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## Ontario government releases report

# Turn-off needed to deter vandals

If Halton Hills street corners seem to have lost that old familiar glow, it's because town workers have spent a lot of time this past year replacing the illuminated street signs with simpler, sturdier, blade-type signs which have to catch car headlights before they'll give up their message at night.

It's a metaphor for our times when our civic leaders must resort to the old functional designs for municipal paraphernalia simply because growing social problems - in this case rampant vandalism - no longer "tolerates" the more aesthetic, more vulnerable designs of the recent past.

Like the renewed tide of global militarism, bolstering civilians for what many predict will be harder times, our governments at all levels have had to tighten their fists as they tighten their belts, society's ills - from drug abuse to violent crime - increasingly putting people on the defensive. Hence the survivalist trend.

Simply turning our backs on our problems will only make matters worse, of course, so it pleases us to see steps being taken to curb the vandalism problem, at least, where people were previously reluctant to take firm action.

We're not talking about stiffer jail terms or any other reactionary overkill. Instead, an Ontario government task force on vandalism, which released its report last week, is finally making some strong recommendations along the lines of retribution - something many people have talked about for years.

Why not make the vandals pay for their crimes when they can be caught? It's a simple solution to part of the problem, although it only applies to those convicted. Our psychologists will have to look further for an overall solution to the motivation itself behind vandalism; that, we fear, will be some years coming.

In the meantime, young people are flowing through our courts. Nabbed for smashing windows and chided by the judge, they'll spend a year or so on probation reporting to a counsellor. The worst offenders will spend a week or two in jail. It's an inappropriate application of legal punishment that we suspect does little to turn the kids off crime but instead reinforces their basic anti-social belief that society is out to get them.

On the other hand, as the provincial task force points out, putting the offenders in indirect contact with the victims of their crimes could work like a tonic. Now, most young people don't have the money at hand to repay their victims for property damage, so the courts would put them to work for so many hours a week, either helping the victim while under supervision or doing community work of some kind.

We also praise the task force for warning against making parents of vandals liable for the crimes their children commit. To suggest, as North York council recently did, that vandals' parents should be liable to lawsuits for damages caused by their children, is to totally forget the parental neglect which probably contributed to the child's problem from the outset.

While many parents would no doubt react to a lawsuit by attempting to properly discipline their children, most, we feel, would take the wrong steps to do so. Remember, we are talking about parents who have already failed in some capacity to properly coach their children about right and wrong and the relative importance in our society of personal property.

Needless to say, parents of convicted vandals would still be financially accountable if another task force recommendation is accepted. Their report suggests court fines for vandalism should be boosted from the current low of \$25 to \$1,000. With tough reactions like that, someone's going to get the message.



## IT'S REALLY SANTA

Despite assurances from his mom, this youngster defiantly made up his own mind about whether or not the man dressed in the red suit and sporting the silvery beard really was Santa—and eventually decided that indeed, this is the fellow who will visit his home and thousands of others Christmas Eve. Santa, apparently a close friend of Coun. Russ Miller, dropped into the kids' party Saturday afternoon at the Glen town hall, and joined clowns and musicians to spread Christmas smiles on the standing-room-only crowd. The annual party is sponsored by the town hall's board of directors. (Herald photo)

# Constitution achievement humbles Prime Minister



## Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau of The Herald

When the 262 attending members of Parliament stood in the Commons and burst into a rousing version of O Canada it was 1965 all over again. This time our Parliamentarians were celebrating the passage of a resolution which will give Canada a new constitution - an objective that has eluded successive governments since the country was founded. The last time - 1965, that is - it was the passage of a resolution that would give Canada a new flag, something else that had intimidated governments for years. The parallels are striking. And as you watch the constitution reach its Commons climax, with Liberal MPs greeting Prime Minister Trudeau like a conquering hero, it was an almost identical playback to 1965. At that time, Prime Minister Lester Pearson looked just as self-effacing as Trudeau did this time and his Liberal followers

were just as enthusiastic in ensuring he had his moment of glory.

On both occasions, a clear majority of the MPs supported the resolutions before the House. But on both occasions, a minority remained bitterly opposed.

Most wanted to sing O Canada in 1965 and again in 1981. But, both times, a few would prefer to remain in their seats.

### ALL TIRED

On the two occasions, most MPs were tired. The arguments, debates and the emotional strains had taken their toll. In 1965, a Tory defending the Red Ensign had bloodied the nose of a Maple Leaf Grit. There is no record of this happening during the constitutional squabble, but there were a few mavericks in all parties who had trouble fulfilling social obligations with their colleagues. On both occasions, every effort was made to conceal the divisions at the last minute so the celebrations would not be marred.

