

# Halton tourism study urged

By STEVE ARNOLD  
News Editor

Halton may be missing an economic gold mine by not developing its tourist base, committee members were told last week as they debated a consultant's study into the industry.

Both the provincial Ministry of Tourism and Recreation and the regional business development are pressing for a study into the ever growing tourist business.

Members of the administration and finance committee agreed to approve terms of reference for such a study and to reconfirm the region's commitment to developing a tourism base.

To promote this development, the provincial government is providing money for such studies, to a maximum of \$36,000, on total costs of \$60,000.

According to information provided to members, more than \$8.7 billion was spent on tourism in Ontario during 1981. With economic ripple effects, this amounted to total spending of \$14.7 billion and accounted for 13 per cent of all the employment in the

province.

The tourism study was first proposed in April but got a rough reception from councillors who had weeks earlier rejected a badly needed housing study for lack of funding.

Last week, however, the feeling had changed to stressing the value of sparking an important business for this area as shown by Burlington chamber of commerce president Ron Pink.

"We feel strongly that tourism will be a major industry in the future," he said, adding a tourism study "will be considerably helpful in setting a direction for Halton."

### Limited success

Mr. Pink added his chamber supported the need for a study "but we don't have the funding to do anything on our own."

In April, regional council accepted the need for a study, but would only allow it to proceed if private money could be found to pay for the municipal portion.

Chief administrative officer Dennis Perlin said efforts were made to get such contri-

butions, but they met "with only limited success."

The region's business development department has some money for special projects, "but there isn't a lot of room in the 1983 budget for this type of study," he added.

Councillor Mike Armstrong (Halton Hills) supported the staff recommendation to proceed, noting his position had reversed from when it was first proposed.

"Initially I was opposed to using 'taxpayer's money for the benefit of private individuals, but now I see it would be of extremely great benefit to area people who run businesses."

"I think we'd be extremely wise on behalf of the region to proceed with this," he added.

Councillor Joan Little (Burlington), argued for care in developing some types of tourism to ensure the new businesses do not create conflicts with existing residents.

"We have to remember tourism is a planning problem as well as a dollar and cents issue," she said.



Safety with farm vehicles was one of several displays at the Milton fairgrounds last week, sponsored by the Halton Farm Safety Association. This is what carelessness leads to. (Staff photo by Jon Borgstrom.)

## Court action planned for peace camp work

A report recommending legal action against the developers of a Milton area recreation facility is to be presented to the Niagara Escarpment Commission tomorrow night (Thursday).

The report is in response to actions by an organization called International Peace Camps Inc. on land it owns at Speyside.

Pat Boechner, a planner with the NEC, said the action to be taken against the group alleges a road was built on land owned by the group without first obtaining the required development permit from the commission.

IPC has purchased a former resort property, locally known as Twin Lakes, and is attempting to develop a multi-use recreational facility to include camp sites, sports areas and entertainment facilities.

Miss Boechner said the road in dispute is 700 feet long and 10 feet wide. Also const-

rueted was an entrance to the camp off Town Line road, without the required permit from Milton.

Although the camp is located in Halton Hills, it is on the boundary and Milton maintains the road on which the property fronts.

Miss Boechner added the road is part of the IPCs total development plan and appears to have no adverse affect on the environment.

The concern, she said, is the group has allegedly ignored environmental controls on development on the escarpment.

"This development is going along piecemeal without the required permits," she said.

Residents of the area have expressed opposition to the proposed development because they fear the effect it will have on their lifestyles and property values.

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Directors of a Toronto social service agency were to meet yesterday (Tuesday) to discuss recent concerns raised over fund raising practices being used in its name.

Ron Thompson, executive director of Recreation Rehabilitation Society of Ontario, said the agency's board of directors was to discuss the concerns and their response to them.

Concern over the group has been raised recently by a Milton merchant who said she was approached by a telephone caller soliciting money for the agency.

The caller asked for a donation, which would be picked up by a representative but allegedly did not identify the group he was calling for.

