

Halton Hills Outlook

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Their Outlook

Media snubbed Green Party

In the 1985 provincial election, George Vezina was a candidate for the Green Party in Ottawa West riding.

On April 30 that year, during the campaign, local television station CBOT, a CBC affiliate, held a debate on the topic of full funding for Roman Catholic schools.

Commission (CRTC). He won.

The CBC's lame defence of its exclusion of the Greens (and, by extension, the other significant smaller party in this country, the Libertarians) was that the party was not big enough to justify giving it exposure.

The CRTC decision had this to say in response:

"Yet in order to grow, a party requires exposure and it is this very exposure which the CBC's guidelines deny."

"This amounts to a vicious circle. A registered party which is not big enough to receive coverage may never become big enough because it does not receive coverage."

And as far as the decision to ignore Vezina throughout and to exclude him from the April 30 full funding debate, the CRTC added:

"DIDN'T MEET DUTY"

"Under these circumstances, the Commission would conclude that CBOT did not meet its duty to either Mr. Vezina or the public."

"There was a duty on the station to afford Mr. Vezina some coverage (although) this does not mean he necessarily should have participated in the debate," the CRTC said.

It will be interesting to see whether Vezina's successful appeal to the CRTC has any effect on the media coverage of this current campaign.

There is a deeper issue, here, too. It involves all the cozy, incestuous deals the three old-line parties make with each other in order to give them an edge over newcomers to the political process.

This is most evident with the rules involving taxpayer subsidies to candidates and political parties, which are written in such a way that the three old-line parties get to raid the public coffers while newcomers are excluded.

But it includes everything from attempting to prevent special interest groups from buying advertising during campaigns, to the spending limits that most benefit well-known parties, to the day-to-day use of hundreds of taxpayer-paid-for Queen's Park staff, whose only function is to get members of the three old-line parties re-elected.



Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

Unlike the three old-line parties - Progressive Conservatives, Liberals and New Democrats - the Greens opposed such funding.

But even though he was the sole dissident, CBOT refused to allow Vezina to participate.

In fact, the station's indifference to Vezina went further. CBOT gave him no coverage whatsoever during the five-week campaign. It also refused his party free air time, although it is a registered Ontario political party with policies (in general, radically pro-environmentalist and anti-nuclear) distinct from other parties.

In the end, Vezina won 2.2 per cent of the vote in his riding, a respectable start.

MONOPOLY

But it is tough to build from there as the old-line parties have a monopoly position in terms of media access, especially to television - the most powerful influence in politics today.

And unlike newspapers, which anyone can start, television is restricted by the limited number of airwaves to a limited number of stations using them.

A licence to use those airwaves has explicitly carried with it the requirement that political coverage be "equitable" in a political party sense. (In an ideological sense, it is invariably left-wing, but that is another matter.)

So Vezina took his complaint about lack of equity to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications

JAWS IV

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE TO STEP OUTSIDE, AGAIN

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 ONION BREADS 1977
 L.A.



Happiness is a positive cash flow

Happiness in the real estate business is a positive cash flow. People who own rental property like to have some money left over after they pay the bills in case a tenant moves out or the roof falls in.

Buying a duplex, fourplex or the house next door has been an excellent alternative to a retirement savings plan over the past 20 years. A person who is handy with a hammer and saw can earn a good return from rental property.



Your Business

By **DIANNE MALEY**
 Business Analyst

More important, the price of real estate has risen dramatically, outpacing all other investments in some areas of the country.

But there are hazards for the small investor. And if that person lives in southern Ontario, a positive cash flow will be hard to find.

Rents in Ontario have not kept pace with the big increase in house prices. This spells trouble for anyone who buys an investment property. At best, the rents will just cover the expenses. The tight market leaves no cushion when things go wrong.

Common sense is the best guide to real estate investing. Hope for the best, but prepare for the worst. The first question you have to ask yourself is: Do I have what it takes to be a landlord? Could I evict someone who cannot pay the rent?

