

The Liberal



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Attending Conventions

The attendance of mayors, reeves and councillors and school trustees at conventions has been the subject of considerable discussion throughout the province this year. The departure of a delegation from York County on a fact finding trip to Europe has inspired more than usual interest in the question and it would be well if all municipal representatives would tell the taxpayers the whole story of convention expenses and benefits to the municipality.

There is some merit in conventions. Hard-headed business executives think it worthwhile to spend money to have staff members attend conventions and it is hardly likely they would continue doing it year after year if it did not pay dividends. It is quite conceivable that meetings of municipal officials and municipal representatives could be beneficial. It is also quite possible the practice has been carried to the extreme and that too many municipal officials and elected representatives are spending taxpayers' hard-earned money on jaunts and outings which bring little in real value to their municipalities. This at least is the opinion of a growing number of people throughout Ontario judging by reports in newspapers which reach our desk.

A Sudbury alderman recently charged that Ontario Municipal Association conventions are nothing but

a big party and a waste of taxpayers' money. He was opposing the addition of the mayor's name to a list of six councillors going to a convention at Niagara Falls. Councillors did not support his demand that one of the councillors stay home if the mayor went.

Members of local municipal councils can reassure questioning taxpayers by making a frank statement of convention expense so far this year. Taxpayers would welcome a statement from Richmond Hill and district municipal councils and from York County Council on the number of conventions attended this year by mayor, reeves, councillors and officials, and the amount of money expended. The statement might well be accompanied by an outline of the benefits which would be resulting to the taxpayers as a result of the convention visits.

Pending a statement of municipal expenditure for conventions it is reasonable to assume it has been steadily increasing in recent years. During the same years taxes have continued to increase so it can hardly be argued that great knowledge gained at conventions held from Halifax to Vancouver and now overseas have had a favorable influence on the tax rate. It may be that economy is not one of the items on the agenda of these conventions.

Efficient Local Government

The Glasco report has focussed attention on the inefficiency of the Federal Government. The mammoth operations of our senior government are being swamped in a sea of paper. The Glasco report has suggested that a complete overhaul of the machinery of government and the introduction of modern business methods would mean a saving of many millions to the Canadian taxpayer.

This newspaper suggests comparable savings could result from a streamlining of municipal government throughout this province. This is especially true in the suburban municipalities which have experienced such tremendous growth since the end of World War 2. Municipal governments have added many new departments and services that were unheard of a few years ago. Mushrooming subdivisions have meant a corresponding rapid expansion in the size but not necessarily the efficiency of local government.

Town government in Richmond Hill has grown to the point where it has become big business involving the expenditure of many thousands of dollars in public funds each year. The major share of this growth took place in a relatively short time in the fifties. The town now employs a

staff of over 60 and has eight separate departments.

Governments can save the public money in other ways besides cutting taxes. A reduction in government spending and a streamlining of departmental operations can result in real savings to the taxpayers.

The Glasco report has shown that our Federal Government is faltering under massive incompetence. Before similar charges can be levelled against the municipalities they should begin to study the efficiency of their operations. The fat that accumulated during the lush years of the fifties should be ruthlessly cut away. Municipal councillors should make an agonizing reappraisal of their operations, department by department. Councils have been adept at adding more and more departments and high priced department heads. Very few councils have been able to find a way to save on the cost of government. In addition to the basic services during the past decade many councils have added industrial commissioners, planning directors, engineers and massive office staffs.

During the trying days this nation is passing through every effort must be made to alter the basic management of government.

Regional Planning

We heartily approve a recent announcement by Hon. Fred M. Cass, Minister of Municipal Affairs, that the province is to be divided into planning regions. Establishment of regional provincial offices could "provide municipalities with the assistance they need more swiftly," according to Lorne Cumming, deputy-minister. We hope it will also give them the opportunity to plan for the good of the whole region.

We also hope that the plan may light the way for a fundamental reorganization of local government in the province — government whose framework was set up 113 years ago and has long been creaking. Regional provincial offices could promote co-operative effort and legislation on the part of municipalities. The offices could also act as co-ordinators of economic planning and development directly with local councils.

The need for effective planning on a regional basis is evident in this area where thousands of acres of the best agricultural land has been lost to production to provide space for mushrooming subdivision growth. Other large tracts have been bought up by land speculators and are lying fallow awaiting development. Agriculture is still of major importance to the economy of this nation. Indiscriminate use of good agricultural

land for suburban development may be bitterly regretted in years to come.