"We did quite a bit of research into this and I think the lady you spoke to only heard a number of things she wanted to hear," Mr. Thompson said of the allegations.

Both of the solicitors involved in the calls were contacted he said, "and both said they followed the prepared material and did not deviate from it."

RRSO is employing the use of a telephone soliciting firm to raise part of its \$850,000 annual budget to finance the operation of a camp for the physically disabled on Lake Kashagawigamog, in Haliburton.

"Either she misinterpreted what she was told or she has pulled some things out of context," Mr. Thompson added, saying his directors would review the entire situation

"from start to finish to see if there is anything we can do."

The funding tactics being used in the name of RRSO are currently the focus of inquiries by the anti-rackets squad of the Ontario Provincial Police. Other agencies, such as the Toronto Better Business Bureau and the Canadian Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled have also expressed interest because RRSO has applied for membership in these bodies.

Mr. Thompson said he realized the concept of soliciting money through a telephone campaign was unpopular and said the effectiveness of this approach was to be reviewed in the near future.

It was, however, the most cost-efficient method available to the agency in its initial campaign.

### Viable Options

"It's something that was the most appropriate means for us at the time, although we realize people just don't like telephone campaigns it is one of the few viable options we have at this time."

"We plan a slow moving away from the telephone campaign as other methods of funding become more stable," he added.

Superintendent W.R. Perrin, of the OPP, said his detectives are currently looking into the fund raising practices of the agency "to ascertain if the collection is being done legitimately."

He added their research is "less formal than an investigation."

Jack Sarney, executive-director of the Canadian Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled, said his group is also interested in the activities of RRSO.

He said his organization has been getting inquiries about RRSO and its program, but he has no information on what the agency is trying to accomplish or if there is a real need for such a camp.

Mr. Sarney noted the Easter Seals Organization already operates five camps for the disabled and other groups have specialized facilities for certain handicapped groups.

"This is a strange campaign because it has started at a fairly high pressure level," he said of the fundraising tactics which have allegedly been used.

"We have been receiving many inquiries from bodies of authority about this group," he added.

Mr. Sarney, however, denied his group was first to express concerns to the OPP, thus causing the current police inquiries.

"We don't mind an investigation into this, but we didn't start it," he said.

He added concerns about this type of fundraising and the program it is for should be answered immediately because such fears harm opportunities for other programs "because it creates a doubt in the mind of the public."

