

Mixed feelings over ex-chairman's region analysis

There's plenty of good sense in this week's evaluation of regional government by Georgetown's Ric Morrow - himself a former chairman of regional council. But if council members display the wariness about his ideas that Mr. Morrow anticipates, we'll have to go along with them.

Elaborating extensively on a favorite topic, Mr. Morrow told the Guelph Daily Mercury that regional government in Halton will never be successful until its taxpayers, and its municipal politicians, accept its necessity and understand its function.

Had the 1977-78 regional council which Mr. Morrow chaired not been anchored by parochial, region-shy members, he said, Halton taxpayers would not have faced a \$600,000 budget deficit they're still struggling to overcome. Judging from the former chairman's further comments, he thinks the same shortsightedness has hampered the regional councils since.

Overt opposition to the concept of regional government - a platform which got several regional representatives elected - prompted these councils to limit spending on consultant's studies which may have disclosed staffing problems early on, eased the workload and headed off financial catastrophe, he contends. Instead, the problems lingered too long and several departments heads, along with the taxpayers, are paying the price.

Only now are outside consultants assessing the problems and recommending solutions, but even they aren't enough for Mr. Morrow.

Revamping the chief administrator's department is just a drop in the bucket as far as the former chairman is concerned. He suggests restructuring council so that voters elect about a dozen council members to represent them at the regional level only. The mayors and councillors of the four area municipalities would stick to themselves on local council.

While the latter idea appeals to us somewhat, the former does not.

Reducing regional council's size and limiting membership to specifically-

electd representatives is most appealing at a superficial level: council could meet in Oakville during the evenings, making it immediately more accessible to the public; the smaller size would increase its effectiveness while decreasing dissension; the sometimes necessary parochialism demonstrated by the four mayors at the regional level would be mollified by channelling their input through their town's regional reps.

Clearly the reason why mayors attend regional council is to afford direct communication between the two levels of municipal government; Mr. Morrow argues that the Regional Municipality of Halton Act is clear in differentiating between local and regional responsibilities, so there should be no communication gap. That contention leaves us wondering, given the communication gap widening between the two levels thus far.

Of Mr. Morrow's suggestion that the region's internal opponents are directly to blame for the current financial woes, we are less convinced. There is much to be said for a positive outlook in the face of a gloomy forecast, but we believe regional council in the past three terms has based its spending restraint more on genuine concern for ratepayers across the region than on disdain over the municipal responsibilities "usurped" by regional government.

We bow to Mr. Morrow's expertise in municipal politics and certainly couldn't challenge his insight into the workings of the 1977-78 council, but we fail to see the region's shortcomings as products of internal sabotage or even parochial reluctance on the part of anti-region councillors.

One comment we can fully endorse, however, is his acknowledgement that the provincial government probably did far too little to explain the form of government they were introducing to the citizens it would affect. To this day, voters remain unconvinced of its positive value. What were once growing pains are now open wounds, and Halton's taxpayers will be even harder to convince when the next municipal election rolls around.



One-time separatist radical wary over PQ's re-election



Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau of The Herald

Going back to that Quebec provincial election campaign with its wholesale promises, there is one other astonishing comparison with 1976 that should not be overlooked. It's this: There is a widespread belief that the re-election of a Parti Quebecois government may well kill the separatist movement in Quebec.

You have to think about that one for a few minutes, don't you? Who could ever associate the government of Rene Levesque with the strangulation of the separatist cause?

But there are a good many frustrated separatists who feel this way. And it is obviously one of the factors to consider in looking at those public opinion polls, the latest of which indicate that Claude Ryan and his Liberals are trailing the PQ. There is probably a large block of angry and confused voters who faithfully cling to their belief in Quebec independence but have no idea how to vote in the April 13 election. There could be massive shifts in the final days of the campaign as the dyed-in-the-wool

separatists - they comprise perhaps 20 per cent of the voters - make their decision. They could very well end up voting for the Liberals.

DIFFICULT CHOICE

The separatists find themselves in an odd situation. Their party is the Parti Quebecois. The PQ, formed through a shaky alliance of various independence movements, was brought into being for the express purpose of taking the province out of Confederation. But in order to get elected, which, everyone agreed, was the essential first step, the question of independence was pushed aside. Campaigning on the issue of "good government" in 1976, Levesque, promised voters there would be no moves toward independence without a referendum.

