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Legal 'pot' debate still smoldering

Parents, service clubs and social agencies across the land are currently rallying to stop a piece of federal legislation which most Canadians had accepted as inevitable — the "decriminalization" of marijuana.

Political observers continue to suggest that Parliament will indeed pass laws making simple possession of cannabis a misdemeanor punishable by a small fine. It was less than five years ago, after all, that the nation's legislators were generally agreeing marijuana users should not be thrown in jail for taking a drug many experts considered no more harmful than alcohol.

Medical studies since then, however, appear to have turned the issue upside down, alarming previously unconcerned parents with indications that pot does indeed have some disturbing long-range effects just like the anti-drug crusaders used to say. Now police associations, educators, the Canadian Medical Association and dozens of citizens' lobbies are urging the federal government to hold off on, if not reject outright, any suggestion that pot controls should be softened.

The worried parent who has written The Herald and other newspapers (see page A5) urging readers to advise their MPs against decriminalizing marijuana is typical of the new opponents of "liberal" pot laws. She points out that young people may not realize in the short term how physically, mentally and emotionally damaging the drug's extended use can be, and expresses concern that decriminalization may be interpreted by them as a government sanctioning of pot use.

We disagree; and nor do we believe that maintaining or intensifying current cannabis legislation will act as a deterrent to the teenage drug user — quite the opposite, in fact.

We've raised the "Prohibition syndrome" idea before with reference to soft drug use: young people will not

stop taking illicit drugs simply because the government tells them not to, and pre-teens who first begin using marijuana because of peer pressure will not so easily be swayed from an activity that, because of current laws, becomes to them an adventurously clandestine form of rebellion.

From James Dean to television's "Fonzie", the "outlaw" image is still a hit with the post-war generation, and insensitive political administrations, needless to say, do little to help young people separate right from wrong.

What bothers us in particular about the letter to the editor at right is that its author leaves what we consider her most pertinent point until the very end: "what about an educational program for our kids?"

Again, we've made this point before. Unique public awareness campaigns like those undertaken this year by Optimists International and the Canadian Teachers' Federation are laudable, but barely cover the tip of the iceberg. Stranded in an ocean of moral contradiction by their stress-possessed parents, most of today's young people lack the inner guidance mechanism that might steer them away from drug abuse and long-term dependence on artificial stimulants.

What is needed, then, is an overall educational system geared to the practicality of modern living in North America. Total immersion courses, living "skills" value counselling and such innovations as the "positive peer pressure" system outlined in last week's Herald are slowly turning secondary education into a more worthwhile and rewarding experience, but clearly there's still a long way to go.

Threatening young people with punishment for activities they do not consider "crime" or even "sin" is far from the correct answer. If today's parents can't teach their children BY EXAMPLE the proper, righteous and healthy way of living, then perhaps our educators can somehow produce a new generation of parents who will.



SPARE TIME LEGEND

Ronnie Hawkins, "a legend in his spare time", performed two shows in Halton Hills last Tuesday, helping open the new library-cultural centre. His particular brand of music, which can be described as taking the best parts of rock, country, and good ol' honky tonk, has crossed age barriers for about 20 years and it's still growing strong with a new, younger following. A review of last week's concert and more photos will appear in the Herald's Weekend Extra Friday. (Photo by George Evashuk)

Has Pierre Trudeau cornered our angry 'Gang of Eight'?



Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau of The Herald
Heaven knows there are many ways to view the situation, but it seems to me that Prime Minister Trudeau, by gaining agreement in principle to another first ministers' meeting on the constitution, has virtually won his crusade.

Unless there are some startling surprises, it's difficult to see how Trudeau can lose. Certainly, he has everything to gain.

There is no doubt that the vantage points vary, and an Ottawa Citizen report, for instance, says that "the premiers have skillfully forced Prime Minister Trudeau to delay his plans to act unilaterally on the constitution." Frankly, I would have been more inclined to say that Trudeau, and rather skillfully at that, has forced the dissenting premiers into a rather awkward corner.

There is going to be enormous

pressure on "The Gang of Eight" to come up with some positive compromises when they meet with Trudeau toward the end of October, particularly after the prime minister offered, what he termed "significant" compromises himself.

