

Opinion Page

30 years ago

Greetings by telegram from Queen Elizabeth and letters from Prime Minister Diefenbaker and Sandy Best, MP, were received by Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Bradford when they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary, June 20, 1959.

Three local girls graduated recently at Alma College in St. Thomas. Marilyn Heslop, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Rex Heslop, Heslop Court, completed her Grade 12 studies and intended to enter Teachers College in the fall. Karen Scott, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Scott, Maple Ave., graduated, and planned to return to Alma in the fall. Gail McGilvray, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Garfield McGilvray, Guelph Street, that year completed the commercial course winning a gold pin for general proficiency.

All pupils of Mrs. Bernice Gowland, ATCM, were successful in receiving honors in their piano examinations held recently at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. Successful students were: Carol Lawson, Grade 3; Kenneth Bell, Grade 4; Dianne McKane, Grade 4; Edith McDonald, Grade 5; Wayne Preston and Richard Butt, Grade 2 theory.

15 years ago

Halton Hills cancer drive exceeded its 1974 quota of \$15,500 by more than \$2,000, reported campaign chairman June Magnuson. "This excellent result was due to the effort of 600 volunteer canvassers, the co-operation received by the people of Halton Hills and the news media," she said.

Christian Scientists from Georgetown attending the annual meeting of the denomination's international headquarters in Boston, Massachusetts heard that today's need for moral integrity is one of the most obvious urgencies in our society.

Eleven guide and brownie

Halton's History from our files

leaders and one gentleman from Acton district recently completed their standard Red Cross first aid course and were presented with their certificates at the Guide's Own day held in the scout house. Receiving certificates were: Bea Ginger, Helen Rowe, Rose Seaton, Marjorie Strongitharm, Doug Vaughn, Margaret Wilson, Darlene McDonald, Shirley Scott, Lynne Simioni, Jean Vaughn, and Patricia Van.

10 years ago

Westfront Film Productions Incorporated of Scarborough was seeking the approval and co-operation of local civic officials and businessmen for a four-week production schedule which will transform selected areas of Georgetown into small-town USA for scenes from the film "Never Trust an Honest Thief." Filming was expected to begin July 30.

Despite initial reluctance, both municipalities, Halton Region and Halton Hills have agreed to pool their financial resources and grant the Acton Community Services Centre the additional \$1,980 needed to cover its 1979 operating budget.

5 years ago

The Chamber of Commerce's BIG celebration achieved their goal of attracting more than 5,000 people to Gordon Alcott Arena. The three day event was undoubtedly a crowd-pleaser for the many who toured through the some 157 booths and displays marking Georgetown's 120th anniversary.

Don't shoot the messenger of news

Kell's Korner

Donna Kell
Herald Staff

Please councillors of Halton Hills, don't shoot the messenger!

I had the amazement of sitting through a town general assembly meeting the other night where the press became the scapegoats for what was a lack of communication between the town and the organizers of last week's Highland Games.

The games, a 14-year Scottish tradition in Georgetown, were threatened because organizers didn't feel they were getting co-operation from the town. The town maintains they did nothing wrong.

But from fear, or lack of diligence in finding the source of the problem, some councillors have said "bad press" is the reason the town is buzzing with talks of this year being the Highland Games' last season.

Mark Holmes and I sat innocently, albeit attentively, in the press box last week as town councillors shared their experiences at the Highland Games. They had every opportunity to proclaim their innocence in what seems like one confused situation after another.

Apparently the mayor spoke to the games executive a while before the games took place, but apparently that wasn't good enough. One account says the group didn't want camping this year, another said that they did.

So when camping was cancelled,

it was done in a state of confusion at town council. It was too convoluted to even report on!

But the mayor was absent that week, and town councillors said they didn't know what exchange had taken place between the mayor and the Highland Games organizers.

Monday night, the mayor said he was quite surprised by what he read in the press. One councillor said what appeared in the press would cause the town "irreparable damage."

But from most accounts, damage was already done before the story appeared in the papers.

