

CNA The Liberal An Independent Weekly: Established 1878 Subscription Rate \$6.00 per year; to United States \$7.00; 15¢ Single copy Member Audit Bureau of Circulations Member Canadian Weekly Newspapers Association Published by Richmond Hill Liberal Publishing Co. Ltd. W. S. COOK, Publisher "Second class mail, registration number 0190"

Boards Must Co-operate

Leading educators in the Region of York are in full accord with Education Minister Thomas Wells in his dictum released November 20 setting up new guidelines for the construction of public and Roman Catholic schools in the province.

In his memo to boards of education, Wells pointed out that in September, a situation in downtown Toronto involving transfer of a number of pupils from public schools to Roman Catholic Schools became critical, resulting in vacant classrooms in certain schools and severe overcrowding in others.

In future, said Wells, every school board will have to fully justify any new accommodation it wishes to build, with the onus on all boards to assess each situation with care before considering new construction.

As the Minister says, elementary school enrolment in Ontario is falling dramatically and will continue to do so over the next five or six years. Predicting a decrease of about 148,000 elementary school pupils by 1979, the minister is justifiably anxious to avoid wasteful duplication of services.

York County Board of Education and York County Roman Catholic School Boards, like all boards in the province, are obliged to submit a five year forecast of anticipated school population and building programs to the Ministry of Education.

Until recently this was relatively simple. Research in urban, suburban and rural areas has shown that "X" number of houses, town-houses, apartments, produced "Y" number of children to be educated. Then came the Pill and the dramatic drop in birthrate. The prognosticators found their graphs and charts had to be completely revised.

Next as land values in York skyrocketed the bottom fell out of the real estate market, and subdivision plans forwarded to school boards by municipalities to help the boards in assessment of future needs were shelved indefinitely, or were completed but failed to attract the buyers and the children the boards had made provision for.

Extremely dollar conscious since its inception in 1969, the York County Board of Education found that a number of secondary schools — Sutton, Newmarket, Aurora, Stouffville, Markham — had vacant classrooms while elementary schools were bulging at the seams.

The Minister's assertion that a major hindrance to good relationships between school boards seems to be a simple lack of effective communication does not apply in York, say the men who head the two boards.

Both boards have been very cautious in building, says Superintendent Joe Hodge of the Roman Catholic Board. Of its 200 classrooms about half a dozen are not in use, and these are in areas where increases in population are anticipated. Even before the county boards were formed, the two boards were sharing certain facilities in the southern part of the region — such as guidance and psychology services. This sharing now covers the region and in the past year the two boards reached an agreement on sharing an audio-visual centre. Such services are paid on a per-pupil basis. There is daily communication and sharing of human as well as physical resources.

Hodge echoes York County Board's Director of Education Sam Chapman in his reaction to the Minister's announcement. "There is no reason why we would not welcome the kind of position the Minister has taken," Chapman told "The Liberal". "If the time comes when space is available we will welcome the opportunity to share it with the other board. Meanwhile we have tried to share anything that is shareable."

In view of Wells' assertion that the primary objective of his Ministry is to ensure that, despite any changes, the proper care and education of the children involved is guaranteed, it would be a mistake to assume that the citizens of York will be paying less for education. Major costs such as teachers' salaries, building maintenance, transportation, and interest charges on outstanding debentures make up the greatest part of the budget of both boards.

And just last year, the York County Board was recognized internationally as a board that counts its pennies while still providing quality education. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development in Paris was making a study of an innovative school board and an innovative school in several countries. In Canada, the board chosen was the York County Board, and the school, Thornlea Secondary School in Thornhill. And while costs of education have increased all over the province, the increase per capita in York has been substantially less than all comparable boards.

These are not grounds for complacency, however, and the public as well as the Ministry of Education will be keeping a watchful eye on the spending programs of the two boards during the coming year.

Metro Limited

(GUEST EDITORIAL — NEW YORK TIMES)

Much has been written about the ideal of metropolitan area government in this overwhelmingly metropolitan nation — and almost as much about the suburban resistance that makes it so unattainable. A valuable product of the fading Scott Commission, which has been studying the problems of governing this city, is a task force report that proposes to approach metropolitanism not by a simple geopolitical spread but on a function-by-function basis.

