

SCHOOL DAZE



By John MacRae

The Manipulators

I think every one should be forgiven for occasional fits of pique. These examples of poor temper are rarely very effective. The observers usually watch with curious detachment as if they were witnessing a car boiling over. Some of the less sensitive spectators even smile at the exhibition which only adds fuel to the fire. Whatever your reaction let it be known that two situations recently "got" to me.

A Metro chapter of the CEC has recently sent flyers to many schools advertising a public meeting at which knowledgeable professionals will speak to parents about the problems in the schools today. I should explain that the CEC stands for Council For Exceptional Children. It is plain and simple an organization for parents whose children are having difficulties in school. The euphemism "exceptional" is technically correct. The organization is, I understand, an off shoot of an older organization of parents whose children were then classified as slow learners and who attended "special" classes. But that historical explanation is really irrelevant.

This flyer blatantly states that "Education Is Your Business". I half expected to see a clenched fist and an accusing finger pointing at every reader's breast. Well I thought we had laid that ghost to rest long ago. It has been a long time since the home and school association used the same slogan. As a parent I have no hesitation in stating unequivocally that education is not the business of parents.

The taps in the sink leaked. I replaced the washers but the leaks persisted. The plumber repaired the "seats" or some such thing. The furnace wouldn't light. I checked the fuses and then called the repair man who got it going. My car was making interesting hollow coughing sounds. I filled the tires, the gas tank, the battery and the radiator before taking it to a mechanic. My neighbor had some mysterious physical ailments which he attempted to cure by paring his toe nails and taking massive doses of an unpleasant laxative. The doctor removed his gall stones. If it hadn't been for a last-minute call to a good lawyer my brother might have gone to jail because he tried to defend himself in a simple legal action.

Now I obviously care about the leaking taps in the kitchen sink, the lack of heat in the house, the noises my car makes, my neighbor's health and my brother's prison record. I am sincerely interested. I was also deeply involved and interested in my children's education. I plead with parents to make your child's education a sincere personal concern but please don't be manipulated into trying to make it your business.

And now for teachers! Many have become manipulators rather than leaders and guides. If the teacher's control is weak and she is afraid of pupil influence then there are tricks to use. If it's a class election that she wishes to influence then she democratically calls for nominations and lists them on the board being sure that the most popular capable student's name is last. If she's not certain that the undecided will have voted before reaching the end of the list then she'll not have an open vote. Because ballots take so long, she'll ask the students to put their heads down and close their eyes — she threatens to void the election if anyone cheats. She then calls the names of the nominees and asks the voters to raise their hands but not their heads or their eyes. This way no one knows who won the election until the teacher, who alone saw the number of hands raised, declares a winner. Surprise!

If the teacher is not really turned on by physical education or art then she sweetly promises the class their regular period if they deserve it. If any child turns his head sideways or twitches his eyebrows at the wrong time at any time from Monday at nine 'til the time for the lesson, the teacher adopts a pained expression, denies them the period because they haven't been good. Maybe next week if they've learned their lesson.

The worried administrator's tactics at the high school level become a little more sophisticated but remain essentially the same. He describes the conditions under which school dances will be allowed. He lets the students organize making sure to give them just enough support to be certain that rules will be broken without a major scandal. The best way is for the teachers to provide enough supervision to be sure that some students come with alcohol on their breath but not sufficient supervision to prevent their attendance. The next day a sad general announcement is made. "I'm very sorry there will be no more dances held this year because some students ruined it for all of us — they attended in a drunken condition. We gave you students a chance and you've failed us."

Meanwhile the principal and staff are secretly applauding since there'll be no more dull dry kids dances to supervise. Who can stand that horrible loud music any way

Score again for "The Manipulators".



NDP Candidate Takes Leave To Campaign

Youthful York North New Democratic Party Candidate Jim Reid, 29, is shown standing at centre left during the recent International Food Fair fund raising event held with about 200 guests attending at St. Mary's Wrixon Hall here in Richmond Hill. Some 70 national dishes from various countries were prepared by cooks from Vaughan, Markham, Thornhill, Woodbridge, Willowdale and Richmond Hill and enjoyed by the guests dining by candlelight. Candidate Reid has taken a one-month leave of absence from his history teaching post at Richmond Hill High to campaign in the election.

