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Municipal Leaders Divided On Merits Of Regional Government

A brief poll of members of municipal governments found three members opposed to regional government for the area and two in favour.

The fourth and final report of the Ontario Government's Select Committee on the Municipal Act and Related Acts was tabled in the Legislature at the end of last month and was a sweeping endorsement of regional government, calling for outright abolition of local boards of health and suburban roads commissions.

The 13-member-all-party committee was headed by Hollis Beckett (P.C. York East) former solicitor for the Township of Scarborough and a member of York County Council from 1924 to 1929.

The 110-page report stated that fragmentation of local governments has caused difficulties in such clearance, urban renewal, town planning, pollution control and development.

As a practical start, the report recommends that county boundaries in whole or in part be adopted as boundaries of regional governments with cities and towns included in them and regional council members elected from wards for terms not less than three years. The regional governments would have powers of assessment, taxation, planning, arterial road construction, public health, hospitals, welfare and policing.

Although he admitted he had not yet read the report of the select committee, York County Warden Sidney Legge stated that he was opposed to regional governments. "It will take away the rights of local municipalities," he said. "If autonomy is taken away from local municipalities where will they end up?"

Mr. Legge was also of the opinion that regional government would cause duplication, more bookkeeping and be more expensive. "With so many types of areas, summer resorts, towns, rural districts, I can't see how they can be in one region," he said.

In marked contrast, Reeve Donald Plaxton of Richmond Hill, a member of York County Council and a former candidate for the Legislature, expressed himself as quite in favour of regional governments.

"In many cases you can't develop urban areas with the present assessment basis," said Reeve Plaxton. "The only way I can see to expand the economy is to take in a larger area with a more stable financial basis."

Mr. Plaxton also felt that under the present system there is far too much bickering between municipalities on matters which should never be the subject of disputes. "It's like a bunch of kids in kindergarten fighting over a lollipop," he said, adding that such disputes work to the detriment of people living in the area.

Reeve Plaxton emphasized however, that members of any regional government should be elected directly by popular vote. "This would bring this level of government closer to the people who support it financially," he noted.

He felt too that the system would only work if informed, capable and educated people were found to stand for office. "If it's going to work, we will need some pretty clever people," he concluded.

York County Commissioner and reeve of Markham Township Charles Hooper said he felt regional government was something that was being pushed on the people in a dictatorial manner.

"We have never been consulted," he said. "They should have come out to the counties and had a round-table discussion on it. The way they are doing it will rouse the people."

Reeve Hooper also stated that he had not studied the report but from what little knowledge he had of it, he was not in favour. "The larger it gets, the more expensive it is to handle," he said. "I feel it beneficial to have small municipalities," he continued. "The closer you are to the people, the better government you have."

Last year's Warden of York County, Vaughan Township's Reeve A. H. Rutherford was of a similar opinion. "I can't envisage all of York County under one regional government," he said, although he thought a regional government which would include Vaughan and Markham Townships, Richmond Hill, Stouffville, Markham Village and Woodbridge would be workable.

"I can't see that regional government will be better than what we have now," he said. "No government could be closer to the people than the municipal governments we have now. I don't see how they will improve it."

Richmond Hill's Deputy-Reeve Floyd Perkins, who also has a seat on York County Council, saw many merits to a system of regional government. "We are over-governed now and have been for years," he said. "We are still using the system set up by the Baldwin Act over a hundred years ago in the horse and buggy era."

Mr. Perkins felt that the present small municipalities caused an expensive over-lapping of services, such as the Vaughan Township's water system on one side of Yonge Street and Markham Township's on the other.

"Look at the trouble we had over services to the hospital," he pointed out. "We're still having trouble providing street lighting and a bus service be-

cause it is just outside Richmond Hill," he said.

Mr. Perkins emphasized that planning, for instance, is much better done on a regional basis. "Now we are just planning to the edge of our municipality," he said. "We should plan to a watershed or a river basin."