PRESSURE SHIFTS

And after meeting with the prime minister, Premier William Bennett of British Columbia — who was representing the dissenting premiers — said that his colleagues "found much that was positive" from his meeting with Trudeau. Given these circumstances, plus the fact that an obvious majority of Canadians are becoming fed up with this horrific hassle, the pressure is clearly on the premiers to come up with some positive responses.

Quite apart from public opinion surveys, open-line radio shows across the country indicate that there is widespread support for a quick settlement of the constitutional squabble, and even those who stoutly oppose Prime Minister Trudeau's methods, and perhaps even the content of the patriation package, often say he should go ahead with his unilateral action.

But, frequently, there has been the suggestion that Trudeau and the premiers should make one last-ditch effort to reach a compromise, particularly since the Supreme Court of Canada emphasized the need for constitutional consensus. And we must not forget that the New Democratic Party now is hinging its support on Trudeau's final attempt to negotiate

such a consensus with the provinces. On the face of it, and without knowing the details of Trudeau's proposed compromises, he would have appeared to have gone a long way toward getting this NDP support. If the dissenting premiers "found much that was positive," in the proposals, surely the New Democrats can't perceive it to be any less.

CAN'T LOSE

Even if one or two of the opposing provinces decide to support the Trudeau package, along with Ontario and New Brunswick, the prime minister could probably lay claim to the necessary consensus. And if three or four provinces get onside with him, he will have clear sailing.

The worst that could happen to the prime minister, it seems to me, is for the eight opposing provinces to remain where they are. In that case, Trudeau will still be ahead of the game, since Premier Bennett has already indicated that the prime minister is making a serious effort toward compromise. And if he should fail to reach agreement with any additional provinces, there will undoubtedly be increased support for his unilateral action. He will have merely added emphasis to his favorite argument that unanimous constitutional agreement with the provinces is a virtual impossibility.

Barring the unexpected, it would seem to me that by following the course he has charted, the prime minister has everything to gain and almost nothing to lose.

Young Tories receive dose of Bill Davis' 'pragmatism'



Queen's Park

By Derck Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau of The Herald

For this observer it was a remarkable moment, one I can't recall encountering before, in more than a decade of off-and-on listening to and reading Bill Davis speeches.

To a gathering of young Tories here the premier waxed eloquent about the philosophy that underlies his view of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party and its role as a government.

Now this kind of speech can often act like a sedative on people's hearing, but Davis gave one of his superior platform performances and kept his audience hooked.

Mind you, the politically oriented young tend to be more interested in philosophy than their elders. It becomes a voyage of discovery when young to read Edmund Burke and John Locke.

And, excluding the climb-the-ladder careerists in the PC Youth, many young Tories make that trip. Unfortunately for PC youth unity, however, they often arrive at different destinations.

RONALD REAGAN

A segment of young Conservatives has always been attracted by the American political right-wing, the Ronald Reagan view of reality, with its roots in economic and political freedom.

Another segment, and the one with which Davis identifies, sings more in tune with the British Tory heritage, with its belief in "peace, order, and

good government" rather than the United States' "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

In practice, the British lineage means heavy government involvement in most aspects of life, and Davis was not apologetic about it, arguing, for example, that in our small country where capital is short government must lead the economy.

He mentioned Ontario Hydro, the Urban Transit Development Corporation, and the Suncor oil purchase as classic cases.

PEOPLE TOO

As for the rights of individuals, these too must be handled by the "legislated route."

Again he gave an example, saying he made no apology for his government's taking away the right of an individual to drive an automobile without a seat belt, to protect that individual against him or herself.

In the same vein he defended the controversial Bill 7, the revisions to the Human Rights Code, as a means of "protecting minorities."

He reiterated the obvious, that Ontario Tories are not doctrinaire but pragmatic, and don't need "purity of thought" to do their job.

In the end he touched on the inner Davis, and said the key for him is that when he shaves in the morning he had no difficulty in looking himself in the face.

Nor should he. The Davis brand of Progressive Conservatism, the so-called Red Tory approach, has long validity and great history in this country.

But the fear exists, valid in my view, that the activist, interventionist, collectivist brand of conservatism is running away with itself.

Funding UTDC was a worthy, very Tory type of gamble — but buying Suncor?

Revisions and extensions to the Human Rights Code, yes — but "special programs" for designated groups?

Must the reach of the state keep growing? Is Swedish-style spiritual death and bureaucratic dictatorship our destination too?