Several councillors attending the Highland Games at the Fairgrounds in Georgetown were the source of reporters' information. They were the ones who said there was a loudspeaker announcement saying the town didn't want to continue the games next year.

As chance would have it, games organizer Keith Spicer was at the council chambers, unsuspectingly delivering a winning raffle ticket prize to Coun. Norm Elliott.

Mr. Spicer stated his qualms with the town were over the treatment of the group during this year's Highland Games. On the phone last week, he said that things were difficult enough to find accommodation in Halton Hills without cutting off camping rights for those visiting from across the country and from south of the border.

But in all this confusion, one thing is clear. Reporters report. And politicians "politick." We will report what we hear, and politicians will do their best to squirm out of often awkward situations.

And sometimes, that means taking aim at the messenger.

LETTERS

Democracy has proven to be the weakest form of government

Dear Sir,

In the midst of the current uproar in China, a 21-year-old student informed the nation's 84-year-old leader - "You really don't understand the point..." This reminds us of a cartoon we saw some years ago which depicted a student rushing out of university and proclaiming to the world - "I've just got my B.A.!" The world responded - "Take it easy, son, sit

down and I'll teach you the rest of the alphabet."

Too many university students these days are idealistic youngsters who would tear down all existing institutions overnight, but, unfortunately, lack the experience and maturity to replace them with anything better. In the image seen in vision by Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2), the four World Empires are symboliz-

ed by precious metals. Democracy, however, is the clay element of the composite. It has proven to be the weakest form of government devised in the human experiment. In essence it is just one level above anarchy - a conclusion reflected in ominous current trends developing in Western society.

K. Barrett,
Guelph

Views on tax reforms clash



Ottawa

Vic Parsons

By VIC PARSONS
Ottawa Bureau
Thomson News Service

Will Michael Wilson's new Goods and Services Tax mean more jobs, or fewer? Will it hurt, or help, the regions? Will it be used to cut the deficit, or not?

There are fundamental disagreements between the finance minister's view of his federal sales-tax baby, and the assessment unwrapped recently by the Conference Board, a respected private research agency.

It seems the only thing the two sides agree on is that the nine-per-cent GST, to be introduced in 1991, will whack up consumer prices by about 7.3 per cent from the previously anticipated five per cent.

Some mighty big assumptions are being made about the impact and the nature of the new tax.

The Conference Board makes three. Let's look at how realistic they are.

First, it assumes that employees who have their pocketbooks dented by higher consumer prices won't try to make up losses by asking for bigger wages. Unless there's a wage-depressing recession, that seems unrealistic.

The board, by the way, says spending money available to con-

sumers in 1991 will be \$5.5 billion less because of the GST.

Assumption Two is that the Bank of Canada will not intervene with higher interest rates. Despite his obsession with inflation, John Crow, the central bank's governor, has hinted he won't be overly concerned with a one-time hit by the GST.

NERVOUS BANKER

But Crow gets twitchy when workers hint they might like a few extra bucks to restore their lost buying power.

Finally, the board says it expects businesses will fully remove the existing 13.5-per-cent manufacturers' sales tax before adding the GST.

There's something Pollyanna-ish about this assumption. The temptation to leave a few extra pennies on the price-tags of currently-taxed goods might prove overwhelming.

A recession might be the only thing that would persuade producers to completely remove the existing tax. Prices would be inclined to fall if consumers just stop buying.

With these assumptions, what does the board foresee for 1991? There will be a loss of 72,000 jobs that year as the economy shrinks. In 1992, that could rise to about 100,000 lost jobs. By 1993, the losses should be halted.

If there was no GST in 1991, the economy would grow by 3.2 per cent, the board says. With it, economic output rises by 2.7 per cent. In 1992, growth should be faster with sales-tax reform than without.

Despite the promise that the GST will be "revenue neutral," the board says the new tax will extract \$1.3 billion more from taxpayers in

1991 and this will go to \$2.7 billion by 1993. This money, it argues, will be applied to deficit reduction.