But that's easier said than done, sure, they celebrated, and after all that preceded this constitutional war, who could blame them? But, just as it was 16 years ago, the joy was not unbridled. Amid the musical din in the Commons, you could still sense the apprehension - even more than you could back in 1965.

As we walked out of the Commons after that late-night flag vote, a colleague remarked that we had just witnessed "history-in-the-making." "But," he added, "just think how much better it would be if the whole country

accepted the flag."

The Commons had just celebrated the adoption of a resolution whose opponents ranged from John Diefenbaker to the Royal Canadian Legion. One Tory had even refused to stand for O Canada.

### STAKES HIGH

This didn't happen with the constitutional resolution, yet as all MPs joined in the celebrations, there was still a bit of 1965 in the air. As the French and English versions of O Canada echoed off the chamber's linen ceiling, the Quebec government of Rene Levesque was preparing to fly its flag at half mast to protest the resolution. And Tory MP Roch LaSalle was saying that "it is impossible for me to support the resolution without the inclusion of Quebec."

Or as John Diefenbaker said 16 years earlier, "How can we support a pennant that ignores our heritage?" Would the flag eventually unite the country or further divide it? Pearson had absolutely no doubts. "In time," he said, "it will be loved by all Canadians."

Will the constitution unite us or divide us? And in this respect, Trudeau, like Pearson before him, is optimistically confident.

But we're still not absolutely certain. Like 1965, we must wait to see how the country as a whole, and one region in particular, handles this new acquisition. The only difference this time is that the stakes are much higher.

# Ontario's legislative lunacy over human rights revisions



## Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau of The Herald

One would think human rights either are, or they are not. It seems only logical that something so important and fundamental should be total, and not riddled with inconsistent exceptions.

And yet that's exactly the fundamental premise ignored by Labor Minister Bob Elgie's crazy Bill 7, an act to "revise and extend" human rights protection in Ontario.

Take this example from the final draft of the bill that passed the legislature this week.

Marital status and family status have now been added to the Human Rights Code as prohibited grounds for discrimination in accommodation.

Well - sort of. If you own an adult-only high-rise with a common entrance you can keep out people with children. That remains legal.

But if you want to rent out the basement apartment in your house (with its own entrance), and reject someone on the grounds they have children, you'll be in trouble with the human rights police. That's illegal.

### REVERSE APPLIES

Exactly the reverse applies, however, if you want to deny people accommodation because of their marital status.

If an unmarried couple wants your basement apartment, you can tell them to get lost. You can't do that if you own a high-rise, however. Then it is discrimination.

These are not the only human rights that are limited in the strangest ways.

Discrimination in employment on grounds of citizenship is also forbidden, with some exceptions, one of them being that a corporation can make citizenship or intention to acquire it a job requirement - but only as it applies to "chief or senior executive positions." Tough luck for minorities.

And one could go on. What used to be a clean, simple, Human Rights Code has become encumbered with all kinds of useless and unnecessary, even contradictory adornments.

### SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Still, Bill 7 is a somewhat better bill than it was before Elgie tabled a number of amendments recently, although there are aspects that remain troubling.

The "special programs" section, the latest buzz word for affirmative action or quotas, is intact, although it was reworded to make clear the Human Rights Commission can only "recommend" such discriminatory policies to business.

Of course, any time the govern-

ment tells a company to "jump" the normal reaction of businessmen is to ask "how high?" I doubt many private sector firms would defy the Commission.

### COULD BE

What we are going to have to do is see how the bill is used by the Commission in its drive for increased powers and prestige. The fear is that it will go overboard. But maybe not. Time will tell.

Fortunately, too, opposition amendments were rebuffed. Both the Liberals and NDP wanted to tack on several more human rights beyond the existing dozen or so.

That lunacy included matters such as political belief.

Worst of all was a suggestion by MPP Jim Henwick (NDP-Riverdale) to severely curtail free expression by forbidding someone to say, for example, "I don't want any more Boat People coming to Canada."

Elgie toyed with the idea, but finally rejected it. The amazing thing is that he considered it for so long.



## Letter from the editor

Paul Dorsey

# Writers helping readers

Readers may have noticed some unfamiliar bylines in The Herald lately, attributing stories and reviews to writers whom you KNOW aren't on our staff, with the added message "Herald Special".

By way of explanation, the Herald Special designation, whether alone or accompanying a writer's name, indicates the story was not written by a Herald staff member. Most of these stories come from our Thomson affiliates in Guelph and Brampton; others are more-or-less verbatim press releases received in the mail.

