

The Liberal

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Opportunity For Public Input

Scheduled for the second half of August are meetings for each of the six wards in Richmond Hill to explain the proposed "Working Goals and Objectives" for Richmond Hill's new Official Plan, which for the first time will set guidelines for the growth and development of the municipality as an entity. The present Official Plan is an amalgamation of the old Richmond Hill plan with those of the townships of Vaughan, Markham, King and Whitechurch which affected the areas originally in those townships but now in the enlarged Town of Richmond Hill.

At the ward meeting questions will be answered and comments received on the proposed goals and objectives.

These contain long term goals and objectives to the year 2000 and call for a medium growth limit of 105,000 population for the seven and a half square mile block reaching from Highway 7 to Elgin Mills Road and from Bathurst Street to Bayview Avenue. The goals and objectives as set out in the new Official Plan will describe in general terms the need to promote the development of Richmond Hill.

Short term goals and objectives have also been prepared for the period until 1981.

All have been adopted in principle by council and its planning committee, but both are anxious to get public input into the Official

Plan and have set up these public meetings as the way to obtain this.

Until August 15 members of the planning staff will be available in the planning department on the second floor of the municipal building (Yonge and Wright Streets) to answer questions and discuss the working goals and objectives Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:30 am to 12 noon and Tuesday evenings from 6 to 8 pm. Groups are asked to make reservations ahead of time.

The public meetings are scheduled for 7:30 pm in the Council Chambers — August 15, ward 1; August 20, ward 2; August 22, ward 3; August 26, ward 4; August 29, ward 6 and August 30, ward 5 in Wildwood Public School.

It is true that August may not be the best month of the year in which to hold such meetings, in order to get the maximum participation by the public, since many of them will be on holidays. However, we urge those members of the public who are at home to take advantage of this opportunity to get in at the start of the planning function of the most important document in this town for the next 26 years.

As the Official Plan is developed along the guidelines set by the working goals and objectives you will have many more opportunities to make your contributions.

Milliken Housing. Yes? No?

Town of Markham Regional Councillor Bob Adams was indulging in a mental game of "wrestling" with his own thoughts out loud recently when he called a press conference to announce a proposed 28,000-population community in the Milliken area of the municipality.

The community scheme has yet to be officially considered by Markham Town Council and comes under the provincial's Housing Action Program designed to encourage such development via financial assistance.

Councillor Adams was also putting his finger on what agitates a number of political minds in today's society. Namely, how to grow and stay the way you are at the same time. The answer is obvious. You can't.

Mr. Adams put it this way: "My over-riding concern is that we might be going too fast although I realize there is a responsibility for a municipality to supply housing when the need is great. I'm just not convinced that being the biggest is necessarily the best.

"It's my belief that the ideal rate of population growth is 3 percent each year. Markham has been growing at a rate of 25 percent over the past two years."

He lists a number of reasons for his "concern" including the fact that the municipality is already burdened with developing its Official Plan as well as coping with proposed population growths in the Markham-Unionville and Thornhill areas.

"These areas alone," he said, "will produce a combined popula-

tion of 125,000 and I wonder if we should add to it with this Milliken scheme."

Mr. Adams noted that the cost of servicing the proposed subdivision would be borne by the province but what about the "other problems created by a sudden influx of population?" He stated that "the province has assured us that taxes on homes now existing won't go up as a result of the Ontario Housing Action program. I want to know why they won't? It may be a case of the province providing financial assistance but how much will it be and for how long?"

