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The Canadian Champion

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Gag law unnecessary

It unfortunately seems Halton Region has failed to understand the real reason when it has trouble keeping in-camera information secret from the media.

Regional Chairman Jack Raftis has sworn a personal vendetta against a person alleged to be a Burlington Councillor, who is being referred to as "The Leak."

In this editorial space, we suggested it might be wise to find out why leaks are occurring, not who is doing it. We suggested that it takes a very great amount of personal strength to go against duty to keep certain matters secret. When secrets get out, we stated, it is because the truth has become more important than going along with the rest of the sheep.

But now Halton Region is talking about a freedom of information bylaw complete with a public relations flack to run interference for the council which should, we think, be allowed to speak for themselves.

Mr. Raftis has announced he started preparing such a bylaw two months ago "because what has gone on here for the last year is just unrealistic."

On the surface Mr. Raftis is quite correct. Many times what happened in secret session became known to the press within 30 minutes.

But the reason it became known was not headline grabbing. It was made known because a minority of Councillors could not stand to be associated with some of the actions taken by a majority of councillors.

As publicly elected representatives, they are not trying to subvert the system; they were and are trying to make sure the facts are presented for the side opposite the majority.

Newly appointed Chief Administrative Officer Dennis Perlin is in favor of a press flack being appointed and he states his reasoning as "we have to take ac-

tion to ensure that actions of this council get out and that they are reported accurately."

What Mr. Perlin may or may not be saying is that in the past some of the actions of Councillors have gotten out and were reported too accurately.

Forgetting the \$20,000 to \$30,000 per year salary of a press flack, no one, and that includes the ratepayers, wants to telephone the public relations office to find out what is going on.

Having elected councillors, they are well within their rights to telephone the councillors direct. If that is true for the electorate, why should it be a different policy for the media?

We agree with Mr. Raftis that there should be sanctity to in-camera sessions, but like any stonewalling procedures, there must be a limit.

The longer an embarrassing item is kept from the press and the public, the more it will appear that something is being hidden. When something appears to have been hidden, many wrong conclusions are drawn.

Halton doesn't need a security bylaw, it just needs the word of councillors to show discretion on sensitive issues.

As for a press flack, the media will never use such a person because the job of getting the news means going to the source, not an artificial screening department.

Because such a person has his paycheque signed by Jack Raftis, the allegiance is to Jack Raftis and the administration. Sure, it's easy to say this won't be so, but when the chips are down such as with the \$700,000 "surprise deficit", a press flack will have to compromise freedom of information with the weekly cheque.

As long as Halton Regional Council does its best job, gag laws and interference runners are not needed.

The centre needs help

The announcement that a disused basement beneath a restaurant would be made into a drop-in centre to provide Milton's young people with a place to go sounded pie-in-the-sky at first.

The basement in the Lido Restaurant building was a classic example of blight when it was opened up to drop-in centre eyes just before Christmas. Dangling telephone wires, plumbing going nowhere, crumbling plaster, and dry-rotted wood did not offer much encouragement.

But through the impetus of Councillor Rose Harrison and former Councillor Gus Goutouski, the work began as a hope and tomorrow at 8 p.m. it becomes a reality.

A group of young men and their friends took over the job of making the basement into something to be proud of with a lot of help from some friends.

Today that musty basement features striking panelling, new walls, new wiring, new everything. Many of the people who donated their time, effort, skills, money, materials do not want publicity and in deference of those people we will not run the very long list of names as much as we would like to.

But the Milton Youth Drop-In Centre is now in operation and we are confident that it will serve Milton's young people well.

In the meantime, The Champion would like to join with those

involved in The Centre and ask Milton residents for their help in holding a flea market to raise funds for the centre.

The flea market will be in the Lion's Hall April 17 for 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and all proceeds will go to The Centre.

To make it a success we need articles for sales and we are asking for donations of any items which could be used in the flea market.

If any reader would like to help The Centre, The Champion and North End Datsun, 610 Martin St., are accepting articles during business hours.

