

the HERALD

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Editorial

Uncertain future

Children entering the school system in the next few years face an uncertain future.

Here in Halton, board of education director Bob Williams' Toward 2000 program designed to give schools more independence and to provide more "resource leaders" for teachers, is causing a stir among trustees.

Provincially, an all-party committee on education has unanimously supported a report urging the government to move schools to an all-year-round concept.

Both reforms could radically change the way we think of school.

While we support careful studies of our educational system, there must be no change for the sake of change.

Summer employment has become a necessity for today's students and an all-year-round concept would only give students a maximum five-week break between semesters.

In Halton the Toward 2000 program could mean a substantial increase in expenditures, possibly without a direct effect on the students.

As parents you might consider the summer a time to put school on the back burner.

But now, more than ever, it's time to let your trustees know your feelings and your concerns about your own children's future education.

Costly campaign



Editor's Notebook

Brian MacLeod
Herald Editor

Is it expensive to run an election campaign?

Even if it's just a municipal election?

You bet. Especially if you're running in a heated race for the mayor's chair.

Municipal candidates' expenses were released Monday as required by the Municipal Elections Act.

Every candidate who spent more than \$1,000 had to disclose money raised and money spent.

Pam Sheldon challenged incumbent Russ Miller for mayor but the extra \$2,500 spent by Mrs. Sheldon couldn't unseat Mayor Miller. Mrs. Sheldon spent \$15,645 according to her declaration sheet while Mayor Miller spent only \$13,322.

Many other candidates spent under \$1,000 or were acclaimed to their seats. Those who did run and spent under \$1,000 include Robert Heaton and Don McQueen who ran in Ward 2 against Alf Spence. Councillors Heaton and Spence were elected but Mr. Spence spent \$2,780 in the campaign.

The race in Ward 3 was only costly for Pat McCarthy. He topped the polls in that ward but he spent \$1,988 doing it. The other councillor elected in Ward 3, Anne Currie, spent less than \$1,000. Tom Politti also spent less than \$1,000 in the Ward 3 race.

The race for the public school trustee position in Wards 3 and 4 cost the winner the most. Dick Howitt was returned to the Halton Board of Education but the race against Lyn Apgar and Rod Taylor cost him \$4,776.

Rod Taylor spent just over \$2,300 and Lyn Apgar spent less than \$1,000.

No one spent more than \$1,000 in the hydro commissioners races. Murt Allison defeated Don Munday in Ward 2 and Jim Fisher beat Ab Tennant in Ward 3.

Councillors rallied together around the round table in the new civic centre for the first time on Monday. The meeting was a short one but our reporter, Ben Dummett, who covered the inaugural meeting in the new chambers, says councillors will have to start sounding off (pardon the pun) if they want to get heard. Press seats are located at the very front of the public gallery and Ben said hearing councillors is very difficult. If those in the front can't hear, you'll really have to strain to hear from the back.

Perhaps the microphone system may be needed after all. There's no sense having a public gallery if the public can't hear.

While the new council chambers is a much needed improvement over the Trafalgar Road room, it's still a bit small. A quick count early in the afternoon showed 37 chairs for the public. There's room for more but I remember counting 60 and sometimes 70 people showing up at some council meetings in the Trafalgar Road offices.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Grits 'rabid interventionists'



Queen's Park

Derek Nelson
Thomson News Service

There's an assumption among many critics of the Liberals that the party is "pro-business," or "business liberal" or, in the best Ontario tradition, "middle-of-the-road."

What that analysis is based upon is hard to say.

A few others (myself, for example) see the Grits as a government of rabid interventionists.

They are in love with rule-making for rule-making's sake, a government that assumes the worst about business in all circumstances and prefers laws and rules to trust.

There is a lot of proof.

The most recent is Bill 149, which will amend the trespass act to make it more difficult to throw unwanted people off commercial and other property commonly used by the public.

And there's the amendment to consumer protection legislation that forbids book companies from giving bonus books to people who bring in new customers, probably among the most stupid laws ever passed.

But the Liberals' hostility to business goes back to their first days in power.

Consider the list:

—the extension of rent control

over the free sector of the rental accommodation market.

—the semi-nationalization of car insurance.

—the passage of pay equity legislation, slowly being imposed on business at incredible expense and with considerable confusion.

—the hiring of literally hundreds of inspectors to police business for occupational health and safety and environmental concerns.

