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The Canadian Champion

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Town surplus a plus

After castigating Milton Director of Finance Don Lougheed last week for finding 1980 budget "goodies" at the eleventh hour, one salient and truly valid point has surfaced.

Mr. Lougheed was able to find a fairly large surplus in the 1979 budget which he was able to subtract from this year's increase in order to bring the budget in at around a one per cent increase.

Again, a one per cent increase in a budget in this day and age is not just an accomplishment, it should go down in the Guinness Book of Records.

But be that as it may the treasurer, until he found a surplus \$313,000, had been expecting an increase to ratepayers of five to six per cent. That again is nothing, compared to 31 per cent from the Halton Board of Education and more than 20 per cent from Halton Region.

If the treasurer and the town councillors, at their budget meeting tonight, so choose, it might be worth considering not cutting the surplus but using it to

bolster the programs they have already pared down to the bone. The Champion suggests part of the \$313,000 could go for the \$25,000 in computer aid the Library needs and still it would allow about \$20,000 for the purchase of new books. There would be about \$40,000 to hire two additional firefighters and that would still leave over \$200,000 in 1979 surplus.

The Champion is suggesting it may be wiser to carry the surplus into 1980 and use it to buy the equipment the town needs and help the Chamber of Commerce with the revitalization program.

Now with the 1980 surplus, Mr. Lougheed can carry this into 1981 and if he faces a severe problem then, he always knows he has something to cut right off the top.

By the same token, a one per cent increase in an election year is a good move on the part of council, but it is being done at the expense of a reduction in services which the ratepayers have come to expect.

Consider downtown

While there can be no doubt Milton needs another food market to meet the needs of our growing population, The Champion is concerned about the approval being given by town council to shopping centres at the outskirts of the town.

The most recent example is the all but official approval for a new shopping centre on Highway 25 at Derry Rd. which will have an A&P food store as the plaza anchor.

While it will provide shopping for people in the new housing areas adjacent to the site, it really represents one more nail in the Main St. commercial area's coffin.

Instead of coming downtown, where the business is desperately needed, residents will find it more convenient to go to the corner plaza and leave Main St. to wither on the vine.

There is no lack of sites in the

centre of Milton. One The Champion can think of is the old hotel site opposite St. Paul's Church. We realize the site is expensive compared with the land on the Milton core boundaries but surely town council can find methods, such as the former Town of Streetsville used, to engineer new business re-location into the downtown area.

We are not saying council should tell prospective business development to move into the core or find another town; but we would like to see all future business-commercial outlets, when they appear before council, to be told pointedly of the town's desire, and willingness to help business locate in the downtown core.

The Milntowne Centre concept is now a certainty. What it needs along with the current merchant mix, is some new blood to make the difference.

Council—please take note!

Police face same law

Regional Council has voted not to pay a \$6,510 legal bill which resulted after two Halton Regional Police constables had been charged with misconduct and then exonerated.

It was alleged the constables had closed air vents and turned up the heat in a paddy wagon in order to quell rioting among a group of prisoners they were transporting one hot summer day.

It is a clever argument but unfortunately for the Police Association, the paddy wagon

may be regionally owned but it is Halton Region Police Force maintained.

If the paddy wagon was operating incorrectly, the police mechanics should have had the system repaired.

Therefore, although The Champion has found the whole episode of the officers being charged distasteful, the police must understand they, like any other citizen, must be prepared to have their day in court and suffer the consequences and the legal ramifications.

Housing plan needed

It's not just Halton Community Credit Union which has become the loser after the group decided to scuttle its 123-unit non-profit housing scheme—it's the Town of Milton.

In a carefully worded notification to Milton Council, the credit union has said correctly that the need for non-profit and geared-to-income housing has been established. Town Council's efforts to find some type of accommodation for Milton's welfare families has run the gamut from approaching holders of industrial land to contemplating the town's

own Ontario Housing Corporation building.

The cloud of suspicion placed over the project by the confusing list of who would own the site at what different time was a justifiable reason for council holding off approval. So was the fear a "charitable foundation" running the 123 units would leave no one to sue or make repairs if the building proved faulty.

Nevertheless, there can be, no doubt as the credit union has spelled out, that the need for geared-to-income housing is very desperately needed.



Viewpoint

with JIM ROBINSON

Challenge to Service Clubs



Rotarians, Lions, Kiwanians, Kinsmen, Tivitanians, Eagles, all service clubs in Halton. I issue a challenge.

On May 5, the Dutch City of Nijmegen has invited the Canadian liberators of its land to join with them in the 35th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day.