The referendum held last year and 60 per cent of Quebecers rejected the Parti Quebecois request for a mandate to negotiate sovereignty-association. And with this resounding defeat, the independence movement lost all of its momentum. Levesque and his ministers know that if they went into an election campaign still preaching the gospel of independence, they would be whopped.

So they have promised not to raise the issue if they are re-elected. There will be no further referendums, there will be no efforts to loosen ties with Canada and the PQ will become a good federalist party, working only for the best interests of Quebecers within Confederation. That's a commitment.

And with Levesque consistently more popular than Claude Ryan, he might well win. What the people of Quebec must decide is which federalist

party and premier they prefer.

DEATH BLOW

But what is the poor separatist supposed to do? Since Levesque is one of them at heart, it could be argued that all separatist sympathizers should rally around him. But if the PQ is elected, it could also be argued, it is so firmly committed to federalism, and the non-discussion of separatism, that the movement would have absolutely no focal point.

However, if the Liberals were elected and the PQ reduced to opposition, then it would not have to live with its promises. Without the responsibilities of office, the PQ could spend four years regrouping as a separatist party, winning back those supporters who were annoyed at the PQ's soft-sell approach with sovereignty-association and who now are engaged by its verbal gymnastics on federalism.

No one is more concerned than Pierre Bourquail, the one-time separatist radical who now has become a sort of elder statesman within the movement.

"I am still tied to the PQ party," he says, "but I just cannot vote for a federalist party." He says the Levesque party has "betrayed" the separatist movement and if it is re-elected, it will be the death blow to the independence movement. What he is saying is that independence movement can only be saved by the defeat of the PQ.

This is the way he put it: "It's not absolutely true that a losing party rejuvenates itself. But it is absolutely true that a winning party never rejuvenates itself."

He plans to spoil his ballot.

Too many negative policies may have collapsed NDP bid



Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau of The Herald

The Progressive Conservatives have reclaimed their majority in the Ontario legislature, but the real story of the 1981 provincial election is the collapse of the NDP and the revival of the Liberals.

Across Ontario the Tories took 45 per cent of the vote, the Liberals 34 per cent, and the NDP only 21 per cent. That's a leap of five per cent over the 1977 results by the Tories, a gain of two per cent by the Liberals, and a decline of seven per cent by the NDP.

Opinion polls during the election campaign suggested the NDP were in trouble, but the extent of the party's fall from favor with the public must have surprised almost everyone.

Nowhere, in any region did the NDP vote hold.

And, interestingly, Liberals as well as Conservatives benefitted from the defections by NDP supporters, although the Tories dragged in two votes for each one the Grits acquired. The question to be answered is why the shift.

SIMPLISTIC ANSWER

The short, simplistic answer is to say the NDP lost the leadership battle, Michael Cassidy lacking the appeal of Premier William Davis with the Ontario electorate.

But that would be superficial. NDP

voters in general do not cast their ballots for personalities. They vote the party, not the leader.

It is interesting to note too that the Liberals, whose leader Stuart Smith probably received more negative publicity on a personal level than Davis and Cassidy combined, actually improved their position.

One suspects that the heart of the NDP failure lay with an image of the party that had little or nothing to do with the leader - simply that it is perceived to be anti-development and anti-growth.

It is true NDP supporters claim such a view of their party is unfair. New Democrats don't oppose development, they say, they just want to channel it properly.

NO LUCK

But on every issue, from the development of nuclear power, to aid to industry or the encouragement of growth, the NDP consistently take a negative stand.

It is illuminating that the NDP 'nument in Brantford, where Massey-Ferguson is deeply troubled, was easily beaten.

The NDP made its greatest gains in the 1960s, and held through the 1970s, on what might be called the social issues, such as medicare and rent control.

But the prime political issue today is not how to redistribute the wealth, as the NDP continue to claim, but the creation of new wealth simply to keep the current standard of living Ontarians enjoy.

GOOD POINT

Obviously the Conservatives managed to put that point across to the public, and benefitted with a majority as a result. Davis, who ran a whirlwind campaign, can probably claim the lion's share of the credit.

But what is fascinating is the small

size of the Tory majority, and the Liberal rebound to a position in popular esteem unmatched for 20 years.

Many people must have agreed with the Liberal theme that the Ontario economy is in trouble, and that the Davis Tories are unlikely to provide the vehicles needed for rescue purposes.

