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Gary sees his shadow

Gary the Groundhog came, he saw... and he ran. That means Kleinberg's hairy soothsayer saw his shadow Feb. 2, Groundhog Day. Thus, Gary has predicted six more weeks of winter for us all, reporting in from the Kortright Centre for Conservation. This contradicts the early morning prediction of his distant, and more famous, cousin Wlarton Willie. Willie was awake at 8 a.m. Tuesday and didn't see his shadow. But Kortright's supervisor Paul Masterson explains the inconsistency. Gary the Groundhog makes his foray into the forest clearing at 12 noon. This year, the sun was beaming at mid-day, providing what Mr. Masterson feels is a more accurate prediction. "Two years ago we contradicted Wlarton Willie and we were right," he said. He claims Gary the Groundhog has been correct 80 per cent of the time.

In the hills

Be a Valentine

It's Valentine's Day soon, so have a heart. The Canadian Red Cross Society requires you to give blood at its clinic Feb. 8 in Georgetown at the Holy Cross Auditorium. The clinic runs from 1:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. Be a friend to someone truly in need.

\$172,226 contract

A Georgetown company has won a federal contract worth \$172,226. The Supply and Services Department has announced. Meadow Glen-Skrow Canning Ltd. has sold canned goods to the Defence Department.

ASSIC meeting

The Acton Social Services and Information Centre is holding its Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 10 at 7 p.m. in the Old Town Hall, 19 Willow St. North, Acton. Video and guest speaker Dr. Doug Brown. Topic: Children's Assessment and Treatment. All are welcome.

PCs cancel

The founding meeting of the Halton-Feel Federal Progressive Conservative Riding Association, which was to be held Feb. 10, has been postponed. Feb. 10 was also selected as the date when the new federal budget will be presented. It is the opinion of the steering committee for the Association that the four area MPs who were planning on attending should be in Ottawa so that they can best serve their constituents, by being fully versed on the budget's contents, said a committee spokesman.

Water for sale

Halton Region is going to buy the Huttonville water well for \$80,000. The well, which used to service Brampton until that city began pumping water from Lake Ontario, is capable of pumping one million gallons of water per day, according to Halton's Public Works Commissioner Robert Moore. The water could help service the proposed expansion of Georgetown South, said Mr. Moore. Halton will conduct more test drilling in Georgetown South first but if more water isn't found there the Huttonville station could prove useful, he said.

An open board

An open meeting of the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital Board of Directors will take place Feb. 25, at 4:15 p.m., in the board room. The agenda will be posted by 9 a.m. the day of the meeting in the administration offices. Those wishing to address the board must forward a request in writing to the Chairman, Board of Directors, Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital, Princess Anne Drive, Georgetown, Ont., L7G 2B4, by Feb. 11.

La Leche meet

The La Leche League of Acton welcomes all women interested in breastfeeding information to the next meeting Monday Feb. 8 at 7:30 p.m. at 16 Wilbur Street North, Acton. Discussion will include childbirth and planning for the early days at home. For more information call 876-4732.

Halton Pro-Life:

Will fight abortion decision

Local anti-abortion activists are still reeling from the Supreme Court of Canada decision which declared the country's abortion law unconstitutional. Don Patterson, a founder of the Halton Pro-Life organization was "very disappointed" with the decision but his group is already preparing to fight back. He is encouraging local citizens to contact local MP John McDermid and voice their objections to the ruling. Mr. Patterson also wants the government to invoke Section 33 of the Charter of Rights which he says puts a "holding order" on the Supreme Court's decision. The holding order would allow the federal government to draft a new abortion law and push it through parliament while preventing abortion on demand in the meantime, said Mr. Patterson.



The decision caught local anti-abortion groups off guard, he said. "We certainly never thought the court decision would go the way that it did," said Mr. Patterson. Mr. Patterson thinks the government is "obligated" to provide an effective abortion law. The group wants citizens to send letters and telegrams to Mr. McDermid, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, Health Minister Jake Epp and Justice Minister Ray Natyshyn urging the government to invoke Section 33. But plans are still in the early stages, he said. "It's been a real shock to us. We're just trying to get back to square one." The group also plans to ask every candidate in the next federal election to sign either a pro-choice or a pro-life statement. Abortion, Mr. Patterson promised, will be a major issue in the next federal election. "We're just hoping that our Christian friends will all join in now," said Mr. Patterson who has seven sons and two daughters. The Pro-Life organization represents a majority of the people, Mr. Patterson contends.