POET'S CORNER

Autumn

Down in the valley the swift river murmurs,
The streams fret and scold as they hurry by,
The leaves tell a tale as softly they whisper,
"I can't linger long", cold autumn winds sigh.
The shivering sumac her red leaves are falling,
The new crimson maple her garlands must shed,
Across the wide landscape sweet Flora has vanished,
The once lovely blossoms are withered and dead.

Up on the hill top the bluejay is screeching,
As if in defiance to winter's cold blast,
Soon through the valley his prey will have vanished,
As winter her blanket shall all over cast.
But hark! through the silence comes Old Mother Southwind
To one and to all as if to proclaim,
God's still in his heaven and we have his promise,
The woodlands shall bloom in their beauty again.

—By Margaret King, Georgetown.



THIRTY YEARS AGO—A new industry in Norval is Lindner-Gurd Ltd. The firm is located in the former Moreton Wood Products building behind the federal mill and is slicing apples for the wholesale trade. The bulk of apples are purchased by bakeries, hotels, and restaurants in the city, but the firm is experimenting with small retail packages in puffed bags. The sliced apples are being marketed under the trade name "Orchard Fresh Brand".

While working on a water main on Mill Street near the Main Street corner last week, town workmen cut a telephone cable by mistake, disrupting telephone service at one end of town for several hours.

Two "lost" ads in the classifieds. 'Lost, Oct. 1, on the Seventh Line, between Golf course and Silvercreek, one washing machine lid. Anyone find this would appreciate if you would phone. Also lost is a smoker's pipe, straight, brown, lost in the vicinity of post office.

Ideal weather conditions favored the annual match of the Halton Plowmen's Association held last Thursday. There were 38 contestants, somewhat below the average entry of the past few years. Hornby's Stanley May won the Esso Champions Special for the best ridge in walking plow classes by a Halton contestant.

So much interest has been engendered in the growing "Porky" prize at the weekly bingo at Holy Cross Church that on Monday the church hall could not accommodate all the crowd. So that everyone has a chance at the prize money next week, the bingo has been moved to the larger Legion Hall. "Porky" is a special prize offered for a full card calling up to 50 numbers. No one has won for several weeks and Porky now contains about \$130.

TWENTY YEARS AGO—Unless council secures a definite opinion from the Ontario Municipal Board by next week, Georgetown's December municipal election may continue on a basis of electing council by general vote than by wards as has been anticipated. Bowing to the wishes of the electorate expressed in a plebiscite last December, council passed a by-law returning to ward votes and establishing three wards. Until now the town has been unable to find out what the board intends to do.

At present, the Acton mayor receives \$800 a year and the councillors \$400 a year, roughly \$8 a meeting, which is deducted from meetings not attended. No fees are paid for committee meetings.

The continuous expansion of Georgetown High School in enrolment, facilities and teaching staff has created another first, the establishment of teaching departments and the appointment of department heads. Blair Armstrong has been named head of the commercial department, Paul Legge, head of the English department, J. Belamy, head of the math department, George Rogister, head of the science department and Florence Luke, head of the moderns department.

Publication of names of delinquent tax payers may be a measure adopted by council this year to overcome a situation which Mayor Hyde termed "critical" at Monday's council meeting.

The co-founder of Varian Associates Ltd, which has a plant here, Sigurd F. Varian, 60, was killed in a private plane crash in Mexico. Mr. Varian and two associates invented the Klystron tube, basic element of radar.

Rex Heslop, president of Delrex Development, Ltd. has been charged with attempted bribery of Mayor Erv Hyde. He was arrested Wednesday by the Criminal Investigations branch of the OPP, taken to Milton and later released on \$30,000 bail.

The Rebels made Milton eat crow for the second successive time by downing them 8 to 6 in an important Inter School football game at Georgetown High School. The win clinched the league for the local squad.

TEN YEARS AGO—The lights illuminating the Cedarvale playing field went on officially Monday night when the Georgetown Kinsmen Club Vice-President Warren McKay flipped the switch in a brief ceremony in the control box. Installation of the lights was a Kinsman project.

A full picket line has reappeared in front of the Georgetown Hydro building on Water Street to stop attempts to bring in outside help. Picketers are asking people paying bills to honor their picket line and mail their payments instead. The contract with the Hydro Commission expired April 1. The 13 Hydro employees aren't receiving strike pay and so some of them have been working at odd jobs.

