

editor's  
choice

Editorial

## Time for an Act of Statesmanship

by HARRY HUSKINS

When the decision was made to close the school in Schreiber one year ago, the reason was financial. The Trustees on the former Board of Education who voted for the Closure said that if the money was only available there would be no question of closing the school.

Faced with that decision the people of Schreiber raised \$119,000 in four days to pay for the operation of the school. The money was not accepted. The point was validly raised by the Board members that there was no guarantee that the money would be there year after year. If the school was to be kept open, then Schreiber would have to come up with a long term guarantee of the money necessary to operate it.

Events have so arranged themselves with the Allan Report that that money will be there from year to year in the form of an annual grant from the Province.

The next point raised was that the figure might not end up being \$119,000. It could turn out to be as high as \$150,000. The School Closure Study Committee had determined the cost to be \$71,000, the figure emerging from the Board Office just prior to the Closure vote was \$119,000. But why quibble, small

minds get hung up on small points. The grant increase will provide about \$300,000. Double the highest figure quoted, three times the Board Office figure, and four times the Study Committee's figure. More than enough money to run the school, and in addition enough money over the next ten years to pay for all the up-grading work that needs to be done on the old wing of the high school in Terrace Bay. Money the school board couldn't find for itself, and a tremendous tax saving for the rate-payers of Terrace Bay.

Board members also raised the point that \$119,000 would be the cost of running the school for 1982 only. With inflation, the costs would go up annually. By coincidence, the Allan Report also addresses that point. The money is not a grant in straight dollar figures, but it is tied to percentage figures so that as the Board's budget costs increase year by year, so will the grant.

The message to Schreiber from the former Board was that the school would have to be closed to free up money to be spent elsewhere. It could not be kept open even if Schreiber agreed to foot the bill because there was no guarantee that adequate funds were there to operate it,

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## As Schreiber's fate hangs in the balance The Question is: How will they vote this time?



One year ago the majority voted to close the school.



And the minority voted to keep it open.

Arthur Black

## Six gun showdown

If I was starting up a new business right now I think I'd go into the construction trade. I anticipate a kind of housing boom soon. Underground housing. I think it's the next big fad. Thanks to the six-gun showdown mentality of Sherrif Reagan and the small likelihood that Premier Andropov (ex-top gun for the KGB) is any brighter ... I think a lot of North Americans are going to be thinking — once again — about fallout shelters.

Yessir. Back to the sixties when anxiety-ridden North Americans burrowed like demented gophers in their own backyards, building a hedge against the holocaust to come.

Crazy times. Paunchy suburbanites with fallout shelters actually debated whether they would shoot their shelterless neighbours, should said neighbours hazard a post-Armageddon rap on the shelter door. Cocktail chatter was about dried foods and venti-

lation systems, radiation monitors and 60-day menus.

Well the Shelter Fad finally fizzled out. People recognized the inherent stupidity of it all. Survive for what? To live in a global parking lot? The locks came off the shelters. The dried food ended up at the cottage. The shelter became a sort of extra rec room where a spouse could go to cool-off after a spat. Where the kids could take their friends and play their records as loud as they wanted.

The underground survival chambers became a place to store the old couch, spare lumber and all your back issues of National Geographic.

Well ... not all of them. I can think of seven fallout shelters that are still spic and span, still in perfect working condition, complete with drinking water, gasoline generators, air ducts, plumbing — even radio transmitters.

There's one in Carp, Ontario,

about 45 miles from Ottawa. There are similar but smaller ones in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and Quebec.

They are government fallout shelters, designed to save the lives of what the government likes to call "key officials" — for which read politicians and generals, basically.

If anybody Drops The Big One anywhere in North America, an emergency routine automatically goes into effect. Our leaders will be transported to these shelters immediately.

Where, presumably, they will make their first major executive decision — who gets to slam the door in the chauffeur's face.

