

*opinion*

# Seat belts... are they really required?



It was an atmosphere of concern which was evident during the recent Information Night held by the Ad-Hoc Transportation sub-committee last Tuesday evening. Parents, students, and interested individuals were present to listen to the experts discuss the pros and cons of seat belts in school buses.

And listen they did ... I hope. Many who arrived, arrived with the idea that seat belts were the only answer to the deaths caused by school bus accidents. Others came with an open mind. Questions were asked. Answers were given. Many left with a feeling of confusion. Many left with the idea that they would in turn study the information given, and attempt to sort through it and come up with the feasible solution to this problem.

Seat belts are indeed a hot issue right now along the North Shore and also in other parts of Canada. Although several studies into this matter have been conducted by various officials, no one has the authority to say that yes, seat belts should be a part of the school bus interior criteria. Not enough proof is available to justify this statement and until there is, parents and local school boards will have to weed through the little information which is available, and make their own decisions.

Ian Rogerson from the Etobicoke Board of Education said that since 1975 they have experienced nothing more major than a 'fender-bender'; therefore they cannot say that seat belts are the answer to the problem. All he could say was that their Board changed their policy to now include seat belts as part of their busing contracts. However, he did state that in some incidents you must carefully weight the situation involving the use of seat belts. The instance given was the tragic death resulted during the school bus accident outside of Terrace Bay in October of 1982. He wanted the parents to think of the consequences, had the bus rolled down the embankment into the lake, and restrained individuals trying to extricate themselves from the vehicle. That's food for thought.

Also think about the size difference of the students riding those buses. Restraints that are suitable for larger and older students may not be suitable for students of J.K. to Grade five age. It's easy to say that injuries received by the wearing of seat belts is minor, compared to the possibility of death, until an influx of injuries (some permanent) have been dealt with.

But seat belts aren't the only thing that parents should be concerned about. They should also take an interest in the design of school bus interiors. All that metal and glass ... the height of the seats ... discipline of the children while being transported ... cost factors involved. All of these are pertinent. You can't expect seat belts to work miracles if the design of the school bus isn't adequate.

Something that surprised me during the meeting was the fact that only one student who was involved in the actual accident was there and only three parents whose children were involved, were present. They are the ones who should be concerned. They've been through it once. They don't want to go through it again. For something as hot as this issue was a few months ago, why weren't they present to get the facts and figures?

Keep in mind however, that you will have the opportunity to give the sub-committee your views and opinions on seat belt use in school buses for this area. Make an effort to attend the Presentation Night which is scheduled to take place Tuesday, February 28th. It will be your final chance to speak out on this issue.

## *This Weeks Chuckle*

"If you want a place in the sun, you have to expect some blisters."

"Samson had the right idea about advertising. He took two columns and brought down the house."

"An agnostic is someone who says they know nothing about God, and when you agree with them, they get angry."

The No. 1 problem in our country is apathy ... but who cares?

## *Arthur Black*

# Hatfield- McCoy feud revisited



Well, it sure didn't get much space in the newspapers, but the fact is, Jim McCoy passed away last week.

Shouldn't have come as any surprise. Old Jim was 99 years old and he'd been poorly for some time. Still, it was the end of an era, and that should be worth some ink. Old Jim was the patriarch of the most famous clan of McCoy's in the history of the name. The McCoy's of Pike County, Kentucky. The ones who represented one half of the most famous blood feud in the history of this continent. The McCoy's who, for decades, did their level best to shoot, stab, burn and hushwack another clan called the

Hatfields, out of existence.

Which is not to make the Hatfields out to be a pious pack of peacemongers. They were a murderous crew too. The Hatfields more than held up their end when it came to murder in the mountains along the Kentucky/West Virginia border.

Nobody knows for sure when or how the feud between the Hatfields and the McCoy's started. Some claim it went all the way back to 1873 when Randolph McCoy stopped to chat with a neighbour, Floyd Hatfield. As they stood chewing straws with a foot hitched up on the pigsty railing, Randolph glanced down at the inhabitants, turned purple

and roared, "Floyd, that ain't yo' hog! Hit's mine!"

Could be. Civil Wars have been started for less. Which, by the way was another bone of contention between the Hatfields and McCoy's. The Kentucky McCoy's backed The South during the U.S. Civil War. The Virginia Hatfields were loyal to the Union.