If one looks solely at industrial ridings the extent of NDP failure becomes even more clear, the Tories gaining four and the Liberals one at NDP expense.

For New Democrats any soul-searching in coming days should not focus on leadership, but on policy.

Halton's History

From our files

THIRTY YEARS AGO-A new branch of the Women's Institute was formed in the district lying immediately north of Georgetown. The suggested name for the branch was Silverwood, as the territory extends from Silver Creek to Wildwood.

Esqueing Young Liberals Club was formed last week, with an executive headed by Donald Milton as president, Ward Brownridge, 1st vice president, and Ted Leslie, second vice president.

Four Norval hockey teams won the championship in their own group at the GRC hockey playoffs last week. Congratulations to coach Eddie McLean.

The Boy Scout Troop attended the Scout Cyclorama which was held in Toronto Thursday. The event showed numerous scouts working on badges, and demonstrating scouting activity at the Coliseum.

Chiff Adams and his Tour for Talent show entertained a large audience in the Old Town Hall Friday, raising \$30 for the GRC funds.

TWENTY YEARS AGO-Georgetown tax rate for 1961 will be 67 mills for residential ratepayers and 71 mills for industrial and commercial establishments. The tax rise in dollars is \$2 per \$1,000 of assessment.

High school students in Georgetown and across the province will shortly be taking scholastic aptitude tests. The test is similar to an IQ test and will be required to enter universities, teachers' colleges, and technical institutes.

Operation TOCSIN 1961 will be an exercise to practise the emergency measures necessary for national survival in the event of a nuclear attack. The program begins in Brampton in May and will have the Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance, Canadian Legion and members of local church and service groups participating.

As soon as weather conditions permit, work will continue on the construction of an eighteen-hole golf course at Hilltop Lodge in Erin. Nine holes are expected to be finished by mid-summer.

W.G. Armstrong has been engaged by the government as designer for the proposed new federal building. The building will be located on the west side of Maple Avenue and will house a new customs office.

TEN YEARS AGO-Taxi drivers in town will no longer have to wear caps or hats, but will have to post a card in a prominent place in the cab, bearing their photograph and clearly printed name and license number. The drivers have complained about wearing the caps, saying they suffer from headaches.

Council decided unanimously to increase the price of town-owned industrial land from \$1,000 to \$5,000 an acre.

Dwayne Hay of Georgetown was one of two Sheridan College students named to share the Athlete of the Year award presented in the Pine Room of the Oakville Arena last week.

Thirty-five Georgetown high school students joined others from Milton and Acton for an 18-day Mediterranean tour which ended with a flight home from Rome this week.

The 36-unit townhouse condominium development on Mountainview Road, between Sargent Road and Campbell Gate, cleared another hurdle Thursday night when council in committee approved minor changes and said they will negotiate on selling a 30-foot laneway to the builder, Golden Gate Construction. The changes reduced the number of units from 38 to 36, giving owners a backyard.

ONE YEAR AGO-Town work crews will continue to pick up household garbage in Acton and Georgetown, although the ongoing strike by their Halton region counterparts leaves officials unsure what to do with the waste after collection. The striking public works employees normally operate the Oakville landfill site where Halton Hills garbage is dumped.

The Georgetown Kinsmen Club inaugurated its K-40 Club with a flourish of the new club's banner by president Bern Middleton. The K-40 Club is for Kinsmen past the age of 40 who are no longer eligible to be members of the Kinsmen Club.

A \$1,000 cheque was donated to the North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded by Norm Ward of the Royal Canadian Legion's Branch 120 for a heat sealing machine worth \$5,000. The remaining \$4,000 will be provided by the provincial government in the form of a special capital grant. The grants are made available to organizations provided they can raise 20 per cent of the project's cost.

Halton regional council will be laying its credibility on the line this afternoon when it votes on a public works committee recommendation that will, if passed, add between \$2.50 and \$2.75 to the average 1979 tax bill. The tax increase is to be used to cover an unexpected deficit of almost \$400,000 in the 1979 sewer budget.

Glenn Williams resident Grace House says the flooding in the Glen could have been prevented by blasting the river channel, but Credit Valley Conservation Authority general manager Glenn Schnarr says that only modifications to the paper mill dam and dredging of the river channel will make any difference. Mrs. House, whose family is still cleaning up after the flooding two weeks ago, said Monday the authority could have prevented the flooding "by blasting on Tuesday instead of on Saturday morning."