The report, written by Edward Costikyan and Maxwell Lehman, shows a healthy appreciation of "the enormous resistance in suburban areas against co-operation with New York City." But the task force is not paralyzed by that political fact of life. Nor should it be. Wherever regionalism has taken root — in Toronto, Canada, and in the Twin Cities of Minnesota in particular — the impulse has come not from the agonies of the inner city but from a decline in the quality of life in the suburbs themselves.

That deterioration is slowly but surely occurring in the suburban reaches of New York. Deplorable transit, shrinking water supply, a swift and continuing loss of open spaces, difficulties in disposing of solid wastes, air and water pollution — all these and other problems

are growing more acute by the year. They must in the end persuade the most reluctant anti-New Yorker that at least some of the aspects of a metropolitan area can be dealt with only by a metropolitan agency.

It is to the credit of the task force that it attempts to lay the groundwork for such a realignment not by posing an academic ideal but by suggesting concrete divisions of the region for concrete purposes. A transportation region, for example, would comprise a great commuter circle taking in much of northern New Jersey, New York north to Dutchess County and east to Suffolk and a good slice of western and south-central Connecticut. A water supply and distribution region would involve a different area and so would regions for air quality control, solid waste disposal and other common problems.

How these special-purpose regional agencies would be financed, to whom they would be answerable and how — these are to be the subjects of a subsequent report by the same commission. Its recommendation will be all the more interesting for involving the legal complexities of a tri-state area. If it can be shown that metropolitanism — even on this limited functional basis — is feasible for New York, it should be feasible anywhere in the country.

Seneca Appoints Councillor, Planner To Committee

Two people from the Region of York have been appointed to the advisory committee of Seneca College's faculty of public administration. The new appointees are Mrs. Jean Smith of Keswick, a former township councillor, and Gordon Brush of the area services branch of the regional planning department.

Public administration is a diploma course and is designed to prepare students for careers in public and civil service up to mid-management level. The advisory committee is made up of elected officials and administrators and other prominent people in government. Their function is to advise the college on course content, relevance and trends in various levels of government. It is not merely an honorary function, says Bowman Andrews, course director and a solicitor.

Committee members contribute considerable effort and work. According to Seneca officials, public administration is the field of the future in terms of opportunity, due to changes in the role and structure of government — such as regional government. The college hopes soon to be able to offer a program of in-service training in this area as well as the present course.



One of a number of winners at the second annual plowing match banquet at Victoria Square Thursday night of last week was John Sheridan of RR 1, Stouffville. Mr. Sheridan is shown (third from left) receiving the Eaton Hall Trophy as well as watch presented by the E. Eaton Company of Canada. Left to right is Guest Speaker Dick Hilliard, Ontario

Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food; Ken Brown of Richmond Hill who was MC for the night; Mr. Sheridan, and Gerald Walker, former farm manager at Eaton Hall Farm, who presented the trophy. It was presented to the winner of a special class open to residents of the Region of York.

Trophy Time At Plowing Banquet

By FRED SIMPSON Concern for agriculture was expressed Thursday night of last week by a provincial government agriculture official.

Ontario Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food Dick Hilliard wondered just how long "we can afford to have ten grade farm land gobbled up. Where will we be in regards to prime agriculture land 100 years from now. I wonder about this."

He was speaking at the second annual joint plowing match banquet and awards presentation sponsored by the King and Vaughan, East York and North York Plowmen's Association at Victoria Square Community Hall. It was attended by 238 people.

North York Plowing Match, Esso Champions Special for best plowed land in Two Furrow Tractor Utility Classes Mounted Plows, to Ken Ferguson Stouffville East York-King and Vaughan Plowing Match, and Herb Jarvis Agincourt North York Plowing Match.

Letters to the Editors

THORNHILL NEEDS YOUTH CENTRE Dear Mr. Editor:

My name is Cathy Schoeler. I attend Thornhill Secondary School. I am 14 years old and am in grade 9. I am prompted to write because of the news story which appeared in our issue of November 30 about the bequest of \$200,000 to Thornhill for a library, park, bandstand and picnic grounds. I realize that you do not control this bequest, but you can explain our problem to those who do have control.

If it is impossible to use the money in this way because of specific terms of the bequest I would appreciate a letter to this effect. I would then know you cared enough to read my letter. CATHY SCHOELER, 56 Thornbank Road, Thornhill.

WISE MEN!