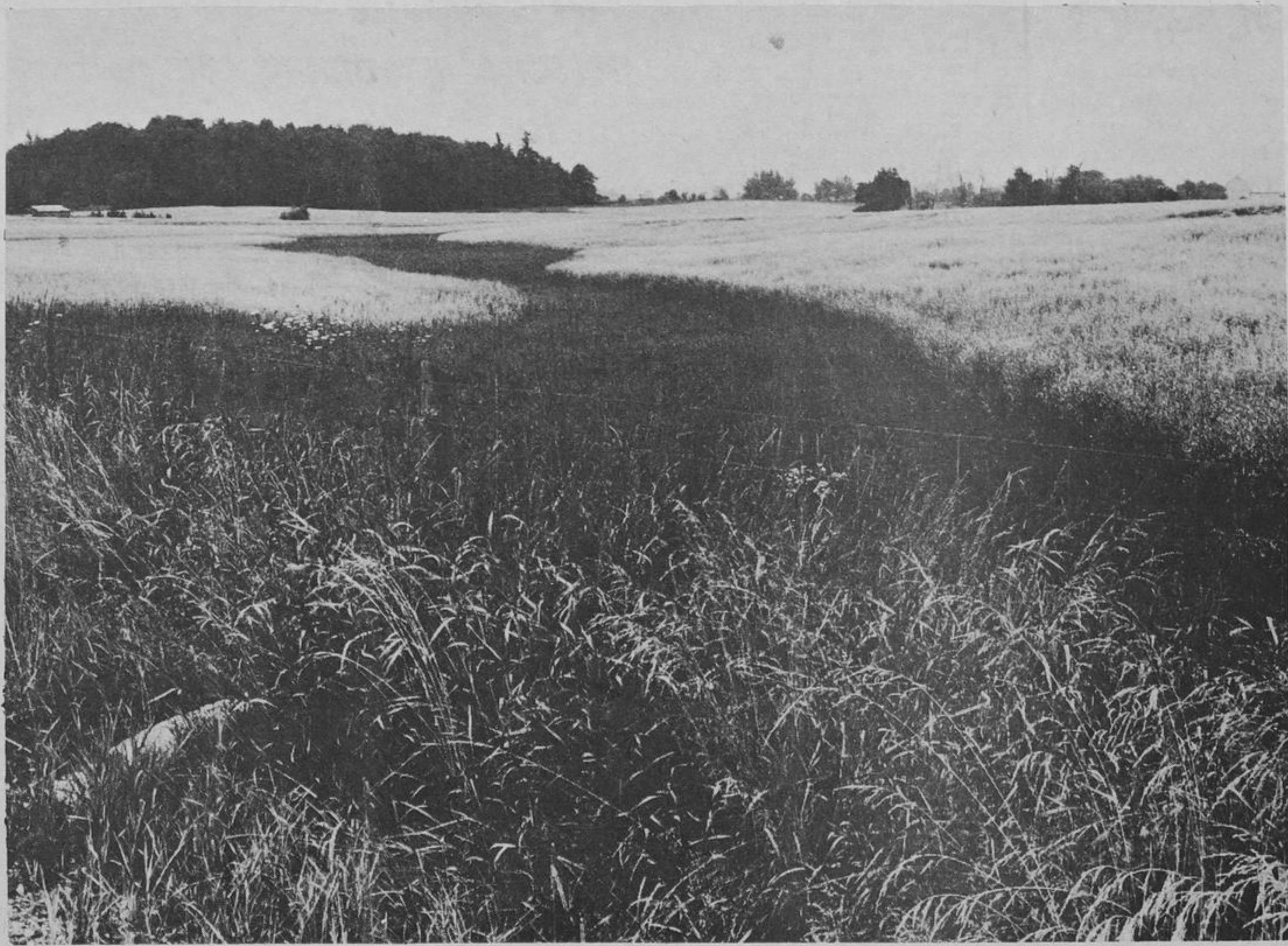
He pointed to the costs as well as the necessity for "soft service" such as parks, schools, transportation, recreation centres, etc."

Councillor Adams will undoubtedly be voicing his concerns when the Milliken proposal goes before council later in the month. The reaction of the rest of the council may or may not follow similar lines.

The fact remains that there is an urgent need for housing but as Councillor Adams puts it: "How much, how soon?"

It's a continuing problem not only in Markham but everywhere.

The answers aren't easy but the questions as posed by Councillor Adams are valid. Growth may also be valid but strictly on a "controlled, orderly" basis and one has to wonder if the province is prepared to follow this dictum. Governments have a habit of creating a situation and then figuring out how to make it work. It should be the other way around.



