

View ending of recession in historical perspective

The recent numbers provided by Statistics Canada seem to indicate an economic recovery is under way and indeed we can see all around us some positive signs.

The construction industry is moving out of the deep sleep of the past months and so are retailers sales. However, all those signs are not necessarily an indication of a sustained recovery and some historical perspective should make us very cautious.

Since the Second World War the Western economies have enjoyed an unprecedented period of growth which has lifted many countries standards of living. For many families the past 40 years have meant gaining access to travel, to home ownership, to possession of cars and all kinds of home appliances.

In short, we started in 1946 with one bicycle in our backyard and entered the '90's with two cars in the garage. Our industries dominated the world market and our population was constantly growing. In the West we have however probably reached a flat plateau of growth: our needs have been largely satisfied and our population growth has subsided.

Abroad we have seen the birth of new competitors, not only Japan but Korea, Brazil, India, Taiwan, Malaysia, ...

Our recent recession was caused not only by the policies of our government but reflected the simple fact that there was no new demand to fuel our economy. The fact that we are likely to face a period of moderate and zero growth should not come as a sur-



Another View
by
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prise.

Several economists have pointed out to the need to reassess our expectations but naturally they have been ignored in the heyday of the boom of the mid 80's. Even I wrote, back in the early 80's, about the appearance of the "satiated socie-

ty" a society where we would mainly "replace" items instead of accessing them for the first time. Also a society where "quality" would replace "quantity."

If we have indeed entered the era of the satiated society we have to be very sceptical of recoveries fuelled purely by internal demand: they are simply telling us that we are replenishing the inventory we ran down during the recession. (E.g.: we did not buy a new car during the recession, but the car is getting old, so now we buy. As we act basically as a group, in a couple of years Canada will have an inventory of relatively new cars ... so we shall have a pause in buying and a new recession).

The only hope for sustained growth comes from abroad and

not the USA either. It is well possible the ex-communist nations will become voracious consumers of our goods and, given the necessary political stability, we could see some of the Third World nations becoming exciting markets for our products.

So far this scenario is highly hypothetical, but should it come to pass it will require a concerted effort from our government and the private sector to reap the potentially huge benefits.

Our options are - to restructure our industry and public services to live in a stationary economy, or - to aggressively seek opportunities abroad, concentrating on what we can do best and jettison dead ballast.

If we do neither we can just as well prepare, at the dawn of the recovery, for the next recession.

Features

Police bicycle patrol program gathering speed

By STEVEN LeBLANC

The Herald

In May 1989, the Halton Regional Police Service established a bicycle patrol program that opened numerous avenues for community-based policing in the region. Now, Halton Regional Police Service is taking this relatively new and effective concept one step further.

Halton Police will now be using a stretch mini-van to complement the bicycle program. Two officers will ride in this van, which will be utilized as a mobile office.

The unit, called T.R.A.C.E., (Targeted Response Accomplished by Cycling Enforcement) will be used in Halton communities on a need basis and will specialize in

loitering, liquor, parks and high criminal/drug areas.

"There are two major advantages to the bicycle program," said Constable Gary Coles of the Halton Regional Police, who developed the T.R.A.C.E. unit concept. "Firstly, there is the pro-activeness of policing with regards to free flow communication. The public is more likely to approach an officer on a bicycle than one in a car. Secondly, the bicycle program allows for very quick and effective enforcement, specifically during property checks."

Constable Coles explained that when the bicycle concept was first introduced for consideration, there were many people that laughed at the idea, feeling that an officer on a bicycle could not perform his duties effectively. He stated, however, that the program has been very successful.

"An officer on a bicycle in general is able to do property checks and building inspections up to three times as fast as an officer in a car and is able to cover trouble spots much quicker."

To date, there are 12 Halton Regional Police officers involved in the bicycle program: three plain clothes officers and three uniformed officers in Burlington, three officers in Oakville, two in Georgetown and one in Milton.

Officers interested in becoming involved in the bicycle program must complete a four hour training session which includes skid avoidance, slow riding techniques, self defense, and obstacle riding. Constable Coles said there are numerous police officers in Halton interested in the program but that spaces are just not available.

He explained four qualities are essential for an officer to become

part of the program: they must have excellent communication skills, they need to have a bicycle aptitude, they must be self-motivated (because they are basically on their own), and they must be willing to make the program work.

Halton Police Officers use either a mountain bicycle or a cross bicycle. The cost for each bicycle, including all of the accompanying equipment, costs \$1,800. The bicycle can carry as much equipment as a patrol vehicle.

Currently, the bicycle program has been sent to numerous police departments including Seattle, Toronto, Ottawa, Regina, Peel and as far away as Israel.

"The T.R.A.C.E. unit is the future for the bicycle program. It is the way it is going to go," stated Constable Coles.



Food Bank donations

Instead of giving, Anna Rodd (left) vice-president of the Love In Christ Food Bank at Mountainview Baptist Church in Georgetown, was taking, Wednesday afternoon when Rosamond Edwards, president of the Optimrs Club of Georgetown presented her with a \$301.35 cheque. The Optimrs raised the funds through a raffle they held at Bang-O-Rama in May. (Herald photo)

Catholic board reaches agreement

The Halton Roman Catholic School Board has signed one new contract agreement with elementary teachers but it still has three to go.

At a special meeting July 2, the board ratified the new agreement with elementary teachers that gives teachers a pay hike of 3.5 per cent Sept. 1 and an additional 2 per cent Jan. 1, 1992.

The contract, which will be effective for two years starting Sept. 1, also gives teachers a cost of living increase during the second year providing it's no more than five per cent said Steve Balogh, senior administrator in human resources for the board.

He said discussions between board administration and the approximately 650 elementary teachers went well.

"The contract was settled before the deadline and the talks were amiable," he said. The teacher's present agreement expires Aug. 31.

With the wage hike, a teacher coming into the system with no

experience could earn up to \$31,283 while the maximum salary for a teacher with 12 years experience and additional qualifications will be \$632,303, said Mr. Balogh.

While this contract agreement is out of the way, the board is still dealing with three other contract renewals for the custodial local, the clerical workers and the secondary teachers.

"It's a busy time around here," said Mr. Balogh.

The clerical worker's contract expired June 30 and Mr. Balogh said a tentative agreement has been reached with them. He would not discuss the agreement except to say a meeting has been planned in July for ratification of the contract.

The custodial workers contract also expires June 30 and contract negotiations are still in the discussion stages, said Mr. Balogh.

Secondary teachers have a little longer before their contract expires. It ends August 31.



Georgetown Constable Nick Leoni (on bike) demonstrates proper skid avoidance techniques while Constable Mike Dunn gives signals during a four-hour training session before Constable Leoni becomes part of the Halton Regional Police Service's bicycle program. His cross trainer bicycle was donated by Oillies Cycle/Ski in Georgetown. (Herald photo)

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