FEW RIGHTS

If you can get over that hurdle, the next step is to go to a provincial government office and get a copy of the landlord-tenant legislation for your province. You may be surprised at how few rights a landlord has.

The biggest obstacle to profitable investment is rent control legislation. Usually, existing rents will not be high enough to cover the new, higher mortgage you will have on the property. Don't assume you can raise the rent immediately. Usually, you cannot.

That automatically rules out most investment properties. But if you find one that is empty or that has just been renovated, you may be able to do your own thing.

With a rental property, you can deduct mortgage interest and other expenses from rental income. This

makes it good business to pay less money down than you would for your own home, where interest is not deductible. A down payment of 15 to 20 per cent is generally enough for an income-producing property.

This allows you to "leverage" your investment. Leverage is when you use a little of your own money and lots of someone else's. For example, if you pay \$20,000 down on a \$100,000 income property that rises in value by \$20,000, you have made 100 per cent profit on your investment. The bank or trust company that lent you the money has made 11 per cent, or whatever the current mortgage rate is.

REDUCED

The more you put down, the more your leverage will be reduced. Once you have decided how much to put down, add up all your expenses. These will include mortgage principal and interest, taxes, hydro,

heat, insurance and maintenance. Make the maintenance allowance generous, unless you can do all the work yourself. Then add in a contingency reserve for vacancies. Subtract all this from your rental income, and if there's anything left you've found a good deal.

If there isn't, you could be taking a big chance. You may not get much of a rental increase over the term of your mortgage, and when it comes up for renewal, interest rates could be higher. If you have been getting by on a shoestring, you could be in trouble.

In a way, owning investment property is much like running a small business. If you can hang in for the first five years, you've got it made. Like a business, it requires work and attention. There will be days when you will wonder if perhaps you shouldn't have bought shares of a big developer instead.

Heat bugs sing the blues

WOOD, WATER AND WILDLIFE
 By **MARION STREIBIG**
 For the Federation of Ontario naturalists

Now the dog days of summer are upon us, hot and oppressive. Gone are the sounds of an earlier, cooler time, the frog choruses and the birds' operatic spring songs. During the scorching heat of the day, there is really only one persistent song, the buzzing throb of the heat bug or cicada. The song of cicada has no melody, only an insistent percussive drone. The song rises to a vibrating crescendo and then fades gradually, rather like the heat shimmer on pavement which melts away as we approach.

Although the cicada is the leader of the daytime chorus, there are other, intermittent singers like the grasshopper. And the nights are ruled by the pulsing tempo of the cricket. All these songs of love, the male is singing to attract a mate, are not song, at all, but percussive sounds made by the scraping or vibrating of body parts. The technical term for this is stridulation. The insects that scrape their bodies like the crickets and grasshoppers, need wings as resonators, the actual sound being made by the scraping of wings or legs. However, the apparatus producing the cicada's "song" is composed of vibrating membranes that is stretched over a pair of small chambers

that act as resonators. No external movement shakes the body of the singing cicada. The contraction is internal.