Among that group of liberators was The Queen's Own Rifles who fought heroically in Holland to force the Nazi oppressors back into Germany. Many of the members of this unit have noted war memorials to Canadians dotting the country in vast profusion. The Dutch have a special feeling for Canadians and they even have set aside July 1 to celebrate Canada Day.

The Dutch Government and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines are expending thousands of dollars to bring Canadian war veterans to Holland for May 5. These vets are being headed up by Major-General Chris Vokes, himself a Halton Region resident.

And while the Canadian Government has also contributed significantly to this trek, a major obstacle stands in the way of The Queen's Own and that is a request for 300 Canadian flags to fly May 5.

Councillor Gus Goutowski, president of The Queen's Own Rifles Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, has been trying to find some method of getting the \$3,500 it will take to purchase the three-foot by six-foot flags. These will be used throughout

the Nijmegen parade route and will be flown from schools and public buildings as that city celebrates the particular contribution of the Halton men and women who fought and died to free their city.

In trying to help, The Champion contacted Etobicoke MP Roy McLaren, the nearest federal Liberal with any power within the caucus to have the Department of Veteran's Affairs free up the necessary money.

This writer, having worked at Queen's Park, found the most direct method of securing aid was to have a provincial parliament member go direct to the Minister in the House and make a request on a one-to-one basis.

However, Mr. McLaren's very disappointing response was to suggest sending a letter to General Rohmer in the Department of Defence. That is nothing more than a cop-out and just about what I expected from the Liberal party.

The next move was to contact Otto Jelinek. Here we partially struck paydirt. Mr. Jelinek has promised to go direct to Veteran's Affairs Minister McDonald and make the request. He is not making any promises of getting The Queen's Own the full 300 flags, but at least he is helping.

In the meantime, the thought occurred that we have so many service clubs in Halton, which have members who served in

the Second World War that between them all, it might be possible to purchase all the flags needed.

I am hoping the Inter-Service Council of Milton will take this matter up among members and with its allied clubs in Halton.

Considering the rather low unit price if the cost is spread out over all of Halton, it would make a tremendous impression of the people of Holland if we had our national flag flying; and it was made known the banners came from the hearts of those people who have joined service clubs because they want to be of service.

If any of our readers saw the movie or read the novel A Bridge Too Far, that is the town in which so many allied service men died in a desolate gamble to end the war.

The Dutch people have never forgotten the Canadian contribution and a reader can verify this just by talking to any friend of Dutch extraction. Maybe we tend to let the years blur the agony we went through from 1939 to 1945, but the Dutch have never lost sight because it happened on their front doors.

I truly hope Halton's service clubs will act on this suggestion, not as just a way to help out.

I hope they see it is an international expression of goodwill and fellowship.

Sugar and Spice

with BILL SMILEY

My heart goes out to all the young people who have been saving to buy a home. At today's interest rates, they have about as much chance to achieve their ambition as I have of being chosen Best Dressed Man of the Year.

Let's take a typical example, and reflect on the grim picture a couple with young children face when they want a home of their own, with a bit of lawn, a little garden, some room for their kids to explore and set some roots.

By dint of cutting every corner, pinching every portion, Dick and Jane, who have two kids called Jack and Jane, have amassed a total of \$5,000 over their five years of wedded bliss.

They've been able to do this only by eating cheap food, eschewing all luxuries, such as drinks, steaks, movies. They have taken moonlight jobs on their holidays to make a few extra bucks. And of course they have both been working, sending the kids to daycare, for which they have to pay. Their only concession to entertainment has been a black and white TV, an old car in which they occasionally venture forth for a picnic, and extremely careful sex.

Mind you, they're not suffering. They're getting enough to eat, unlike those "poor little starving children in China" of whom my mother reminded me every time I clumped my lips tight and refused to eat lumpy oatmeal.

(I wonder what happened to those poor

little starving kids in China, anyway. Every time I see some little Chinese kids on TV, they look remarkably well-nourished. I think they've all moved to Biafra or Bangladesh or South America.)

At any rate, this is no horror story about a young Canadian couple who can afford a 24 of beer only on Saturday nights. Their kids are healthy, and reasonably well-dressed, thanks to Zellers and Woolworths and other philanthropic Canadian companies who buy cheap but sturdy rags in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

But I still feel sorry for Dick and Jane. They had a dream, the old Canadian dream of owning your own house and a bit of land, and it's turning into a nightmare.

They don't want to be up there with the Vanderbilts. They'd settle for a very modest home, around \$40,000, if there is still a detached house in the country for this price.