—expanding the mandate of the human rights commission to go snooping into the private sector to find unintentional discrimination.

—new anti-business taxes, from the employer health levy to the special parking tax for the Metro area.

Add it all together and it implies a government with an ideological obsession with business as its enemy.

Liberals deny it, of course. But their actions speak louder than words.

KEY TEST

A good touchstone as to whether they've genuinely become more flexible towards business will be the fate of Bill 149, with its radical reduction of property rights. It goes to committee hearings this summer.

The theory behind Bill 149 is that shopping malls have changed the nature of private property and that anecdotal evidence suggests youths (particularly non-whites) are discriminated against in using such property (although not, in the ministry's own words, "to any significant extent").

Such discrimination is already illegal under the Human Rights

Code, of course. You can't discriminate on the basis of color or age.

But Attorney General Ian Scott's ministry claims such discrimination in, say, shopping malls, is hard to prove. Hence, in their eyes, the need for Bill 149.

Under the bill, anyone on property normally frequented by the public is there by right and can be removed only for specific cause.

This will supposedly prevent discrimination against non-white youth.

Mind you, it would make more sense to get the human rights police - richer by millions of dollars from the Liberals, and much more concerned nowadays with going out and finding discrimination - to check it out than to pass, in effect, what is a whole new law.

It seems strange to say that because one law is said to be hard to enforce (although not tried), another law should be amended.

So what then, other than an ideological desire to write rules for others, is the reason for this law?

It's true there may be Charter problems with the existing trespass act (on private property picketing, for example), but they'll exist whether there is a new law or not.

No. It is strictly formula thinking: we have a perceived problem; let's pass a law and beat up on business.

An article in the Wall Street Journal during the Liberals' early days in power was headlined: People's Republic of Ontario.

Maybe that headline was right.

THE SOUNDS OF CANADA...



Faint praise for Forestry Canada

By RENNIE MACKENZIE
Ottawa Bureau
Thomson News Service

There's a new federal department and fresh legislation to direct the country's forest industry, but praise for the government's efforts has been faint.

A new department was promised in the 1984 election to give the forest industry - which had long been in the shadow and under the direction of other ministries - its own higher profile.

Forestry Canada was finally created by cabinet order last September, but the legislation giving it the formal status of a full department was not presented to Parliament until June 22.

The new bill, which has a long way to go before passage, is not all that critics and industry had hoped.

As expected, opposition spokesmen quickly condemned the bill. It created a toothless department, a paper tiger, whose minister, Frank Oberle, will have no clout, they said.

But the Canadian Institute of Forestry, an organization of 2,400 forest industry professionals who have waited five years for the bill, expressed disappointment and renewed concern over the govern-

ment's commitment.

"It's essentially a minor piece of legislation... an amendment of the Forestry Development Research Act which goes back to 1960," says institute executive-director J.H. Cayford.

The draft bill, dropped into the Commons the week before parliamentarians fled the capital for a three-month adjournment, appears to Cayford as nothing more than "a minimum step" that raises more questions about intentions in the forestry sector.

The government is making substantial cuts in spending on forest development in the current fiscal year. Cayford admits figures vary, but his organization claims \$34.2 million and 47 person-years are being trimmed from forest allocations.

"These reductions are being made at the same time as they announce the intention to provide leadership in forestry," he says.

CONFUSING SIGNALS
Cayford also says six of the federal-provincial forest development agreements have been allowed to expire and the federal government is sending out "confusing signals" on their renewal.

"We're really concerned with the federal government commit-

ment to the forestry sector."

With \$3 billion in annual revenues from the forest industry, the federal government should be assuming more responsibility and a stronger role, especially in the areas of forest products research and trade, Cayford argues.

The legislation, he says, makes no reference to a national forest sector strategy to deal with the deterioration and depletion of forest stocks, and makes no mention of the broader aspects of multiple use of woodlands.

"There's nothing on recreation, wildlife, wilderness or water. We think it should be broadened to encompass these other resources," he says.

And while Cayford says he doesn't agree with "all the doomsday scenarios" that see an end to many forest products industries, he feels there is a need for better management and welcomes a provision of the bill that requires an annual statement on the condition of the nation's forest resources.

The legislation will require the minister to provide Parliament with an annual account of the condition of forests and their contribution to the national economy.