

Economy could be election wild-card

Now that we're in the midst of an enjoyable economic boom, with jobs plentiful, prices and wages holding steady, and interest rates still better than the double-digit days of the recent recession, nobody wants to think about the bad old days.

But hold on a minute. Interest rates are rising, economic growth is slowing and the bad old days could be right around the corner again.

But nobody wants to hear such bad news. Especially politicians on the campaign trail making expensive promises based on a recent period of economic boom.

While the federal government (unpopular though it and especially its leader may be) has been working to reduce the massive federal deficit, the province of Ontario's deficit has remained the same.

While it increases spending on popular causes like education and health care, the province's Liberal government has not been taking advantage of the boom by hammering the deficit.

As long as the boom continues, no one will notice (or want to notice). But if and when the crunch comes, Ontarians will remember the outrageous spending habits of previous governments that got us into trouble in the first place.

If such a course of events were to happen before the provincial election Sept. 10 (and some economists predict just that), Premier David Peterson's liberal spending habits could come under public pressure.

And Tory leader Larry Grossman might be the beneficiary at the polls because of his earlier calls for restraint. The NDP's constant call for even higher government spending might dramatically harm that party's standing in the polls.

And the free trade issue remains a wild card. Public support of that could go either way should inflation or recession rear its head again.

All this might seem surprising considering the current government's widespread popularity throughout the province. But, especially in elections, truth remains stranger than fiction.

Yonge St. entrance could be a hazard to pedestrians

Dear Editor:

Attached hereto, for publication in your paper, please find a copy of a letter I sent to Midland Council regarding the hazards associated with a re-zoning application of a lot situated at the Yonge and Norene Streets intersection.

Even though I was given assurances from Town Clerk, Fred Flood, that my letter to Council would be put on the agenda and distributed at the June 22, Monday evening council meeting, Mr. Flood dropped all reference to the correspondence from Monday night's Agenda.

Following the council meeting, the Mayor stated that the letter in question should have been placed on the agenda and made available to the public and the press.

The letter reads:

**To the Mayor and Members of Midland Council,
Dominion Avenue West,
Midland, Ontario**

Dear Council Members:

Re: Objection to Becker Milk entrance off Yonge Street

Please be advised that as a matter of record, I am formally objecting to the proposed Becker Milk Ltd. operation on the north-west side of Yonge and Norene Streets, because of the potentially dangerous and hazardous entrance off Yonge Street.

Serious consideration should be given to

the fact that there are two cemeteries located on the south side of Yonge Street, one of which, is located opposite the proposed outlet and the other is in very close proximity to the same intersection. It is most important that the mourners attending these two burial grounds and the pedestrians in the area generally, should be taken into account. After all, these people are permanent residents of Midland.

By way of the history of proposed Becker site, some of you may recall that a former town lawyer was a previous owner of the Becker property. He attempted to have the town council re-zone the lands in question during the late 1970s.

I objected then to the council's re-zoning application and subsequently an OMB hearing was held.

The OMB soundly rejected and dismissed the said application. The late A.A. Ingram, QC, represented several objectors to the application and, in his submission and depositions, set out various points of objection, including the attendant vehicular and pedestrian hazards in establishing Yonge Street entrances on the subject lands.

I sincerely hope that you will review this matter further with a view of eliminating the potential hazards of the proposed project.

**Yours very truly
Charles N. Parker**

Served as Mayor of Midland for 11 years

Ainleys send fond greetings from Ethiopia

Editor's note: This is a copy of a letter sent from Bill and Trudy Ainley to Port McNicoll Council.

Dear Friends:

Hello again from Ethiopia! As you can imagine, Trudy and I are now well settled in. We have stopped taking pictures of women drawing water from polluted pools or donkeys buried under huge loads - we are now glad to buy bread freshly baked in the backyard of a mud hut and handed to you by a questionably clean little boy. We also think nothing of buying meat from open stalls where whole carcasses are hung up and you point, through the flies, at the piece you want cut off.

This doesn't sound too hygienic but there is one advantage - there is no solid waste problem in Ethiopia. Nothing is wasted, a plastic bag is used over and over again. When you can buy them, the cost of a bottle is five times that of the contents, more often you can only get soft drinks by returning an equivalent number of empty bottles. Tin cans are rubbed down on a stone and made into cups. Definitely a no-waste society.

