

CITIZEN COMMENT

County planning area or regionalization?

A recent meeting, held in Midhurst by the County of Simcoe, has proven to be a demonstration of bad judgement — on the part of the County of course.

One person who attended the meeting even went as far as to say County officials talked all night "without saying anything". Although County folk may have forgotten the purpose of meetings such as this one, we haven't. Some time ago the County circulated a report to various councils and committees explaining that a County planning designation would be sought.

Basically, such a designation would put the County in charge of many planning matters that are presently handled by local planning boards. Almost immediately, many municipalities in Simcoe voiced their displeasure at the idea of increased County control, and that was to be the purpose of the

recent meeting.

In our opinion, a county planning designation is no more than a backhanded way of introducing regionalism to Simcoe County. Certainly, it wouldn't be called regionalism, but none the less it would fit the label well.

Regional government claims to operate on a centralized basis, and that is exactly what the County would like to do in regards to planning. Simply put, officials in Midhurst would handle a good deal of planning for Penetanguishene and municipalities like it. Also simply put, that is ridiculous.

The major part of local planning must be done by a local planning group. Who else understands the wants and needs of our area? Certainly not a group of people in Midhurst who may or may not have been in Penetanguishene. Ever.

Letters to the editor Thanks to OPP

Dear editor,

Canada Day weekend in Midland, Penetanguishene, Tiny Township and particularly Thunder Beach was for many one of apprehension and uncertainty. Fortunately, however, it passed without incident, due I'm sure in no small measure to the fine, fine work of our Provincial Police.

Often the subject of criticism at the slightest suggestion of fault, often overlooked are the many instances of a "good job well done".

Hats off to them and thanks for their handling of a difficult and challenging situation.

Name withheld by request

Queen's Park report

George Taylor M.P.P.

Time for new policies

Ontario, like the rest of Canada, is faced with an acute unemployment problem. In part, this problem stems from the fact that many industries which would normally expand their operations in Ontario are now being lured away by incentive packages offered by several American states. This creates a particularly dangerous situation because, if we in Ontario are to attract new industries, we too are being forced to enter the incentive game. It is a step that we in the Ontario Government have opposed in the past, largely because it enables industry to hold the government to blackmail. At the same time, however, we recognize that if we are to attract new industry, we will have to compete in the terms forced upon us by other jurisdictions.

If Ontario and other provinces are forced to provide incentives to compete with our American neighbours, then it must be done with the assistance of the Federal Government. Moreover, it must be done in a fair and equitable manner. But, the Liberals in Ottawa, particularly the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, Jack Horner, does not seem prepared to deal with Ontario in a fair and equitable way at this time. A good example of this can be seen in the recent problems that emerged with the proposed construction of a \$500 million engine plant by Ford at Windsor. The plant would provide some 2,600 jobs in Windsor.

