

Reichmann's aren't saying nyet to the Soviets now



Your Business
Diane Maley
Thomson News Service

Albert Reichmann rises from behind his uncluttered desk to greet his visitor. He is a big man in his late 50s, charming, forthright and with a keen sense of humor.

Lately, Mr. Reichmann has grown increasingly interested in Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and his plans for the Soviet Union. So interested that he is taking time from his busy schedule to talk to the media, a rarity for this most private of men.

Mr. Reichmann is acting as joint chairman of the newly formed Canada-U.S.S.R. Business Council, a lobby group set up to promote two-way trade between the two countries. The council hopes to recruit members among small- and medium-sized Canadian companies interested in doing business with the Soviet Union.

He is the eldest of the three brothers who founded Olympia and York Developments in Toronto in the late 1950s. Olympia and York's holdings include Gulf Canada, Abitibi-Price and Consumers Gas; its real estate investments span Canada, the United States and Britain.

If things go the way Mr. Reichmann hopes, Olympia and York may soon be building in Moscow. But the Reichmann family's interest go well beyond business. Making friends with the Russians is the best way to improve conditions for Soviet Jewry, Mr. Reichmann believes. It is also the best way to improve relations between East and West. Besides, it's plain good business.

"Obviously we are not very communistically inclined," he laughs. But the Soviet Union is a big market - 300 million people; that's more than the United States and Canada combined. "Most of them are well educated, so it's not like a Third World country where you have to start from scratch."

In a sense, helping Mr. Gorbachev with his economic reforms may bring the Soviet Union back into the European fold. "They always considered themselves Europeans, even under the czars," Mr. Reichmann notes.

He first became interested in the Soviet Union a few years back, after he asked Prime Minister Brian Mulroney to intervene on behalf of some "refuseniks" who wanted to leave the country. Refuseniks are Soviet Jews who have been refused exit visas.

Mr. Reichmann explains: "At the time (External Affairs Minister), Joe Clark mentioned to me that the Russians really don't like it when governments get involved telling them what to do in their own country. He suggested it would be helpful if we had some direct contact, business or otherwise. I came to the idea that maybe it is not bad to do business with them."

"It helps not only the Jewish community. I think it helps the relationship between East and West. When you do business, as they say, you supply butter instead of guns."

The barriers between the two countries are considerable. Laws differ, western bankers are reluctant to accept investments in the Soviet Union as collateral and the whole concept of the market economy is puzzling to the Soviets.

Worst of all, the ruble is not freely convertible into other currencies. Outside the country, it is virtually worthless. "There are lots of problems, but I think they are learning," Mr. Reichmann says. "If you have patience, in the end it will pay."

Olympia and York is looking at the possibility of building a hotel, office and residential complex for foreigners in Moscow, he says. "I think we will be successful in consummating something in the near future."

Government is trespassing on the Trespass Property Act

By DOUG PENRICE
Herald Special

If you operate a business where the public has access to your property, you should read this article. The Ontario government has introduced a bill to amend the Trespass Property Act. This will become law in January of 1990. At the present time the legislation is before an all-party committee which is studying it, changes can be made at this stage. At this stage the public has an opportunity to make its views known through the committee and our local MPP Walt Elliot.

Under the present law the owner has the right to control access to his property. He has the responsibility to ensure the safety of the public. The owner has the right to ask any persons to leave the property if they are acting contrary to the owner's interests or endangering the public safety. The owner can at his discretion ban people from his property for indefinite periods of time if they do not abide by the rules as set forth by the owner.

Bill 149 will limit the discretionary power which the owner now has. The new law will make it difficult for owners to evict people from their premises who are not conforming to his rules of conduct.

The owner under Bill 149 must post his rules of conduct in a prominent location so that all persons who enter the property will be able

to see them. The rules must be reasonable in nature and must not be discriminatory. If owner decides to ask someone to leave his premises he must give written notice stating the reason for the removal, the trespasser must be informed of the legal rights of defence under the bill. The trespasser can re-enter the premises by responding in writing stating that no rules have been broken or that he feels the rules are unfair. The person must be allowed to remain on the property until the matter is resolved in court.

business person's right to administer his own property for an example: a group of people enter your store and create unrest amongst your customers. You ask them to leave and give them written notice that they have broken the rules as posted. The group returns 20 minutes later with written notice that the rules were not reasonable. Under the new law they can stay until a court decides on the validity of the rules.

The Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce has at its office copies of the proposed new law. For further information call the chamber at 877-7119.

Chamber golf tourney set for Acton

The Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce invites all business people to enjoy a relaxing day of golf at Acton Meadows Golf Course Monday, Aug. 21. This year the chamber organized two tournaments, one in Georgetown and this upcoming event in Acton.

Lincoln Mercury, for a Hole In One.

For further information regarding tee-off times please call the chamber at 877-7119.

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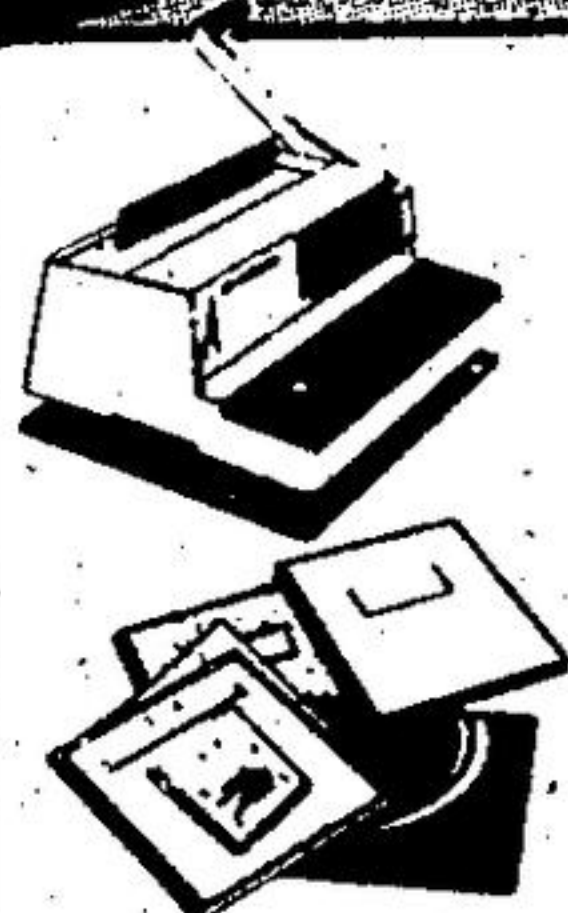
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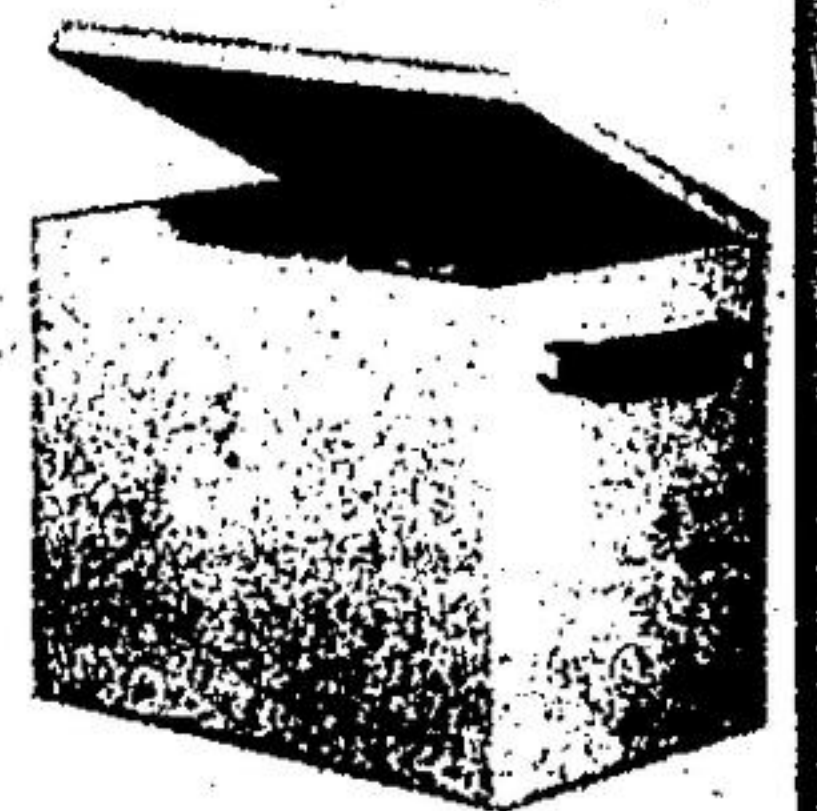
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