

Council was right on Croatian plan

Town council's decision more than a year ago to block elaborate plans for a Croatian-Canadian social and recreational complex seems to have been justified in recent weeks by police action against some individuals at the Croatian centre near Norval and the Yugoslavian-Canadian campground south of Norval.

Both sites - which share the ability to attract hundreds of otherwise city-bound residents - make good use of passive rural areas, the Croatian centre just south of Norval on Winston Churchill Boulevard and the Yugoslavian gathering spot on Highway 25 south of Acton.

The recent Feast of St. Anthony celebrations at the former centre attested to the rich cultural heritage of these Canadians, and the colorful ethnic festivities are always a joy to behold. It's the more regular gatherings most weekends at these two recreational centres that has angered some neighbors and drawn police to the sites, however, and clearly there is reason for public concern.

Council was originally asked to approve legislation that would have enabled the Croatian-Canadians who own the Norval site to launch a lengthy and ambitious construction program which might have turned the former pasture land into a mini-Olympic stadium complete with tennis, soccer and swimming facilities and room for thousands of visitors.

Despite some initial enthusiasm over the idea, council voted against the more elaborate plan and the Croatians have developed their centre as far as existing bylaws will allow. Like Acton's Yugoslavians, Norval's Croatians play host to hundreds of their former countrymen each weekend, the rural picnic ground atmosphere understandably a big attraction for those who live in Metro.

Loud noise late at night is the only consistent reason police have visited the two centres, neighbors tiring of the celebrants' alleged unwillingness to turn down the volume on sound systems. There was, of course, the isolated incident in which two of the Croatian organizers were charged by police with weapons-related offences after workmen involved in the St. Anthony celebrations were allegedly threatened; that case comes before the court again this week, but clearly is not representative of the general behavior at either centre.

Instead, the noise of the parties and aggravation among some neighbors over excessive traffic are the only ongoing problems, ones which hopefully will be controlled through mutual agreement. Council's foresight in withholding permission for a much larger Croatian operation must be applauded in view of the minor headaches provided by the current centres.

The big day nears

We're now only about 53 days away from opening the Halton Hills library-cultural centre, easily the area's biggest step forward in terms of passive recreational development.

And we're only halfway to reaching the public fund-raising objective of \$230,000.

Not that the arts complex on Church Street will stay closed without the full amount raised, but the public's share of the financing must be in place soon for corresponding grants to be obtained.

So it comes as welcome news that project organizers are increasing the fund-raising pace after a brief summer lull. A massive campaign blitz will start just after Labor Day and we hope everyone in Halton Hills who hasn't already done so will contribute to this historic and worthwhile cause.

Certainly there are many in town who've done far more than their fair share to get this project - virtually a Georgetown Little Theatre pipe dream just a few years ago - off the ground. Rex Heslop, as an individual

and a Rotarian, his fellow Rotarian and a fine musician Ralph Ursel, building contractor and building committee chairman Ab Tennant, architect Keith Wagland, Gretchen Day and her fellow organizers in the Arts Council, Mayor Pete Pomeroy, John Roe and others in the Little Theatre, the Choral Society and artisans' groups, librarian Betsy Cornwell...these are the citizens who should take the final bows come opening day (tentatively, Oct. 18).

To all those devoted patrons of the local arts scene who purchased a piece of history in the form of GLT-arranged seat plaques, to the hundreds of youngsters who helped collect money by decorating the building site with colorful murals organized by the Arts Council, to all the individuals who took part in the many special events set up by local clubs to raise funds - a big thankyou from Georgetowners of the past, present and future.

And to you who will now pool your donations to top the essential public fund over the top, you shall reap the vast benefits of your labor.



Letter from the editor

Paul Dorsey

'Wolf!'

The mail strike was over and Jean-Claude Parrot pulled the plug; suddenly, we're deluged with all the third-class mail that was building up at the post office during The Longest Forty-Two Days.

Once the stuff not worth reading is brushed aside (soybean competition results from Blinckton, Alberta) and the usable news is dispatched to the typesetters, we have the material requiring more careful and long-range perusal.