(Photo by Susan Samila)

Open Space Disappearing Fast In Southern York

Undisturbed, peaceful rural countryside used to dominate the landscape here in Southern York Region not so very many years ago. But urbanism is gobbling up the land as it never has been gobbled up before. And still very little open space is being held in public hands for the immediate

future and the generation to come.

Here is one of the most southerly and nearest Metro open prospects still remaining in a summertime view from the centre of Teston neighborhood in Vaughan Town.

In the Spotlight



By VICKERY COOK

The Canadian Society Incorporated

With the invention of such modes of transportation as the automobile and the airplane came the breaking down of various restricting barriers as space and time. Communication with other countries of the world is most active and the world seems to be growing smaller daily. Vacations to cities all over the world are taken by families regularly.

One area that has been highly developed into a haven for tourists is Florida with such notable resort spots as Miami Beach and Fort Lauderdale.

Many Canadians annually pack-up and journey down to these places. In fact, there is such an abundance of Canadians doing this and ending up in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, there is a week called "Canada Week", devoted strictly to Canadians. In St. Petersburg, Florida there is an association called "The Canadian Society Incorporated" with a membership of over 700. This society is highly organized and operates primarily from December through to March with an active executive of ten assisted by ten committee chairmen.

The president of this association is a local man who is well known in the community and the surrounding area. He is Bernard T. O'Beirn of Thornhill. Mr. O'Beirn was born in Uxbridge and has been a teacher in the area since 1925 and a principal and vice-principal in several surrounding secondary schools. He was first a principal in the province of Quebec in a bilingual school for seven years and then vice-principal at Richmond Hill High School and later principal at King City Secondary.

He and his wife Helen travel to St. Petersburg, Florida regularly from November to March and vigorously partake of the many activities provided by this Canadian society. There is a busy schedule for members of the club with regular entertainment, picnic lunches and field games such as horse shoes.

The society is funded through fees paid by its members and is a great meeting place for Canadians wishing to make new acquaintances and renew old ones. There are a few Americans who are members of the club and equally enjoy

York Official Plan Public Input Sought By Travelling Caravan

Residents of this area will be given several chances next month to visit the Region of York's public participation "Region Plan Caravan" which starts out on its travels August 15 for a two-month tour to carry the story of regional planning to all interested citizens.

Its first visit to Richmond Hill will be September 5 when it will be located at Richmond Heights Plaza. Two days later it will be at the Kleinburg-Bindertwine Festival. The Thornhill Farmers Market will be the site September 13 and 14 and the next week it will return to Richmond Hill, this time to Hillcrest Mall, where it will stay for three days, September 19, 20 and 21. It will also be at the Markham Fair for its full four day duration October 2-6 and at Woodbridge Fair October 12 and 14.

Display hours at shopping centres are 2 pm to 9:30 pm and at fairs and special days 10 am to 10 pm.

The yellow and white 44-foot trailer will present a graphic story of the reasoning behind regional planning and each individual citizen will be invited to comment and contribute any suggestions for future planning.

Brochures outlining the history of The Regional Municipality of York, and suggestions on how to participate in the planning for the region will be distributed free of charge to all visitors.

Qualified planning department personnel from the region will be in attendance constantly to provide on-the-spot information and to answer questions, it is promised.

This is the second part of a four-phase program to explain regional planning to the residents of the region and provide them with an opportunity to participate. The first was a questionnaire circulated some months ago. The next phase will be a series of public evening meetings to be held in the latter part of the year.

According to the region's Chief Administrative Officer Jack Rettie the whole program has been structured to provide all possible citizenship participation.

"It's a two-way street for communication between planners and citizens to provide the best possible Official Plan for the region," he said.

"We will be giving anyone and everyone the opportunity to participate with either constructive input or criticisms. We will be providing a forum for frank discussion between the people living in the area and the regional government planners who are charged with the responsibility of developing an Official Plan for the region."

"And when this program is completed next year, we should have a very comprehensive idea of what regional citizens in general want for the future of the Region of York. We will listen to each and every proposal and give it serious consideration. We are not promising that all suggestions will be accepted, but in the separation of the logical from the unworkable, we will be able to develop a viable Official Plan."