Representatives from York County had been invited to see a film study of county government in the United States by Peel County recently. Mr. Perkins stated and he had found much to commend the larger unit.

DICKSON HILL

Mrs. Don Moyer, recently returned from a trip to Florida, and her children of Toronto, called at the R. Moyer home on Sunday afternoon.

The Lloyd Wideman family visited at the Bruce Clarke home at Woodstock during the Easter holidays.

Mrs. M. Eby and Mrs. R. Moyer accompanied Miss Mildred Barkey and Mrs. L. Moyer of Stouffville to Shepherd Lodge last week. There they called on Mrs. Willoughby and chatted with Mrs. Fred Betz who are presently making their home there. Later they visited with Mrs. Menno Grove at the Lovelace home, Pharmacy Ave. Agincourt.

Mr. Wm. Sherwood was able to return home from the Scarborough Hospital last Saturday. His neighbours wish him a good recovery during the convalescence period.

The services of the Month of Missions came to a conclusion Sunday evening at the Markham Church. The guest speakers included Rev. S. Boehmer D. D. of Toronto Bible College, Mr. Dixie Dean with his accor-

Nigeria, Miss Esther Cressman of Nigeria, Miss Edna Pridham, Rev. Murray McLeod, Toronto, Rev. Peter Stam, formerly of B.C. formerly serving in India, Mr. Paul Fretz of Brazil and the Congo, now serving as General Secretary of the African Inland Mission for Canada. Congregations at Dickson Hill and Markham enjoyed each of the messages and were challenged to greater faithfulness in this part of the program of the Church.

Mrs. Warren Moyer and Miss Esther Cressman, missionary on furlough from Nigeria, called on Mrs. Keith last Thursday. They spent a happy time together reviewing the intervening years since Esther and Ruth, as young girls spent a time together picking fruit at Vineland.

Miss Dingle of Toronto called on friends here Tuesday afternoon.

Housewife, home from shopping, to husband: "Let's see—trading stamps, contest entry forms, list of next week's special offers—good! gracious, the groceries!"

Cedar Grove News

On the last Monday of every month Cedar Grove Community Club meets at the home of one of its members. It is an active club so the meetings run the gamut—sometimes they are fun, sometimes funny, sometimes deadly serious and sometimes, (only occasionally) heated. On the agenda are cures, the maintenance and expansion of the rink, the big Apple Butter Festival, the Corner Lot and its many activities, bowling, picnics, special interests, booths at sales or fairs for fund raising and countless individual items that crop up for consideration or discussion.

Considering the size of our village and the number of its members active in the club, the work done is staggering. Committees are set up to take care of everything from lunches and prizes for the twice-monthly euchres to work on the expansion of Cedarena and it is a rare person who serves on one committee.

One of the main purposes of club funds is to maintain the rink and a good deal of money goes into this project. If we have a good cold winter the rink is rewarding but a winter that provides little skating can be an expensive one for CGCC.

Certain activities open to the entire community are solely sponsored by the Club and others partly so. But that is not all Cedar Grove Community Club has to its credit. With no fanfare and no publicity anyone in the area who needs help is helped. There is never a moment's hesitation when funds are required for someone in trouble whether they belong to the Club or not. Every year substantial checks are sent out to the Mental Health drive and the Retarded children and this year the club sent money to furnish a room in the new Mennonite home for the aged, Parkview Home.

Cedar Grove Community Club is a pivot around which this village and its activities revolve and only if you stop to think about it, do you realize the tremendous debt Cedar Grove owes to its Community Club.

A report from the newly formed Markham Township Citizens Committee announced that

the Cedar Grove bridge question appeared before Council. Approval for a new structure was passed through Council and consent has been received from the Dept. of Highways who are expected to foot a large percentage of the cost. By now the new bridge should be on the drawing board for installation this fall. Meantime watch your step.

