

New Year's Message

A VC Winner (Retired)

By REV. GEORGE FRENCH Maple Presbyterian Church

His hair is gray and in a full cut, much in the manner of my 15-year-old son, but he is no youngster. He is a "Senior Citizen", retired and living in a residence with folks of a similar age.

His eyes are keen and alive to what goes on around him, and although his shoulders are a little stooped, I can tell he likes to hold his head erect.

We were finished singing Christmas carols, and he asked me if I remembered the lines to a favorite hymn of his. Without waiting for an answer, he recited the verses and volunteered a story about the over-organized church.

It seems that some children had a pet that died, and they decided that a minister should bury the pet in some proper Christian fashion. The poor minister searched his Worship Book to no avail. There was no prayer or funeral service for a dead pet.

"That represents," he said, "what has taken me away from organized religion, and I'm happy without that sort of ministry."

I didn't volunteer that Presbyterians feel organization is so important, and that the organized church had brought me as a clergyman to share his fellowship and break bread with him. In place of that, I listened with fascination as he told of his life, more than 80 years of pacifism and Christian service, the memory of which made his eyes light up. "I was hated by lots of folks," he said, "for being a pacifist when everyone was getting into uniform, but you know, I fooled them. I even earned a VC."

"Did you really?" I inquired. I was abruptly impressed to hear of a pacifist who had won a VC.

"I turned my back on war and fighting and gave myself to more useful pursuits, in my estimation, like caring for people who seemed to be without hope. I started

west and slept many a night under a prairie sky offering myself to God and asking to be used for some meaningful life. Pretty soon I was on my way back east and on overseas where I joined the Salvation Army. We worked hard pulling people from buildings that were bombed, digging them from the wreckage, taking them to hospitals, and when the bombs weren't falling we were caring for homeless, helpless refugees of the war. I saw more action of the war than any of my brothers who were in the service. They are all gone now, but I got my VC to show it was all worthwhile."

"Was there a particular act that won the VC for you?" I asked.

"Yes, indeed, that's how I met my wife and married and settled down to the serious business of life. Loving and being loved, caring and being cared for, it is all in the record, and I'd do it the same way given another time around."

"But what about the VC?" I protested. "Oh, of course, that's what I'm telling you about. When you measure the things that I did and the abuse I took for my pacifism, the hunger and privation I've seen, the bleeding and the mutilation, I came out of it all with my VC. When you look back at life you can say, 'This is experience talking.' The most meaningful experience of life has been the loving experience between myself, my wife and my two children. They are my VC — Victor and Constance."

I have to admit when life's values are weighed that this kind of integrity is precious. For the year 1974 I pray that Canadians might have such integrity; to care for our youth and be concerned for them, maintaining their trust and leaving them a proud legacy.



Only Sticker Needed For 1974 Licence

Richmond Hill Area motorists can now obtain 1974 passenger car and trailer license plate renewals at the local issuing office, located at 40 Elgin Mills Road East. William Neal is the license issuer.

Under the new system motorists will not receive new plates for 1974 but instead will be provided with a sticker to be attached to the lower right-hand corner of the present rear plate.

Motorists are warned, however, that before attaching the sticker, the rear plate must be thoroughly cleaned. Wax, dirt or oil could prevent the sticker from adhering properly.

Although the issuing of licenses has been streamlined, motorists are reminded that they will again be required to supply information respecting liability insurance and are urged to carry their liability insurance certificate with them when applying for license renewal.

Those area residents who may apply for renewal by mail are required to send a letter with their permit and fee, listing the name of the insurance company, the name of their insurance agent, the policy number and the policy expiry date.

Fees for a license are the same as in 1973: \$23 for a 4-cylinder vehicle; \$32 for 6-cylinders; \$40 for 8-cylinders and \$5 for trailers. The deadline for renewal will be midnight, February 28, 1974.

No Decision On Sunday

(Hamilton Spectator)

Provincial Justice Secretary George Kerr skated the entire length of the Sunday shopping-store hours question without leaving a scar on the ice. His Green Paper on that delicate subject didn't bring the government closer to any kind of resolve; the issue remains wide open.

Considering the tidal waves of talk which have washed over the commercialization-of-Sunday question during the last decade, it might have been reasonable to expect the government to indulge in a little old-fashioned leadership and swing the Sunday trend one way or the other — back toward a quiet day of rest or toward the total extermination of the day-of-rest concept.

But the government's hesitancy is understandable and not all that impractical.