REGIONS HIT

Moreover, the board says, some regions will be heavily hit. The GST will be particularly brutal in the Atlantic provinces, largely because it will apply to services. One service is tourism, which the board estimates will lose about \$1 billion nationally. That's because higher taxes on restaurant meals and hotel rooms will discourage both Canadian and foreign visitors.

Quebec will also suffer because its clothing industry will be hit and it has a relatively-important service sector. Prosperous Ontario and Western Canada should have net gains, except where tourism is important.

The board's analysis has made Wilson somewhat cranky. He insists the government will return any windfalls from the GST to taxpayers in the form of sales-tax credits and reduced income tax. There will be no extra money for Ottawa, he says.

But you could almost see him wink when he added that there could be more cash for the government if the economy is stronger than his department expects. Remember, this is the same Wilson who said income surtaxes would be removed when the GST came in, and then changed his mind.

Wilson also says the reformed tax will mean \$9 billion more each year to the economy, that households receiving average wages will have more spending money after all taxes, and that jobs will be created, not lost.

Later this month, technical papers on the GST will be published. Perhaps then there won't be as much groping in the dark.

Good old American assertiveness pulls 'em over every time



Weir's View

By Ian Weir
Thomson News Service

Like a lot of Canadians, I don't really rank very highly in terms of assertiveness.

My own theory is that this is simply a national trait, and one which separates us from the Americans.

When it came time to choose a national symbol, the Americans selected the eagle. Our own ancestors steeled in a country full of bull moose and grizzly bears, and opted instead for the beaver.

It would be tough to be much more self-effacing than this, short of going straight to the tufted titmouse.

But I'm nonetheless fascinated to see good ol' American assertiveness in action. Which is why it was so intriguing to read about Sylvester Stallone's amazing solution to traffic problems in L.A.

It seems Sly has had loudspeakers installed in each of his cars. When he gets stalled in a traffic jam, he simply orders other drivers to pull over, and apparently, they actually do.

Well. My first response - quite frankly - was to sneer. Just for starters, there's this business about installing a loud-speaker "in each of his cars."

Perhaps it's my Scots ancestry, but something begins to rankle whenever I hear of someone who owns more than one car. Heck, I even have doubts about people who own more than one necktie.

Still, let's try to be fair. Stallone's solution to traffic problems might seem a little ostentatious, but at least it's preferable to certain other strategies favored by California motorists.

Awhile back, as you'll recall, there was that spate of news stories about Californians who were responding to traffic congestion by shooting at other drivers. Which seemed a classic example of American assertiveness taken to a fairly unfortunate extreme.

"Look, Madge - the guy in the Honda just changed lanes without signalling. Sorry, Hon, but I'm going to have to kill him."

Oh, Walter! Couldn't you just wing him a little, instead?"

Besides, anyone who's even been stuck in traffic can empathize with Stallone's frustration. After all, traffic jams serve to illustrate other people's shocking lack of consideration.

There you are, trying to drive home from work. And you're stuck at five miles an hour, thanks to a pack of flaming idiots who had the

gall to finish work at the same time.

Still, the mind boggles at the sheer nerve of someone who would install a loud-speaker in his car. Think about it - what exactly does he say to those other drivers?

"Emergency! Emergency! Movie star late for his lunch-thing!" Or does he just get straight to the point? "I'm Sylvester Stallone, and you're not. So pull over, peasant."

This, of course, raises a provocative question: would you personally pull off the road if Sylvester Stallone ordered you to do so over his loud-speaker?

Let's be honest - Sly Stallone may be pretty hot stuff in the eyes of Sly Stallone. But to a lot of other people, he's just another middle-aged fitness buff who talks like he has chronic sinus problems.

As such, it's possible Stallone doesn't identify himself over the loud-speaker - which makes you wonder about the conversations that take place in the other cars.

"Guess we'd better pull over, Madge. If that guy has a loud-speaker, he must be pretty important. Like the Governor, maybe, or..."

"No, look! It's that poor man who hasn't made a decent film since Rocky I..."

The whole thing seems thoroughly crass and boorish, from a Canadian perspective. And yet - just imagine the thrill of pulling such a stunt yourself.