

The Liberal



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Ontario Education Costs

In a recent speech to members of the Associated Secondary School Boards of Ontario, Education Minister William G. Davis urged them to cut down unnecessary facilities in new school buildings. Declaring this decade is a critical one for secondary schools, the universities and other centres of higher learning, Mr. Davis suggested school boards use their budgets to the best advantage when planning new buildings, asking themselves whether it is essential to purchase equipment for each student.

In the contentious matter of greater municipal control of education budgets the Minister said, "If we expect municipal councils to relax the pressure now being exerted to gain control of school board expenditures, it behooves all board members to take a second look, with their architects, at the specifications which they are putting out to tender." Mr. Davis said it now costs about \$1,500 to place a student in a new collegiate institute or a high school, \$2,000 in a composite school, and \$2,200 in a vocational school. Yet some schools are being erected at twice these figures.

This province is in the centre of the student population explosion, which is more reason than ever to spend out tax dollars wisely. Mr. Davis told the convention that with the current emphasis on vocational training and the new accommodations being provided for secondary schools, more students are expected to remain in school long enough to graduate or round off a course suitable to their capabilities. He said plans are being laid by the advisory committee on university affairs to care for Ontario's share of the 100,000 Canadian students expected in colleges by 1970. "We have a gigan-

tic task to cope with this influx which will become cumulative through 1966-70. We cannot permit ourselves to fail our nation and our young people in the face of this challenge."

The vast expansion in the educational requirements of this decade demand that every education dollar be spent on education. We shall have no money to spare, at any level of government, for frills, however desirable in themselves such frills may be. The frills must make way for classrooms, laboratories and highly qualified instructors.

The real power of exerting greater control over educational expenditures lies not with the municipalities but with Mr. Davis' own government. His duty and that of his government is to assess all the educational needs of this province, relate them to provincial revenues, and make certain that every dollar is spent for the best possible return. The province has refused to grant the municipalities any authority over school costs. Councils are compelled to levy whatever budget figure school boards may set. This situation is particularly bad in the case of high school trustees who aren't elected by the people but are appointed.

Under the present system the education dollar can only be spent to the best advantage if the provincial government is prepared to exert a strong central authority over capital expenditures in particular, and in some areas even over operating expenditures. The province, which now provides a large part of capital school costs, has the responsibility to make sure the money it supplies is prudently spent. School capital budgets should be subject first to the approval of municipal councils and then to the approval of the province.

Markham Acted Wisely

Last week Markham Township Council deferred approval of proposed residential development in the township north and east of Thornhill. Reeve W. R. Dean and Councillors Stewart Rumble and Charles Hoover, who voted for the deferral, contended that large-scale residential development—proposed subdivisions would give a total of 1,240 single-family units and 520 multiple-family units eventually—should be postponed until such time as the jail farm property at Langstaff has been released for industrial development and an adequate water supply is available. They also stated that they did not wish to add unnecessarily to the tax burden of the ratepayers already established in the township. Past experience both in Markham and in surrounding municipalities where residential development has been allowed to take place without industrial development on a proper ratio, has proven to result in great increases in the tax rate.

Markham Township has, according to its Planning Director Ron Forrest, a ratio of 70.28 per cent residential assessment and 29.72 per cent industrial and commercial. This ratio is as good as, if not better than, that in neighboring municipalities. But in arriving at these figures, Mr. Forrest said he had not included farm assessment, claiming that this was the procedure used by Metro in arriving at its assessment ratio.

Nevertheless, Markham, with the

exception of the western mile and a quarter and other small areas, is still essentially a farming community—and if farm assessment were counted in, the ratio of industrial and commercial assessment to the whole would be much lower. The ratio for which every municipality is striving is 60 per cent residential and 40 per cent commercial and industrial. It is believed that this ratio would share the cost of municipal government and services more equally—so that the residential ratepayer would not be overburdened with taxes.

A representative of one of the developers of the area concerned told council that even if not another house was built in Markham, taxes would continue to go up. This statement is true, but unless large residential building is carefully balanced by large industrial and commercial building, the increase in taxes will be very much greater than it will be without further residential building. Residential building calls for increased services, particularly in the field of education. School buildings and staff, to provide the education which no one would deny the children who will live in these almost 1,800 proposed residential units, would cause the tax rate in the whole school area to jump alarmingly.