Philosobits

By Edith Sharpe

"Do you believe in free speech?"—asked by a neighbor to his friend. "I certainly do," replied his friend. "Then you don't mind if I make a long distance call on your telephone!"

There are many things that frustrate me, as I suppose they do the same to others; people who do not return a phone call when you leave a message for them to do so; people who do not at least let you know if they have received your gift to them; people who play cat and mouse behind the steering wheel of cars; people who are not grateful; and people who continue to say "oh, you shouldn't have done that" when you are kind to them; people who slap children or kick animals; frugal people who save everything in sight, even though they know it is of no use to them, but might help someone else. I could go on, but that's enough for now. I'm getting frustrated thinking of them all.

NEWS ITEM: HOUSEHOLD ITEMS ARE NEEDED FOR "FLEA MARKET TO HELP THE MILTON YOUTH DROP-IN CENTRE.



This idea no fool Viewpoint

with JIM ROBINSON

In writing a spoof this week for April Fool's Day, the idea of using garbage to create a "tourist attraction" on the Site F lands was suggested only as a joke.

But the more thought that goes into the idea, the better it may appear.

Etobicoke was Ontario's "First Planned Community" and as such all the roads and housing and zoning was settled before the land was even used for development.

But in that planning concept Murphy's Law was bound to rear its ugly head as it surely did, when the borough realized it had made room for 500,000 people but no room for the garbage.

Someone had the bright idea of taking waste lands north of Rathburn Rd. and turning it into a recreational complex. Someone even brighter suggested all the garbage could be built up in one big hill so people could go fly a kite.

Speaking personally, it is a great place to go fly a kite. In fact, it is a great place to do a lot of things we can't do here in Milton and Halton Region.

Hang gliding enthusiasts populate the hill regularly. The borough built a ski tow and it is used in the winter for downhill skiing and in the summer for roller skiing.

Complementing the hill of waste, otherwise known as "Mount Garbage", are a

complete recreation-fitness trail, an indoor botanical gardens, picnic facilities, bocci courts, a regulation football stadium, and the Etobicoke Olympium which is the only olympic size swimming and diving pool within a hundred miles.

So what about Site F, the 246 acres of land at Tremaine and Britannia Rds. the region wants to turn into the next landfill site?

Environmentalists will tell you there is nothing worse than clawing away good farmland and digging a great hole in the ground for garbage.

It puts the garbage right on the bedrock and sinks it down to the watertable. As contaminants run off, they don't trickle through the earth percolating themselves clean. The contaminants go directly into the ground water and it becomes polluted.

So instead of digging a big hole, why not follow the Etobicoke lead?

First of all the foundation could be built with a pet idea of Milton Councillor Bill Johnson. He has advocated compacted waste to take up less room in landfill sites. Why not use compacted waste as the building blocks for a Mount Halton Garbage?

The hill could be built up slowly over a period of time and it could be controlled

better as it would all be in easy view of residents who would know directly when something "fishy" was being dumped.

Needless to say a hill using waste readily in view would make those building it more liable to being caught when cutting corners.

Once completed over a period of years, it could be covered over and topped off with the sediment from channelization projects. No soil is richer or promotes growth more than this nutrient-rich loam.

When completed we could have skiing programs and even hang gliding—which is something the population of Halton is unable to do in the region at this time. Rattlesnake and Kelso are just too dangerous with the updrafts.

A demonstration forest to be followed by a small, but selective, botanical garden could be built and represent what Halton was like before the settlers came.

If we ever decide to build—with generous federal help I might add—a sports training facility with olympic possibilities the 246 acres is already there and on a series of major transportation arteries.

The possibilities are endless and, I might add, perhaps just too good to pass up.

By Otto Jelinek, MP

Ottawa Report

Your right to own property

For almost one year now Canadians, and the Canadian Parliament, have been preoccupied by the all inclusive debate over reform of our constitution; virtually ignoring more critical issues arising from our stagnating economy. It is for this reason that the Progressive Conservative Party urged Parliament to patriate the constitution without delay, thus allowing Canadians the opportunity to make all changes in Canada and not in Great Britain as the Liberals have proposed.