Letter from the Editor

Paul Dorsey

Campaign 'steams' ahead

I've probably said the same thing more than once before, but it was Terry Fox who finally enlightened me as to the nature of fund-raising campaigns for charitable organizations. I was still getting used to the news media's association with these campaigns when the Marathon of Hope hero traversed Halton Hills last summer.

Obviously, Terry's unprecedented effort gave the fight against cancer a unique focal point which stripped away all the corporate trappings of the major charities. A believable hero in the true sense of the word fighting a recognizable handicap by grabbing our attention with his cross-country run. Suddenly, the campaigns made perfect altruistic sense and the phrase "Cancer can be beaten" became more than just a fund-raising slogan.

Since Terry's visit, I've looked on the Heart Fund, the Red Cross, the March of Dimes, the cystic fibrosis battle and other such campaigns with far less cynicism than before. Last Wednesday morning, when the local cancer society unit kicked off its 1981 campaign with a Daffodil Day breakfast organized by local insurance agent Paul Armstrong, my optimism could only increase.



WHELDON "STEAMER" EMMERSON

It's an odd predicament the cancer unit finds itself in this month: despite a Pacific Coliseum visit with Wayne Gretzky on the weekend, Terry is virtually a prisoner of his recurring disease, his hopes of returning to Thunder Bay and continuing the Marathon almost certainly dashed. The first

question that comes to mind is, can cancer really be beaten?

With this doubt nagging vaguely in the back of our minds, we watch the cancer unit mount an annual campaign without the winning help of Terry Fox. In fact, as I found out last week, Terry's spirit remains a major factor in obtaining financial support.

Some 200 or so business, industry, service club and social club reps gathered at North Halton Golf and Country Club for the Daffodil Day breakfast and somehow the sense of hope and optimism which Terry brought to town eight months ago vibrated through the room like a subtle current of unanimity.

Several speakers referred directly to Terry, but an indirect reference by Claudette Smith, who ran the 1980 campaign, brought it all home again for every single listener there. The same cruel irony which greeted Georgetown's own Bette Stokes - author of "Song for Terry" - last fall had befallen Claudette: a member of her own family recently contracted the disease.

The fierce reality of the campaign - the disease itself and the vigorous human spirit needed to combat it - was graciously offset by plenty of whimsical entertainment. This year's campaign chairman, Wheldon "Steamer" Emerson, demonstrated his considerable skill as an after-dinner speaker with a battery of jokes, introductions and greetings worthy of Don Rickles-cum-Rodney Dangerfield.

Steamer kept things rolling at a grand pace all by himself, but he also brought along a valuable ally, Vince Mumford. With the mayor's mother-in-law, Iva Davidson, at the piano, the CFRB radio personality shared his own repertoire of jokes and led a sing-along or two. It was a wee bit early on a Wednesday morning for me, but plenty of those on hand enjoyed "Sunny Side of the Street" and other moulty but goldie oldies.

The Herald is very grateful to Mrs. Smith and the Canadian Cancer Society for a special Terry Fox certificate of appreciation we've received. The Georgetown Independent also received one, as did McDonald's Restaurant's local franchisee (Jo Lister's reward for chasing the elusive Marathon entourage around town on the old fire truck) and the Georgetown Motor Inn, which Terry stayed in and later commended thankfully. Verbally and non-verbally, those present thanked the cancer unit and pledged continued support to campaigns that won't enjoy Terry's physical involvement, but can't fail to benefit from the good spirit he generously spread around last year.

POET'S CORNER

This is the day

Something creative of the new
Brings interest to me and you
Today is the day I lived to see
I am much wiser, that I be
This is the day we live to reap
Let the bygone rest and sleep
If today could only stay
But it will quickly slip away
Happy days will come again
So will sunshine and the rain
We can beat life's great strain
Must be strong to try to gain
Opportunity could be here
To you they are not so clear

When you seek and you find
All past years you were blind
Do not bungle your life away
Time is precious make it stay
Build your castles with much care
You can place them anywhere
There's a purpose you must find
For those dreams within your mind
Every day must be a thrill
If you last so it will
The simple things in life to me
Peace and love with equality.

-By Albert Brooks
RR2 Acton.