

Staff kept quarrelsome Halton united

Although we don't expect Renaissance Canada's contribution to the current embroglio involving Halton's medical officer of health MOH Dr. Peter Cole, Milton Coun. Bill Johnson, and Acton's Cher's Rest Home, will have any effect on how fast all parties reach reconciliation, we have to argue with at least one point Renaissance leader, Rev. Ken Campbell, raised in a recent letter to regional council.

While the letter questions the morals of informing high school students about birth control, something Dr. Cole advocated five years ago when he was MOH with Metropolitan Toronto and which we support, we believe it takes an unwarranted swipe at the current role of the region's — and for that matter, any — civil service.

Rev. Campbell maintains that Halton's civil servants should keep the elected representatives informed, but they over step their duties when they begin to "advise" on items of regional business.

This is a rather narrow-minded regard for the country's democratic processes. We suspect that without the region's "advise-oriented" civil servants, Halton residents might have what former town councillor Pat Patterson often described (in his barbed references to Halton's representation), as government by a "bunch of drunken sailors", lacking direction and stability.

Ultimately, deciding

STAFF COMMENT

what's best for the region's residents lies with its councillors; but whether forging major policies or acting on relatively minor items of business, decisions are most often based on recommendations from senior civil servants.

When councillors entrust staff members to do the footwork and come with some direction which council can follow, it's done with the understanding that the civil servants are the people qualified to do the job. In fact, an elected representative who plows ahead with a regional matter without the advice of his civil service is acting recklessly and doing nothing for his constituents. He usually ends up looking like a fool.

We don't disagree that bureaucracy, particularly at the federal and provincial level, is getting out of hand and contributing to government inefficiency. It's still too early to tell whether or not hiring additional senior management civil servants after last year's Hickling-Johnson review has improved efficiency in all regional departments.

Nor do we welcome belligerent civil servants of whom Rev. Campbell suggests there now are a number in the regional fold.

But one should be reminded that it has been the outspoken, more heavy-handed members of Halton's civil service which have kept the region together for the common good against councillors who would have it torn apart without giving it a chance to work.

By Chris Agaard

Hello?...Hello?...

If Canadians are among the world's biggest talkers, as Bell Canada frequently reminds us, then we will soon have plenty to grouse about when Bell presents its case before the Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC) for yet another rate increase.

"Our continuing responsibility to provide service to our customers obliges us to seek an increase in rates," reads an article in a recent special issue of the Bell News, and goes on to lament the state of economy and how inflation is continuing to push up its costs.

When somebody called to inform Bell's administration that the federal government's battle plans to fight inflation called for restraint, Bell must have rudely hung up.

The application filed by the company June 28 (to be heard at public meetings Oct. 26) calls for a 15 per cent increase in revenues next year, rather extravagant by today's standards.

Without renewed rates, Bell president J.C. Thackray maintained, current revenues won't keep pace "with the rising costs of providing service".

In the Toronto area, the average rate for a residential line may rise from \$2.90 a month to \$4.55. For business, individual line rates may rise \$13.45 a month to \$31.85. There are also substantial changes proposed for Bell's long distance service, particularly if you are making operator-handled calls.

In the same breath, Bell means about the economic crunch and then contributes to it. From offices towering above Toronto

and Montreal, Bell's chieftains appear oblivious to the fiscal soundness of general restraint. Perhaps they're giddy in the rarefied, unpolluted atmosphere surrounding the market they have skillfully monopolized.

Bell has plans to spend \$3.2 billion world-wide over the next five years, \$1.5 billion of that in 1983. If they get their increase, and there's little reason to believe they won't as they bully our wobbly-kneed CRTC, they can offer shareholders a 17 per cent rate of return on common stock holdings. If not, the return may well slip to eight per cent, right down there with other industries trying desperately to weather the slump.

One must ask the same questions which have preceded other Bell rate increase applications: Will customer service improve? Who wants another "Phonecentre" anyway? How is this going to affect small business, supposedly the backbone of our economy, which is already generally faced with financial problems? When is the finger-wagging government, so fond of telling its civil service and other Canadians to adopt more modest financial-security goals, going to start feeding some of the same medicine to obese government agencies and crown utilities like Bell Canada?

Finally, how deaf is the CRTC? What kind of public outcry, what amount of personal expense, sweat and tears does it take before the Commission barks a firm, "No" to Bell's continuing demands for more money?

It's about time somebody in Ottawa put Bell on hold for a while.



Our tough economic climate forces foes to bury hatchets



Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod

Amid all the gloom and doom of the current economic crisis, we've finally caught sight of one glimmer of light. Finally, it seems, government and organized labor are beginning to bury their hatchets - at least, they have stopped the name-calling.