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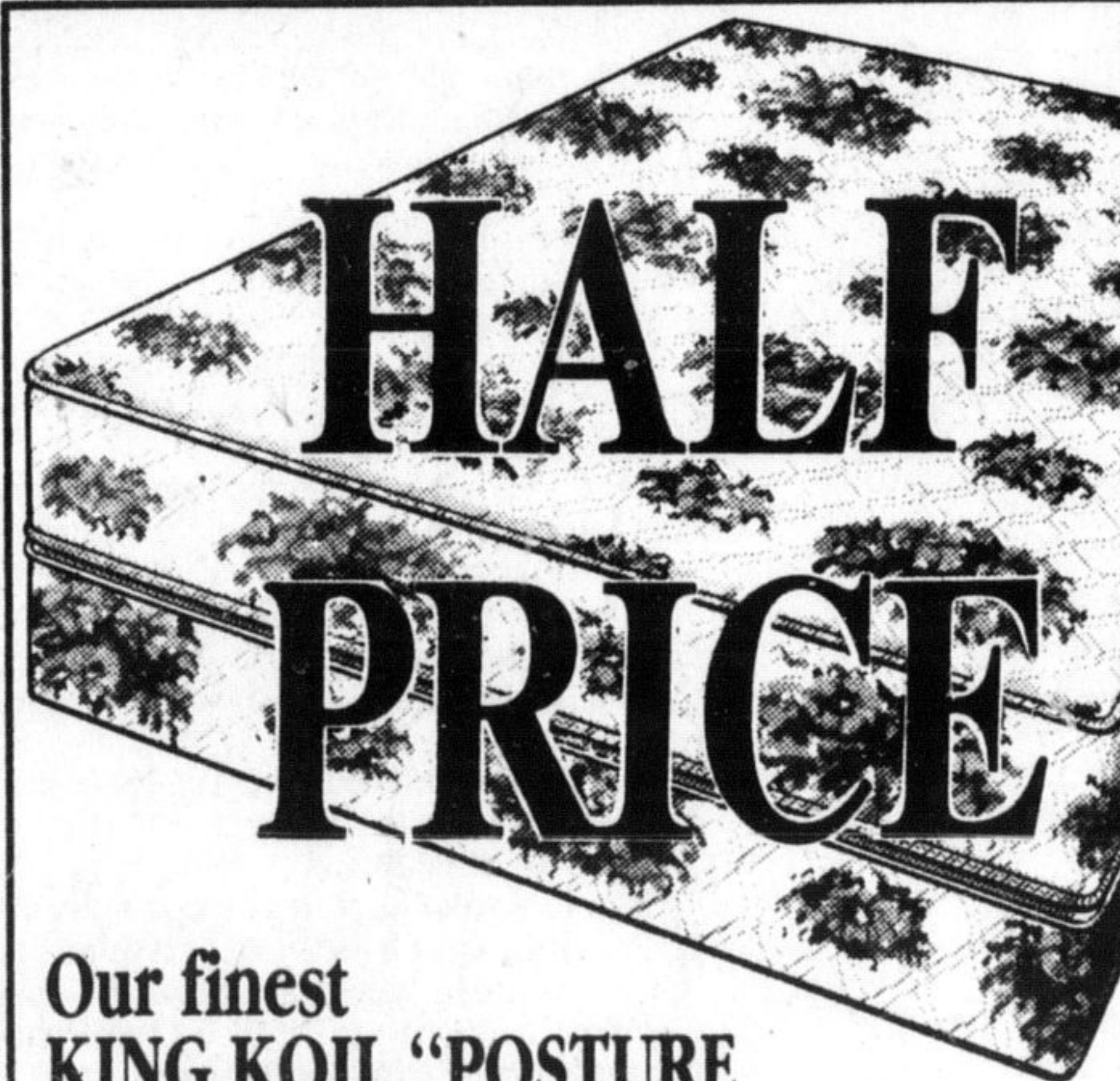


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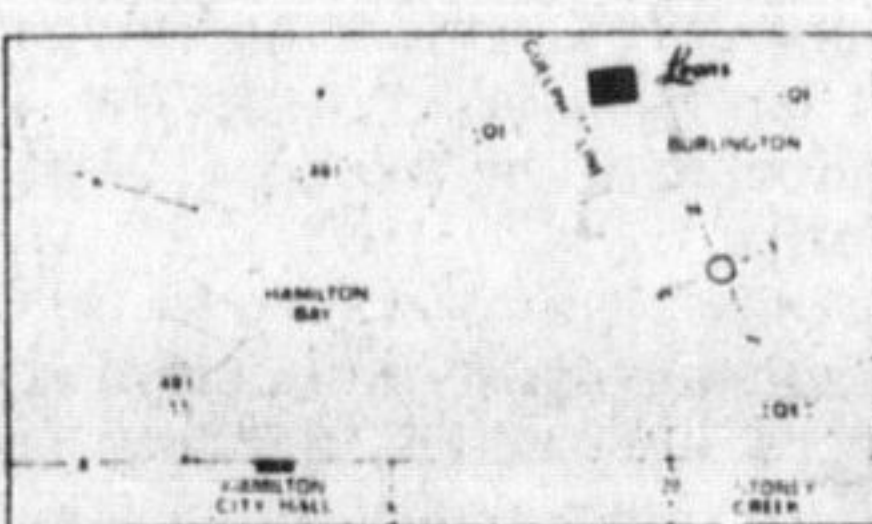
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