

Are we waiting in vain for new candidates?

Nomination Day is 12 days away, the election itself only 27 days away and we have a disturbing dearth of council and school board candidates to choose from; we newsmonsters can write about current flurries of activity on the Board of Education scene, but voters in general will suffer greatly for lack of candidates.

At presstime, ten of town council's 12 incumbent members had stated they'll seek re-election Nov. 10; two remain undecided, but all four regional councillors are among those ready to run again.

Only one candidate has appeared outside council: Speyside's Pam Sheldon will challenge incumbents George Malby and Pat Patterson in Ward 2; coincidentally or not they're the only incumbents undecided about retaining their council seats.

For membership on the school board, one incumbent is out of the running altogether and the other has switched wards. A two-way race for the board seat in Acton is at this point the only definite battle set for Nov. 10. Newcomer Betty Walker is thus far unopposed in Ward 2.

Less than a month shy of election day, these facts are appalling. It is not a matter of incumbents doing a "good job" and maintaining their constituents' support; it is a question of democracy.

Loss of interest in a political administration at such a grass-roots level foretells of much worse developments to come. Such seemingly innocent shortcomings on a community's part can only harm the democratic system, and with it that community's welfare, in the long run.

Let us consider some reasons why an incumbent might be acclaimed in a municipal election:

1) He is indeed doing a "good job", or at least one adequate enough to meet the basic needs of his or her ward. This inherently suggests the ward is getting its fair share of local municipal services: roads are maintained and tidy, snow is cleared, garbage collected on time, vandalized property replaced, private properties are safeguarded against poorly-planned developments, sewer services are provided and maintained and civic rights, along with civil rights, are protected from abuse.

2) Potential candidates are simply scarce, their jobs and private lives consuming most of their time.

3) Would-be candidates were either scared off by the last election or remain too disillusioned about the acknowledged political game-playing that sometimes prevents council from progressing steadily.

4) Voters who might otherwise consider running are waiting for others to declare their candidacy, fully expecting a last-minute battle before election day and all the while abhorring the concept of acclamation themselves.

Do any of these reasons strike a responsive chord in you? Are you, like many others, simply intimidated by incumbents who are increasingly astute in political matters and well-practised at brandishing the political tools of rhetoric and soapbox panache?

If so, we suggest you hear the truth from the horses' mouths, as it were.

Satisfied with your councillor or trustee? Give him a call and tell him so, but at least make some suggestions for any changes you'd like to see; observe his response and responsiveness.

Too busy with home or work? Phone Ward 1's Ed Wood, who runs a cleaning business and serves as regional councillor; or Terry Grubbe, who keeps involved with family and a host of social services; or George Malby in Ward 2, Ward 3's John McDonald, Ward 4's Harry Levy and Mike Armstrong, all of whom have day jobs and other interests.

Wary of the political ploys? Ask Marilyn Serjeantson or John McDonald, both of whom entered the fray with precious little experience but specific issues in mind and plenty of determination; no great speechmakers both have nevertheless accomplished much in their terms - Marilyn since 1976 and John since '78; and both are seeking re-election; that must mean something.

Waiting for the show to start without you? Don't wait too long - you have only five more issues of The Herald in which to advertise your virtues before the election arrives.

But why would any incumbent reassure you about the job and thus encourage possible challengers? We can't say they will, but surely they must, for the democratic system that elected them rests upon freedom of choice and electoral competition. They realize that better than most.



Federal government leaks slow to an effective trickle



Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau of The Herald

While we were all busy watching the federal-provincial constitutional conference, and thinking about the implications of that leaked federal document on the subject, there was another monumental leak from the top echelons of government.

It wasn't as topical as that massive 64-page document prepared by the Privy Council Office for Prime Minister Trudeau and which provided a blow-by-blow prescription for patriating the constitution should the federal-provincial talks break down. None-the-less, the second leaked document deserves some passing attention, since it's a 71-page outline of the government's proposed industrial policy.

I don't propose to go into the heart of the subject - frankly, I have a deuce of a time comprehending industrial policies - but the fact that we have experienced a second major leak within one-week period is worthy of

some reflection. It makes me feel like an aging sportsman, looking back on the heyday of the secret document trying to remember what it was like when collecting leaks was a classic journalistic competition. Ah, those were great days.

And it's marvellous to think we might have a revival of those heady times.

CYCLE ENDS

The last great cycle of the leaks came to an abrupt end in 1968 when Pierre Trudeau assumed office and, at his very first news conference, announced that henceforth there would be no more government leaks. If any minister so much as hinted at a secret document, he said, his career would come to an abrupt end. "He won't be around very long at all," said the shining new prime minister.

And all the leaks were immediately patched. Not a drip of information would come from behind those felt-covered government doors. Until, last week that is. And while two major leaks within a week is an encouraging omen, it's really something short of the torments we once knew.