My organization, HOPE INTERNATIONAL, continues to make good progress. We have broken our overall program down into three parts! Well-drilling, pump-installation and water-system construction. We have selected and visited 33 sites, which make up the HOPE program to the end of 1988 and established a comprehensive file on each. The files, initially, include a location sketch, a polaroid photograph and the hydrogeological study. Once the well is

developed, a borehole lithology and well log, with depth, static water level and yield, are added. To date, we have drilled 10 successful wells, insulated five pumps and constructed two water supply systems.

A few weeks ago, we were advised that the extension of the HOPE program to the end of 1988 has been approved by the Canadian Government with an additional grant of \$1.1 million.

However, all is not smooth sailing because we have been experiencing unseasonably heavy rains in the Awassa area. We had recently just completed a well in the village of Abela Lida when tropical rains almost instantaneously turned an arid valley into a muddy lake, with our rig stuck right in the middle. We had to dump over 500 tonnes of volcanic ash into the area and rent one of the few heavy bulldozers in the country to pull it out. The ash was local but the bulldozer had to be transported over 300 km so the rescue operation took over two weeks.

After that experience, we decided to move the Rig across the Rift Valley and over the mountains into the flat lands near the Somalia border. We assembled a convoy of five vehicles which spent three days on the road and finally made it to the semi-desert area of Borena. Here, in the last few days, we have completed a 120-meter deep well and our plans call for the drilling of three more wells at sites where the anticipated depths are over 300 m.

As can be imagined, in this type of area, with almost no rain, the welcome is very enthusiastic when the drilling rig pulls into the

community. The whole village turns out to help us unload and set up camp. The actual drilling takes about two weeks and when we hit water, there is widespread rejoicing.

After getting the Rig established in Borena, I thought a few days of civilization was warranted and Trudy and I drove 300 km north to Addis Ababa. Whilst there, we were invited to an Ethiopian wedding which was quite an experience. It started with an early lunch at the Bride's house, where a big tent had been set up and the national dish of "injera and watt" was served. We then journeyed across the city to the church (I carried 15 in my Toyota wagon) for a 2½ hour ceremony, including a one hour sermon. I asked the guy next to me if the preacher was talking about the couple but he said, no, it was just a standard sermon, which he couldn't resist because of the big crowd. I guess preachers are the same the world over! After the ceremony, Trudy and I drove 15 singing and clapping passengers to a park for pictures and then finished up at the Groom's house for supper, where everyone fed each other and a new name for the bride was decided upon. Quite a day.

The following day was quite a contrast, we did what comes naturally and got together with a dozen of our Canadian friends to watch the final game of the Stanley Cup on video. That is one of the wonderful things about working abroad, the warm friendships you make with other Canadians. There are so few of you and you have such a lot in common. Anyway, it was a great game, we even enjoyed the ads.

On June 22nd, our daughter Suzanne joins us for our last month in Ethiopia. She is studying planning at Waterloo and so I have arranged for her to meet with the government planners based in Awassa. It should be interesting to compare land use planning as practiced by a socialist state with that of our own. One interesting comparison will be the Ethiopian villagization program and the Canadian planning technique of encouraging urbanization by restricting building lots in rural areas. On the face of it, it would seem to be different means to the same end but we'll see what Suzanne thinks. One thing is for sure, there are a lot less appeals here. When the government decides to do something, you don't argue.

The Ethiopian people, however, don't really take things, including their government, very seriously. Their attitude is, what will be, will be and let's laugh (and eat) while we can. Last Sunday, Trudy and I picked up four women heading for the Monday market in Awassa, they were carrying big loads and had about 10 km to go. All the way into Awassa they giggled and laughed, as the wagon bounced along and when we dropped them, hurried down to the market area to claim a prime spot. They would spend the night at their chosen place, ready for the 7 a.m. opening and when we drove away, they were still chattering and laughing. A wonderfully, happy and resilient people, we will miss them.

**Sincerely,
Bill and Trudy Ainley
Awassa S.R.
Ethiopia**

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Letters

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