We believe that Markham Council used sound judgment and reached a rational conclusion in deferring further residential development until greater industrial development is assured for the township.

Regular Police Patrols

Thornhill Park was the scene of an unfortunate incident Sunday afternoon when two young men in their late teens engaged in a fight while a large group of young people and adults crowded around to watch. One of the two teenagers involved was eventually rendered unconscious and had to be taken by stretcher to the office of a local doctor.

The very disturbing part of the whole affair was the fact there were no police on duty in the park to stop the fight and maintain law and order. The hot, humid weather of the weekend drew swimmers from a wide area. The two youths were reported to be from outside the Thornhill area, one from Richmond Hill and the other from Willowdale.

The park was crowded on both Saturday and Sunday. Saturday afternoon it was the centre of a district Scout and Cub rally.

The Thornhill Village Trustees, who are responsible for policing the area, should have a constable on regular duty once the warm weather arrives. The attractive park and pool are real assets to the community. Young children and their parents should be able to enjoy these facilities without having to witness such incidents as the one that occurred on Sunday afternoon.

Regular police patrols would help to avert this rowdiness and ensure that those using the park and its facilities behave in a proper and orderly manner.



Rambling Around

BY ELIZABETH KELSON

"TAKE AN INTEREST IN MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS."

-- WILLIAM NEAL, MAYOR OF RICHMOND HILL

The genial mayor of Richmond Hill is certainly no stranger to this district. He and his family have lived in the Hill for 33 years. His automobile business is as well known as himself, and he is aided in this business by his three older sons, Bill, Sandy and Jim. The younger sons are Bob (who is attending Victoria College) and George (who attends the Richmond Hill High School.)

William Neal began his political life as councillor in 1933. He spent four years as councillor, six years as the reeve of Richmond Hill and two years as mayor. He likes to remember that the first well for the water supply in Richmond Hill was drilled while he was in council and that he was the reeve when the sewers were installed. Mr. Neal is a member of the United Church and Masonic Order. He fully believes in the value of good public relations between the people and local government. He wants them to understand the problems of their local government and perhaps be interested enough to take a more active and understanding part in it.

"The greatest aim of a local government," said the mayor, "is to try and give the best possible service to the local residents, and this includes education, protection of persons and property and recreation and community services, etc., without having to increase the tax rate and this in these times, is a difficult problem."

To help the readers to understand the nature of this difficulty, Mr. Neal explains the function and uses of local government, so that it may be clearly seen that running a municipality is not exactly child's play, and it sometimes requires a great deal of money to keep it running properly.

"It is the duty of the municipal government," continued Mayor Neal, "to perform the executive and legislative duties which are set up in the statutes of Ontario."

So municipal government is responsible for the establishment and maintenance of a police department and fire department for the protection of persons and property; for the control of all buildings erected in the town including residential, commercial, and industrial development; for all aspects of public works namely: building and maintenance of all streets, public buildings, maintenance of all municipally owned vehicles and equipment and the operation of a waterworks system. Added to this is the responsibility for sanitation and waste removal which includes the operation of a sanitary sewage disposal plant and the collection of all types of garbage.

Mr. Neal said also that the town was bound to administer social welfare, which includes direct relief, care of persons in nursing homes as well as charitable cases, and to establish recreational and community service which takes care of the public library, park maintenance, arena operations and recreation facilities in general.

So it becomes necessary to issue debentures to take care of all capital costs for the various works in the municipality. It is necessary to levy and collect moneys required for the public school, high school and separate school boards. The local government is also responsible for the operation of an industrial commission to promote and encourage industry to locate in the municipality, and for the maintenance of a planning department which is responsible for the planning and growth of the town in a mannerly and efficient way . . . and the council is responsible for the passing of all local legislation although in certain cases, by-laws must be approved by various departments of the provincial government before becoming law in the town.

There are seven members on the Richmond Hill Town Council. The members of the present council are Mayor William Neal, Reeve Floyd Perkins, Deputy-reeve Stanley Tinker, and four councillors, Al. White, Walter Scudds, Alex Campbell and Thomas Murphy. The meetings of the council are elected annually by the ratepayers. All council meetings are open to the public and press. The by-laws are available for the public to study at the clerk's office any day during regular office hours.