There is no clearer proof of the need for effective planning on a regional basis than in the Niagara fruit belt, which is relentlessly being eaten up by industry and housing. This land is ideally suited for the growing of fruit, because of climatic and soil conditions. It cannot be replaced easily, if at all.

Another instance is the way the Lake Ontario shoreline from Oshawa to St. Catharines has been virtually sealed off from public use and pre-empted by factories, private estates and developers. Many municipal problems far beyond one municipality's boundaries, yet cities, towns or townships are severely hampered in trying to cope with them because of these boundaries. No one community can — or will — by itself save the Niagara fruit lands. No single one has responsibility for ensuring that the lakefront is preserved and appropriately developed. Even in the matter of pollution, how can one city's bylaw be effective if the neighboring municipality does not have one?

Yes, regional planning is most urgently needed, and we sincerely hope that the new plan will do much to arrest and prevent the ravages of uncontrolled development.

Municipal Income Tax In The United States

More than 100 cities in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Alabama, Kentucky and Missouri impose a tax, usually at 1%, on payroll earnings of persons living or working in the community. Recently, more and more suburbs, mostly in Ohio and Pennsylvania, have been

levying income tax of their own. In 12 months ending June 30, 1960, local income taxes totalled \$254 million, up nearly 10% from the year before. In 1950, such revenue totalled only \$70 million. In some local governments

the traditional property tax is outstripped by municipal income taxes. They provide 70% of total tax revenue in Columbus, 57% in Toledo, nearly 40% in Philadelphia. From The Wall Street Journal

Rambling Around

by Elizabeth Kelson

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE A COUNTRY FAIR

Fair season will soon be in full swing throughout Ontario, and there's no place like a fair . . . small or large . . . to have a good family outing. There is something of interest, something of fun and something educational for every member of the family.

Some people are saying that the day of the small fair is over. Don't tell that to the people in Woodbridge and Markham. They won't believe you. As long as small fairs are owned and operated by people in local farming communities they will provide competitions where local individuals can participate.

At more and more events today people are becoming spectators rather than participants. We have sports events where thousands come to watch and cheer; we have television where millions can watch professional entertainers. But we have fewer and fewer events where the average people can compete and show what they can do. But that's not true of local fairs. It is refreshing to go to them and see how heartily the competitors work and how thoroughly local breeders enter the contests. As long as the livestock classes are filled and a good percentage of the local farmers both senior and junior are participating the competitions justify themselves. As long as the exhibits of crafts, fruits and vegetables almost overflow the space available to show them, the fair must be considered as successful as any big spectator event.

What could be more worthwhile than events where adults and youngsters participate. I'd say it was much better than an event put on by one person who anticipates an audience of many people.

A HOBBY TODAY SEEMS TO BE A NECESSITY

It wasn't so very long ago when the majority of men and women had no time left in their working day for the pursuits of hobbies as we know it. More-over they would have been too exhausted at the end of a day's work to indulge in a hobby. In the time of our grandfathers and grandmothers nearly all the creative work was performed daily in the home and this was necessary because it could be done no other way. Their need for self-expression was satisfied although they may not have been aware of it.

In this day and age the scene has changed for most of us . . . mechanized industry, good transportation, the mediums of radio and television, and the huge chain stores that are strung across the country are at our doors. The private citizen does not have to supply all his daily needs now, as when every housewife baked bread, preserved fruits and vegetables, cured meat, manufactured soap and candles and spun and wove cloth to make clothes. The women of yesterday also churned cream and made butter as well as looked after chickens, gathered their eggs and tended the vegetable gardens. The men spent their time farming from dawn until supper time in the summer and engaged in logging and cutting wood in the wintertime. It was a busy life.

Modern inventions such as automobiles, washing machines, vacuum cleaners and all sorts of power tools were destined to take the back breaking toil out of most of the work. Factories and other industries lured the farmer away from the farm and they became consumers of goods that they had no hand in producing. The five day week and the shorter daily working hours gave the men of the family a longer evening and a whole weekend and their wives were relieved from baking and making butter and doing endless chores that belong to the farm life of yesterday. The question was how to spend this extra leisure in a profitable manner. The creative aspects of daily living were urged out of the home by mass production which produced varied and cheaper goods but they came back through the window in the form of hobbies, which proves that the human spirit is definitely creative and cannot be denied for long. So the women who made things as part of their daily work are making them again for the sheer joy of it. They make specialized hobbies out of old reliables like making quilts, hooking rugs, dressmaking, weaving, knitting, and crocheting. They have ventured into the newer handicrafts like shellcraft, ceramics, china painting and have taken a new interest in interior decorating, fancy cooking and baking. More men than ever are interested in making furniture and refinishing old furniture. Others are studying horticulture, landscape gardening and learn the ins and outs of plumbing, heating and electricity.