Recently though, some bylines have been attributing stories to local writers. As they continue helping us out on a freelance basis, I hope to introduce them to you. For the most part, they're amateur writers who take an interest in Halton Hills events and activities and who responded to our recent classified ad looking for part-time reporters.

You might expect problems in hiring amateurs, particularly in the area of writing quality, but quite frankly, I've been amazed at how

good our freelancers have been. Arlene Bouwman of Georgetown did a superb job reviewing the GLT's "Not Now, Darling" and Ted Brown of Limehouse took some great shots of the Wintario show and Acton fair board honors night recently.

In this week's issue, 13-year old Kathy Winterburn of Georgetown rose to a formidable "adult" challenge by reviewing the GLT's "Once Upon a Time". It was Kathy's mother, Linda, who responded to the ad for reporters, suggesting that she and her daughter would like to tackle an assignment together. I thought they could compare notes on the Little Theatre's Christmas play from the viewpoint of two different age groups, but ultimately Kathy found she shared her mother's reaction, so she handled most of the review herself. And, I'd like to stress, she's done a fine, semi-professional job that suggests she's more talented than most 13-year olds.

Also in this issue is a review of the Choral Society's "Messiah" concert. Though unattributed, it was written by two Halton Hills women, one of whom had not seen the Society's previous performances. Both were literally astounded by the calibre of the twin Sunday shows, as they've indicated in their review. Although we usually like writers' names on top of our reviews, I agreed to an exception in this case when the two authors asked not to be identified. I think you'll agree, though, they too have done a commendable job.

All of this is not just in aid of Herald reporters, though needless to say we're grateful for the reduction in our workload. There's much more to it, though, as we're finding out. Our freelancers are bringing a new perspective to The Herald and in time I think you'll notice their contribution of new and different visions of Halton Hills.

My very first "Letter from the editor" two years ago stated in no uncertain terms that I wanted to get as many readers directly involved in The Herald as possible. This is YOUR newspaper, I said. Bring me what you'd like to see inside it. Many have responded, though not enough. These new freelancers, I feel, are bringing us all closer to what I consider the community newspaper ideal.

## Pitching in

Acton's Beardmore leather tannery has come to the town's rescue following an unsuccessful search by the recreation department for land on which to build a new community baseball diamond. Town council Monday night endorsed the department's proposal to build the new diamond on Beardmore property located on Poplar Avenue, subject to a lease being negotiated between the two parties. Initially, the department planned to move a soccer field from Prospect Park to land available at the curling rink on Churchhill Road north, making room for a new diamond. However, the idea was shelved when the rink property was found unsuitable for the soccer pitch.

# Halton's History

From our files

THIRTY YEARS AGO-The weatherman provided a real winter day for Santa's annual visit to Georgetown. Considerable snow fell on Friday, ending an unseasonable mild spell, and Saturday was cold and clear. After all the children received their bags of candy on Main Street, Santa visited Cedarvale School and Notre Dame de Beaugard Farm where he distributed goodies to the children there.

Spring flooding has begun early in the Glen this year. This morning, residents of the flats along the Ninth Line were unpleasantly surprised to find the river had overflowed its banks and was in their cellars. The river is frozen over and water trapped under the ice has no other way of escaping.

The Christmas seal campaign undertaken by the newly formed Halton Tuberculosis and Health Association is meeting with marked success in the Georgetown district. A total of \$536 has been received to date. The fund raising will continue for another week or two.

Inspector L.L. Skuce visited Georgetown Public School and announced it had a good staff relationship and fine working spirit, with courteous and well behaved pupils. Mr. Skuce said the board was fortunate in being able to get St. John's Church Hall this year for use by the kindergarten to primary classes. Walter Blehn was reappointed to the North Halton high school district board. Georgetown has this extra appointment by virtue of having the largest public school enrolment of the five municipalities which comprise the district.

The Raiders have won a hockey game! Sparked by Del and Junior Beaumont who tallied five goals between them, Dang Kentner's boys came through with their first win of the season last Friday, here, against Hespeler. The win ended a string of six defeats for the luckless Raiders who have been hampered this year with some missing faces.

TWENTY YEARS AGO-Santa's coming to town and a spectacular reception is planned. The Georgetown Lions Club has their mobile extravaganza ready to roll Saturday afternoon with 29 units including four bands and 22 floats. Clowns, pirates, majorettes and Leo the Lion will proceed down Guelph Street with visiting guest Santa in tow.

At a brief Esqueping Council meeting last week, Mansell Nellis of Acton was awarded the tender for snow ploughing in the township. He will be paid \$8 an hour while towing, and \$8 a day per machine stand-by time. The contract runs from Dec. 15 to March 15.

