

Will Ontario be 'Snowed' again?

Premier Bill Davis was righteous enough to join Canada's other provincial leaders last week in condemning the federal budget, but if he abides by that rule about "people who live in glass houses", maybe he should have stayed home.

Words used to denounce Allan MacEachen's budget, like "irresponsible" and "misguided", could also apply to a new Ontario government proposal to raise passenger vehicle registration fees next year. The Hamilton Automobile Club last week challenged that suggestion by transportation and communications minister Jim Snow - and we couldn't agree with them more.

Instead, as the Auto Club points out, registration fees should be reduced for small car drivers.

Mr. Snow's proposal would see the fee for licence stickers for four and six-cylinder cars rise to \$48 from \$30, while owners of eight-cylinder vehicles would also pay \$48 instead of the \$60 they're now accustomed to.

The single rate for all passenger vehicles is suggested because a majority of motorists now drive smaller cars, and that's where the insulating absurdity of Mr. Snow's idea becomes apparent.

As has been the case so many times in the past, financial policies established by Davis government ministries seem opportunistic and self-serving. Instead, they should reinforce public attitudes toward energy conservation and other worthwhile endeavors. Mr. Snow's proposed change does just the opposite.

Literally thousands of Ontario drivers have made the switch from big cars to smaller ones because of spiralling inflation and rising fuel costs. In its small way, the lower registration fee for four and six-cylinder cars has acted as incentive for car buyers to try the smaller models and perhaps sacrifice some of the comforts and luxuries they enjoyed with the bigger vehicles.

In this fiscal year, the Ontario government expects to reap \$958 million from "ad valorem" fuel taxes, a \$341 million jump over the 1979-80 fiscal year total. To be sure, the ministry's own costs are also rising at a similarly alarming rate: it costs a lot more now to repair ministry-controlled highways and help finance municipal reconstruction projects, for example, than it did ten years ago. (Of course, the technology used in building and maintaining these roads has improved at a depressingly sluggish rate, a factor which many believe to be a deliberate stall on the part of the auto and road repair industries.)

Must it be a persevering trend among governments to answer each new economic challenge with new and higher taxes? Even the much-anticipated assault on the U.S. public's tax burden by "Reaganomics" has seen new taxes introduced.

If governments continue to endorse irresponsible budgets that allow the wealthy to breathe easier while denying basic social privileges to the needy, and then respond to economic crises by boosting taxes further, we shall all soon see our nation's fiscal demise.



Allan's budget won't budge, so Tories take it to the streets



Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau of The Herald

After the Tories spent a whole day battering the budget of Finance Minister Allan MacEachen, and then failed in an attempt to have the document withdrawn, Party Leader Joe Clark announced he would continue his relentless fight at the constituency level.

What he is figuring out, it seems, is embarrassing Liberal MPs to the point where they can't stand up and support the controversial budget. And the best way to do this is to work on the constituents of these Liberal MPs.

Or as he put it: "We will be watching the way each member of Parliament votes and we will naturally be looking at ways to communicate the way that member of Parliament votes back to the Canadians who vote for that member of Parliament."

He could have tightened up that

paragraph had he given the matter some thought, but we all know what he means. What he plans to do is tell the constituents of Liberal MPs to write or phone their member with their protests on the budget.

And what's wrong with that? you might well ask.

TWO DRIVES
Nothing really, except that, perhaps unbeknownst to Clark, there is another group at work asking constituents in Tory ridings to exert pressure on their MPs to take a stand on another question.

This appeal, from the Committee for a P.C. Leadership Convention, is not only directed at voters now served by a Tory MP, but also at those who are represented by MPs from other parties. What they are being asked, all in the name of replacing Joe Clark, is to convey their views to the nearest Tory MP, or the chairman of the regional Tory caucus.

And this campaign continues, regardless of what the Conservative caucus decided in the way of ending public bickering on the leadership question.

Now do you see the potential problem? Can you imagine how confusing our political system would become if we suddenly find the Tories blitzing Liberal ridings for a write-in campaign against a Liberal minister, while Tory, Liberal and New Democratic ridings

are being blitzed for a write-in, or phone-in, campaign against Joe Clark.

ENDLESS CAMPAIGN
If this new, mail-order system shows any signs of success, the sky is the limit. We could have Liberals blitzing NDP ridings urging voters to force their MP to support wage controls. Or the New Democrats could encourage Tory voters to demand nationalization of Canadian Pacific.

What we could have, in effect, is one endless election campaign, with the battles being fought door-to-door by canvassers. Parliament would become a sort of ballot-counting building, where one party would tell another party what its supporters are thinking.