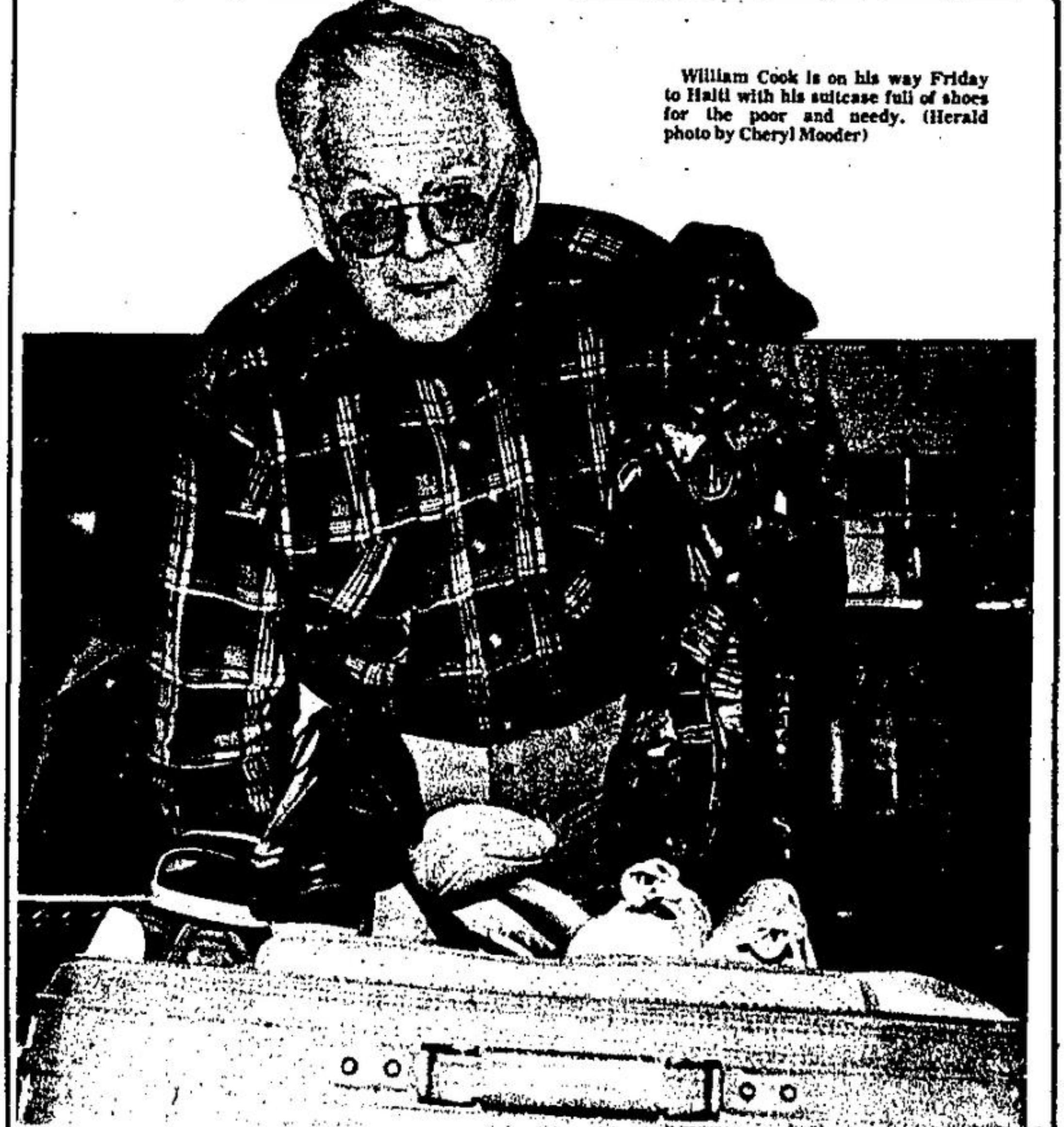
The problem with the current law, which has allowed so many abortions, said Mr. Patterson, is that it says a woman's health must be in danger before an abortion can be legally performed. But women are claiming that their mental health is in danger and that allows the legal abortion, said Mr. Patterson. "It makes you wonder what the heck is going on." The Supreme Court's ruling was also applauded by many women's groups throughout the nation including the local WHAM (Women of Halton Action Movement) group. WHAM Health Committee Chairperson Barbara Walker said the decision represents a "great step forward" in the abortion laws. The decision was a "solid" 5-2 majority indicating in a clear cut way the law was unjust, said Ms. Walker. She believes the Supreme Court's decision will be welcomed by most Canadians. WHAM doesn't plan to sit still and wait for the government's next move, said Ms. Walker. The group will likely lobby the federal government to heed the statements written by the Justices of the Supreme Court. Should the government decide to write a new law, it would have to be less conservative than the law just struck down, said Ms. Walker. Any law which went against the reasonings of the Supreme Court would also likely be labelled unconstitutional, she said. The Supreme Court's ruling shouldn't effect procedures at the Georgetown District Memorial Hospital. No abortions have been performed at the hospital since the spring of 1986 because no doctors could be found to sit on the abortion committee, said Executive Director Mark Rochon. The abortion process is really up to the individual physicians because they refer their patients to other hospitals or doctors who perform the abortions, said Mr. Rochon. Liberal MPP Walt Elliot said although the caucus is now examining the decision, any move by the provincial government would be "premature" until the federal government reacts clearly to the decision. Asked if the Liberals, who opposed "abortion as a method of birth control" during last summer's election, feel a need to react to the Supreme Court decision, Mr. Elliot said: "I haven't any idea about that." The decision has complex legal implications and the government first has to study it in detail before any solid moves can be made, said Mr. Elliot.