The function of local government can be broken down even further. There are a number of separate departments, boards and commissions in Richmond Hill. There is the clerk-treasurer's department which is responsible for the collection of all taxes, licenses and other financial commitments delegated by council. The works department is responsible for building and maintenance of all public works including roads, municipal buildings, sanitation and waste removal as well as the operation of a waterworks system. The building department is responsible for the issuance of all building permits and the inspection of all buildings being erected in the town. The police department is concerned with all phases of police work; the fire department is concerned with all phases of fire protection; the planning department is responsible for all planning and future development of the town. The library board looks after the operation of public libraries and the parks committee for the maintenance and operation of all public parks. There is a recreation committee to look after all the recreational activities of the municipality, and finally there is the assessment department who are responsible for the assessment of all land, buildings and businesses.

The public school board is elected for the operation of all public schools in the town; the high school board is appointed and is responsible for the operation of all high schools, and there is also a separate school board handling the operation of all separate schools.

"As well as the above mentioned boards and commissions," said the mayor, "the council is responsible for raising its proportionate amount of money to be used for county purposes."

The municipal government derives its revenue from the following sources: 1—From direct taxation on land, buildings and business assessment. 2—From grants and subsidies from the province. 3—From licences, permits, and fines and miscellaneous items.

"I would suggest," the mayor emphasized, "that more citizens take an active part in municipal government. The greater the interest shown in this phase of government to the problems which must be faced in a growing community, the greater the co-operation between the taxpayer and their elected representatives. I am of the opinion that a very small percentage of our residents realize the extent of the responsibility which council has and the challenge they must meet when they become members of the council."

In Years Gone By

Items gleaned from files of "The Liberal", the home paper of this district since 1878.

Recently we published the verses of "The Lass of Richmond Hill" which many times appears in the old files of "The Liberal" which has been the home paper of Richmond Hill and district since 1878. An historic event in the life of Richmond Hill was the old boys' reunion staged in 1911. It was a gala day and many Richmond Hill old boys and girls from many parts of Canada and the United States enjoyed the re-union program. In honor of the event John Hamilton wrote a poem, which appeared in "The Liberal" September 2nd, 1911. It was as follows:

On the Green of Richmond Hill

How glad we were to meet once more,
Where we were born and bred;
To see remaining loved ones,
And the graves of them that's dead.

And the flowers that bloom where mother sleeps,
And sisters laid to rest,
Where father's tomb tells us he's gone
To the mansions of the best.

We were glad to see the faces,
And it gave our hearts a thrill
To meet the boys we played with
On the "green of Richmond Hill".

But we missed our absent playmates,
Those whose graves are strewn around,
Some, laid by Rev. Shanklin,
In the English churchyard ground.

And some who sleep far up the hill,
Their names with age grown dim,
And Rev. Dick said "dust to dust"
And closed with funeral hymn
And on the farther slope we find
The names of many more,
Whom Rev. Bredin taught the way
To the eternal shore.

O'er strewn with flowers are other mounds
That time will ne'er refill,
Whom Father Cassidy laid to rest,
'Neath the "green of Richmond Hill".

The summer-saults we used to turn,
Upon the old school ground,
The horses which we drove with strings,
The marbles that we found,
The rafts we built, the fish we caught
'Way down on Elgin creek
And old blind Tom and leap frog,
And the old game hide and seek,
And toes were stubbed and heels were skinned,
With pain that made us shout
And plastered o'er with mud sometimes
With shirt on wrong side out,
New voices now are shouting
Where old are gone or still
We think today of childhood's hour
On the "Green of Richmond Hill".

The stage that left at seven
We saw in all those faces

o'clock,
No doubt you all well mind;
How Hewison gave us many a cut,
For hanging on behind.
The creek that ran the old flour mill,
We dammed the water back,
And Dixon used to fret and say
We turned the water black.
The orchards there for miles around,
We'd been in every tree,
We'd been in every empty house
That didn't have a key.
No matter what was going on,
We boys would have one fill,
For there was nothing then too good for us,
On the "Green of Richmond Hill".