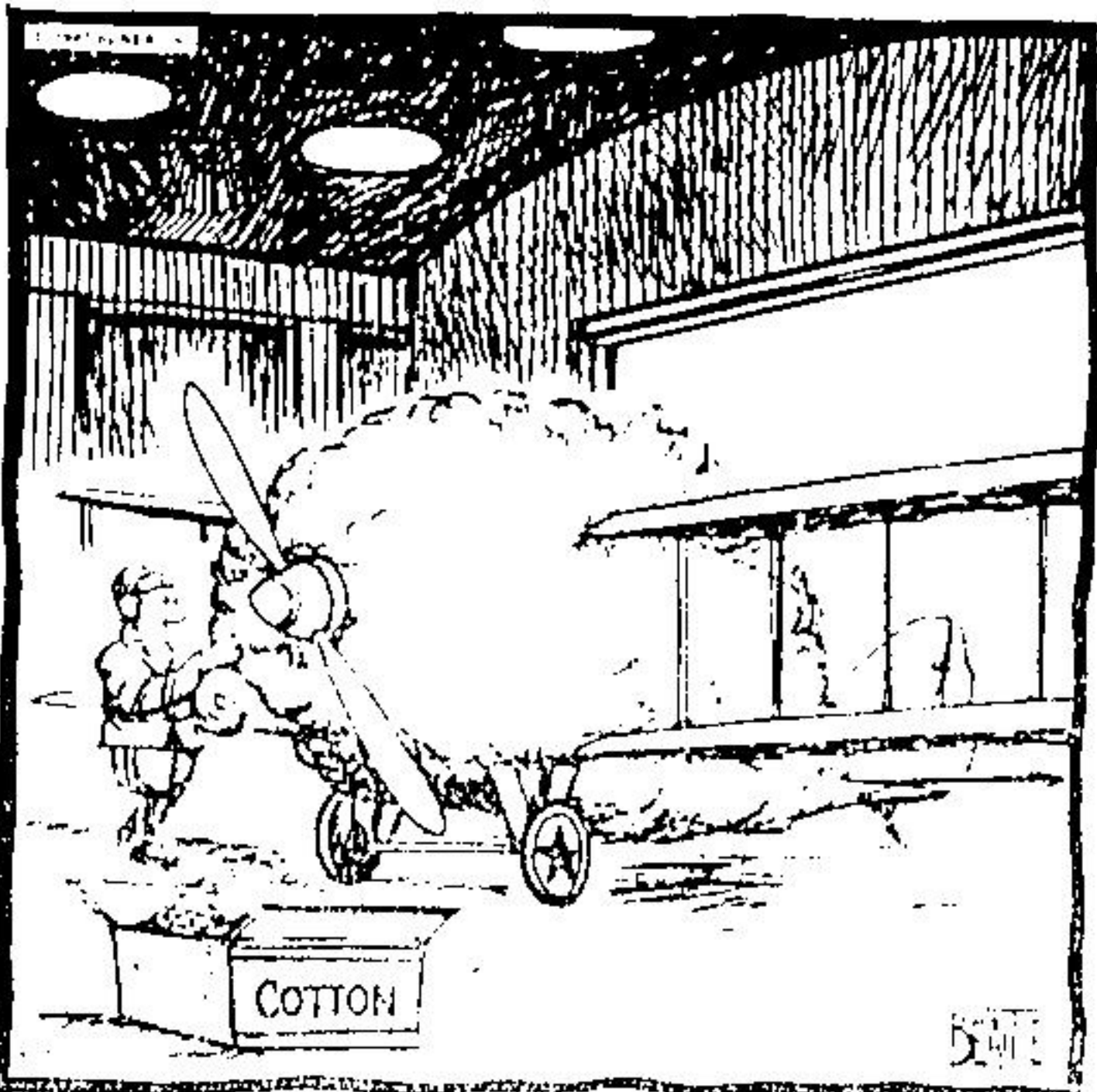
Once the male has successfully attracted a female and has procreated, the female will slit a twig with her ovipositor and deposit her eggs. As soon as it hatches the nymph drops to the ground, burrows into the soil and feeds by sucking the juices of tree roots. This seventeen-year cicada, does not emerge until the seventeenth spring. During this time its appearance rather like a mechanical fly with comically large front feet, does not change much.

When the time finally comes for it to emerge, any time from late May to early July, it will dig its way out with its enlarged front feet. Its casting will split down the back to allow the adult cicada to emerge. The adult cicada will have but a brief week of life above ground to recompense it for all those years of underground burrowing.

The cicada is of the order Hemiptera to which belong those bane of the gardener, existence, the aphid and the whitefly. Like them, equipped with sucking mouthparts, it is in many respects a large spittlebug. The adult is more than an inch long. Fortunately for the rose garden the cicada prefers trees to flowers which are more suited to their size.

There is a good reason for the heat bugs and why the cicada is the insect chorus-remember that the singers we are hearing were likely born in 1970.

SNAFU* by Bruce Beattie



Early attempts at aircraft camouflage