Music from many countries, gourmet food and those who including China and Sweden, worked in the kitchen. His wife Lynda officiated at a draw for the evening concluded with a beautifully colored piece of dancing. Candidate Reid thanked the ladies who provided the

COMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 5, Tuesday, Fall term for piano and theory begins at the studio of Estelle Markham, ARCT, RMT. tfc7

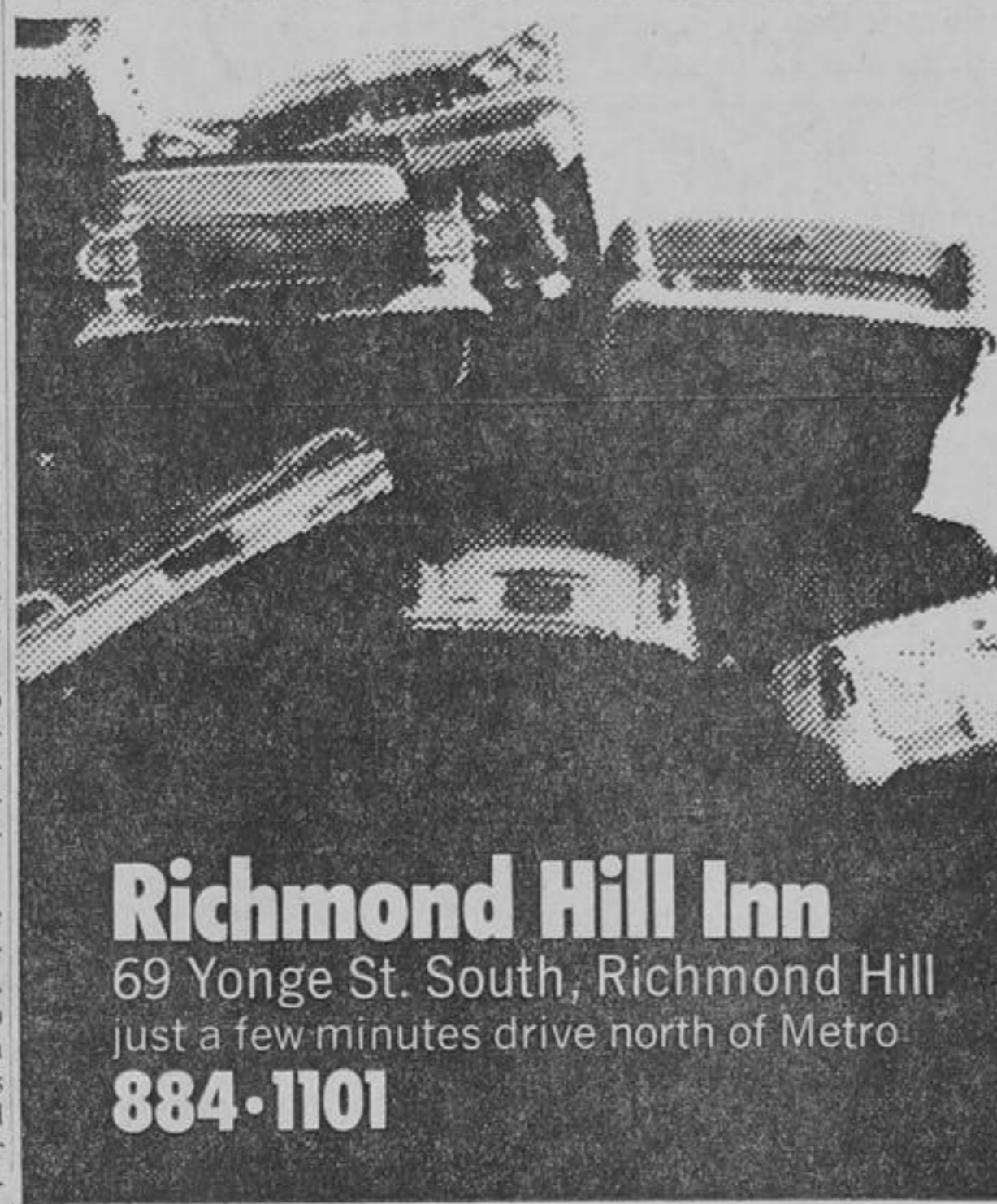
OCTOBER 13, FRIDAY, 6 P.M. — Smorgasbord at Maple United Church. Admission by ticket only. Adults \$2.25, children \$1.00 from UCW members. clw14

OCTOBER 14th, SATURDAY, 12:30 p.m. — King City Lions Annual Auction Sale, King City Memorial Park. Bake Sale, 3 p.m. c2w14

Shown seated at left at the Food Fair is Ian Rafuse of Senator Reesor Drive, Markham. Standing at right talking to Reid is his Official Election Agent Ron Moran of Dickson's Hill, with Mrs. Moran seated at right. Emerging from a door in the background is Bill Paterson of Richmond Hill.

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT NIGHTLY

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North Yonge Subway Moving Slowly North

Track-laying has been completed in the north-bound tunnel between the Eglinton and York Mills Stations of the \$140-million North Yonge Subway extension.

The three-mile section is scheduled to go into operation March 31, 1973. Tracks have also been installed in the southbound tunnel between the York Mills and Lawrence Stations.

NEWMARKET: A 728-lot subdivision with a 36-acre shopping centre, 23 acres of park, a riding stable, trails and a pond is part of a long-term proposal made to council for its 390-acre holding on the southwest corner of Davis Drive and Yonge Street. It will be known as Kingsland Park.

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