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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1981

McDermid presses Gray on Irwin-Dorsey woes

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

side of the House of Commons Monday following his attempt to have the federal government justify the Irwin-Dorsey closure slated for the end of the month.

House and demanded that industry trade and commerce minister Herb Gray explain how the shutdown, ordered by Irwin-Dorsey's parent company, Dow Jones of Delaware, is in the "best

interests of Canada". Twenty-eight jobs are affected by the impending closure.

The Foreign Investment Review Agency (FIRA), an organization which seeks to prevent Canadian businesses from excessive foreign ownership, ruled recently that Dow Jones' purchase several years ago of Richard D. Irwin Company of Illinois should not include the purchased company's Georgetown text book publishing subsidiary.

"The decision disallowing the application does not force the closing of Irwin-Dorsey," Mr. Gray argued. "That is the decision of the foreign parent, Dow Jones in the United States, which so far declines to sell the business to its Canadian employees, or to any other Canadian company or to file a new application offering further benefit to Canada."

"So the responsibility for this unfortunate event is solely in the hands of the foreign parent, an attitude which I think all Canadians should deplore."

Mr. McDermid and Mayor Pete Pomeroy have discussed the closing with FIRA officials and were told that the agency would consider another application allowing Dow Jones to retain the Georgetown firm.

Continuing to press the minister for more information, Mr. McDermid remarked that it seemed "rather interesting" that developer Bob Campeau, whom he described as a "Liberal friend", was able to sell \$20 million worth of hotel interests to a Hong Kong investor without too much problem from FIRA.

Mr. McDermid indicated that the government may have brought pressure on FIRA to rule heavily against foreign-owned publishing interests in Canada in order to protect Canadian publishers several years ago. And he asked whether or not the Ontario government had originally approved of Dow Jones' acquisition in Georgetown.

Mr. Gray maintained that provincial authorities were contacted regarding Dow Jones' proposed purchase and took their advice "into consideration". However, he added, the government determined that there was little benefit to Canadians in the takeover bid.

"If the parent company of Irwin-Dorsey was serious about its concerns for the workers, it could have easily filed a new application, offering further benefits to Canada, or as I've said, make arrangements to sell the company to its employees or another Canadian company."

"It chose not to do so, and I'm surprised that my honorable friend is accepting and supporting this deplorable conduct on the part of this foreign company."

Dow Jones position remains unchanged

Dow Jones' position regarding the impending closure of its Irwin-Dorsey Ltd. subsidiary remains unchanged, the Georgetown firm's president, Dick Willis, told The Herald Tuesday.

MP John McDermid in the House of Commons yesterday (Tuesday). "Nothing has changed as far as the FIRA stance is concerned," Mr. Willis explained, "and there is no change in Dow Jones' position. There is still a feeling that (Dow Jones) is correct in its legal stance and it shouldn't have to sell the company."

The parent company has unsuccessfully petitioned the Supreme Court of Canada against FIRA's argument that its purchase several years ago of Richard D. Irwin Ltd. of Illinois should not include the Georgetown subsidiary. Dow Jones maintains that the sale was arranged between two American firms and didn't change things for the Canadian subsidiary.



HANDY FRIENDS AT CHRISTMASTIME

Residents of the John Armstrong senior citizens apartments on Durham Street held their annual bazaar Saturday. If you stopped by for tea or to shop around for some handsome gifts, you probably bumped into these ladies, who helped make the bazaar a success. They are (left to right) Marie Grant, Nellie McMeekin and Margaret Caperauld, holding some of the many interesting crafts available.

(Herald photo by Dave Rowney)

Please drive carefully

The Halton Region and Canada Safety Councils have declared Dec. 1 to 7 National Safe Driving Week, noting that the season of adverse driving conditions has arrived. Early darkness and poor weather are too often joined with the high spirits of the holiday season to produce tragedy, the Councils say. Halton region averaged 139 accidents, 187 injuries and 2.6 fatalities per month between January and November of 1980. Last December, those numbers rose to 147 accidents, 218 injuries and five fatalities.



'FAIR LADY' A KNOCKOUT

The Georgetown District High School Music Theatre Club presented its production of "My Fair Lady" last Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and once again delighted parents and visitors with another in a long list of school musical successes. The production was produced by Greg Casaban and musically directed by Ralph Ursel who has scored ten previous GDHS performances. Here, the servants chime in adding color to the story of the Cockney girl who was turned into a duchess by a whimsical Henry Higgins.

(Herald photo by Harold Bransch)



CLOWN BREAK

Action firefighter Bill Lanthrop was one of several members of his detachment who dressed up as a clown to amuse youngsters at the Acton Santa Claus parade Saturday. Surrounding him as he pauses on a Mill Street sidewalk are (left to right) Nick, Chrata and Steve. The parade is annually sponsored by the Acton Y's Men organization and featured eleven float entries this year. Lots more parade photos, page A7.

(Herald photo by Dave Rowney)

Quota moratorium rejected by minister

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

Import quotas on foreign footwear were lifted in Canada yesterday (Tuesday), despite concerns from leather industry spokesmen that the move will have serious ramifications on the Canadian shoe industry and large leather suppliers like Acton's Beardmore and Company tannery.

Declining leather sales at Beardmore, a company spokesman told The Herald, are attributable to a wary shoe industry awaiting the federal government's decision on whether to lift the quotas.

Imposed four years ago, the quotas were largely meant to protect the Canadian shoe industry from a glut of foreign-produced non-leather footwear. Beardmore was forced to lay off 175 "upper leather" employees last week, but the spokesman said that some workers have been returned to work this week.

