teachers say it really represents.

Last week, a staid 99.1 per cent of the voting teachers effectively turned their collective back on the six per cent across-the-board offer, indicating that in the two months since the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation took over local negotiations, it, too, has made no real progress.

Today (Wednesday), final hopes for negotiations flicker, but those involved vow that any failure to make "significant" progress

could see permission requested to hold a strike vote early next month.

The teachers, each earning between \$13,300 and \$28,500 a year, have made it clear that issues concerning salary, teacher-pupil ratio in the classrooms and maintenance of teachers' retirement gratuities are important enough that arbitration is, at this point, not a viable alternative for them.

The situation in Halton is typical of the kind of "charade" which contract negotiations become due to outdated and inadequate provincial legislation. Halton board chairman Bill Herd said as much last week and we couldn't agree more.

We join Mr. Herd and others in urging education minister Bette Stephenson to make her long-awaited move to amend Bill 100 in accordance with the stated wishes of several regional school boards. Whether the minister goes out on a limb to back proposals that non-certified teachers should be hired during strikes or else simply takes steps to speed up the contract negotiation process, she must readily admit that the legislation as it holds much room for improvement.

The seemingly interminable studies conducted by factfinders appointed to get things rolling in such cases is a good example of how much time can be spent accomplishing little if anything. Subsequent manoeuvres by both parties constitute a confrontation in no uncertain terms, far-removed from the kind of arbitration process legislators no doubt originally had in mind.



Letter from the Editor

Paul Dorsey

An afterthought

As amply recounted last week, the federal election provided plenty of human drama here in Brampton-Georgetown, where former Liberal MP Ross Milne was placed in the publicly embarrassing, personally humiliating position of accepting a victory he was told he'd won and then having to concede defeat instead.

If Mr. Milne's squeaker defeat by incumbent John McDermid heralds the former's political retirement, it would be a particularly unfortunate end to another promising career in Ottawa.

Imagine the scene at Liberal headquarters that night as Milne, supporters, almost delirious at their apparent success, urged their candidate in the microphone moments after erroneous poll returns advised everyone in the riding that John McDermid had narrowly lost his six-month old job in Parliament.

The news, accompanied oddly enough by the rumor that the incumbent was on his way over to Liberal headquarters, was especially gratifying to Grits who had been told of Mr. McDermid's remarks earlier that evening concerning the quality of the Brampton-Georgetown election campaign.

Already flushed with victory by 10:30 p.m. when it still appeared he had a 300 vote margin over Mr. Milne, Mr. McDermid surprised reporters during an impromptu press conference in his headquarters by describing the campaign

as "the dirtiest" he's ever seen.

Standing nearby, I was frankly amazed that among the first words spoken by the newly-re-elected MP were those attacking his political opponents for what he termed their deliberate and organized program of destroying Tory election signs.