Built-in prejudice against rural areas claims farming rep

The Halton Federation of Agriculture wants the Region to change the way agricultural impact studies are conducted because there is a "built-in bias" to the current system. The HFA has "serious concerns about the objectivity of some of the agricultural impact studies that have been done in recent years," said OFA President Norman Biggar. The agricultural industry, which has over \$80 million investments in "being threatened by the inconsistency of these agricultural impact studies," he said. Right now, any person or company proposing to develop land must hire a consultant to conduct an agricultural impact study. The OFA says the fact that the consultant is hired by the proponent of the development means there is a built-in bias. The OFA wants the Region to select the consulting firm using the money from the proponent of the development. In that way the consulting firm would be working for the Region and any bias would be towards Halton's Official Plan designations, said Mr. Biggar. He cited three specific cases which occurred in Halton Hills that he said are just a few "flaring" examples of the bias. In 1985 a study on lands surrounding the Croatian Centre said a tank which can store two million litres of animal manure just 150 metres from the centre would have no impact on the quality of the air surrounding the centre, said Mr. Biggar. The lands are located northwest of the centre and the prevailing west to east winds would bring the odor from the manure towards it, he said. When the manure is spread on the

fields it almost surrounds the Croatian Centre, he said. In another case in March, 1987 a consulting firm used a map which indicated an unused barn was on a property in Halton Hills, said Mr. Biggar. The map also indicated the farmland was idle. In fact, the barn was being used and the land was being used for hay production, he said. In a third case in 1987 lands owned by Ron Pinkney on Lot 10, Concession 6 were the subject of a consultant's report that had "a lot of things... that we did not agree with," said Mr. Biggar. The HFA asked Halton to hire the consultants instead of the developer last fall but the Federation didn't supply enough background material to support its case and the Region rejected the request, said Mr. Biggar.

William has heart and sole



William Cook is on his way Friday to Haiti with his suitcase full of shoes for the poor and needy. (Herald photo by Cheryl Mooder)

Steps into charity role to help Haitian needy

A Georgetown man travelled Friday on what has become an annual sojourn to Haiti with suitcases of goods for the impoverished people there. William Cook has been taking shoes, glasses, plastic carrying bags and other articles down to the West Indies country since 1983. The poverty the farmer witnessed during a 1982 pleasure trip to the southern islands of Haiti and Jamaica tugged at his heart strings. "I saw what was going on down there," Mr. Cook said. "It started from there." "They are a proud people," he added. "The Haitians are trying hard but getting no place." For this three-week trip, Mr. Cook packed two large trunks and two suitcases full of approximately 35 of glasses, a numerous array of brightly colored shoes, lots of soap and anything else the septuagenarian could collect.

For his winter holiday, Mr. Cook took a tiny beige suitcase and maroon shoulder bag. "All you need are shorts, a shirt and shoes," he said. The glasses Mr. Cook takes are mostly on the strong side because, he said, "people down there... a lot of them are pretty well blind." "I get a lot of it very cheap," the 74-year-old said. He picks up his articles anywhere he can such as the Salvation Army, discount stores and garage sales. "I got a nice bunch of shoes from St. Vincent de Paul," he said. Friday Mr. Cook began his trip by driving to Fort Lauderdale, Fla., where he will stay with his daughter-in-law until a Haitian with a freighter ship picks him up for the four day cruise to Port Prince, Haiti. Then the Georgetown man meets with the Haitian who knows people in need. Mr. Cook dispenses his goods, he said, "just to the people who really need them."