On October 22nd, 1980, we moved that "(we)... support the immediate patriation of the Constitution of Canada, incorporating only the generally agreed upon amending formula known as the Vancouver consensus, so that all other constitutional changes shall be made in Canada."

This motion not only expressed without a doubt our active support for patriation but, as well, confirms our commitment to ensuring that the wording of a new constitution is representative of the wishes of the Canadian people. We believe that it should be based upon and include those principles upon which this nation was founded, and further that it is intended to protect those rights that are so much a part of our way of life... among the most significant of which is the right to own property.

To own our home or family farm or business is not only a dream but, indeed, a goal for most Canadians. Making investments in order to build security for our retirement years is a common practice amongst Canadians. In fact, it was pursuit of these fundamental freedoms and securities that brought many new Canadians to this country.

The Progressive Conservative Party, in recognizing that this fundamental right

has been omitted from the Liberals' proposed "Charter", moved an amendment that sought to accomplish two things...

First, it would give constitutional recognition of your right to own and use property and, secondly, it would ensure that no one could take your property from you unless it was purchased from you and only after you had been given a fair hearing. This is essentially the guarantee that the Diefenbaker Bill of Rights ensures and must, in my view, be an essential and fundamental aspect of any new constitution.

It was as inconceivable to me as I am sure it was to the many residents of Halton that we would not receive unanimous support for our amendment. Yet, with the stroke of a pen, the Liberal/NDP coalition, for the sake of political expediency, voted down our proposal and wiped out this fundamental right which most Canadians take for granted.

Only days before the critical vote on our amendment, the Solicitor General, Robert Kaplan, who was filling in for Justice Minister Jean Chretien, gave a public commitment that the Liberal party would support our property rights clause.

However, within days of it being introduced, NDP leader Ed Broadbent served notice upon Mr. Trudeau that if he went along with the Tories he would withdraw his party's support for the Trudeau package. Given the choice between keeping his word or keeping the support of the 32 NDP members, the government didn't take long to make a decision. The following Monday the Minister of Justice announced that the government would vote against including property rights in the constitution.

Many reasons were thrown about for rejecting our property rights amendment. Many more were sited in an attempt to

rationalize this move. However, in my mind, the real reasons are clear...

The NDP are still a socialist party; they are still committed to the old doctrines of the Regina Manifesto. They still believe that, ultimately, governments have the right to own everything.

Even if the NDP were not honest about their reasons for not supporting our amendment, they, at least, openly opposed it. The Liberals, on the other hand, were deceitful and double dealing in their reaction. Mr. Trudeau has stated that the reason for including the "Charter" is that our present Bill of Rights does not go far enough: to protect the rights of Canadians.

The Hon. Robert Kaplan said of our amendment when it was introduced that, "Since we so believe that economic rights and the right to own property should be recognized and protected, we also are prepared to see that that provision move forward." However, after Broadbent made it clear that he would withdraw his support if the Progressive Conservative amendment to recognize the right to own property was included, the Liberals broke their word and, in my view, their own principles.

Outrage over this course of events has not just been articulated by Progressive Conservative supporters. The very fact that the Liberals have chosen to ignore the deeply held feelings of all Canadians is evidenced by the overwhelming opposition to this action that has been expressed by the constituents of Halton, as well as a majority of Canadians from coast to coast.

The irony of it all is that, far from strengthening our "inadequate" Bill of Rights, as is the Prime Minister's objective, this deliberate omission of the right to own property has placed in jeopardy one of the most fundamental aspects of the Canadian way of life.

Turning the Pages of the Past

One year ago

From the April 2, 1980 issue

A bitter strike by 400 Rockwell workers is being described as "totally out of control" by security officials as the strike heads into its third week. Shotgun blasts shattered the windows in the home of Murray Amlins Production manager for Rockwell International. Miraculously, nobody was injured.