Mass education has advanced us to the point where we do not have to stop with handicrafts for the realm of the mind and the spirit looms largely in our consciousness as never before. Courses of study in many subjects are welcomed by the thoughtful adults who believe in a higher education. New languages are being learned and customs of other people are being appraised for what they are and the best is being assimilated into our own manner of thinking. Art has really come to the fore in our country. Oil painting, music, creative writing, photography and dancing techniques are being explored thoroughly. Our children are encouraged to have hobbies apart from their daily schoolwork, and we ourselves are learning to keep pace with them. The hobby has developed in us the sense of appreciation of fine things and leads us into a world of richer and better living.

THE GRACEFUL GARBAGE COLLECTORS — THE GULLS

The water of the lake is low now and the gulls come in very close. They scan the beach for fish that is washed in by the waves. By cleaning up the dead fish, garbage and other offal they perform a valuable service by preventing pollution of the lakeshore.

Gulls are something to watch. The flying silhouette of a gull against the horizon with a backdrop of green forest is something to remember but they are equally picturesque when they are resting lightly on the water and bobbing on the waves like toy boats.

They are long-winged with short necks and legs. Their bodies, heads and tails are white and the wings and back are grey. The gull feels at home on land as in water. His taste runs as far as the local garbage dump. You can find his kind ascending and descending on a place like this almost any hour of the day. The gull also likes to explore the farmer's fields in search of grasshoppers and field mice.

I find them very sociable and good company. They fly in close to the shore many times and their penetrating cries break the loneliness with their constant calling.

I've always been impressed by gulls. It makes me think of other vivid scenes like the time I made a trip to Niagara Falls in the old Cayuga. The gulls appeared to be following the boat all the way and it seemed to me that their wings were beating in perfect rhythm with the surging waves. Nothing but boats, waves, sky and flying gulls. Another time I watched them flying in bands around the harbor at Tobermory. To my mind, no lake would be complete without a company of gulls.

"Dear Mr. Editor"

CRITICIZES LACK OF WARNING SIGNS

Dear Mr. Editor, I feel I must complain about the lack of thought and planning exhibited by our town's public works department. At long last some work is being done on Centre St. East. This is all very good but why are there no signs to let the public know that Centre St. is impassible? Surely a sign placed west of the CNR tracks would not be too expensive. Instead if one wishes to go from Yonge Street to Bayview via Centre Street then after driving over half the distance, without any warning the road is found to be blocked off. This is typical of the thoughtlessness which characterized the installation of the obstacle course down Yonge St. I refer to the absolutely useless traffic lights set at strategic intervals from Crosby Avenue to Elgin Mills so as to cause the biggest traffic jams possible. Surely on this stretch of road the biggest problems posed are for southbound traffic turning east on to Crosby and northbound traffic turning west on to Leventdale Road. The present traffic lights do not in any way alleviate these holdups. Could not an advanced green light have been installed at these locations. Or is it too much to expect from our public works department that they think and plan before they act.

D. W. Stainer
Centre St. W.

WANTS DITCHES CLEANED UP

Dear Mr. Editor, Recently, during the very pleasant weather we have been enjoying, I have occasionally taken a walk through the new sections of the town on the east side, where I myself also live and have observed with much pleasure the individual efforts of most of the homeowners to beautify their property. Many trees have been planted, fences erected and hedges encouraged to grow. Flower beds provide a blaze of colour. Houses have been painted, drives paved and lawns cut and raked until they look like velvet.

As I walked along the roads I realized many people had drawn an imaginary line where their property and, they presume, their responsibility ends, at the "town line". Between this line and the edge of the road surface there lay in the hot sun a disgusting waste of weeds and stones with which was intermingled paper wrappers, wet torn cardboard cartons, old cans and bottles!

What sort of people are we? Is it that we do not notice this eyesore when we are coming out sleek laws? Do we imagine it is "not our job" to clean up this mess? Where is our pride? May I, Mr. Editor, with your help, publish this appeal for everyone who has a ditch in this condition to go out soon and do something about it. Then perhaps next Spring the effort may be continued so that all the fine work being put into the gardens themselves may be complemented by a tidy front border.

Yours sincerely,
"Garden lover"

GEO. W. CROTHERS LIMITED COMMENTS ON EDGELEY WATER

Dear Mr. Editor, We, at Crothers, are disturbed about the controversy which is going on in Vaughan Township regarding the development of a municipal water supply at Edgeley.