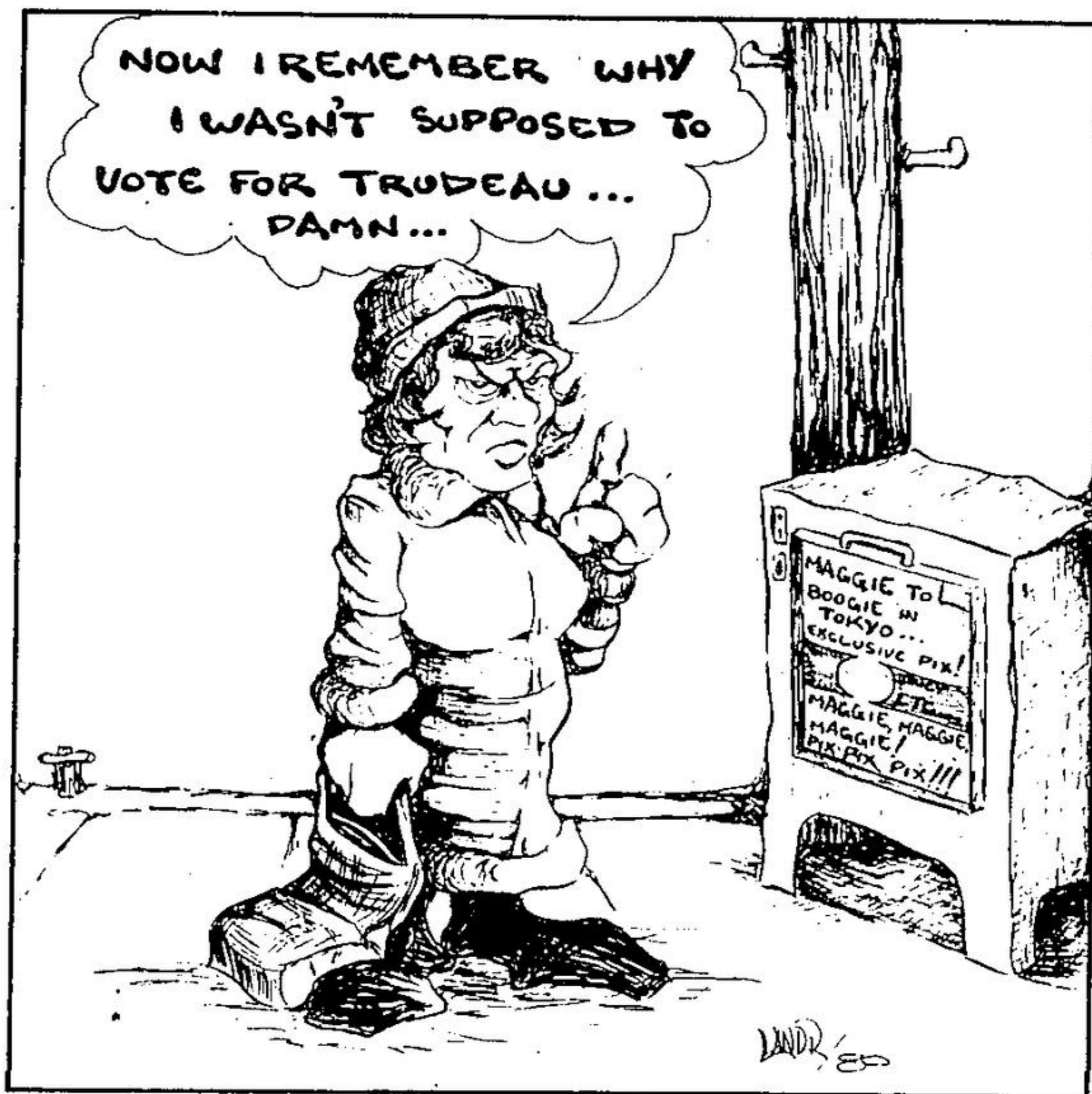
Widespread vandalism as it relates to campaign signs is, of course, a recurring problem for all parties, one which to a great extent can no doubt be blamed on what a Liberal spokesman called "overzealous supporters".

For Mr. McDermid to immediately point a finger at his political opponents, especially at his moment of glory, struck me as an ominous example of narrow-mindedness. Certainly, the repeated destruction of signs is a frustrating and costly affair for any candidate, but without adequate proof of an "organized" assault on those signs (the offered none), the MP was perhaps going a little too far in lambasting his opponents, nameless though they remained.

Cocky and self-confident he appeared to me that night, but John McDermid, one must concede, does deserve more of a chance at representing this riding than he's had thus far. You've got your chance, sir, albeit in the Opposition this time: let us hear from you, particularly your supporters in Georgetown, where the balance of power was largely maintained in this riding.



McDermid's back! MP faces the press



How much is an MP worth? Salary review full of surprises

Ottawa Bureau of The Herald

How much is a member of Parliament worth?

All Hales has been pondering that question for the past six months. Hales is the Commission to Review Salaries of Members of Parliament and Senators and for \$250 a working day has been determining just what an MP and a Senator should be paid.

Hales, appointed commissioner last fall, is working for Parliament under a 1976 amendment to the House of Commons and Senate Act.

The amendment, passed after a long debate both in and out of the Commons on MPs' salaries, calls for a commission to review salaries to be set up following a general election.

Hales' report will be tabled in the Commons 15 days after the next session of Parliament resumes.

"You can't pass the buck to someone else," says Hales of his one-man chore.

He talked to MPs, Commons and Senate Speakers, the three party whips, Senate and Commons clerks and administrators, MPs' wives, the chief electoral officer, two officials of the Canadian Teacher's Federation, presidents of two universities, economists, corporation presidents and business association heads.

"You'd be surprised" at what the MPs said," says Hales. "They're not all in favor of increases. In no way."

Hales says his report is far-reaching and presents a "brand-new concept in the approach to establishing salaries for MPs and Senators... particularly in the area of allowances."

MPs are now paid \$30,600 a year, plus a tax-free allowance ranging from a minimum of \$13,500 to \$17,900.

Senators get \$30,700 a year and a tax-free expense allowance of \$6,600. The extra \$100 for Senators is the

result of a different interpretation of the "automatic" pay increase MPs and Senators receive every year. Parliamentarians get an automatic increase of seven per cent or the annual inflation rate, whichever is lower.

Hales won't say what he recommends before Parliament sees his report, but it is clear the major thrust of his recommendations will be in the area of allowances.

Allowances, says Hales, take in a very broad field, from transportation to and from an MP's riding to telephone allowances.

His concern is with travel allowances. The two Northwest Territories MPs receive the largest expense allowances, of \$17,900. Another 22 MPs from remote ridings receive \$3,100 on top of the basic \$13,500 allowance.

