



The Liberal

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Regional Government Soon

All indications point to the gradual establishment of regional forms of government throughout Ontario. If there was any doubt in the minds of our politicians as to the province's feelings in the matter, they were dispelled last week when Premier John Robarts told the annual convention of the Ontario Municipal Association meeting in Toronto that his government favors such a trend.

The Premier told the closing luncheon of the convention that local government is an essential element of the democratic system and as much local autonomy as possible must be preserved. "In my opinion, it would be disastrous if, through lack of leadership and creative thought, our system of local government atrophied or was altered by a senior level of government without adequate consultation with the local people whom it was designed to benefit," he said.

"This province has long experience in government at the county level which brings together for common purposes several autonomous municipalities," he said. "Regional government is a federation which provides certain services for all its members."

"If we continue to approach regional government from this point of view, it is my firm belief that we can achieve more than if the province arbitrarily imposed any level of government on our existing local government structure." The Premier felt that in parts of the province the existing form of county government could operate effectively as a regional government.

After several months of study, planning consultant Murray Jones has outlined a form of regional government for the Ottawa area. Earlier this year Municipal Affairs Minister Wilfrid Spooner set up a three-member Royal Commission to study local government structure in the Niagara area. Heading the commission is Dr. Henry Mayor, senior professor of political science at the University of Western Ontario. It is studying municipal government in St. Catharines, Welland and Niagara Falls and the surrounding areas.

Thomas J. Plunkett, head of a Montreal firm of municipal consultants, is busy studying the feasibility of regional government for Halton

and Peel Counties. The province has agreed to pay half of the estimated \$65,000 total cost of the survey which is expected to take a year to complete. The remainder will be shared by the counties on either an assessment or population basis.

Peel, like many other fringe communities caught in the grip of rapid urban expansion, has been talking for years of expanding county government to meet the changes and assuming a Metro-type role. The county has undertaken several studies in the past decade. One done several years ago was an overall servicing program bearing a close resemblance to the \$67,000,000 Ontario Water Resources Commission scheme announced last week which will supply water and sewage facilities to the southern part of Peel.

Another, on government structure, recommended a borough system for the county's five southern urban municipalities and the establishment of a little Metro above the boroughs. Peel also considered a county police force but talks never got off the ground and the recommendations were simply shelved.

In his speech to the Toronto convention Premier Robarts outlined three advantages of regional government—effective planning for land use and the provision of such essential services as roads, sewers, hydro, schools, hospitals and health units; more effective management of the tax base and more equalized assessment; and pooling of some tax revenues to provide equal and better services throughout an area.

Mr. Robarts also listed five problems associated with the change. These included working out political representation; the division of responsibility between local and regional governments; inequalities in the tax base despite pooling; maintenance of adequate standards of services; no increase in the tax base although better management would be possible.

Ontario is not the only province where the trend is towards larger government units. Quebec Municipal Affairs Minister Pierre Laporte recently told that province's 1,700 municipalities many of them are too small for efficient administration and that they must look forward to some form of regional government.

Still Kicking It Around

North York Controller Irving Paisley, in a brief presented to council, proposed the immediate annexation by North York Township of those portions of Markham and Vaughan Townships lying south of the CNR By-pass.

His arguments were that this was recommended in the Goldenberg Report; that these areas of suburban growth could be serviced by North York, and that this would be a basis for dividing Metro into five cities instead of four.

There is nothing new, of course, in the proposal to annex these areas. Mayor Beth Nealon of Leaside wants Metro partitioned into six cities.

It is no doubt calculated policy on the part of the provincial government that no pronouncements have been made that would indicate the position the province will take regarding the report. Perhaps it is considered wise to let the municipal politicians and others directly concerned, kick it around for a while. And they have been doing just that.

We have been among those who could only see amalgamation as the right future for Metro. However, if the provincial government accepts the principle that a borough system

is to replace the present set-up but that details, including the number of boroughs, or cities that will comprise the future Metro is open to negotiations, Members of the Legislature, especially those representing the Metro area, will certainly be on the hot seat. It will be useless for them to try to please everybody, but they will be under terrific pressures.

That would not happen to the same extent if the government decided to implement the Goldenberg Report essentially in toto.

We view in much the same way the redistribution of federal ridings as recommended by an independent commission, for the first time.

Recently the Richmond Hill Liberal, in an editorial, complained bitterly about these recommendations as they affected York North Riding and other area ridings.

It was indicated that meetings will be held in due course to hear criticisms and recommendations, and that some minor revisions may be made.

But if major revisions are going to be considered, there would be, in our view, only one practical course of action — reject the entire report and make a fresh start.

— Markham Economist and Sun

Regional Development: It's Later Than We Think

It is time that Liberals across the province began to think seriously about the subject of regional government. Too many of our problems—problems of disadvantaged groups on the one hand, problems of rapid economic change on the other—need to be handled efficiently and responsibly by authorities with powers suited to 1965, and yet are met by governments which were designed in the eighteenth and nine-

teenth centuries. Present-day problems are, or will be, solvable only by agencies whose executives can direct the whole range of governmental involvement and local response.