Dick would work on improvements and Jane would make it warm and lively with her unerring sense of taste.

So they decide to take the plunge. With their hard-saved cheque for \$5,000 clutched in one of their hopeful hands, they go to the bank or a trust company to borrow the rest. No problem, as the ads said a few years ago.

Then comes the crunch. The bank manager, or the realtor, or the trust company bird, welcomes them with the warmth of an undertaker, and fiddles with his pencil,

and mutters about the Canadian dollar and interest rates, and finally gives them a figure. For the \$35,000 they still need, at 15 per cent a year, they—uh—interest would be \$5,250 just \$250 more than they walked in with. To say that Dick and Jane are stunned would be like saying that Pierre Trudeau is humble.

With both their jobs, they gross \$22,000. After the Revenue Department is through with them, they'll be lucky to have \$18,000. More like \$16,000. But that's still quite a bit, isn't it?

Take off another \$4,000 just to eat and keep clean and maintain the old rusty car. Take off a few hundred for telephone and hydro and medicare, and all the other deductions from their pay checks, and it's another \$1,000 they haven't laid hands on. We're down to \$11,000.

Or course, if they have a house, they won't have to pay rent. That will save about \$3,600 a year, if they happen to be living in a slum.

But that \$3,600 will be gobbled up by taxes, fuel and all the other things that houses gobble.

Then there's that \$5,250 a year interest on the mortgage. They are left with around \$5,000 a year to pay for clothes, toothpaste, repairs to everything, dental bills, and all the other lack of modern living. And they still haven't bought a washer and dryer, a stove and refrigerator, and color TV, or a second car, all the absolute necessities for a proud house-owner. Poor devils.

Turning the Pages of the Past

One year ago

Taken from the April 11, 1979 issue
A freak storm lashed through Milton, felling trees, stranding motorists and causing windows to break. Milton OPP officers warned motorists heading out of town not to use Highway 401. Winds gusting to 111 kilometres per hour, combined with snow, made for zero visibility at times. This was the worst storm to hit Milton all winter.

The town's annual budget was approved with allotments of about \$2.25 million. This figure was reached after close to half a million dollars worth of projects and services were cut from the budget. The town will buy a fire truck for \$75,000.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held for the unveiling of the Halton Credit Union's new facility. The \$298,164 expansion added 30 feet to the front and a second storey to the 44 Main St. building which first opened in 1969.

Milton's major pee wees captured the Ontario Minor Hockey Association championship when they defeated Stoneybrook 5-3 in London.

20 years ago

From the April 7, 1960 issue
Plans were announced this week for a new office for Canadian Felling Zinc Oxide plant, which opened in Milton six years ago. The new office will include a laboratory to replace one gutted by fire three weeks ago.

Milton Council's participation in the \$323,000 Kelso Dam project was held up for a week when council learned its share of the project over the next two years will be \$21,770. An 800 foot dam is planned to flood 80 acres of land and increase the summer flow of the creek through Milton.

Real estate agent Brian Best was at council Monday to ask if the town had any plans for industrial sites. Three companies are interested in Milton, he said, but the high prices (above \$2,500 an acre) have had a deterring affect. Possibility of the town annexing more land was mentioned.

50 years ago

Taken from the April 17, 1930 issue
The high and public schools will close this afternoon for the Easter holidays.

An accident occurred recently near the home of Russel Conoyer, Trafalgar Township, when three cars got involved in a mix-up, one being upset in the ditch. Many baskets of eggs were smashed and caused a lot of excitement.

Last week the Chief of Police shot sixteen wandering dogs in Dundas.

Reuben H. Lush, of Clarkson, has been appointed a Hydro Commissioner for Toronto Township in place of the late Dr. McFadden, of Cooksville.

People in this district who have been looking for an early spring have lost confidence in the weather prognostications of a certain Chatsworth sage.

Not for many years has there been such a demand in Oakville for houses to rent or buy as at present. Contractors are figuring on plans for some fine new buildings.

75 years ago

From the April 6, 1905 issue
Though the Halton Agricultural Society will not have a spring exhibition this year, a grand horse parade will be held at the fair grounds on Thursday, 20 inst., commencing at 2 p.m.

Robert Armstrong died on Saturday. He had not been in good health for some time. He was the son of the late Edward Armstrong of Trafalgar, and a brother of Mrs. W.J. Robinson of Manitoba, and Mrs. J.H. Jackson of Saginaw, Mich. A widow son and three daughters survive him.