NOT ONLY TRAVEL. Not only travel expenses come out of the allowances but living expenses as well.

"The majority of MPs can commute to their ridings," says Hales. "But those from the far east and the far west, in order to live a normal family life, like to bring their families to Ottawa."

Those who bring their families to Ottawa, says Hales, have no place to take the cost of the move, and of maintaining a residence in the riding and in Ottawa, but from the expense allowance.

"I'm doing everything possible in this report to keep families together," says Hales.

Hales will probably recommend that the number of MPs receiving extra expense allowance be increased.

After consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer, Hales came up with an additional 10 ridings which are either difficult to reach or have difficult travel problems within the riding.

MPs, or their representatives from the 10 ridings were asked to show Hales how they might qualify for extra expense allowance.

"Some of them were very successful," says Hales. "Others didn't qualify, in my opinion, but it was a very interesting, worthwhile exercise."

One B.C. MP, says Hales, lives in a mountainous riding which has an airport which is fogged in most of the time. When the airport in his riding is fogged in, he has to drive to the riding from either Calgary or Vancouver, a distance of 400 miles.

There's an airport at Spokane, Wash., 140 miles from the MP's riding. But his travel allowance won't pay for flights on U.S. airlines.

The MP gets economy air fare once a week for a trip to and from his riding; the car rental for the 400 mile trip comes out of his expense allowance.

Once in his riding, the MP's problems continue. Roads in the riding run north and south, following the valleys. Going from east to west or west to east in the riding can mean travelling the entire north-south distance of the riding before coming to an east-west road.

The mileage costs for those trips come out of the expense allowance, as well.

A Quebec MP, with the Magdalen Islands in his riding, has another type of problem.

"I think there's 14,000 people in the riding," says Hales. "He (the MP) can go by ferry, but it takes a whole day. He has to fly, and it costs him \$340. That \$340 comes out of his expense allowance."

He was the MP for the Guelph, Ontario, riding of Wellington South from 1957 to 1974, winning a seat held by the Liberals for 22 years.

One of his most lasting accomplishments as an MP was establishment of the Parliamentary Intern Program, which gives 10 graduate students from Canadian universities the chance to work for a year with an MP.

While an MP, Hales was chairman of the Common Public Accounts Committee, the committee which keeps an eye on government spending.

Annual rite of student protest shows need to equalize grants



Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau of The Herald

Come springtime the grass here will likely be trampled once again by students demonstrating their displeasure with government spending policies.

It has become an annual ritual to boo colleges and universities minister Bette Stephenson and cheer opposition party spokesmen.

Apparently the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS) and a number of university student councils are gearing up for another run in 1980.

As in prior rallies at Queen's Park, the focus will be on money.

And, like previous rallies, the students will ruin a good case by making wild claims based on sophomoric ideology.

Stephenson has announced a 7.5 per cent tuition fee increase province-wide, with each university having the option of adding another 10 per cent on top if it wants.

FREE SCHOOL. Since operating grants to colleges and universities will be up only 7.2 per cent, two per cent less than the Ontario Council on University Affairs says its members need, it seems likely some extra fee hikes will go through.

OFS and company object, even though

no reason exists for students being exempted from the costs of inflation by keeping tuition level.

For somebody from a lower-income household a bigger tuition bite will hurt, so the government has said it will allocate \$1.3 million in additional student assistance.

If OFS was to contend that amount is too low, and tear up the Queen's Park lawn in protest, they might have a point.

Instead the demonstrators will be here to argue for unrealistic total abolition of tuition, to be followed by "living allowances" for all students from the government.

NO PROOF. OFS theory is that lower-income people don't attend university in the same proportion as the wealthy because lack of money deters their entry.

No proof exists this allegation is true, and common sense indicates that non-financial reasons (such as lack of emphasis on education at home) are much more important deterrents.

But it is true that money is a major concern to many when they consider going to university. That is one reason why we have student grants and loans.

And here's where OFS should be focusing their indignation.

TORIES TOO. Even student Tories — who don't agree with most OFS silliness — believe not enough money is being allocated to student assistance programs.

In a brief to Stephenson last November their organization (Ontario PC Campus Association) advocated abolishing loan ceilings as well as adjusting living allowances for inflation.

She should take their recommenda-

tions to heart.

Students must be responsible for part of the costs of their education through tuition, but at the same time money must be available for poorer students to borrow if they need it.

No society can (or should) guarantee equality of results, but equality of opportunity there must be. It is too bad OFS and friends won't stick to fighting for that.

Halton region, Halton Hills and the Interested Citizens Group (ICG) are now all awaiting the outcome of a forthcoming summit meeting with Premier Bill Davis before committing themselves to specific action in their opposition to the Bruce to Milton hydro transmission corridor.