"Madam Speaker, a Tory might say, 'I would like to table the results of our 'phone-in' show on the prime minister's speech on Senate reform.'" Or a Liberal MP might ask for leave to introduce a petition from the New Democratic voters in Oshawa-Whitby concerning the Conservative response to the government's Polish position.

Before this thing gets out of hand, I would just like to suggest that the present two-month campaigns are quite long enough. And in between these national interruptions I would prefer to have our MPs make decisions on our behalf without cards, letters or toll-free numbers.

And if we don't like what they do, we can get them the next time round.



THIRTY YEARS AGO—Town council discussed the question of renovating the present library or building a new building with the Library Board. Chairman J.L. Lambert said the present structure needs many repairs, including repainting and extensive basement repairs. An architect's advice had been to strip the building to the walls if it is renovated, he said. People appreciate a library, he said, pointing out that almost 100 new members enrolled that year. Secretary Harry Adams gave statistics which had been sent from the Director of Public Libraries showing that it would actually cost the town less to build a new structure than to operate as at present.

Town council took the oath of allegiance to the new queen, Queen Elizabeth II. Georgetown will commemorate the death of King George VI with a public religious service in St. John's United Church Friday at 3 p.m. A national proclamation closes banks and post office and schools are also being closed for the day. No civic holiday has been proclaimed in town but places of business have been asked to close from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

The annual summary just released by the Ontario Livestock Branch reveals that Halton is tied with Waterloo in leading the province in the production of Grade A hogs. In 1981, Halton producers marketed 20,074 hogs with 41 per cent Grade A's. This is quite an achievement. Halton's production was up 6.3 per cent over the previous year, with Ontario maintaining her position as Canada's premier producing hog province.

A brochure issued for education week in March shows 55 per cent of Canada's population has less than eight years' schooling and that only 35 per cent of pupils entering grade 7 complete secondary school. In Ontario, it is estimated that 40 per cent don't go on to high school. Only British Columbia has a better record. Quebec is the most backward province educationally speaking, with 63.3 per cent of its population having less than eight years' schooling. An industrial town like Georgetown shows the lack of interest in education more than Milton where industry doesn't predominate. Jobs are plentiful here and young men in their teens can command big pay, leading to an almost complete disregard of secondary schooling.

TWENTY YEARS AGO—An extensive well drilling program which will put some 600 wells from the town limits west and south will be put into operation this spring, the Herald learned from Anthony Gas and Oil Explorations of Acton. A company spokesman told the Herald that Georgetown is sitting right on top of a gas field which links large fields to the west in the Speyside area and to the south in the vicinity of Horsby. A well is presently being sunk on the Van Vleet farm on the Fifth Line just west of Stewartstown and is down 1,500 feet. A four man crew started the drilling operation six weeks ago. The gas lake to be tapped is allegedly at 1,900 feet. A 200 acre lease was taken out by the company in two other areas, one on the Fifth line and one on the Ruddell farm on the Seventh Line below Stewartstown. "We will probably drill 500 to 600 wells around the Georgetown limits," he claimed.

Directors of the North American Lilies Society at the annual meeting at Chapel Hill, North Carolina, have voted the E.H. Wilson Memorial Award, the highest award in the continental society, to a Georgetown woman, Miss Isabelle Preston, of 33 Market Street, for her "outstanding work with lilies." Miss Preston is the second recipient of the award which was instituted in 1959. She is a horticulturalist who has produced several hybrids, among which the George C. Creelman is the best known.

In an effort to cut water revenue losses caused when tenants leave town owing bills, council decided Monday to impose a \$9 deposit for all water users except home owners. "This assures us of at least a four-month advance payment," explained Deputy Reeve Hunter, whose water committee decided on the new measure. From now on when a tenant rents an apartment or house in town a \$9 deposit must be made at the town office before water service is provided.

TEN YEARS AGO—A town bus service could cost the town \$20,000 in a yearly deficit or could break even, so the transit study carried out by consultants Deleuw Cather told council in their report Monday night. "The town needs this service," the report stated. They pointed out that the Department of Transportation and Communications would subsidize the deficit 50 per cent. Council authorized the consultants to proceed with the second phase of the study. Joan Smith said the total cost of the complete study was \$8,000 of which \$2,000 had been spent to complete the first phase. She reminded council the Dept. of T and C subsidizes the study 75 per cent, meaning the town's cost would be \$2,000.