Two babies were christened in Zion Church on Sunday morning. The sons of Mr. and Mrs. Reg Warden and Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Blane, James Scovil Warden and Derick William Blane.

Ruby and Mabel Reesor and Myrtle have returned from an Easter holiday trip to Florida where they spent a little time with Leona Brown. A wonderful holiday is the report. Olive Macintosh spent the holiday at Virginia.

The congregation of Zion Church presented their organist, Mr. Mitchell with a beautiful painting of the church in appreciation of his many years of faithful service and dedication.

Euchre winners: Jeanne H. Hunter, Jean Jefferson, Edna Lovelace, Alvin Klinck, Leslie Thord and Levi Booth.

Euchre will be held in Cedar Grove schoolhouse on Monday, May 3rd. Continuation of current series with nightly prizes and series prizes. All welcome.

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PINE ORCHARD

Mr. Bob Hope is home working on his father's farm after spending the past year in Huntsville.

Mrs. Dr. and Miss Jean Robinson were Sunday guests with Mrs. G. Wood.

Our best wishes go with Mr. and Mrs. J. Ash as they move to their home in Zephyr.

Mrs. George Sproton visited her daughter in Toronto last Tuesday.

Mr. John Hope has accepted a position at Ingersoll for the summer.

Mr. Whitfield of Thornbury spent a few days with his daughter Mrs. Rae McClure and family.

Mrs. W. Shaw passed away on Saturday night following a stroke ten days ago. Although a semi-invalid in a wheel chair for a number of years, she was always bright and cheerful, never complaining and an inspiration to all who visited her. Our sympathy is extended to her two sons and family.

Mr. Martin Thomas, well-known to the local congregation was present at the Sunday night service. He and Mrs. Thomas and baby are leaving shortly for a charge in Nova Scotia.

Mr. and Mrs. Max Vague are travelling with the Toronto Bible College Choir for the next three weeks in the eastern provinces.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Steckley visited their daughter Mrs. Victor Brown and family, North Gower, near Ottawa last week. While there they visited relatives and friends in Ottawa and Winchester Springs.

Mrs. Lloyd King is a delegate of Ontario County at the Ont. Farm Union March for better prices to be held at Ottawa this week. Mrs. King formerly lived near Wick, Ont.

The Excelsior Class met at the home of Mrs. K. Smith for their April meeting. Mrs. Hirsch of Lemonville was the guest speaker.

Mrs. W. Pipher and Mrs. E. Brownsberger visited Miss Ada Grove, Mrs. John Wilson, Mr. A. Lehman and Mrs. Beech at Brierbush Hospital on Tuesday afternoon of last week.

BLOOMINGTON

About thirty friends attended the graduation service of Toronto Bible College held in Varsity Stadium on Saturday night. We congratulate Miss Doris Nesbitt on graduating.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert of Markham held a party for Doris and friends at their home after the service.

Messrs. Jerry and Ron Tranmer, Don Nesbitt and Paul Benson attended a Young Peoples' Rally last Tuesday evening in the Aurora A. G. Church.

Mrs. Graham and Miss Dorothy Wagg were guests at Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Storry's with Mr. and Mrs. Noel Storry and family on Sunday to celebrate the birthday of Mrs. Storry. Many happy returns.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Rowe have moved to their new home on Main St. Stouffville.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Reichard of Toronto were Sunday guests and Mrs. Edgar Heron attended mon.

Mr. and Mrs. Larry Tranmer and Steven of Mt. Albert were at O. Tranmer's on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Wallace and Debbie of Uxbridge visited with Mr. and Mrs. Ernie Nesbitt, Miss Helen Nesbitt spent a few days in Toronto last week.

The Easter Cantata "Hallelujah, What a Savior" put on by the Dawes Road Church Young People on Sunday night was presented to an appreciative and full church. A social hour was enjoyed afterward.

The famous Apian Way from Rome to Capua was wide enough to permit wagons to pass one another.

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