Whatever the reason, there was bad blood between the Hatfields and the McCoy's for generations. And there was precious little any law enforcement agencies could do about it, because both clans were mountain folk - hillbillies if you like - people who knew the land and also knew guns. And didn't cotton to stran-

gers.

In any case the Hatfields and McCoy's were going hard at it when Jim McCoy - the fellow who passed away last week - was born way back in 1883. The year before, three McCoy brothers had been tied to a papaw bush and shot to death.

As punishment for having shot a Hatfield in the back a month earlier.

It was the beginning of many years of killings for both clans. It's hard to believe, but for most of this century and a good chunk of the last one, no Hatfield or McCoy would think of leaving his home without a rifle under his arm or a pistol stuck in his belt.

The Hollywood "Wild West" was largely a fiction, but not the Hatfields and the McCoy's. They played for keeps.

It wasn't until 1976 - just seven years ago - that the two families officially buried the hatchet. It was a formal ceremony in which Willis Hatfield, 88 year old patriarch of his clan, shook hands with Old Jim McCoy.

Willis died a couple of years back, and Old Jim, as I mentioned passed away last week.

With one final gesture towards peace and goodwill between the Hatfields and the McCoy's.

Old Jim arranged to have himself laid to rest by ... the Hatfield Funeral Home of Liberty, Kentucky.

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## *anchor*

# "Woman - keep silent!"

by BILL LEGRAND

"...the women should keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says. If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church." I Corinthians 14: 34-35.

This is pretty heavy stuff ... especially if you happen to be an informed, sensitive member of the human race and at the same time a woman!! Although most Christians would identify the cultural significance of Paul's preaching (and decide that it cannot possibly apply to the reality of churches in the 1980's), they are influenced by one powerful suggestion: women are generally regarded with suspicion when they become prominent in ecclesiastical affairs, either as ordained clergy or committed lay persons.

Whether we like it or not, Church traditions remain almost exclusively masculine, often to the detriment of sensitive and competent women. Even worse, women are frequently stereotyped as "loose" and "immoral". In Proverbs, a young man is warned about women: "And lo, a woman meets him, dressed as a harlot, wily of heart. She is loud and wayward, her feet do not stay at home; now in the street, now in the market, and at every corner she lies in wait." If a woman does not fit within a particular mould (the Biblical version of "barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen"), she is condemned. Although wayward men are rarely discussed in Biblical literature, the loose woman becomes a focus, as the temptress, the alluring Eve breathlessly enticing an Adam to do what is forbidden. Such descriptions might actually be humorous, if it were not for their implications on the status of women in the religious world.

Paul also speaks of women submitting themselves to their husbands and looking upon male headship as almost a divine imperative. In my own ministry I've confronted too many situations with battered wives, to take Biblical tradition lightly. As an ordained person, I've experienced too much rejection of my female colleagues in the Church, to assume that Paul's letters and Old Testament teachings can be interpreted literally, without a historical analysis.

Biblical tradition, as passed down to us through our churches, has emerged through paternalistic structures. It is important, I believe, to ask ourselves some crucial questions: 1. Can we interpret scripture and accept tradition without a careful examination of their cultural aspects? (Paul spoke through his culture and asserted values which had some basis on the first century. They still do today, but only after we've examined their cultural impact). 2. Is Biblical tradition static, or must it be applied to each succeeding generation of Christians, with a view toward their society? 3. Does God call us through our scriptures and traditions to place women in secondary roles to men?

Paul does call upon us not to conform to the world. Within this injunction is a responsibility on our part, as men and women, to reform our world ... particularly if its religious and secular institutions impede the struggle of women for equality with men.

In London, Ontario, a survey in 1983 revealed that 90 per cent of all ordained clergy, in positions of actual leadership, are men. Even for churches which ordain women, this record illustrated the dilemma faced by women in the Church.

Tradition is important to preserve but not to conserve like jars of canned jams. The dynamic which keeps Christian faith alive is our ability to teach Biblical truths to a realistic world. Denying women their rightful place in our churches is a rejection of the spirit of tradition. As a man, I find the more militant expressions of feminism hard to swallow, but I'd hate to conceive of the alternative - a world where women would fail to raise my consciousness about a male-dominated tradition, straight-jacketed by exaggerated myths about masculine power and worthiness. Paul's greatest teaching on sexuality is that men and women are one in Jesus Christ. May we all try to practise sexual equality in our living space, in both the secular and religious worlds.