Dear Mr. Editor— This letter is written to protest what, in our opinion, is a new, all-time low in the ever-increasing attempt to stimulate sales through poor taste advertising. The reference is, of course, to the various billboards throughout the town which proclaim, "Wise Men Shop At Richmond Heights". While we could hardly be classified as religious fanatics, we do find these signs extremely offensive and insulting. Needless to say we are two "Wise Men" who will find it extremely difficult to shop at Richmond Heights while this type of advertising is evident.

What would there be at a youth centre? There would be a cafeteria for short order lunches and hot chocolate for warming up after tobogganing at Thornhill Golf Course or skating at Thornhill Pond. There would be a juke-box and dancing area. Other possibilities are indoor sports, arts and crafts and of course just a place to sit and talk or watch TV.

A while ago it was rumored that the old Presbyterian Church on Yonge Street, near Highway 7B, was to be turned into a youth centre, but I suppose this was just another politician's promise. I think this is an ideal area for a youth centre where the Thornhillians and young people from surrounding areas could take advantage of it.

REGARD FOR ALL LIFE

Dear Mr. Editor: The United Church of Canada is against bringing back the death penalty, yet condones the killing of thousands of unborn children every year through abortion. Where is the logic in such thinking?

It is wrong says the United Church, for a human being, created by God, to be put to death for a crime he has committed. However, on the other hand, this same church does not seem to see the wrong when innocent unborn children are killed to pay for the physical pleasure of two people.

Until recently I was an active member of the United Church, but, very regretfully I wrote asking for my name to be removed from its membership roll. I did not wish to remain a member of a church which does not have reverence and regard for ALL human life — before and after birth. (Mrs.) LALLAH CALDWELL, 173 North Taylor Mills Drive, Richmond Hill.

HILL WINNER Guaranty Trust Company of Canada Trophy for best plowed land by a resident of the Plowmen's Association, Stouffville, to John Sheridan, RR 1, Stouffville; East York Plowing Match; Ken Brown, Richmond Hill, King and Vaughan Plowing Match; and Carl Timbers, RR 4, Stouffville, North York Plowing Match.

Musical entertainment was provided by Mary and Bud Leggett of Sutton.

In the Spotlight

By MONA ROBERTSON

Welcome To Canada

October 13, 1972, is a date marked indelibly in the memory of Nizar and Yasmin Jinka, their two lovely little daughters, Farah 2½ and Naina 1½ and his mother, Sakinabai. For that is the day Air Canada touched down at Montreal Airport — with a passenger list of 160 Ugandians from Nizar's home town, Kampala.

I visited the Jinka Family in their new home in Richmond Hill and here is their story to date. "My wife and I were at a Saturday evening coffee party when the ultimatum, 'All British Asians must leave the country within 90 days', was announced on TV. It was such a shock I personally did not believe it could happen!" Nizar told me. He explained to me that Uganda is one of those countries where things may disrupt — causing a major upheaval — then settle down later.

"But when, within a week, a second pronouncement was made that, 'All Asian citizens holding a Uganda passport must leave' . . . I told my wife we must arrange to leave." Over and over again Nizar repeated to Yasmin, "It just can't happen — we are citizens of this country."

"Finally, after I had started the wheels rolling to bring all my living relatives out of the country, the President announced he did not mean 'citizens'. But it was too late, we were on our way to Canada."

Nizar told me how he and his family and (Continued on Page 18)

Coburn Scores Student Mexico Trip As Uneconomical

A coming trip to Mexico for 132 grade 7 and 8 students in York County public schools, which is to serve as a prototype for future trips, was criticized by Trustee Margaret Coburn of King at a meeting of the county board of education November 27.

In its report, the staff said that the elementary field trip budget would be underspent by about \$5,000.

Mrs. Coburn said she thought extended field trips had their benefits, but the "minimum of children who were fortunate to go, shouldn't be subsidized by these who can't."

She said that, for children of 11 and 12 years of age, their own country was a "good starting point."

Mrs. Coburn said she thought there were more economical ways to finance the trip, and didn't think the board could justify taking \$3,500 from the field trip budget.

Cost of the tour, \$220 plus \$50 "pocket money", is to be paid by the parents of the students.

Mrs. Coburn termed the trip, which is to be undertaken March 15 to March 27 next year with classes from Stouffville, District Secondary School, Intermediate division, Aurora Senior Public School, Mark II Public School, Unionville, plus a group of nine students from several area schools, "uneconomical".