To begin with, the extremes of choice are astronomical distances apart. The serene, tranquil Victorian Sunday as opposed to the bustling roar and blazing neon with which Ontarians live six days a week.

Next, there isn't a reliable consensus to give the government a sense of direction. Many of the people who insist Sunday should be a day apart, a day of rest and relaxation, practise recreations that require the labor of others.

To enjoy a Sunday, many people want the services of store, theatre, sports facility, gas station, transportation systems. When the circle comes around, those who demand full services on Sunday will find themselves working on Sundays. Exit Sunday.

The other factor hamstringing any attempt by Ontario to make the ultimate decision is that the issue is continental. Whatever decision the government should make will be vulnerable to the powerful influences from across the American border.

It was those influences, more than anything else, which led to the present quandary. American communities which have opened their Sundays to a wide range of business and entertainment are held up either as bad or good examples by Ontarians.

After years of debate which have given the politicians and the people opportunity to examine Sunday from every angle, it's doubtful if Mr. Kerr's Green Paper, or anything short of a plebiscite, would provide the government with any more guidance.

But there is no cause for panic. Unless there is a popular movement demanding action — one way or the other — or irresistible pressure from an interested group, the government should be able to continue its policy of non-leadership until the cows come home.

In the Spotlight

By DIANA COOK

Helpmate Information — Vital Community Service

Over the years, Richmond Hill Public Library has expanded its range of services, so that today it offers much more than just books for both children and adults. There is, for example, a large and varied record selection, as well as eight millimetre films, which people are free to take out on loan just as they would books. And in the children's library downstairs, storytimes are held twice a week, at 2:30 Wednesday and 10 am Saturday. Students of all ages who have a project due are also welcome to come in and look through the file of pamphlets and brochures available, along with magazines and of course the reference section.

Helpmate Information, situated in the downstairs of the library, has been in operation for approximately four years. Originally it consisted of one librarian who provided information over the telephone, but since then the need for a more comprehensive service has grown, and Helpmate is now a much larger organization, in-

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New Small Business Voice Grows And Grows

The independent businessman in Canada now has a voice in Ottawa, thanks chiefly to the ideas and initiative of a former teacher at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute. It was the Federal Government's White Paper on taxation that infuriated John Bulloch, and subsequently gave birth to the Canadian Council for Fair Taxation.

Bulloch's immediate reaction to what he considered inequities in the proposed tax structure as it discriminated against the small businessman, was to dash off a critical letter to Ottawa.

He persuaded his father to send copies of the letter with mail advertisements to customers of the family tailoring business.

From the flood of replies he received, Bulloch selected the ten angriest, and invited the authors to a meeting. This was the beginning of the Canadian Council For Fair Taxation which helped generate a storm of protest that forced the government to rewrite some of the legislation.

But this was only the beginning. The council reorganized under the name of Canadian Federation of Independent Business. Its purpose was to create a vehicle for small and medium size businesses owned by Canadians who felt they were not getting a fair

deal from Ottawa. In two years it has grown from 9,000 members, and is adding about 200 new members each week.

Membership is limited to businesses with fewer than 100 employees. This leaves a vast potential, as 95 percent of Canadian firms employing 65 percent of the Canadian work force fall in this category.

The federation regularly samples members' opinions on a variety of topics and passes them on to politicians, senior civil servants and the news media. It is now being recognized as a full-fledged political action group that is prepared to initiate action and lead public opinion.

an important departure from the old technique of reacting to government initiative. The turning point came a year ago when Ottawa stopped regarding the group as a nuisance and started asking for help and advice. As a result Bulloch has become less irate about government's seeming disregard of public opinion, but has not dulled his distrust of government bureaucracy.

"We capitalized on the emotion of the taxation issue, because people will react to emotion, but that's not a formula for building a permanent organization. I think there should be a minimum of confrontation between govern-

ment and business if we are successful, but we could quite easily rise up again, and we have the muscle to be a very powerful reactionary force if we ever wanted to be," says Bulloch.

Referring to the White Paper incident, he said the trouble with reacting to government proposals often leads to a bad compromise and over-complicated laws. By the time government proposals reach the white paper stage, too much prestige is riding on them. "It's too late to discard the proposals and make a fresh start."

It is far better to speak on issues before they become government policy, says Mr. Bulloch, and make government react to business proposals.

Federation members were polled in October on 15 major issues which were ranked in order of importance and Ottawa and the provincial Legislature bombarded with the results in order of priority.