Perhaps co-operation is too strong a word, but a temporary truce seems to have been struck. And considering the acrimony that has existed in the past, this is quite an achievement. It may also say something about the serious state of the economy.

A breakthrough of sorts occurred last week when the Canadian Labor Congress Executive, headed by President Dennis McDermott, entered a Parliament Hill committee room to talk with Prime Minister Trudeau and key members of his cabinet about the government's wage restraint program. What everyone expected - and I suspect this applied to the participants - was a short, angry exchange of

disagreements before the airwaves once again reverberated with the traditional exchange of insults.

NOT NASTY

We all knew what Dennis McDermott thought of the Trudeau government and its wage restraints program. A few days earlier he had called Finance Minister Allan MacEachen a "son of a bitch." And now that the government was going to ask for McDermott's co-operation in holding wage increases down to six per cent, we expected to hear some new original adjectives.

It was surprising - perhaps even shocking - when the meeting finally broke up and the CLC President emerged without one nasty thing to say about the Trudeau government, except that there was still a fundamental disagreement. Instead he talked of the serious situation facing the country.

"Our members are badly frightened," he said, almost echoing the words of Trudeau who said that "The hell has been scared out of all of us."

What happened behind those closed doors, said McDermott, was "A good exchange, an open exchange in a reasonably cordial atmosphere." He had learned that the government's restraints program has not etched in stone, there was still the possibility of changes. It seems that both sides were open, constructive and relatively cordial, quite unlike all previous meetings between the two groups.

COMMON ENEMY

What happened, apparently, was that both sides came to the conclusion that the common economic enemy was simply too threatening to be handled by divisive forces and, despite fundamental differences between labor and government, a truce had to be reached. With more than 1.3 million Canadians out of work, this was clearly no time for unnecessary squabbling.

After his meeting with the CLC president, the Prime Minister said this: "I think Canadians are beginning to say, 'Well, let's set aside our quarrels for a while and see if we can pull up our socks and act as a nation for a change; forget that we are provinces and federal government and labor and management let's see what we can do together to create a better climate here, a better economic climate and political climate.'"

There were certainly indications of such co-operation when Trudeau met recently with the Premiers and, more predictably, there was unrestrained enthusiasm when business was asked to embrace the wage restraints. But it was at this latest meeting with the CLC that the biggest breakthrough occurred and although the truce may be temporary, it's good to know that in these critical times that such antagonists as Trudeau and McDermott can sit down together and actually find common ground.

York South bid may prove tough one for NDP's Rae



Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

NDP leader Bob Rae's chances of losing the York South by-election this autumn lie somewhat between remote and nil. But then — that's what the media thought too about Jim Couits in the Spadina federal by-election.

It is that slim possibility that makes what otherwise would be a cut-and-dried affair into an interesting race.

In theory Rae could have troubles. The York South seat has been represented by the patriarch of the provincial New Democratic Party, its former leader Donald MacDonald, since 1953 when he won with 1,400 votes.

Interestingly, although the riding boundaries have changed over the years, and MacDonald's victory margin has climbed as high as 8,000, last March MacDonald again won by only 1,400 votes.

The Liberals ran second, with the Tories a close third.

The rumor mill already has the popular mayor of the local borough

running for the Conservatives, while an alderman of Italian extraction (in a riding 50 per cent Italian) is being touted for the Liberals.

OTHER SIDE

The other side of the coin, of course, was best symbolized by the recent Hamilton West by-election. The NDP candidate won easily in a seat traditionally more favorable to the other parties.

Most opinion credits the NDP victory to the unpopularity of the federal Liberals in general (with voters taking it out on their provincial cousins), and to the provincial Tory budget in particular.

Moreover, the NDP can concentrate their dedicated workers during a by-election in a way they cannot during a major campaign.

And Rae is running as party leader.

Add all those factors together and it is highly unlikely that Rae can lose.

Still, the NDP did not spend several months of internal jockeying in an attempt to find Rae another seat without a reason. And the obvious one is that the party wanted the safest possible seat.

BEST BET

In that regard the logical home for Rae would have been in the provincial equivalents of his former federal seat in east-end Toronto. But the sitting members, Jim Renwick and Marlon Bryden, both refused to resign.

So most of the drama over the past

few months has been centred on whom the party could convince to step down so Rae would not have to take one of the more chancy seats beyond core NDP country.

MacDonald's was a likely choice, and so it proved to be. (A better location, at least from the point of view of his constituents, would have been Tony Lupasella's downtown Toronto seat. For medical reasons Lupasella has not been doing his job as an MPP all that well.)

HIGH PRICE

However, what should not pass without notice is the high price MacDonald exacted from the party establishment to give up what in essence was his life-long career.