Halton County's population has hit a record high. County assessor Ford Rogers announced this week that Halton's population is now 115,908, an increase of 4,401 over 1960's 111,867. The populace is divided among five towns and three townships. Burlington leads with 45,868, Georgetown is second with 10,325, and Acton is fifth with 4,205.

Rotarians were hosts to the senior citizens of Georgetown, deftly balancing trays stacked high with dishes to serve dinner, then clearing the tables at their annual dinner to honor older citizens of Georgetown. About 150 guests dined, then watched as rotary club president Logan McDonald crowned Joyce McLean of Norval Snow Princess 1981.

A letter relayed to council Monday by town solicitor George Hewson said that payment of an amount owing by Delrex Developments under a 1958 agreement to make up an industrial imbalance in cash would be paid by Dec. 20. The letter, from company general manager Harold Bairdrow, explained that there had been a delay due to technicalities in financing construction of the Standard Products plant. The solicitor had been instructed by council earlier this fall to take legal action to collect the debt.

TEN YEARS AGO-A Shell gas station in Norval has been gutted and a young man taken to Peel Memorial Hospital where he is being treated for burns to his hands, face and legs, as a result of a fire. Damage is placed at \$40,000 and for a while, fire threatened to engulf the United Church next door. Firemen limited the damage to the church to the windows on one side, the window frames and slight roof damage, estimating the total damage at \$2,900. It took firemen three hours to fight the blaze. They successfully prevented it from reaching the gas pumps in front of the garage owned by Norman Lefebvre. Origin of the fire is unknown.

Georgetown's snowmobile bylaw which would set stringent regulations for the operation of these vehicles within town limits is still mired in a council-recreation committee dispute over allowing snowmobiles in parks. The bylaw has been in process since last spring and was presented for its third and final reading. "Snow is here and we need the bylaw," said Coun. Harry Levy. Some councillors want the recreation committee to map specified areas where they would be allowed. Others, and the committee, want the bylaw to give control of this to the recreation committee without specifying locations in the bylaw.

A large "dog" hit by a car at the Georgetown Market's Montreal Road entrance Thursday night turned out to be a wolf. An Ontario Humane Society officer called to the scene confirmed the identification. As the Humane Society officer was binding the animal with a rope in preparation for moving it, the wolf, apparently just stunned by the car, regained full consciousness and with teeth gnashing leaped at police constable Henry Adema. As the constable jumped away, he slipped on a patch of ice and fell, fracturing his right arm. The Humane Society Officer instructed Const. Adema to shoot the animal and the carcass was taken to Cooksville for a rabies test. Wolves are normally shy animals and shun populated areas.

ONE YEAR AGO-Halton regional police stopped 555 drivers across the region in the first week of their new spot check program. Of the drivers stopped, 345 received warnings under the Highway Traffic Act, for such offences as equipment broken tail lights or being unable to produce a driver's licence, or driving with an expired driver's licence. Public relations officer Sgt. Norm Ryall pointed out that there has been a sharp increase in the number of fatal accidents in Halton over the last year. In 1979, 23 people were killed in 20 accidents, while so far in 1980, 38 people have been killed in 31 accidents.

An Acton merchant who suggested vigilante help for Halton regional police patrols has had a conversation with Police Chief James Harding and expects to meet him personally to discuss matters within the week. Lorne Doberthien, president of L and L Ford Ltd. said he expects to accompany Coun. Dave Whiting when he takes concerned residents to meet Chief Harding Thursday. Mr. Doberthien had written a letter to the police chief which he had also released to the Acton Free Press expressing his frustration with thefts and vandalism at his dealership.

A consulting firm has been hired to finally determine whether the Acton sewage treatment plant can handle more industrial and commercial growth beyond the community's present boundaries. Town council Monday night approved an urban review steering committee recommendation to hire Proctor and Redfern, municipal consultants, to conduct the study at a maximum cost of \$25,000 which will be equally shared between the region and the town.

## POET'S CORNER

# The Stump Puller

As a boy, this story was told to me by an old stump puller, who used to be Old pine stumps, would never rot Man worked with all the strength he got They winched them out with ox and boom Man and Ox worked with a grinding tune Men shovelled tons of earth and rock To free those roots, some they had to chop Then those stumps were dragged in line

That formed a fence, all made of pine Oxen strength was powerful great For dynamite those days was too late The country was cleared by man and ox Cut off the trees and moved the rocks Farmers they grew hay and wheat Some kept cattle hogs and sheep When the time of harvest came All the family cut the grain Long hours hard work, time and sweat They sure earned all they did get.

—By Albert Brooks RR2 Acton