AURORA: Construction on Aurora's 100-suite Howard Johnson's Motor Inn is expected to begin by the end of the year. It will be located on Yonge south of Sterling Road. Construction of the Aladdin Industries Products of Canada plant in the new industrial park is now underway.

"Two girls, working at the district office in Maple, are involved in the general office routine of the accounting section."

Markham Building \$25,430,711 Down From 1973 \$42,099,239

Building construction to June of this year in the Town of Markham totals \$25,430,711, down from the same six month period in 1973 of \$42,099,239.

Continuing to lead the way in industrial permits issued comprising 47.15 percent of the overall total followed by single family residential at 34.96 percent and multiple family residential at 12.84 percent. Commercial trails at 5.04 percent.

Industry accounts for \$11,023,710; single family residential, \$8,173,955; multiple family, \$3,001,000; and commercial, \$1,179,400.

There were four permits issued for industrial in June: Anglo-York Industrial Ltd., erection of one industrial building on the west side of Steeles Road, \$700,000; Eastway Contracting, industrial addition, south side of Esna Park Drive, \$500,000; Marwood Properties Ltd., Waterloo County and Norfolk County added on. We can no longer assume that his seat is the safe haven it once was and has been since his father first won it in 1919.

Hugh Edighoffer, the M.L.A. for Perth, has had his riding changed sufficiently that he himself now lives in Huron, a seat already held by a Liberal.

Ray Haggerty, who held Welland South last time by only 400 votes over his Conservative challenger, has had several highly Conservative townships added to his seat.

Phil Givens has had his seat entirely eliminated. Parts of

SWORD Active In Area

Collecting litter, interviewing park visitors, correcting bank erosion, tagging fish, protecting trees from mice, spraying poison ivy, testing water, surveying marshes, netting fish, examining old quarries, sampling mud. These are just a few of the varied tasks that the 26 SWORD students (Students Working On Resource Development) are undertaking this summer while working in this district for the Ministry of Natural Resources.

At the Vivian York Regional Forest where there are many acres of coniferous plantations, five local high school students are busy repairing fences, painting, erecting signs, collecting garbage and spraying poison ivy. At two of the ponds in the forest they are grading the banks to reduce erosion and shoring up some badly trampled banks.

Bal Singh, a biology student, who received university training in India, is surveying marshes, swamps, river valleys, large forest tracts and ravines throughout the district. These are the most significant biologically sensitive areas. He will determine their value and make a partial inventory of their existing flora and fauna and will carefully map and photograph all such areas. Such data will enable future planners to present a strong case for their preservation.

At Sibald Point Park 12 local high school students are carrying out general maintenance work such as painting buildings, cleaning out ditches and collecting litter. They have also been involved in breaking open problem beaver dams and chasing nuisance raccoons out of park buildings.

At Lake Simcoe John Yates, a first year math student from Waterloo University is helping tag small-mouth bass, largemouth bass and pickerel caught in eight trap nets. He also helps in creel census and at the office in preparing fish scales for age determination.

Norm Long, third year geography student from York University is trying to pinpoint abandoned pits and quarries. He locates them from aerial photographs and then visits them to determine whether they are still in use. He records the type of vegetation rehabilitation occurring and visits the owner to find out what his future plans for the pit are, and then informs him about programs available for pit rehabilitation such as tree planting.

Two girls, working at the district office in Maple, are involved in the general office routine of the accounting section.

Kitchener Writer Says Provincial Redistribution Just Plain Politics!

The following feature story written by Jo Surich a political science teacher at the University of Waterloo appeared in a recent issue of the Kitchener-Waterloo Record — Editor)

With the federal election and the prospect of further federal elections safely out of the way, politicians in Ontario are starting to seriously worry about the next provincial election.

You can expect one at the latest by the fall of 1975, although there are persistent rumors that say there will be one this fall.

While the cast of characters will be the same, there is no reason to suppose that Bill Davis, Bob Nixon, and Stephen Lewis won't be around next time to head their respective political parties. A number of other things have changed.

A fairly major effort was made this year to redefine the boundaries of the Ontario constituencies in order to take account of differing population growth rates in the province.