We expect our governments to do many things that were inconceivable twenty years ago, and we expect our neighbors to cooperate with us across miles and miles of territory when—in the past—it would have been quite unnecessary to get that co-operation.

Just because our interdependence, one on another, is growing, it is now fashionable to accept, grudgingly, one concession to "regional" thinking after another. The Ontario Water Resources Commission, by its very nature must think in terms of watersheds; such aspects of tourism are co-ordinated re-

gionally; there are plenty of acceptance, of the principle that properly-designed regional authorities, with major executive powers and adequate finance for research as well, can be the best way to get to the root of a far wider range of concerns.

There are two outstanding areas of concern in the politics of the province in which Regional Authorities should be given the major role. First, they provide a flexible and powerful "engine" for dealing with blight in all its manifestations. It is popular in some quarters to say that there are no poverty areas as such, but nothing could be farther from the truth. There are all too many areas in which local initiative for self-development simply borders Highway 400 and 401, for example, is to predict suburban sprawl, ag-

who remain in areas of relative decline will drop further behind. Sociologists and economists have realized that poverty and disadvantage are "total - environment" problems. They cannot be dealt with adequately by attempts to co-ordinate scores of government and programs ad hoc.

The second prong of regionalism should be directed at those problems arising from precisely the opposite situation: rapid potential growth. Here again it is not clear what form or powers the regional co-ordination should take. But if interdependence was ever a problem, it is so here. To look 30 years ahead in the areas bordering Highways 400 and 401, for example, is to predict suburban sprawl, ag-

and I would not presume to have answers. Rather for us to recognize the need for new powers and new ways of dealing with the problems that have arisen.

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"How about pulling together for a change?"



Rambling Around

by Elizabeth Kelson

Hobbies are a way of life for Educator E. T. Pherrill

In Tom Pherrill's study, the dominating feature is his huge desk. On one wall, shelves reaching to the ceiling contain his books which are authorities on the various fields of interest which absorb him when he is released from his duties and pleasure of being the assistant-superintendent of four North York secondary schools. On these shelves repose his books on mineralogy, geology and philosophy and included among them are some unusual cookbooks. Tom Pherrill likes to cook and can whip up a gourmet dinner for his family on occasion. He resides at 104 John Street, Thornhill.

Philately or stamp collecting is a major hobby and has been a love for most of his life. He has a collection of Canadian stamps that dates back more than sixty years. According to Mr. Pherrill, stamp collecting is an excellent hobby for youngster and adult because it provides an unrivalled opportunity for learning history and geography, current events and becoming familiar with famous people. It also trains a person in awareness of detail. And of course if you collect only first class stamps there is an economic feature involved. If you think of stamp collecting as an investment, you should go back more than twenty-five years if you take his advice.

Mrs. Pherrill is also an avid stamp collector. He proudly shows her rare collection of unusual flower stamps gleaned from every country in the world. His other major interest is in geology, especially in collecting and identifying rocks and minerals. Recently he participated in the annual Rockhound Gem Boree at Bancroft.

A Gem Boree is a Rockhound's Paradise

The week of August 12 to 15, was the occasion of the second annual Rockhound Gem Boree at Bancroft. Rockhounds who assembled there came from all parts of Canada and the United States. If you had been a fellow rockhound you might have noticed a familiar face among these rock and mineral enthusiasts. Otherwise his manner of dress would be just like that of the rest. He would be wearing stout heavy boots, gloves, a hat to shelter him from the weather and a knapsack over his shoulder. Did you recognize him? If you didn't, let me introduce you to Mr. Pherrill, the North York educator, or simply as Tom Pherrill, as he is known to his family, friends, acquaintances and fellow rockhounds.

So you might have found him in this rocky paradise enjoying himself, a well-earned change from his (Continued on Page 12)

Labor Day Year's Top Road Killer

Of Canada's seven major holidays, the Labor Day weekend is well in the lead as creator of death on the highways, reported the Canadian Highway Safety Council. In fact, said CHSC, the working man, whose day it is, is being pushed into the background by the road victims in the general public's view of the holiday.

The average number of road fatalities on Labor Day weekend in Canada is 61. Other holidays have averages below that. They include 25 for New Year's (the least); 35 for Easter, 42 for Victoria Day, 45 for Dominion Day, 50 for Christmas, 52 for Thanksgiving.

Major causes, CHSC claimed, are the urge for dominance, the urge for speed, reluctance to "give in" to the other driver, failure to make use of driving procedures and car features designed to help avoid mishaps, and lack of attention to the simple signs that warn of potential peril.

NEWMARKET: Jack McCaffrey, 17, Newmarket District High School, obtained eight firsts and one second for 81.6 percent and was awarded an Ontario Scholarship, in recent grade 13 departmental examinations. Rod Mickleburgh, 18, with 78.6 percent had seven firsts, missing nine firsts by only one mark.

FLASHBACK

In Years Gone By

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

Colonel David Bridgford again came to the front during the stirring days of 1837. William Harrison wrote in the November 15, 1888 issue of "The Liberal" William Lyon Mackenzie's ed, adding that people's opinions, pamphlets and papers on these contentious subjects had made the grievances of his subjects were governed to a great degree the topic of conversation by political leanings, in every home, the writer claim. (Continued On Page 12)

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