The leaks that occurred in the last stages of the Diefenbaker government were undoubtedly the most sensational. They always seemed to involve high-level policies, such as defence or economics. And the sources were always exotic, such as foreign ambassadors. Dief himself managed to leak one momentous economic document that greatly embarrassed the just-defeated Liberals.

And who will ever forget that reported scrap of paper on which President Kennedy was alleged to have scribbled something about Diefenbaker being a "S.O.B.?" That was a dandy leak in its day.

DAILY LEAKS

But it was under the Pearson regime that we actually achieved government-by-leak. Those were the never-to-be-forgotten days when you phoned cabinet ministers to ask whether there were "any good leaks today?" Reporters would button-hole ministers leaving cabinet meetings and, more often than not, get a fairly complete rundown of what went on in that secret conclave. By the time Lester Pearson left the room, he was being asked embarrassing questions about the rationale that went into decisions that were supposed to be top secret.

Pearson's exasperation reached a peak one day when, as he left a cabinet meeting, he was asked knowledgeable questions about a secret memo he had just drafted asking ministers to guard against leaks. A reporter had a copy of the still-fresh memo as he questioned the prime minister.

It may be purely coincidental, but the leaks which dampened both the Diefenbaker and Pearson governments began just as their regimes were running into severe turbulence and aspiring successors were beginning to inch out of the woodwork.

Admittedly, two leaks don't make a deluge, but it makes you wonder, doesn't it?

Compassion, common sense mingle in health policies



Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau of The Herald

Where governments are responsible for the financing of medical care, the position of health minister is equivalent to being a miner on the slopes of Mount St. Helens.

No matter what you do, eventually the job will explode in your face.

Health minister Dennis Timbrell learned that hard lesson again last week, leading to what he called the most painful moment of his political career.

The wife of a heart attack victim who died at home after being refused admission to a hospital emergency ward blamed Timbrell's financial restraint policies.

The doctor in charge said he'd warned a year ago that someone would die unless more money was forthcoming for hospital beds and nursing staff at the hospital, Humber Memorial in west-end Toronto.

Then a normally closed meeting of the medical advisory committee at Humber was opened to the press to condemn so-called "reduced financing" by the government.

CAN'T WIN

The clear implication left by media stories was that Timbrell's tight-fistedness on money was and would be indirectly responsible for deaths that

could otherwise be prevented.

For a politician, it's a classic no-win situation.

Timbrell can reject the allegation, as he did, and note that he does not believe any doctor would turn away someone in danger of their life.

But the impression lingers that somehow lack of cash from the ministry was a limiting factor on the quality of health care available at Humber. And people understandably find that argument hard to accept.

Yet it is going to become more and more prevalent as time passes.

Every government-financed health care scheme in the world has found demands for services invariably outstripping society's ability to pay for them.

NOT TRUE

Talk about "reduced financing" of health care in Ontario is bunk, as one look at the budget figures prove: in 1978 \$4 billion, in 1979 \$4.3 billion, this year \$4.8 billion.

Hospitals alone drew \$2.2 billion in 1979, \$2.3 billion the next year, and will cost \$2.5 billion this year. Humber figures for those years are \$14.3 million, \$15.3 million, and \$16.5 million respectively.

What Timbrell's critics are really saying is that more of society's resources should be allocated to health care (hospitals in particular in this case).

What those critics never do explain, of course, is what other segment of society should receive less to make up the difference.

HOW MUCH?

The essential question that Timbrell (and treasurer Frank Miller, or anyone divvying up tax revenue) has to decide in terms of health care is: how much is a human life worth? A difficult enough problem in real

terms, politically it is near impossible to answer when someone loses a loved one.

If every hospital in the province had more beds, more staff, a CAT scanner, and so on, lives undoubtedly would be saved. But how many? At what price? Is spending \$10 million to save each additional life reasonable? Is \$10,000?

On making that decision we have no choice but to rely on a combination of compassion mixed with common sense in any health minister, and Timbrell appears relatively good at this task.

The bottom line is that with an aging population, new medical skills and drugs, and "free" access to medical care the costs are going to rise faster than the growth in real wealth required to finance it all.

Hard decisions must be made.

Halton's History

From our files

THIRTY YEARS AGO—Coun. Thomas L. Lyons kept a fire in check at his home on the corner of Edith and Church Streets while waiting for the fire department to arrive. Although the house was not seriously damaged in the blaze, children playing in a nearby shed are believed to have started a bonfire which threatened the house.

Town council voted themselves an additional two-cent an hour increase. Eighty-five Jerseys, 92 Guernseys and 100 Holsteins competed in the Milton Fall Fair's cattle shows held Saturday, October 1.

Members of the Lorne Scots regiment visited Camp Borden recently to attend a weekend course conducted by the Royal Canadian School of Infantry. Soldiers learned to fire the most modern weapons, including flame throwers.

TWENTY YEARS AGO—Georgetown's population has passed the 10,000 mark with a corresponding increase in municipal assessment. Assessment for 1960 is \$13,994,300, an increase over the previous year of \$1,115,050. The population of the town in 1959 was 9,353 people and rose to 10,034 in 1960—a seven per cent increase.