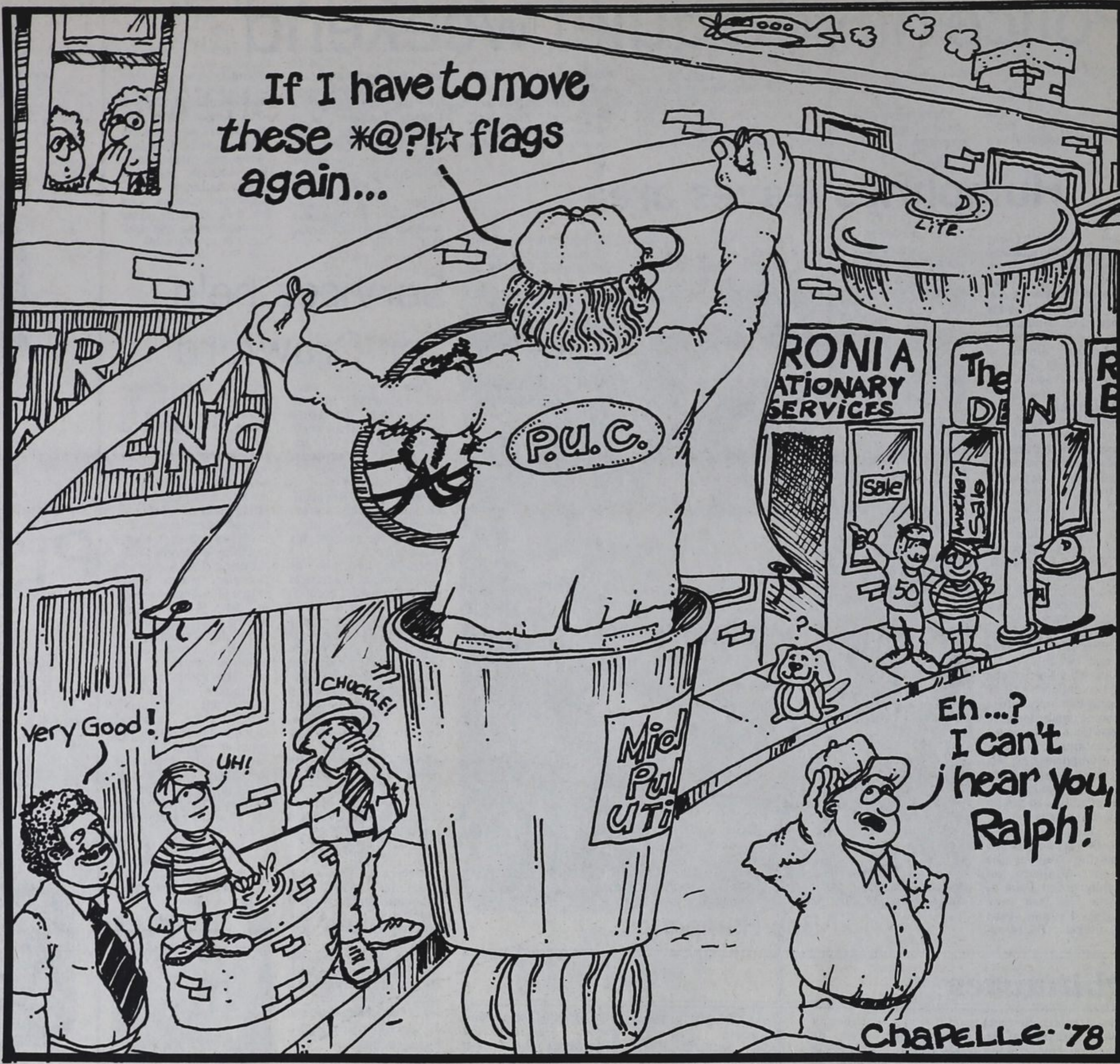
Rightly or wrongly, the Ford Company insists that it will need a \$75 million incentive to build the plant in Ontario. Other jurisdictions are competing against Ontario. In order to attract the plant, the Ontario Government agreed to a proposal put forward by Mr. Horner last February, in which the incentive package of some \$30 million was to be shared on a 75-25 basis between Ottawa and Ontario. When the Ford Company recently announced that it would need \$75 million, not \$30 million as it originally stated, Mr. Horner revised his position and stated that Ontario would have to pay 50 per cent of the incentive package. In the meantime, under the Federal DREE program, which defines all of Quebec as a depressed area, the Federal Government subsidized the building of a General Motors

plant at Montreal on a 75-25 basis. The amount involved here was some \$80 million.

What emerges from this situation is the fact that Ontario is being forced not only to compete with the American states, but also with her sister provinces who are aided by a substantial amount of federal support. Our position is that all of the provinces should be treated equally when competing for such projects, and that if incentives are to be provided to the automotive industry, it should be done on a general basis, not just for one or two companies.

Aside from the position of the Federal Government, it is interesting to note the positions taken by the Opposition Parties in Ontario. The N.D.P., who claim to speak for the Ontario workers, gave a typical response by stating that the corporations should not be given any incentive at all and that we should use our legislative powers to deal with them. What they seem to ignore is that the reality of the situation is that Ontario, in order to compete with the American states and in order to provide jobs for workers, is being forced to compete in the same way. If we do not, we will not attract new industry which is the source of more jobs.

Liberal leader Stuart Smith, on the other hand, initially criticized the incentive program saying that none should be offered, then, as usual, changed his position by saying that Ontario should pay the 50 per cent. After all, what's another \$17 million added to the provincial debt when you can later criticize the government for over-spending. Let's make it clear. Ontario needs new industry to provide new jobs. If we are forced to provide incentives in order to compete, then, however reluctantly, we must; let us then do it in a fair and equitable way. If the Federal Government is going to participate, it must treat all of the provinces fairly in this regard. However, looking at the benefit of 2,600 jobs to Ontario and the long run advantages, the Ontario Government may well serve the people of Ontario by spending the entire \$75 million immediately in order to complete the transaction. To wait for the leaderless economic policies of the Federal Government may again lose us another industry.