When we lads got in a mix-up,
We had counsel for defence,
Why we had the finest lawyer
And his pleading was immense.
Sometimes we all pled guilty,
To the cherries that we took,
Through a speech from Billy Cook,
And the greatest judge that Canada.

Can ever boast to day
Was right in there amongst us
And he always leaned our way
It was there Billy Falconbridge
Obtained his early skill
In making quick decisions
On the "Green of Richmond Hill".

We all recollect the medicine,
And just how much to take,
When we had the cholera morbus
And the awful stomach ache,
How we ate too many cookies,
From the highest pantry shelf,
And young Langstaff couldn't help us,
'Cause he was eatin' them himself.

How we got the poison ivy,
Gathering berries round the stumps,
How we suffered from the measles
And the chicken pox and mumps,
But the time we ate green apples,
Was no worse than any pill
That we got from Langstaff's father,
On the "Green of Richmond Hill".

Every boy there had his sweetheart,
Maidens with the loveliest curls,
There was no time in its history
Richmond Hill had sweeter girls,
They were dressed in dainty fabrics,
With a modesty desired,
With a hat that showed their faces,
And a dress as much admired,
And Billie Trench the young divine,
Was thinking of his purse
When he dreamed he'd join us all

For better or for worse
And when a license was produced
And once he used his quill,
There was room for one more couple,
On the "Green of Richmond Hill".

For better or for worse
And when a license was produced
And once he used his quill,
There was room for one more couple,
On the "Green of Richmond Hill".

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On the "Green of Richmond Hill".

Second Thoughts . . .

by George Mayes

● Yesterday's news is not necessarily dead.

Is there really a nurse shortage in the hospitals? Or does it just seem that way because of those low-heeled shoes they wear? . . . Or maybe it's because so many nurses are working in the TV beer commercials—carrying those napkin-covered trays.

"Everybody is maladjusted," reports Dr. S. E. Jensen of York County's Mental Health Association after attending a meeting of the American Psychiatric Association. "The problem," he says, "is to sell the idea to the public." Sell it? They couldn't give it away.

An Ontario Government municipal planner says that Muskoka must now be regarded as part of Metro. . . . Or vice-versa if Metro's litter-bugs continue.

That Diefenbaker speech at a Toronto trade dinner explains a lot of things. He said, of his days as prime minister: "Day in and day out there rests the terrifying fear that what you are doing might not be the right course."—And here we thought it was indecision when all the time the poor man was paralyzed with fear.

North York's Safety Council has been denied an increased grant because it is a "do nothing" organization. . . . Sort of a stop, look and listen group, eh?—that never got past the "stop".

Metro police have only three Italian-speaking officers to deal with Toronto's 135,000 Italians and they are urgently seeking Italian recruits. But the problem will likely continue; for once an Italian-speaking policeman handcuffs himself to a prisoner is practically prevented from speaking Italian.

Toronto is going to hire a \$15,000 a year trouble-shooter to expedite construction of the new city hall. . . . Or, putting it another way: he is being hired to speed up a job which will pay him \$15,000 a year for as long as the job lasts.

Chinese immigrant Weldon Chan has emerged from his three years of hiding as "the man the Mounties couldn't get." . . . Well, he wasn't a Communist.

That series of stories from Stouffville on a local pastor's advice to teen-agers could be summed up in the observation that there is nothing wrong in GOING steady. . . . Their troubles start when they stop.

The same lustre of the eye,
We saw the same expression,
Of the days that have gone by,
And the ladies there to welcome us,
Seemed curious for to see
If the boys who used to see
them home
Were the same as they used
to be.
One time they may have parted
In fond embrace of tears

And maybe some made up
again
Though after forty years,
There were some not there, but
gone before
Beyond all earthly ill,
And are calling us to a richer
scene
Than the "Green of Richmond
Hill".
— John Hamilton.

Paper Bound

With paper cups and paper towels
We drink our juices, wipe our jowls;
It's paper napkins when you dine;
(No need to hang them on the line)
It's tissues when you have a cold;
For many uses they are sold;
It seems as if most laundry issues
Will shortly be resolved by tissues.
— Robert D. Little

The Richmond

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... Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire...
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