Go transit rail service to serve Georgetown was announced Thursday by Premier Bill Davis. He said he hopes the system can be implemented by late 1972 and plans negotiations with Canadian National Railways on the possibility of initiating it. The area served by the new Go system will be Georgetown, Brampton, Bramalea, Malton and Weston. The Go transit scheme utilizes Government of Ontario commuter trains on CNR lines.

Georgetown will have a full-time paid fire chief before the end of the year. Council agreed to advertise for one. Coum. Hyde was the lone dissenter. He said it was the first step to a full-time paid fire department and that it would account to a quarter million dollar budget in a few years. Reeve Ric Morrow felt it was a timely move since the town now has 17,000 people. "I think we have been very close to borrowing trouble by not having a paid chief," he said.

Another first for library service in town will take place Oct. 30 when a bookmobile will be in the Georgetown Market Centre. All books and records normally borrowed or exchanged at the Georgetown Public Library on Church Street will be accepted at the bookmobile.

In an attempt to utilize school facilities in Georgetown to the best advantage and to provide residents with the opportunity to pursue their favorite sport or pastime, the Georgetown recreation committee has begun extensive investigations as to the future requirements of the town. A survey has been distributed to households of the Moore Park area.

ONE YEAR AGO—Calling municipal spending the biggest issue facing both town and regional council in the next two years, Mayor Pete Pomeroy says he will consider resigning his position if south Halton forces regional council to abandon equalized sewer rates, a move now being studied. Reversion to the old chargeback system whereby each of Halton's four member municipalities must cover its own sewer and water service costs could have a \$1.4 million impact upon Halton Hills' urban taxpayers according to the mayor.

The Halton Separate School Board received an \$80,000 allotment last Wednesday from the ministry of education towards the purchase of property for a new facility for St. Joseph's Separate School in Acton.

Work is well underway on renovations to the Paper Mill Dam in Glen Williams. Changes to the dam are part of a major project by the Credit Valley Conservation Authority to prevent the annual ice jam and flood on the Credit River.

The Georgetown and District Red Cross Society announced an Acton branch would soon be formed, with Henry Kroes as president.

The Optimist Club of Georgetown's Third Annual Cross Country Run went on as scheduled Saturday despite miserable weather. Hills were extremely slippery, forcing many runners to use their hands as well as their feet, some grabbed nearby trees for support. There were 324 runners attending the meet, representing 15 of the 21 schools invited.



Letter from the editor

Paul Dorsey

Just my imagination?

Is it just my imagination?
Has the crime rate in Halton Hills soared over the past year, or is it just that our "police beat" reporter, Ani Federian, is gleaming more items from the staff sergeant every week?

My speculation may be less than objective: last week I arrived at my Normandy Boulevard home at about 12:30 a.m. one night, parking my car as usual beside the house, which is on a quiet residential cul-de-sac. Four hours later I was at the Georgetown police station reclaiming my billfold full of drivers' papers, membership cards and medical information that I routinely keep in my glove compartment.

Much to my astonishment, some youthful thief had calmly strolled up my driveway to the unlocked car, climbed in and rooted around in the glove box. There was no money: I'm naive, not dumb.

The Halton regionals (thanks again, boys) had picked the kid up not far away soon after the big heist. Already the proud owner of a criminal record, he'd stolen a pick-up truck earlier that night, abandoned it after two blocks' driving, and started roaming around window-shopping among parked cars. At the police station, my property was buried in a pile of combs, cigarette packs, bottle openers and Canadian Tire money. The kid must have had a sack like Santa Claus' by the time the cops nabbed him.

It was a minor incident, to be sure; just another statistic on the police blotter. But I've lived in Halton Hills all my life and didn't quite expect anything like this for awhile yet.

Fortunately, we're still a long way from frequently witnessing the kind of tragedy that occurred in Acton last week. Let's hope things get better before they get worse.



VIMY BAND VISITORS

You can dance as much as you march to the music of the Canadian Forces Vimy Band, which performed to near capacity audiences last Tuesday at Acton High School and at Georgetown District High School last Wednesday. Known previously as the Air Transport Band, the Kingston-based group started out in 1968 and has travelled to many foreign countries since, surprising audiences with its varied repertoire.

(Herald photo by Harald Bransch)