What's new? Not much really

by Shirley

Whittington



When school boards decree that grammar and multiplication tables be taught again; when young people contemplate weddings and woodstoves with equal earnestness; when folks give up water-skiing in favour of hobby farming; when young men get their hair cut above their ears, and young women dress themselves in high-heeled shoes and billowing skirts—observers of the social scene nod sagely and say, "The pendulum is swinging back."

I don't know where they keep this pendulum or who pushes it back and forth every ten years or so, but I do have the feeling that one could predict the future with unerring accuracy just by anticipating the next wild oscillation.

I suggest you clip and file the following fictional news items. They are flights of fancy, but I bet some time in the next decade you'll find them, or stories very much like them, in your daily newspaper.

Item: Police today broke up a riot at an outdoor music festival attended by hundreds of short haired, neatly-dressed young people. Fists started flying after members of the audience smashed several thousand dollars worth of speakers and other electrical equipment belonging to the Noisy Thugs, a rock group from the seventies. "We kept asking them to turn the volume down," said a

spokesman for the rioters. "The noise was hurting our ears and we couldn't talk to each other. So we went in and smashed their stuff up."

Asked if the group resented police intervention, the youth replied, "Heck no—we all want to be policemen when we grow up."

Item: The rapidly growing back-to-the-city movement is pushing up the cost of urban real estate, while small country acreages are reverting to real farmers who use electric milking machines and pesticides. According to Steaming Pavements, a magazine aimed at the new generation of city dwellers, people are flocking away from country concessions and into city apartments where they are attracted by the novelty of indoor plumbing

and stoves that go on at the flick of a switch. "I got so I couldn't breathe in that country air," said one happy back to the city buff. "It's so great to get back to the traffic and the milling crowds. And I can walk half a block and buy all the vegetables I need. Organic gardening? You can shove that up your compost heap!"

Item: A new course is being planned for elementary and secondary school students. Described as "a revolutionary concept" the new study program will be made compulsory in all grades. It is designed to inculcate moral and spiritual values and stresses honesty, compassion and selflessness. It is called Christianity.

Item: Laura Sourface, a militant leader of

the women's movement, yesterday made a passionate plea for the liberation of the working woman.

"Few men realize," she said, "how much working women have suffered over the years. It's no fun working in a stuffy old office all day, and carrying your lunch in an attache case and sitting on dear knows how many corporate boards. We want back into our kitchens." A mass rally is planned for next week, when five hundred women will publicly burn their No-Nonsense panty hose, and demand the right to be barefoot and pregnant. The group's slogan is "Ms. was a Mistake."

Item: Skinnies from across the continent gathered at the Share-a-ton Convention Centre yesterday for a Weight Gainers International symposium. Scheduled activities include seminars on Avoiding Diet Pop, 1,001 Ways to Use Whipped Cream and How to Break the Jogging Habit.

Well—you see what I mean. You just get used to one extreme and the pendulum swings. Some of us who have lived long enough to be bewildered by constant change often ask why that pendulum has to swing so wildly.

The answer is simple. If the pendulum stops, so does the clock.

Our letters policy

The editorial page of this newspaper is open to any reader who may wish to express a thought or opinion on any subject in, or of the news. We'd especially like to see letters or articles dealing with local issues and concerns.

Our only limitation is space. If necessary, letters or articles may be edited at the discretion of the editor, for good taste or for legal reasons. Material may be of any length and if possible, typed or hand-written clearly so that no mistakes will be made.

We will not print any letter sent anonymously to this newspaper. We ask that writers include their name, address and

telephone number in the letter or contribution so that we may verify the authorship.

From this point onward we will publish letters to the editor with names withheld—provided the authors of the letters make themselves known to this newspaper, and provided they have a valid reason for wishing their name withheld from publication.

We believe that there are citizens in this community who wish to communicate their opinions on important issues, but because of valid circumstances, may be compromising their position.

We feel those citizens have a right to make their opinions known.