Alas, into this category last week fell two more mail-outs from Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. (they keep sending me this stuff - honest; I don't go searching for it...maybe they're trying to set me up as the Boy who cried "Wolf!").

There was "Ascent", the company's quarterly, typically expensive magazine. But that had more dull reading about "Radiation: How dangerous is it?" and a look at the "social and ethical issues of energy supply" (which pointed out that your average anti-nuke protester and "those who profess to speak for the poor are almost all opponents of current lifestyles and of the present uses of energy" and are rather affluent themselves).

Then there was an AEC press release from Whiteshell (try dropping the "s") Nuclear Research Establishment which explains how the company is going to experiment on nuclear waste burial with a non-nuclear, underground facility.

The folks around Lac du Bonnet, Manitoba, should be delighted to hear what the undertakers from the AEC have in mind for their new cemetery, and we'll all be glad to pitch in on the \$13.8 million expense, won't we?

AEC will set up "several small rooms" at the bottom of a "300-500 metre" deep shaft from which the underground environment can be monitored. The AEC could then use that information to build computers that would "predict how nuclear wastes would behave over thousands of years if made highly insoluble and buried deep in the rock of the Canadian Shield".

If I were a punster, I might suggest that we taxpayers need a "Canadian Shield" of our own to protect us against the potential hazards of the nuclear industry, against the effects of energy causes that create "highly insoluble" problems. But I'm not.



Recalling MPs pointless - too much empty talk already



Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau of The Herald

As leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, Joe Clark naturally wants Parliament recalled so he and his colleagues can rail against the government's alleged inaction on our economic woes. "We have a country in crisis and a government on vacation," says the former prime minister. And he argues that Parliament should be recalled immediately so the government can draw up a new economic program.

The New Democrats, too, would like to see Parliament recalled. Opposition parties always fare off better when the House is in session and they have a forum for their anger.

But apart from providing such a forum, I don't see much point in recalling Parliament. Over the last six months, we have heard just about everything parliamentarians have to

say about the economy. And what we need now is a little apparent attention from government, not parliament.

The government can take just about any action it wants without first going through the parliamentary process.

NOMAGIC

An emergency session of Parliament in itself would do nothing to prop up the declining Canadian dollar - in terms of the U.S. dollar - nor would it do anything to dampen inflation. The opposition parties have no magic solutions that are being saved for a reconvened Parliament.

Having said that, there is no reason for the government to appear so indifferent to the economic situation. We may not require an emergency session of Parliament, but it would be nice to have our leaders, including Prime Minister Trudeau, displaying a little concern for our economic plight. It's not good enough for cabinet ministers to emerge from holidays long enough to say "don't panic" and then go back to the cottage.

"There will be a budget sometime in the fall and there is no need for panicking at this time," says Justice Minister Jean Chretien. And, he quite rightly pointed out that "even if Parliament were in session, this would not stop United States President Reagan from increasing his interest rates."

But while we all accept the fact that many of Canada's economic problems are imported, and the

government's options are limited, there is no excuse for this image of indifference. The "don't panic" message might be comforting to economists, but it doesn't do much for the homeowner who is negotiating a new mortgage at 22 per cent.

CONCERN HIDDEN

There must be great concern in government about outrageous interest rates - no one in his right mind could be unconcerned - but you don't get the impression that anyone in the cabinet is preoccupied with the situation. In fact, when you couple this with other recent events, there would appear to be an amazing lack of sensitivity in high places.

When Transport Minister Jean-Luc Pepin announced a drastic reduction in rail passenger services, he seemed totally oblivious to the historic role of railways in western Canada. And when Postmaster-General Andre Ouellet said businessmen should stop depending on mail services, he seemed totally oblivious to everything. These events are never assessed in isolation.

And now that Prime Minister Trudeau is hopping around Africa, and Finance Minister Allan Rock is spending most of his time at his cottage, and other senior ministers are coming into Ottawa only long enough to say "don't panic", it's difficult to think the government is really seized of the situation. There are times when the appearance of concern is as important as the concern itself. And this, surely, is one of those times.