Following a brief closed-door session last Wednesday, Halton regional council agreed to await further direction from Halton Hills council in the matter before voting to either abandon or continue its own involvement in the dispute.

Management personnel at Acton Superior Glove Works Limited have been charged under the Labour Relations Act for firing employees because they joined a union. The Canadian Union of Brewery, Flour, Cereal, Soft Drink and Distillery Workers filed charges Feb. 19 with the Ontario Labour Relations Board against company general manager Frank Geng and supervisor Vi Weaver for attempting to "chill the applicants organizing campaign" discharging 12 employees "because they were members of a trade union."

Halton regional councillors have broken with established policy, voting themselves a 5.2 per cent pay hike although they are entitled to almost nine per cent. Bowing to fiscal restraints, council voted last Wednesday to increase annual pay stipends for all 24 members by \$493.

Halton's History

From our files

THIRTY YEARS AGO—This week's summary shows the coldest and stormiest of the winter. The average minimum of zero is way below the normal February average.

Harry Lawson, 18-year-old Acton southpaw, left on Monday for a Florida training camp, where he will try out for a major-league team.

From The Herald's advertisements: A grand sale at Brill's of Georgetown, Ladies shoes, 49 cents to \$2.99. Suits, \$18.95 and up. Ladies' tailored blouses, regularly \$3.95, now \$2.95. Ladies' housedresses, \$1.69 and up.

There is a real abundance of wild life in the township of Esquesing. There were 49 foxes shot in the township in one month. The \$5 county bounty is helping to keep down the nuisance caused by these pests, which do much damage to poultry flocks.

TWENTY YEARS AGO—The Lever subdivision report was unveiled Monday when town auditor H.A. Lever discussed the report at council meeting. The report, ordered last fall to "report on costs of all released subdivisions and probable costs of future ones", names education as the main reason for a 26 mill rate rise from 1945 to 1959, plus increased street maintenance, debenture charges, and "failure to levy an adequate tax rate in preceding years."

The present enrollment of 275 pupils of Holy Cross School is expected to increase in the next year, creating the need for two more classrooms, it was learned at the Separate School Board meeting last Wednesday. An auditorium and a kitchen will be included, with the intention of making the school the parish centre.

Edith Mary, Lady Windle, 90, widow of Sir Bertram Windle, died Monday at her home, 39 Edith Street. Sir Bertram, an authority on anatomy and anthropology, was associated with universities in Britain and Ireland, and later became professor of anthropology at St. Michael's College, Toronto. He was knighted for his scientific work.

Canadian Short-horns were in the limelight at the newly established All Bull Sale at Winchester, Virginia. There were 125 bulls in the sale from eight states and the province of Ontario. The top six selling bulls all came from Ontario. S.G. Bennett, Georgetown had the top seller, with a son of his CNE champion Scotsdale Lucifer. The price was \$1,600.

A theft perpetrated at the IGA Foodliner last Wednesday night netted the thief 160 pounds of poultry, dressed and iced, and conveniently parcelled in four bushel baskets. Constables Evan Rollins and Ron Rankine apprehended the chicken lover in Norval the next morning before he had an opportunity to exercise his appetite on the birds.

TEN YEARS AGO—Justice D.A. Richardson directed a supreme court jury to bring back a verdict of not guilty by reason of insanity in the trial last week of a Toronto man charged with attempting to murder James Blair in his Water Street apartment October 19. He was also charged with wounding with intent, and assault causing bodily harm. The accused was sent to Penetanguishene Hospital for the criminally insane.

Esqueping council yielded to an urgent plea from their planning board Monday night and decided to hire a planning consultant at an estimated cost between \$12,000 and \$15,000. The planning board pointed out the greatly increased activity in the township and urged a planning consultant be hired to help draw up an official plan to regulate such activities. They admitted they need the support help of municipal engineers, and planning consultants to support their decisions.

A plan by which a joint committee of Halton public and separate school trustees could decide types of sharing between the two systems would be welcomed by the county separate school board, chairman Peter Watters said last week. He was commenting on the proposals contained in a report by the Ontario Separate School Trustees Association.

The controversial question of erecting a waste disposal plant on a 98-acre site south of 22 Sideroad and Highway 25 is now in the hands of Esqueping planning board. Monday night council decided to turn the matter over to them for recommendation, after Kenneth Langdon, appearing on behalf of the 25 area residents present at the meeting, suggested that course of action. The five ratepayers who made the trip to Sarnia last week to inspect a similar plant returned disillusioned and unanimously opposed.

ONE YEAR AGO—The Halton board of education has been told by the ministry of education that it will not approve inclusion of a compulsory course in parenting in the curriculum for secondary school students, but that it could be implemented in grades 7 and 8.

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