I don't receive many letters from young people, with comments on my ideas in this column. That's to be expected. Young people, quite naturally, are extremely self-centered. I know I was.

They are becoming extremely aware of their own "self", their individualism. They are extremely interested in sex, love, some kind of belief they can hang onto, some guru with all the answers. And good luck to them, even though there is no such thing.

They are not interested in the maudlin meanderings of a middle-aged (sic!) man who doesn't seem to know from one week to the next what he really believes in.

It's not that I don't get along with young people. From the age of about one to twenty-one, they and I are on the best of terms. There's only one fly in the fun. I can't help teasing them. It's a rotten quality and I'm always sorry when I do, but some demon urges me on.

For example, my older grandson hit back when I'd needle him by saying, "Jolly good!", when he'd try to make a Tarzan leap and land on his ear. He responded with, "Jolly bum-bum", to let me know he didn't like it. By saying a bad word, he put me in my place.

He underlined his individuality by such remarks as, "No way", when I'd try to tease him into something he didn't want to do, or couldn't do. "Bugger off" when I'd pretend to mock anger and threaten dire punishment. He didn't learn these terms you'll be happy to know, from his gran, grandad, mother or father. He learned them from the other little punks at day-care.

Teenagers are just as easily teased, and pretty vulnerable. After spending nine months goofing off they come up to you as

by Bill Smiley



exam-time looms, with a tortured expression, as though they had to go to the bathroom, and could hardly wait, and shimper, "Sir, could you tell me if I have to write the final exam?"

I reply to a freckled redhead, "Not unless you have freckles and red hair." There are all kinds of variations on this. If it's a boy, I might say, "Not if you can take me to a trout stream and guarantee I catch my limit." You can see the wheels spinning wildly in his motorcycle-haunted mind, this boy who's never caught a trout in his life. They HATE me.

From about twenty-one for the next ten years, I can scarcely stand young people. They become pompous. They think their mildly socialist ideas, so hackneyed you can't believe it, are fresh-minted. They want to change the world and you: your religion, your ideas, your life-style.

After that they're not so bad, and they have acquired that rueful resignation that most civilized people get after pounding their heads against life long enough to soften them irredeemably.

From about forty on, readers and I are on

the same set of rails, and though they can and do attack me furiously, at least they know, most of them, that there is more gray in the world than there is black and white.

Their letters are much more interesting than those of young people: witty, astringent, pejorative, sometimes brutal, often kindly, perceptive, sympathetic, nagging. They have lived, and they know that the world has them by the tail, not vice versa.

In response to a recent column, half-joking, asking if anyone had a job for my daughter, I received a great letter from A.R. Kirk of Renfrew.

"Yes, I have a job...New job requirements include a new baby in 1979, and another new baby every two years until 1989, when she and her husband will be the parents of eight healthy children. That was an average family in the early and best development years of Canada."

He goes on to explain that my daughter would never be out of work. "She will remodel and make clothing for her children and herself from the abundant supply of slightly used clothing you can get at a rummage sale for a song."

"She will with the help of her husband and you her father, and your wife, her mother, have a large fruit and vegetable garden: the children will help."

Mr. Kirk goes on, seriously, and I'm half inclined to agree with him. But he doesn't know a few things about our Kim and her kids. In the first place, they already look as though they'd been dressed from a rummage sale, without any re-modelling.

In the second, where do they get the land or this big garden? Young people today have very little chance of ever owning a home of their own, let alone one with garden space.

What really hurts, though, is when he suggests that such a life would interfere with my vacation trips to exotic places. "Think of the pleasure you will have, using vacation money saved, to help out the finances of your grandchildren in small sums where most needed."

Dear Mr. Kirk: Those small sums have prevented me from having a decent vacation for years. A penny saved is a penny earned, but a dollar to my daughter is a dollar I'll never see again. Thanks anyway.

Mr. Kirk and his wife are 78 and 74 respectively, with seven of a family and twenty-one grandchildren. He would like to live to be 100 years old, "life is so interesting."

Bless you sir. May you do so. May you be pinching your wife lovingly at 98, and she responding.

But don't ask me to take on six more grandboys. I said to my wife the other night, "I have a feeling in my bones, just a premonition, that some disaster is about to befall me."

She answered, "Oh, didn't I tell you? The boys are coming for the weekend."

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