It is almost a truism to say that the rural areas of Ontario are grossly over-represented in

the legislature, and any attempt to right the balance will lead to some shifting in the support the parties get and in the number of seats they might win.

The number of ridings in the province has been increased to 123 from 117, and all of the additional seats are in urban areas.

Since votes for all of the parties which compete in the political system are not usually evenly distributed in any territory, the process of redistribution can fundamentally affect the fortunes of the parties — not in popular vote, but in the number of seats that they win.

Given its importance to electoral fortunes, the process of redistribution has been subjected to partisan excesses, exceeded most of the time only by the process of fund-raising for political purposes.

Until very recently, redistributions in most jurisdictions have been undertaken with purely partisan advantage in mind. Only in the 1960s did governments start to worry seriously about the need for unbiased electoral boundaries

commissions.

In the latter half of the 19th century, for example, Sir Oliver Mowat was able to keep his Liberal Party in power in Ontario through the careful drawing of electoral boundaries which was called "partisan ingenuity."

Since the Liberal Party at that time drew most of its strength from the rural areas of the province, while the Conservatives dominated the cities, Mowat always ensured that there were always far more rural than urban constituencies, even though the number of people living in the cities was growing by leaps and bounds and had outstripped the country by the turn of the century.

A word was even invented for the practice in the United States: gerrymandering. It draws its origin from the name of an American state governor named Gerry who drew a constituency which ended up looking like a salamander. Hence we get gerrymander.

The process of gerrymandering is, of course, fairly simple

so long as you assume, as you can in most places that people will tend to continue voting for the party they have always voted for.

In other words, you have to be able to bank on the fact that most people do not change their minds very often. In modern times this is perhaps becoming a risky assumption.

The principle is simple: Since the votes for the parties are not evenly distributed, you make an effort to concentrate as many of the opposition's voters as possible in a small number of constituencies.

If the balance between two parties is fairly even, and one tends to draw its support from working-class people while the other draws it from middle-class voters, it is a simple enough trick to take a piece out of one constituency and add it to another to either give the first party one seat instead of a potential two or, if possible, to give it none.

Take for example, downtown Toronto. You will notice that almost all of the ridings run in narrow strips from the shores

of Lake Ontario north. Now it so happens that in Toronto the people who live at the bottom near the lake are poor, while those who live in the north are much more wealthy.

If you drew boundaries which did not go north of Bloor Street, you might give several seats to the NDP or the Liberals and a few to the Conservatives.

By drawing south-to-north boundaries and creating thin strips of ridings, you might be able to guarantee all of those seats, or most of them to the Conservative party.

A neat trick — and all legal. In the current Ontario redistribution, a number of guidelines existed which the commission was supposed to follow.

One was the number of seats in Northern Ontario could not be reduced (even though the population might not warrant it).

Also, no riding could be more than 25 percent larger or smaller than the average for all the ridings in Ontario, based on the 1971 census.

And three, traditional commu-

nities and so on were to be paid attention to where possible within the 25-percent rule.

Bob Williams wrote some weeks ago about the last point and its application or non-application to the new regional municipalities, ours included.

The 25-percent rule meant that some ridings could still be twice as large in population as others based on a census which is now three years out of date.

Given the rapid growth in our suburban areas, this will mean that by 1978, when the government might start thinking about another redistribution, the suburban ridings will again be massive compared to the rural ones. That, in every sense, is unfair to those who live in the cities.

While it may be impossible to claim that the commission proceeded with partisan objectives in mind, the effect of their work is pretty partisan.

Have a look at the number of constituencies which are fundamentally altered and you discover that quite a few of them are now held by Liberals.

Could it be that the Con-

servative government is trying to prevent large Liberal gain in the next election? After all, the effect of the redistribution on the basis of the 1971 vote is to add NDP seats in some parts of the province.

Let's have a quick look at cases.

Bob Nixon, the leader of the Liberal Party, has had pieces of his constituency which normally vote Liberal taken off and has highly Conservative pieces of Waterloo County and Norfolk County added on. We can no longer assume that his seat is the safe haven it once was and has been since his father first won it in 1919.

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