She also objected to the \$3,500, which staff had suggested be extracted from the field trip budget, for contingency purposes.

Trustee Morley Kinnee, who supported the resolution calling for the \$3,500 contingency fund, said he believed the service clubs would be "delighted to enter into this scheme."

Trustee Mariane Gillan of Sutton, said she thought it was "too much too soon" for the young students on this particular type of trip.

Sam Chapman, director of education said the board was trying to learn how to move solid groups, so that ultimately everyone in grade 7 could "look forward to this type of experience."

Trustee Deena Simpson of Richmond Hill, who supported the motion, said that, if they were going to wait until they could send everyone, nobody would ever go.

Trustee Louise Aimee of Markham said she felt the younger children needed a trip of the Mexican kind before they took on the "air of blarney of older children."

Mrs. Coburn said the trip could be just as well taken at the grade 9 and 10 level.

Russ Rees, a teacher at Dr. G. W. Williams Secondary School in Aurora, who will be one of the leaders on the trip, said that, in a similar trip last year with 14 and 15-year olds, the children adapted well to their surroundings and were kept busy learning, sketching and drawing.

The children were in a "constant state of wonderment and realized there were other ways of life," he said.

He said they got a "frame of reference" so they could evaluate their own way of life.

Mr. Rees said he didn't think the relative youthfulness of the students was important. From a behavioral point of view, they were easier to get along with than the older ones.

The board approved the resolution, with only Trustees Coburn and Gillan opposing it.

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Moving People

(Montreal Gazette)

Premier William Davis has come up with an imaginative and revolutionary plan for moving people around Ontario's cities. It is revolutionary in Twentieth Century North America because it reveals very little interest in moving automobiles and no interest whatever in encouraging them—it is a "people-first" transportation policy. "We now have before us," the premier said, "a unique opportunity to move forward from pollution and bumper-to-bumper traffic jams." Almost too good to be true.

At the core of the program will be networks of quiet, perhaps even silent, automated, electrically powered, elevated vehicles to be built in Toronto, Hamilton and Ottawa over the next ten years at a cost of \$1.3 billion. The system will be able to carry up to 20,000 persons an hour on any one line, about half that of a subway but far exceeding the 6,000 an hour for a bus line. Costs are considerably under that of expressways and less than half that of subways. Because they can be built above city streets or along hydro and railway rights of way, they will not involve the expressways' massive destruction of neighbourhoods. Nor will they, like expressways, foul the air.

Several types of operation are being considered for the two-mile test track to be built in Toronto next year. Most intriguing is a German design for a train that will float about an inch above a concrete bed on a magnetic cushion. Movement will also be magnetic, with power supplied by a linear induction motor. The train can reach a speed of 95 miles an hour without a moving part in its drive chain.

Such an elaborate system naturally would be inappropriate for small municipalities which will be encouraged to experiment with dial-a-bus and other innovations. Mr. Davis' integrated program also includes 75 per cent subsidies for studies of staggered work hours, computer-controlled traffic lights, and other methods of reducing congestion.

No one yet knows how many drivers the new transit system will lure from their cars, because it hasn't really been tried. Denver has embarked on a similar "personal rapid transit" system, but construction there is just getting started. Any system, however, that is designed to move people (and perhaps freight) quickly and quietly, reduce air pollution and save money can't go far wrong if the engineers know what they are talking about. Montreal will be watching Toronto with more than usual interest.

INNISFIL — Irene Wiloughby operates this town's 24-hour a day, seven days a week, answering service at a cost to the taxpayers of only \$11,000 annually. She has three assistants. They summon the fire and police departments, ambulances, rescuers, and are responsible for a dozen burglar alarm systems. Mrs. Wiloughby will continue until March, but finds the job too great a tie.

NEWMARKET—The United Church has hired a team of researchers from Ryerson Polytechnical Institute to help determine the best development for a 15-acre of church-owned parcel of land in the town's northend. The property was purchased in 1969 for a retirement community, but since senior citizens are already well-served through a wide variety of facilities, a prouder need must be justified before the church seeks funding for the project.

PICKERING — Harry Boves, chairman of the dairy cattle committee of the Royal Winter Fair, died November 14 a few hours after appearing in the show ring at the Coliseum. He was 76. He served on township council, as clerk of session of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and executive director of the Ajax and Pickering Hospital. He was known throughout Canada, the U.S.A. and South America as a breeder of outstanding Ayrshires.