We are concerned for three reasons: 1) Further delay in completing the Edgeley well will involve a further delay in construction of our needed facilities. We cannot go ahead without a water supply. Our property does not have a supply which will even start to measure up to our requirements. 2) The controversy about the Edgeley well has generated many rumors. The one which requires the most attention is the rumor that Crothers has made a special "deal" with council for favoured treatment with regard to water. Let's look at the facts! When we set out looking for land for our new plant, we looked for a site near a main highway which would have the services that we re-

quire. We were not concerned about sewers so much because we have our own plans in regard to that. But we looked at the water problem very carefully. We found that Vaughan Township had already established a well at Edgeley; we were told that the stage of development at that time was only part of the already established program for the full development of the Edgeley supply.

When it became clear to us that we did not have an adequate water supply on our property, we asked township council in open meeting to approve our application for rezoning along with a resolution to install a water main along the frontage of our property — a matter of less than 3000 feet. Council agreed to recommend that the main be installed on a local improvement basis with the cost of the main being assessed against the frontage. In other words, Crothers is to pay for the main. Had council not agreed to provide water for us, we could not have considered moving to our location in Vaughan.

3) We are somewhat concerned about the reaction of some residents who are opposing the development of the well because of the cost of roughly \$200,000.00. It is true that the proposal is to add the cost to the municipal debt and retire it through assessment. But what consideration has been given to the well as an investment which will bring dividends in the form of additional assessment? This outlay of \$200,000.00 will probably attract many millions of dollars in assessment.

We, at Crothers, look upon Vaughan Township as the next place where the development of the Toronto area will spring up. We fully expect that our move to Highways 400 and 7 will be just the first bud in the springtime of Vaughan's development. But the township cannot attract development unless the basic essential services are there. Vaughan Township ratepayers, of whom Crothers is one, must be prepared to authorize financial commitments, if we expect to attract others to share our tax burden.

We hope that this statement of our views has served to clarify our position in regard to the Edgeley well. We hope now that the matter can be cleared out of the way, and that we can proceed with construction.

Yours very truly,
Harry J. Keenan
Secretary
Geo. W. Crothers Limited

REPRINTS AVAILABLE

Readers may order reprints of staff photos appearing in "The Liberal" at the newspaper office, 63 Yonge Street South, Richmond Hill.

Second Thoughts . . .

by George Mayes
● Yesterday's news is not necessarily dead.

Toronto's Mayor Phillips announces that he will run again . . . So what else is new?

If the Americans hadn't thought of a similar title first, Canada could have made millions by publishing its "Glasco Report" as: How To Succeed In Government Without Really Trying.

Advertising men handling government business say they expect the largest austerity cuts will come in their public relations work . . . And they'll be lucky if the government doesn't sue them!

Lord Wrattlesley, Britain's naturalist peer, died recently without realizing his life-long ambition to breed a spotted mouse . . . And we'll never know if he'd have called it the Mouse of Lords.

In Canada, an RCAF Flight Sergeant succeeded as an Irish peer. So let's face it. This, coming on top of the Bomarc, definitely means that the RCAF is no longer peerless.

As a result of a recent order, Metro's P.C.'s are reported to be feeling naked going on duty without their guns . . . And, as a result of a recent election, Ottawa's P.C.'s are going ON duty with a naked feeling.

The British army has a practice nuclear bomb which explodes a mushroom cloud of soap flakes . . . Wonder if they call it the X-Bomb? (Brand X, that is.)

Canada may also have a "soap bomb" in the \$1,000,000 campaign to introduce ANOTHER detergent. The meaningless backward name would likely have been also readable upside down if they could have designed a package which poured from the bottom.

Resort operators at Georgia's Jekyll Island State Park are accepting Canadian dollars at par . . . Trying to turn it into a shekel island?

One of the Telegram's reports on the CNE covered its international aspects. The story was written by a John F. Bassett — Telegram Staff Reporter . . . Now there's a real case of Conservative austerity.

This is "Measure Your Mattress Month" according to the National Association of Bedding Manufacturers. So take a tape and measure your mattress — it will give you an idea of how wide your half SHOULD be.

The CBC announces that weatherman Saltzman will be the only regular on 701 when the program returns to Toronto. The show will draw upon a "stable" of 25 expert interviewers who by that time, are likely to outnumber the audience.

Equip your boat with DOT-approved life preservers. Why be half safe?

GORMLEY: Cousin's Dairy Bar at the intersection of the Don Mills Road and the Markham-Whitchurch Townline at Gormley was the scene of an armed hold-up on Sept. 4 which netted thieves \$60.

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