The NDP caucus will add more than \$9,000 to MacDonald's \$22,500 annual pension so that he'll continue to receive the basic MPP salary. He also becomes chairman of the NDP caucus.

In addition, he'll head up two task forces for the party on his areas of special interest, namely agriculture ("asphalt farmer" the Tories called urbanite MacDonald) and Ontario Hydro.

And he has been designated "special advisor" to Rae, whatever that means.

With MacDonald at his side Rae should never be over-confident about these things. Aristocratic parachutists like Rae have been known to crash in elections before.

Halton's History from our files

THIRTY YEARS AGO — A radical change in retail business hours will come into effect Aug. 1. From that date, stores will remain open Friday evenings until 9 p.m. and close Saturdays at 6 p.m. A petition, signed by 35 merchants, was passed by council Monday bringing the change into effect. There were no complaints at the meeting about the new hours, although there are at least ten merchants who did not sign the petition.

TWENTY YEARS AGO — Georgetown's road budget took a beating Monday when five tenders were accepted calling for an expenditure of somewhat over \$54,000 for a number of major projects. A local firm, Lyn Dale Contracting, will install Delrex Boulevard storm sewers at a price of \$3,013 and reconstruct parts of Valleyview Road, Charles and Market Streets for \$14,285. Other contracts went to Peel Construction of Brampton for surface treatment on a number of roads, \$24,636; to Godson Contracting, Toronto, for final surface coat on Main Street, \$3,850; and to Bramall and Co., Cooksville, for a new Ontario Street bridge. Concrete culverts on Main Street South, costing \$8,405 will also be installed.

TEN YEARS AGO — Substantial revenue will accrue to Georgetown's capital fund following passing of a bylaw Monday. The bylaw provides for fees ranging from \$300 for a bachelor unit to \$850 for a single family dwelling when a building permit is taken out. A two-unit residence is assessed \$750 per unit; three units or more \$650 per unit. One bedroom apartments pay \$450 and two or more bedrooms, \$600. Coun. Ernie Hyde led a spirited attack, claiming the bylaw penalizes the builder of a single home and that it may only apply to the older part of town.

ONE YEAR AGO — Sewer and water servicing will remain a regional responsibility, Halton councillors maintained last Wednesday, but the provincial government will be pressed for more grants to iron out alleged rate disparities among municipalities. Council's support for fully regionalized servicing, along with Burlington's proposal to squeeze at least \$6.8 million from the province to subsidize sewer and water rates, quashed Halton Hills' hopes for a ministerial review of the recently completed joint sewer and water study before endorsing its recommendations. Urging councillors to reject moves aimed at pressuring the government to take a greater share of the sewer and water servicing responsibility, Halton Hills Mayor Pete Pomeroy suggested the Burlington amendment lacks solid financial calculations needed to support it.

POET'S CORNER Summer

The humid weather brings to all a pain in the head I do recall
The campfire burning big and bright
We're all up until late at night,
The morning comes in no time at all
The birds are driving me up the wall
Off to the beach we all depart.
We soon arrive and the seagulls start.
We chased them off into the air
While the girls decide to wash their hair
Into the lake we start to run
Oh, we are having so much fun
Until the time I nearly drowned
And after that to the beach I'm bound.

—By DEREK HODGSON, AHS student

Love

Love is like a bird, that glides through the sky,
Heading far into the clouds,
With its wingspan spread long and far.
As its freedom takes it some-where warm,
And it reaches for the stars,
As it goes out of sight.

—By JULIE TYERS, AHS student

Dreams

The canoe moved slowly across the lake
I see the wilderness all around me
My troubles are gone when I am awake
With all the life and the sounds of the free.
The water is calm and over so clear
With the faint wind that is moved through my hair
This place is so great with nothing to fear
That when you see a bear you don't even care.
The campfire burns so big and so bright
The warmth is good and so relaxing
The moon's out and doesn't affect your sight
As everyone else continues to sing.
Too bad that tomorrow we'll be back home
Maybe in the future I'll be free to roam.

—By DEREK HODGSON, AHS student

Art In The Park

The Oakville Art Society is holding its annual ART IN THE PARK show and sale on Monday, August 2nd, from 10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. in Coronation Park, Lakeshore Road West (between 3rd and 4th Lines) in Oakville. About 50 participants will be selling paintings, pottery, sculpture, photographs, macramé, embroidery, bath, handwoven wearables, jewellery, leather, stained glass and other crafts. This is one of the major fundraising events for the O.A.S., a non profit organization which provides many educational programs, especially in painting, pottery and sculpture. Admission for Art In The Park will be 50 cents for adults; children under 12, and senior citizens free.

HORNBY BALL CLUB'S 36TH ANNUAL Garden Party

Saturday 6:30 p.m. Ball game, meat pies and country music.