Oxy-acetylene welding was added to the curriculum at Georgetown High School recently. A proposal to introduce the welding course was made by shop teacher Oscar Robb and supported by members of the high school board at their regular meeting. The high school will purchase the necessary equipment recommended by Mr. Robb.

The future of the Acton Arena remains in doubt this year, but it looks like the doors will be locked leaving all hockey activities out in the cold. A reader writes that Georgetown's councillors have performed well: "...Council, by steadfastly refusing the efforts of various entrepreneurs to enrich themselves at the expense of taxpayers in Georgetown, have laid the foundations for "reasonable taxes" in the town."

TEN YEARS AGO—Mr. Ed Starr, superintendent of fairs for Ontario will officially open the Georgetown Fall Fair Saturday. The opening parade will be led by the Georgetown Majorettes and celebrities will include Halton County Dairy princess Susan Dixon and Halton Queen of the furrow, Mary Pickett. Georgetown's new ambulance will also be on display.

Widening plans for Guelph Street between the Main Street corner and the maple Avenue intersection are on the drawing board. An overall plan for Guelph Street revision will take three years, consultants Damas and Smith report.

Drag racing at the Golden Horseshoe Dragway in Esquesing will have to end by 10:30 on week nights, council has decided. A new bylaw lopping off one hour of the sport will allow people in the neighborhood to get to sleep earlier if they have to get up for work the next morning. The bylaw also forbids camping and house trailers on the dragway property.

The Georgetown senior Rebels football squad christened a new field with a solid 14-1 victory over the visiting Milton Mustangs. A strong defence, good kicking and strong quarterbacking were attributed to the Rebels' win.

ONE YEAR AGO—The Interested Citizens Group (ICG) will continue to fight a hydro corridor through Halton Hills despite an Ontario Supreme Court decision to have an Ontario Municipal Board ruling on the corridor question.

A Halton regional police officer, Constable Joe Prasad, 36, has been charged with common assault following an incident in Acton. The complaint was laid against the officer after he stopped a car for a routine check. The officer charges that the driver of the car subjected him to a number of racial slurs. Constable Prasad is from British Guyana.

Spurred by a large lobby of 53 Sixth Line residents, town council has withdrawn its approval of mining operations at six wayside gravel pits. Meanwhile the ministry of transportation and communications has indicated it is willing to provide a full-time supervisor to insure that gravel-laden trucks conform to the highway code and stop operating at illegal hours.

Police protection in Acton was the biggest issue raised at the sparsely attended Meet The Candidates Night in Acton. But both Terry Grubbe and Dave Whiting agree that the regional police are doing a better job in town than they are given credit for. The candidates are concerned about the lack of a strong Acton voice on council and feel it was necessary to improve communications between the town administration and the people.



Letter from the Editor

Paul Dorsey

"Song for Terry", the poem that grew up to be a 45-rpm record in the space of a week, isn't quite the dramatic, moving classic I'd hoped it would be, but given the circumstances of its recording and the varied backgrounds of its creators, the single is a fine effort worthy of special note in history's final report on Terry Fox's Marathon of Hope.

For \$2 plus 14 cents tax, you get a pleasant melody by Victor Dellamora and the sometimes stirring lyrics provided by Georgetown's Bette Stokes, all brought to life by Dana Michaels, who herself grew up in Georgetown before moving onto bigger and better things as a nightclub singer.

The poem composed by Mrs. Stokes following Terry's withdrawal from the Marathon in Thunder Bay had already turned up on my desk and been sent through the typesetting machines ready for framing somewhere on that week's editorial page when news came of the sudden attention it had received. The next thing we knew, its author was in a Brampton recording studio - Evolution 2000 on Rutherford Road - collaborating on "Song for Terry" with area musicians.

With Victor on keyboards, his brother David Dellamora on bass, Paul Paolini on drums and Dana singing, the group Vision made sure that "Song" would become an audio as well as a literary sensation.

Terry was in a Vancouver hospital bed, and interest in new and unique fund-raising projects was keen. The media, and radio stations in particular, have been publicizing "Song for Terry" as a lasting tribute to the Marathon and a classy way to raise more funds for cancer research.

The Cancer Society gets it all, less the single's \$1,500 production cost. Demand for copies was immediate and overwhelming; some 300 pressings vanished during the first weekend and orders poured in from Fox fans who'd heard the tune on CKMW, CFRB, CHFI, CKEY, CFTR, CKFM and other stations.

Copies are on sale at various Halton Hills locations; I got mine at the Acton Fall Fair, but there're more at Ellis Real Estate, Kenner's Dairy Bar and Country Fair in Hornby.

It's no earth-shaker of a pop single, as far as I'm concerned, but "Song for Terry", "fasting tribute" that it is, warrants anyone's \$2.14 for determination alone recognizable within each of

components; these good people - a poet, a singer, a songwriter - may not yet be star material, but their hearts have gone into every word and note.

the HERALD

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