The rest of us? Heck, we don't have to worry. There's a book on the stands right now called "With Enough Shovels". The title is based on a quote from one T.K. Jones, a U.S. Deputy Undersecretary for Defense and one of

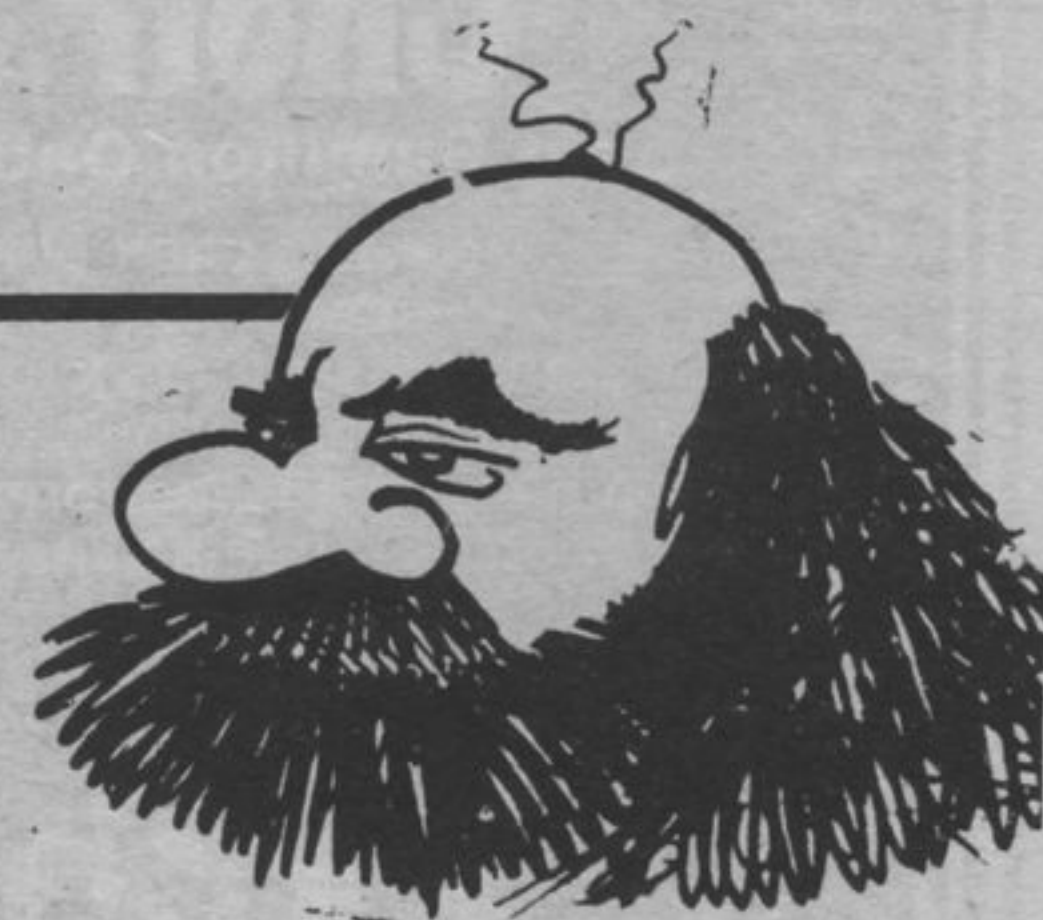
President Reagan's key (it is to weep) advisers. The author asked him if he wasn't worried about the prospect of nuclear bombs falling on North America.

He replied that nuclear bombs were no big deal. All you had to do was dig a hole, cover it with an old door or two, heap a yard or so of dirt over top and get underneath it. With enough shovels, said Mister Jones cheerily, we'd all survive anything the Russkys could throw at us.

The man is an idiot. Still, if those sirens ever go off I guess a good number of us "non-key officials" might well find ourselves ripping doors off bedrooms and flinging earth from the flower beds against basement windows.

In the seventeen or so minutes we'd have left.

Reminds me of something I saw when I was a kid. I was high on a hill, hunting, overlooking a



valley. Down in the valley a pack of dogs was after a rabbit. The rabbit had maybe 50 yards on the dogs, but they were gaining. And more important, the rabbit was cut off. They ran him high out on to a sandy point. There was a wide, fast river in front of the rabbit. He had nowhere to go. The rabbit stopped.

And I swear, in the last few seconds of his life ... with the dogs close enough that the rabbit could see the slaver on their jaws, that rabbit started to ... dig.

On the off-chance that T.K. Jones is reading this, I'd like to report that I walked out on that point after the dogs took off.

I found a bit of fur, a bloodstain and a few scratches in the dirt.

To which Mr. Jones would undoubtedly reply. "Too bad. The rabbit should've had a shovel."