Four vehicles were damaged, four large plate glass windows smashed and two people injured in a costly accident at the corner of Guelph and Queen Streets Monday morning. The accident produced damage totalling over \$3,700. A westbound 1985 Pontiac on Guelph Street struck the rear of a westbound 1966 Plymouth, shattering it across the Queen Street corner and onto Tolton's Auto Body property. The car clipped an International truck parked on the property and rammed a parked Thunderbird with enough impact to drive it into the show windows. Damage was put at \$1,200 to the show front, and \$1,000 to the Thunderbird.

Jim Snow, MPP for Halton who two days ago was appointed Minister of Public Works, answered questions fired at him by students in a "bearpit" session during three lunch hour periods. The location of the new airport was one of the first questions. Mr. Snow said he doubted very much it would be around here but mentioned two possible sites, one farther west than Halton and the other the eastern side of Toronto, near Pickering. He predicted the earliest possible time for the inauguration of GO Train service in the area to be the end of this year.

ONE YEAR AGO—Derek Sanderson is finally coming to Georgetown. At 11 a.m. yesterday, Hockey Heritage chairman Dave Kentner confirmed that Sanderson would be coming to the heritage dinner this Tuesday Feb. 10. Kentner has tried since Nov. 5 to get Sanderson to play for his Georgetown Raiders. Until last Wednesday, the Heritage Council had only arranged for Pierre Filoteo and Aggie Kukulowicz to speak at the prestigious awards dinner. However, Sanderson called Kentner yesterday to confirm his presence at the dinner.

An unauthorized "hump sum" payment to one of Halton's top administrators has touched off a bitter regional council debate, including a call for regional chairman Jack Rattis to resign. According to Rattis of having "exceeded his authority" in paying chief administrative officer Dennis Perlin extra salary last fall while he was both acting CAO and regional solicitor, Burlington Coun. Walter Mulkerwitz Wednesday refused to endorse an "after the fact" administration and committee recommendation approving the payment.

The Halton Hills detachment of the Halton regional police force is now happily settled in its new quarters on Guelph Street near Gordon Alcott Memorial Arena. The building into which the officers moved Jan. 20 features expanded office space, including room for the Criminal Investigation Branch offices which conduct investigations of crimes as burglary, murder arson and rape.



Letter from the editor

Paul Dorsey

Priority pressure

The Herald editorial above regarding Jim Snow's proposal to boost registration fees for drivers of small, energy-efficient cars refers to tax increases as means of accommodating higher government expenditures.

Readers of this column will know that my personal views go far beyond gentle criticism of government spending. Last week's decision by the U.S. government to pump another \$45 million worth of military aid into El Salvador, coupled with another recent proposal for similar spending by Canadians prompt me to repeat myself.

How much do you care? How much do you believe? Do you accept the "facts" presented by the U.S. state department concerning the "Communist threat" in Latin America? Do you accept the Canadian Armed Forces' contention that their ranks and armories must be beefed up so we can hold the Russians across the Arctic ice at bay? Do you believe that raising taxes is the only way our governments can meet their spending "requirements"?

Canada's national defence minister, Gilles Lamontagne, set out to reassure delegates at the Conference of Defence Associations Jan. 14 that the country has reversed its previous trend toward demilitarization. Our national defence effort is again being bolstered, he said, thanks to the Nov. 12 budget which gave his ministry \$4 billion for 1982 and another \$7 billion for the next fiscal year.

Needless to say, I find nothing at all reassuring about those words. They link directly with the stern warning given the U.S. Congress last

week by Secretary of State Alexander Haig: landing American troops in El Salvador to stave off the "Communist threat" (or "yellow peril" or whatever they're calling it these days) is indeed an option open for consideration.

In both cases, I feel, North America's defence agencies (George Orwell called his future world's war ministry the Ministry of Peace in "1984" just as our defence ministry might be more correctly termed our offence ministry) are testing the waters. Will America stand for another Viet Nam-style involvement? Will Canadians allow their government to spend billions on "defensive" measures while unemployment and inflation rise and social services fall by the wayside?

Many Canadians can see the potential threat to peace posed by a hypocritical American administration. But few, it seems, are willing to challenge the spending priorities of their own government.

Mr. Lamontagne asked delegates at the defence conference to help him alert Canadians about the reasons for bolstering their armed forces. "If the past is any indication... Canadians will respond when they are challenged," he said.

If you're like me, the "threat" to which the minister refers is not centered in Moscow or Peking. Any political threat their ideology once posed has been far too fictionalized by American paranoia and xenophobia and now seems impotent against our relatively luxurious Western lifestyle. The threat, instead, comes from Ottawa. Do you feel challenged?