Waste and mismanagement of public funds is the type of gut issue that stirs up a sense of outrage, says Bulloch. He cited as an example federal expenditure of \$477,000 in two years on the care and maintenance of tropical plants. Of this, \$11,000 was allocated to the unemployment insurance department which used them as room dividers.

"They even had a guy in Pickering drive to Ottawa to

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Letters to the Editors

EDUCATION MINISTER WELLS HASN'T GONE FAR ENOUGH

Dear Mr. Editor—

I and many like me feel Education Minister Tom Wells hasn't gone far enough. He should accept the resignations of all the teachers directly involved, and start at square one with "dedicated teachers" who aren't influenced by any individual, groups or unions — but are motivated by a desire to implant in our young people's minds the sense of true education values and understanding that seems to have been lacking in the last few years, by and large.

Teachers as a whole haven't been hard done by financially. And to suggest they are understaffed, overworked and have to contend with larger classes isn't a valid reason for their deplorable behavior in the last few months. Other segments of industry have had to re-trench, suffering certain cut-backs, etc. But you don't hear them "crying wolf" and marching on Queen's Park.

In addition, to threaten the taxpayers of Ontario and directly some of their children with the federation of teachers' associations strike fund of \$8,000,000 (in reality made up of contributions from citizens of this province in effect) does nothing to enhance their cause. It is sickening to see (NDP Leader) Stephen Lewis and (Liberal Leader) Robert Nixon suddenly appearing out of the woodwork to supposedly support the "teachers' cause" when anyone with an ounce of brains realizes they are solely soliciting votes for the future.

What an example the so-called "teaching profession" is setting for our young people all across our great province. The time has come for all intelligent taxpayers in Ontario, regardless of their political convictions, to have a true look at this so-called "teaching profession".

Think of the children of those families on fixed incomes, those who have more than paid their educational way for many years and cannot afford increases any longer. Think of the responsibilities of the guardians of our educational system, our trustees.

I today sat in a restaurant and in the course of 15 minutes overheard comments from a truck driver, an oil man, two businessmen and a bus driver. Each expressed disgust regarding the actions of the teachers.

Education Minister Wells and Premier William Davis should stick to their guns and continue to represent what is best for all — the average taxpayers of Ontario.

KEITH CAMBLEN,
152 Keele Street South,
King City.

New Year Greetings

We're putting the old year away. Remembering the things that were glad; We shall keep in our mind the days that were kind.

Forgetting the ones that were sad. We're putting the old year away. He has left with a wave and a sigh; Though some of his days won a title of our praise We have bid him a cheerful goodbye.

We are all a little bit older, The New Year has jotted that down, Though a freshly turned page in this uncertain age Might bring better things to our town. As the chimes ring out on the morrow, And the New Year is carried along, Forgetting the sorrows that shape our tomorrows

Let's greet the New Year with a song!

ROBERT D. LITTLE,
54 Arnold Crescent,
Richmond Hill.

RICHMOND HILL SHOULD FOLLOW DAVIS' LEAD IN MOBILE HOMES

Dear Mr. Editor—

Not long ago, my wife and I visited relatives in Michigan who live in a mobile home. We were greatly impressed at the layout of the home as well as the general appearance of the subdivision it was part of. Our enthusiasm with the home was carried back to Metro where we decided to investigate the possibilities of buying on ourselves. It had occurred to us that by acquiring a mobile home, we would be able to leave our twentieth floor apartment and thus own house, which is next to impossible in Metro at this time.

After some searching, we found a home that would give us the room to raise a family. Then began the task of finding a place to put it. One factor had to be kept in mind for this — commuting distance to my Don Mill office. Buying land and servicing it in the Metro area was out of the question as it would be too expensive. There was, however, the alternative of putting the home into a mobile subdivision. Here, we would have the benefit of complete service for a relatively small fee. I soon became apparent that none of these subdivisions exists near Metro. We did however, hear about William Corcoran in Gormley who has been trying to open a mobile home subdivision in the Gormley area.

Since Gormley is only about 25 miles from my office, I would be a perfect place to settle. I've talked to Mr. Corcoran about his plans for the area and was soon very enthused about the entire affair. Yet, there is the possibility that this plan may not go through town council.