Asked during Monday's House of Commons question period whether the quotas removal would harm the footwear industry, federal industry, trade and commerce minister Herb Gray said that the shoe trade would still be protected by tariffs and the country's evaluation laws.

Mr. Gray rejected suggestions that the government consider a moratorium on the footwear quota decision and told a New Democratic MP calling for guarantees that no jobs will be lost, that the nation's footwear consumption is dropping.

"The per capita footwear consumption in Canada since 1972 has declined from four pairs to about three pairs," Mr. Gray argued, adding that production methods and consumer tastes have also changed.

He maintained that the purpose of lifting the quotas is to strengthen the shoe industry by making it more competitive.

Management and workers at Smith and Stone in Georgetown will be meeting this week to discuss how the 375-employee electrical component producer can weather the nation's current recession, which has already forced lay-offs at two other Halton Hills plants, Abitibi-Price and Acton's Beardmore tannery.

A major supplier of household items such as sockets and wall plates, as well as a parts producer for appliance manufacturers, Smith and Stone's business has dropped correspondingly with new housing starts. The closure

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Smith, Stone studies effects of recession

Ten attend public meeting

Report on town hall rekindles hot debate

By MAGGIE HANNAH
Herald Special

Public interest in the fate of Acton's 99-year old town hall was conspicuous by its absence last Wednesday at a public meeting to examine results of a consultant's report on the building.

Only 10 residents showed up for the meeting to hear 18 councillors, town staff members and consultants make their presentation and field questions.

Of the 10 residents, seven have been closely associated with either the town hall restoration committee or the Acton fundraising committee which has battled to raise funds for the building's restoration over the past five years.

Results of a door-to-door survey on the hall and whether people would use it if it were restored for use as a community facility, showed 45.6 per cent favored the use while 44.1 per cent did not.

"Sometimes surveys are pretty close on a question like this," Helen McDonald, a researcher for Kleinfeldt Con-

sultants said. "But usually they're weighted at least a little in favor one way or the other. This is such an even split it's unbelievable."

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Abitibi rehires 22 laid off employees

Twenty-two of the 185 employees laid off at Abitibi-Price Paper Company Ltd. in Georgetown over the last two weeks have returned to work in the plant's finishing section.

Plant manager George Lockwood said the company hopes to order more employees back to work next week and is expected to know today (Wednesday) how many more can return.

A seasonal slump in the fine paper market (products which include household wallpaper), forced the plant to lay off most of its staff

recently. Meanwhile, Abitibi officials and members of the United Paper Workers International Union which represents most of the mill workers are expected to discuss the mill's uncertain future this month.

Because of major paper producing plants coating their own product, the need for Abitibi's specialized fine paper plant has dwindled.

Mr. Lockwood said that prospects for more employees returning to work "look promising", but added that the company is "playing it by ear" as to how many.

Just five more donors can top off fund

Herald Special

Only five more name-space donors are needed to fulfill Halton Hills Arts Council's pledge to the cultural centre building fund.

With less than a month to go before the rug-hangings drive ends, the Arts Council is only \$454 shy of the \$20,000 pledge; made a year ago on behalf of all arts-related organizations.

Thus far, the unique fundraising campaign - co-sponsored by the Georgetown Rug Hookers which will hook the hangings - has brought in \$6,905.

The remainder of the \$20,000 pledge was collected through a variety of special fund-raising activities which included the Georgetown Choral Society's "Cultural Awareness Now" campaign, the University Women's Club's historical house tour, Georgetown Public Library staff's cookbook and children's coloring book publications, the Arts Council's historical wall mural and the Summerfest Old Tyme Music Hall, and the balance from Georgetown Little Theatre's Independent \$30,000 seat-plaques campaign.

"Our goal has always been to complete the building fund pledge this year," said Arts Council president Elizabeth Shore. "The cut-off date of Dec. 31 was also selected so that donors could take advantage of the charitable donations provision for 1981 income tax purposes." (This section was not affected by the recent federal budget.)

Mr. Gray rejected suggestions that the government consider a moratorium on the footwear quota decision and told a New Democratic MP calling for guarantees that no jobs will be lost, that the nation's footwear consumption is dropping.

He maintained that the purpose of lifting the quotas is to strengthen the shoe industry by making it more competitive.

Tour of lights set for Dec. 16

Dec. 16 has been chosen as the date for the third annual senior citizens' tour of Georgetown home Christmas decorations. Again, the Kinsmen Club of Georgetown will be lining up special buses to pick area seniors up at several locations, take them on a neighborhood tour of the outdoor lights and then treat them to coffee and donuts and a singsong at St. Andrew's United Church. The choir from the Mountainview Road church, a police escort and Santa Claus himself will all be helping out for an eventful and entertaining excursion. Stay tuned to The Herald for more information about pick-up locations and other details. Individuals and groups interested in helping run the show are invited to call Kinsman Bob Malcolmson at 877-2972.



'POOLING' THEIR WISHES

It was a special occasion last weekend for kids who take part in the swim sessions at the Georgetown District High School pool when Santa Claus dropped by for their Christmas party. The party marks the end of the family asthma program sponsored by the Halton Lung Association, since September. Twelve families and 20 children participated in the fall program, which allowed participants to work with a physiotherapist in the gym and the pool, learning relaxing techniques and breathing exercises and generally coping better with their asthma. Greeting Santa were Heather and Alison Macewan, Doug and Heather Ann Dutchburn, Chris and Andrew Pouw, Julie and Stephen Holmes, Jane and Cindy Baker, Nancy Sharp and Jenny Howe and Nicole and Michelle Spicer. The service is provided free of charge thanks to Christmas Seals, executive director Joyce Armour said. Grete Seast is the physiotherapist.

(Herald photo)