Morand takes his chances to help little guy in S. Africa



Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau of The Herald

Later this month the Ontario Legislature's Select Committee on the Ombudsman will meet to decide whether it is appropriate that MPPs give Ombudsman Donald Morand his marching orders.

Probably partly because he's running for NDP leader and wants the publicity, MPP Richard Johnston (Scarborough West) has been conducting a crusade against a proposed trip by Morand to South Africa.

The International Bar Association and the International Ombudsmen's Institute are co-sponsoring a seminar for the Association of Law Societies of South Africa on having an ombudsman-type person for that country.

Morand is to talk about the concept, but Johnston finds this so abhorrent that he wants the select committee to give Morand political direction to stay home. The New Democrat has even "launched a second front of pressure" (his words) on the ombudsman to make him obey by mobilizing the usual collection of South Africa haters in this country.

It will be interesting to see whether the select committee agrees with the principle that MPPs can exercise partisan control over Morand's speaking engagements, and whether the ombudsman himself bows to special interest groups.

STAND FIRM
So far Morand is standing firm. His position is quite clear.

"We know an ombudsman can't change the principles of the government of South Africa...we know we can't change the system itself, but within the existing system an ombuds-

man can at least see the law is applied as fairly as possible," he said.

Now that is a reasonable view, especially for those who realize that one of South Africa's day-to-day problems is a heavy-handedness by the bureaucracy in the application of laws.

The larger issue of South Africa itself is what the Johnstons of the world have all the answers for, although these at base usually translate into genocide against the Boer minority.

Moreover, what the Johnstons don't understand is that South African Boers, like Israeli Jews, Ulster Protestants, French-Canadians, Hmong Laotians, and Lebanese Christians, would sooner bring the world down in flames than quietly acquiesce in their own ethnic destruction — as so many want them to do.

ONE MAN
But ombudsmen don't deal with these sweeping vistas. They deal with the poor guy or gal—the individual—caught in the gears of government who has an immediate problem.

Advocating race war in Africa from the safety of Toronto may make one feel good, but it doesn't help the

person of any color in South Africa who has to deal with some dunderhead bureaucrat.

However, that said, one hopes Morand doesn't hold up his own office here as an example of how the South Africans should go about redressing citizen grievances against civil servants.

NOT GOOD
There exist about 100 classical ombudsman offices in 30 countries, and Ontario's has to be among the most top-heavy.

Sweden, which invented the concept, and has a population similar to Ontario's, has only 55 people to staff the ombudsman's office. Ontario has 122, with an annual budget of \$4.5 million to handle fewer than 10,000 enquiries (some repeat, and half out of its jurisdiction) a year.

This is a bit much.
It is especially true since the office works too slowly, or so the select committee said in a report tabled last year which claimed an average time of 207 days to resolve a citizen complaint.

Now South Africa could use an ombudsman, but not one that operates with that kind of glacial slowness.

POET'S CORNER

We are Forever

Flowers die, the sun disappears too.
Much easier and simpler to say
Goodbye
Than hurting you and making you cry.
And yet, there may be one chance
more.
Please answer just one query for me.
Has all the love I've tried to disguise
Penetrated that shell, and reached

your eyes.
I'll wait this last night alone
And if my stars with their broken
wishes
Fall me again, I'll give it all away
To someone, anyone, who just wants
me to stay.
—By Marlowe C. Dickson,
RR2 Beeton.

February is Heart Month

To puff or not to puff?

Second in a Four-Part Series

In 1964, the U.S. Surgeon General released this report linking cigarette smoking to death from heart and lung disease. In the ensuing years a vast amount of publicity has been given to this subject with consequences that are contradictory to say the least.

There is no doubt that the great majority of Canadians — young and old are aware of the health hazards of cigarette smoking. However, the tobacco companies have not

gone bankrupt. On the contrary, their annual sales have been increasing steadily, though many changes have taken place in their products. Although population growth and exports may account for some of the increase, current sales do constitute a danger sign of major proportions.

Canadian adult males seem to have got the message, because there has been a significant decrease in their per capita consumption, but adult females are still smoking

at the same rate as 18 years ago. Among teenagers, the per capita consumption of cigarettes by boys is relatively unchanged, whereas there has been a substantial increase in smoking among girls. This is disturbing because these future mothers not only injure themselves; they could harm a generation yet unborn. They will be a bad example to their children and it has been clearly established that the earlier people start on cigarettes, the

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