A 27-year-old Maplehurst inmate is recovering in Milton District Hospital following a savage beating by fellow inmates in the medium-security institution last Wednesday.

An investigation by Halton Regional Police into allegations of prostitution at a stag held Feb. 15 at Boyne Community Centre has turned up no evidence to support any charges.

Acton High School students from the Alternative Program will be contacting some citizens in the town and surrounding rural area by phone this week regarding a study of household energy.

A smoldering cigarette is believed responsible for a blaze that caused an estimated \$18,000 damage to a vacant house on Main St.

The seniors of Bruce Court received a gift of an electronic bingo machine recently from Joe Allen, an original tenant of the building.

20 years ago

From the March 30, 1961 issue

It will be a while before some Hornby residents forget the freak thunderstorm of last week. It sounded like an explosion had hit outside many homes. Several homes had broken windows, some doors blew open, and cracks appeared in walls.

Farmers' Allied Meat Enterprises continues to grow in Halton. To date \$17,000 of Halton's quota of \$24,000 shares have been purchased in the new marketing enterprise.

Fire Chief A. E. Clement warned council this week there was a danger the town could not be properly protected if both fire trucks were out of town on rural calls when a town call is received. He suggests council consider a third truck, that would not be allowed to leave town.

Donna Purdy of Milton was chosen Halton's top public school public speaker.

A gas war is developing in Milton. By noon yesterday, prices had dropped to a low of 32.9 cents a gallon and Thursday morning, a few stations displayed prices at 29.9 cents.

Halton County Council this week approved setting aside \$24,000 to equip all fire departments in the county with a two-way radio. Installations would be made in five base stations and the 20 mobile truck units.

The post office delivered a letter on time, but the receiver got it 14 years later. The incident came to light Monday when workmen engaged in renovating the post office parted the marble steps leading up to the postal boxes and found a letter addressed to Halton County Health Unit, postmarked Oct. 16, 1947. Postmaster Bill Randell said the letter had apparently been delivered to the Health Unit's box, but the person picking up the mail must have dropped it and it lodged on end in a crack in the marble.

50 years ago

From the April 2, 1931 issue

Shortly after 6 o'clock Saturday night, Wm. Bayley was crossing Main St. in front of McDuffee's garage, when he was knocked to the pavement and run over by an automobile driven by H. Garbut, of Nelson township. Mr. Bayley's condition is not as serious as first believed.

There were fewer marriages in Milton last month.

On Friday, April 10th at 8.30 p.m., a concert will be given in the Kilbride community by the 1st Lowville Boy Scout troupe.

Several thefts of muskrat traps have been reported at Bronte this season, one man losing 40 traps in a week, as well as a number of rats.

Mr. Robert Early of Campbellville, had a narrow escape from being burned on Wednesday of last week. He was suffering from neuralgia in his face and had lain down and put a light bulb near his face to relieve the pain, when his bedclothes caught on fire. There was nobody hurt.

Bacon is 23n lb. at Dominion Stores this week.

75 years ago

From the April 5, 1906 issue

At 1 a.m. on Sunday fire broke out in the roof of the G.T.R. station at Burlington Junction. It is supposed to have been caused by a spark from a passing engine.

The body of Chas. Reddy, drowned at Glen Williams as reported last week was found on Thursday about a mile from the dam where he fell into the river. An ice jam formed and broke away. The body lay below a large cake of ice which was stranded.

Mr. Andrew, our popular auctioneer, is a very busy man these days. He is been conducting sales every day but one during the past two weeks.

Farmers in this neighborhood report that the clover crop has suffered greatly from the open winter and is completely ruined in many places. Fall wheat has been badly damaged as well.

The YMCA Male quartet of Hamilton gave a concert at the town hall on Tuesday evening, under the auspices of the Public Library. The attendance was only moderate—smaller than the entertainment deserved. The part singing of the quartet, without accompaniment was a novelty here.

Mrs. E. Syer left yesterday for Wyoming where she will visit friends till after Easter.