Political cowardice abounds over radioactive soil issue



Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau of The Herald

"Too cute and too clever by half," an outraged MPP Sean Conway called it, and he was right.

Conway, the Liberal representing the Chalk River area, was responding to the suggestion that 4,000 tons of slightly radioactive soil from eastern Ontario be dumped in his riding.

The suggestion was made by Premier Bill Davis in a telex to the federal government. It climaxes a sad tale of how a combination of irrational protest and political cowardice has disrupted what should have been a perfectly simple operation.

The soil in question, about as much as would cover a football field a couple of feet deep, isn't any particular health threat where it is.

The radioactivity is low, about three times background "normal", maybe similar to some populated areas in Elliot Lake, or about what a luminous dial on a wrist watch throws off.

A subdivision has existed at the soil site since 1973.

NEED MOVED
But however marginal the risk, residents understandably want the stuff removed from their backyards and, in fact, it should be removed from the vicinity of buildings (which can in theory "trap" the radiation).

And as Conway points out, this

would be no problem if the province and the federal government would discharge their joint political responsibility for setting up a formal low-level waste management program.

Ottawa bears the brunt of the blame, since it has legal responsibility, but as the Davis telex indicates Ontario is also involved up to its neck.

The most useful means of disposing of the soil would be as fill for a golf course or some other open-space use away from buildings, where it would be no hazard whatsoever, but the province vetoed that idea.

BANCROFT TOO
Next it was suggested the soil be spread over uranium mine tailings near Bancroft, which produced the usual emotional local protest followed by the usual craven provincial response.

After all, local MPP Jim Pollock is a Tory.

Then the Ontario Environment Ministry suggested a military base for interim storage and the federal government unilaterally picked Camp Borden near Barrie.

Again local protest erupted and again the local MPP is a Tory, George McCague, and an influential cabinet minister to boot. Hence the Davis telex

to Ottawa. Ontario even went so far as to agree to pay any extra costs incurred by shipping to Chalk River rather than Borden.

One suspects the Chalk River location was picked partly because people in the area are less emotional and irrational about the atom than they appear to be in much of the rest of Ontario.

Besides, the area already has large quantities of contaminated soil that were removed a few years ago from Port Hope (although 200,000 tons remain at that town).

And maybe there's just a touch of Conway's being a Liberal.

Conway justifiably calls the Davis suggestion unacceptable, although he's not panic-stricken about non-existent dangers.

Instead he argues people elsewhere must accept their share of the waste burden, that Chalk River has done enough, and that the province and Ottawa must stop playing chicken with the whole waste question and come out with a comprehensive plan to deal with low-level waste.

One has to agree with him, although the political realities are such that it is unlikely to ever happen.

POETS' CORNER

The Cat

The lady knew she was going to die
She had a problem, I will tell you why
Made her husband make a pledge to
care for her cat
He didn't give it much thought, sure he
would do that.
And every where he wants to go, that
cat it must be fed
When he is away from home, the cat
waits in the shed.
The cat it is a problem, a promise he
won't break
If a man can't keep a promise, it's
something he can't take.
Though his memories are deep with
love

She was watching him from above
Then that cat was missing, he thought
he was free
A week later she returned, with kittens
number three.
I don't know what became of them, he
never did say
The last time I was there, the cat was
there that day
In spite of loneliness and sorrow his
faith we do accept
Although it is a problem, the promise
will be kept.

—By Albert Brooks
RRR Acton

THIRTY YEARS AGO—Georgetown Public School, already overcrowded to capacity, will expand into St. John's Church auditorium when school opens next week. With the creation of another class this year, the school board was faced with a decision of staggering classes or securing a room until a new school is built.

Many local listeners heard the program "Georgetown on the Air", a 15-minute radio program broadcast over CFRB Monday. A brief sketch of the town was given, telling of its inception in 1864 and steady growth to its present population of 3,500.

Council members, town officials, employees and their families celebrated summer at their annual picnic in Erin Thursday. They spent an enjoyable afternoon playing games, softball, races and numerous other games and topped off their day with a picnic feast.