Why? Why should council stop it? Are mobile homes such a blot on the land that they must be stopped from appearing? I certainly hope that Richmond Hill Council sitting in judgment on the subdivision do not think that way. I would ask the council members — Have you researched the mobile home business? Have you seen the interior as well as the exterior of mobile homes? Have you talked to people who own this type of housing? Or more simply, have you read the November 3 issue of the Toronto Star where, in the real estate section, Premier William Davis outlined net plans and thinking for mobile homes? If the Ontario Government is ready to recognize the validity of mobile homes and mobile home subdivisions, I would think the Richmond Hill would want to follow suit and do something constructive about it. You have the chance by granting Mr. Corcoran the right to go ahead with his subdivision. There is a place for the modular-type housing in our society as there is a place for the conventional brick-and-wood type housing.

ROBERT CUTTING
Apt. 2006,
Don Mills.

Beware Modular Homes

Provincial Cabinet level statements from week to week are making it increasingly clear mobile or modular housing is something that is likely to come. Its arrival is being propelled by high prices for accommodation and a shortage which even Premier William Davis has called a near crisis.

We would feel the shortage should more accurately be called a crisis of several years' standing. A spade should be called a spade.

Be that as it may, Premier Davis and the members of his government are certainly under tremendous pressure. It is politically necessary for them to relieve the housing shortage. They have made it quite clear they are looking to mobile or modular homes for at least part of the answer to the problem.

Certainly it isn't an easy problem. The federal and municipal levels of government are also intricately involved. Davis and his new Housing Minister Robert Welch are going to have to get the active co-operation of other government levels if their efforts are to be successful.

Thousands upon thousands of residential units are needed right now and in the years immediately ahead, at least. The public is crying out for more housing. But at the same time many people are highly critical of, and angry at, much of the results the developers have been producing in the recent past.

As has been shown here in Richmond Hill and in neighboring Whitchurch-Stouffville there is a substantial resistance in existing communities to any influx of factory built movable home units. This public opposition is reflected in the attitude of the municipal councils.

Here in Southern York Region we are in one of the highest pressure spots in the housing shortage situation. In view of the need for homes and the crystalizing provincial government attitude, the public here apparently is going to have to pay a lot of attention to this kind of housing. Does it look very good to us?

The municipalities have certain powers to protect themselves from development they don't want. They probably will be called upon to use these powers. The degree of municipal opposition will depend upon the nature of the modular home proposals advanced and upon the resulting public reaction.

Certainly it seems under present circumstances locations will have to be found that aren't going to either existing neighborhoods or adversely affect the economics of the municipalities.

Housing Minister Welch last month told the mobile home industry the government is going to act to eliminate social, economic and legal objections to this kind of housing. It is alleged they have a retail tax disadvantage which will be removed if it is substantiated. Tenants, owners and buyers are to be given equal legal protection with those people in-

involved in conventional accommodation. A uniform building code will eliminate advantages still enjoyed by conventional types of housing.

With higher level government encouragement, experimental examples of mobile home developments have been created. Perhaps the proponents of this type of housing can substantiate their claims about the desirability and value of mobiles for the individual and the community.

Idealistically, it seems mobile home people should have the freedom and equal opportunity the province is proposing to help them attain. However, the ramifications of all this must be given long, hard and careful consideration before any community such as ours hereabouts takes a plunge into such development.

There is probably more merit in looking for more solid answers for the housing crisis than in turning to patchwork solutions such as mobiles. The real kernel of the problem is more likely to lie in the areas indicated last week by the incoming president of the Toronto Home Builders Association Ronald Williams. His firm builds homes mostly in the Metro fringe areas like our own.

We feel the province would do better to look more in the direction indicated by Williams for housing crisis solutions.

The home builders' president says the day of the single-family house is fading faster than our regulations and aspirations. Much stronger emphasis is needed immediately on condominium and townhousing in many forms — street, stacked and back-to-back. He says the problem isn't land but only services.

Williams says many municipalities are still forced to demand subdivisions of single-family detached houses purely and simply because of the tax assessment involved. He feels the sooner Ontario does something to equalize and stabilize the assessment problem, the sooner the builders can get to work providing the new housing forms that will combat the housing crisis.

Here at the municipal level it is probable only the regional council at Newmarket has the personnel, expertise and resources to provide any major amount of leadership independent of the province in the housing crisis. Most of the local towns and townships don't have their own planning staffs. But Richmond Hill, Vaughan and Markham do have their own planners and may be able to contribute somewhat.

The new regional administration is hardly three years old and has given commendable priority to a heavy commitment to community planning. Our citizens should look to the regional planners for some leadership on the mobile-modular homes questions and other solutions to the housing crisis. We would hope these matters are covered in the region's Official Plan now well advanced and due for completion shortly.