Principle of principals... Schools need teachers most trustee argues

It was close but no cigar. In a vote of seven against and six in favor of the Halton Board of Education trustees voted down hiring more principals and vice-principals for elementary schools in the new school year. Georgetown trustee Dick Howitt said he agreed with the policy in principle but felt the timing to pass it was not right. "My main concern is I want to be able to rank this along with my priorities," he said. "I want to see how the rest of the budget shapes up." The Board has already committed itself to funding several programs such as music and computer programs, and at this time the Board may not be able to afford the between \$60,000 and \$70,000 price tag to hire more administrative staff. Although Mr. Howitt realizes the need to hire more principals, he feels the priority lies in increasing teaching staff and thus reducing class size. In past years, due to factors such as Bill 82, which put special education classes in schools, French Im-

ersion programs and demands on administrators to stay current with educational changes, workload for principals has increased. In an 18-month study, a committee reviewed the expectations and workload of principals. The changes, which would have been put into effect over three years beginning in September 1989, would have placed a full-time principal in all elementary schools with some schools, depending on student enrollment, receiving full-time or part-time vice-principals. For example, full-time principals would have been placed in 64 schools, full-time vice-principals in 30 schools and half-time vice-principals in 14 schools. Milton trustee Bob Clarke agreed with Trustee Howitt in that more principals are needed but the timing is off. He questioned whether or not principals and vice-principals accept too much responsibility rather than delegating it. Superintendent of Student Services Bob Williams pointed out that in secondary schools, principals have department heads to help lighten the administrative load but in elementary schools, where there are no department heads, the supervisory tasks fall on the principals' shoulders. Oakville trustee Janis Millan said the board is aware of the increase in workload for principals in the past few years. "Bill 82 brought more kids in the schools who need extra help," she said. The trustee added principals are constantly being expected to attend meetings and be brought up to date with issues such as child abuse and AIDS. "We are constantly urging our staff to be better," she said, "(and) must recognize the many diverse ways (their) duties have changed." Burlington trustee Dave Coons did not support the policy for the same reasons as Trustee Howitt and Trustee Clarke. The music program costs \$333,000 to implement with no provincial help, and the computer program \$1.3 million with no provincial grant, he said. The cost of \$750,000 to fund this policy would go right to the mill rate and out of the taxpayer's pocket.

\$35 million too much for Region

Halton Region is looking for ways to pare down the price of a proposed \$35 million expansion of its Regional complex on Bronte Road in Oakville. The first phase of the expansion would include an addition to the current Regional Headquarters, relocation of Halton Regional Police Headquarters on Trafalgar Road to a new building on the Bronte Road site and a "shared facilities" building which could house a cafeteria, a day-care centre, a gym and meeting rooms. The first phase would be completed by late 1991 or early 1992. Second and third phases would contain additions to the Regional Headquarters in 1999 and 2006 costing a total of \$5.5 million in 1987

dollars. But Regional Finance Commissioner Joe Rinaldo has told councillors Halton can't afford \$35 million right now. He recommended a \$25 to \$28 million range for the new building. Acting on that advice, Halton's Administration and Finance Committee instructed Regional staff and the Halton Police Commission to sit down and come up with ways to reduce the cost of the new Police Headquarters building. As it's proposed right now, that building alone would cost about \$11.1 million. The Committee also approved \$8,000 to hire the consulting firm of Laventhol and Horwath/The Thom Partnership, who did the original

space needs study, to look at ways to reduce the cost of the proposed \$5 million expansion of the Regional Administration building. The shared facilities building is expected to cost about \$5.7 million and parking, roads, landscaping, utilities, design fees would cost just over \$9 million. An additional \$1 million for furnishing and the cost of purchasing 8.5 acres of land would bring the total cost of phase one to \$35 million. Delaying expansion rather than paring down the cost now might be more expensive in the long run, said the Region's Chief Administrative Officer John Fleming. The Administrative Complex and the police force "are in serious need of additional office space," said Mr. Fleming and renting or purchasing temporary office space will be costly. He said the proposed expansion of the Regional complex is "not extravagant" but reducing the cost now is preferable to delays. In the meantime, the Administration and Finance Committee has approved \$61,400 for improvements in the environmental conditions in the current complex providing the money can be incorporated into the 1988 capital budget. The Region is also looking for an additional 5,000 square feet in office and storage space until the expansion is completed.