Due to misunderstanding among parents the school board wants to clear the issue regarding school textbooks. Saying they will not provide books for classroom use; these books must be purchased by the pupils themselves. The board will make greater use of supplementary reading books which are paid for by a government grant and has decided to purchase more of them in the coming year.

TWENTY YEARS AGO—Hi-Lo Equipment, manufacturers of steel for warehouses, has completed moving its heavy machinery into the King Street plant formerly occupied by P. Graham Bell Associates Limited and if things go smoothly they'll be in full production in two weeks. The newest local industry will employ 23 people but 80 per cent of the staff is being transferred from Mimico where they are shutting down their plant.

Construction work on Highway 7 in Norval has created problems for some area residents. Esqueping council has learned. With the lowering of the road, some sidewalks and driveways are too high according to Road Superintendent William Townsend. Mr. Townsend and Reeve Sinclair will meet with Department of Highways engineers to discuss the problem.

A request by Zellers for clarification of its status in selling its own operating hours has caused a stir among local merchants and town council. A Zellers spokesman recently told council the store would only locate in Georgetown if it could maintain a six day weekly operation and be open two nights a week. Currently, town merchants are governed by a bylaw which allows them to set their own hours by a majority vote. Most have adhered to a closed Monday, open Friday night policy.

Major renovations are being planned by one Main Street merchants in conjunction with the town's new sidewalk building program. Contractor William Hamilton appeared with Enrico Caruso at Monday's council meeting to outline plans for a new front on Caruso Fruit Market and the adjoining Goldham's Meat Market. The fruit market will be set back from the street to allow an open air display of goods.

TEN YEARS AGO—While a major reconstruction of Highway 7 is not in the immediate future, there is a good possibility it will get a smoother surface between John Street and Maple Avenue. This narrow portion of the highway was left for future decision some years ago when the eastern portion of the highway was widened and improved.

Georgetown Transportation Company will offer a bus service to Georgetown high school students living inside the town limits who don't get bus service from the Halton Board of Education. A company official said they will inaugurate the service on the second day of school at a cost of 20 cents per student. If an insufficient number of students use the service, it will be cancelled at the end of the month.

Esqueping council placed a ban on rubber tires at their Fourth Line dump to put an end to a problem. An Acton man is in the used tire business and sorts through the tires keeping those which can be recycled. The rest go to the Esqueping dump. The result, after seven months of this process, is hundreds of bald rubber tires on the Esqueping landfill site. They can't be legally burned and there are too many to be buried.

MP Rud Whiting and Acton Mayor Les Duby said they have been "right on top" of the possible extension of the GO transit system proposal being discussed now by federal, provincial and Metro Toronto representatives. It was their joint feeling that the service be extended as far as Guelph so it would reach the Kitchener-Waterloo market. Mayor Duby said he's sure Acton residents would use the service if it were available.

ONE YEAR AGO—A new school board trustee position—allocated to Halton Hills Monday following a region-wide shuffle of representation on the Halton Board of Education—will go to Acton and Esqueping town council has decided. Clerk administrator Ken Richardson told council that clerks from four municipalities in the region sat down last week to recalculate representation on the 20-member board according to an equalized farm and residential assessment ratio.

Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital will not be closing down for three weeks due to lack of funds the hospital board has announced. Hospital spokesmen denied reports from a Toronto newspaper saying the hospital board was considering closing the facility in an attempt to keep this year's deficit down. The 72-bed hospital is facing a possible deficit of \$186,000 this year compared to a \$30,000 deficit last year.

Despite a flurry of protest, Jim Barrett says he is not "bowing to any minority pressure" in the community to cancel the Junior Miss Halton Hills "beauty" pageant proposed for the Georgetown Fall Fair in October. The idea has already been approved by the Georgetown Fall Fair board and contestants will be sponsored by various service clubs in the community.

Town council approved a preliminary design for the reconstruction of Highway 25 between Highway 401 and Acton. Under the five-year construction plan, the ministry of transportation and communication will widen the highway to four lanes beginning just south of the 401 to Regional Road 9. The ministry would not commit itself to a starting date but will host an open house at Spyside Public School to review the project with area residents.