

Editorials

Tribune

A pageant of color

The executive of the Stouffville Drum and Bugle Corps is to be commended on the success of its first annual Pageant of Flags program in the auditorium of Stouffville Dist. Secondary School, Saturday night.

The entire evening was well organized and the performance, the most colorful of anything seen here in years.

There were twelve entries in the pageant, including six from the United States. Several representatives from across the border expressed enthusiasm over the reception they had

received here and said they would be pleased to return again. The audience was thrilled by the show and showed its appreciation through generous applause.

One corps followed another onto the parade square with clockwork precision and the finale, prior to the presentation of awards, defied description.

The two area entries, Markham "Collegettes" and Stouffville's "Centurions" performed wonderfully well. Their promoters have just reason to be proud.

The wrong impression

A five-car accident occurred early Sunday morning on a "drag strip" stretch of pavement north of Island Lake, bordering Whitechurch and Uxbridge Townships. Property damage was heavy but fortunately no one was killed or even injured.

Due to the positions of the cars at the scene, it was difficult to learn immediately how the crash had occurred. It was obvious, however, that several drivers had come to the area for the purpose of racing. None of the bystanders we talked to seemed certain of whether a race had started or was just about to begin.

Drag racing on a public highway such as this is not permitted. While these lads are obviously breaking the law, we would not be too quick to jump to the wrong conclusions. These boys are not "teen-age punks" as so often termed. The majority, in fact, are pretty good kids. Rather than

roam around in gangs on motorcycles their interest lies in automobiles. They know more about the intricate parts of a car than most Class "A" mechanics. To prove this skill and knowledge, they use this section of roadway as a test track. Residents in the area know it. The police know it. Officers patrol it. But they can't control it.

While any suggestion of a legalized dragstrip in either Uxbridge or Whitechurch would stir up a storm of protest, it seems regrettable that an organized program of this kind cannot be established. Drag racing under strict rules and regulations is not a dangerous sport. The same thing performed on an open road is dangerous. The drivers know it but won't stop it. The police know it but can't stop it. The solution — allow a drag strip to be built and operated properly.

Retiring P M has proud record

Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson who will shortly retire has been a great Canadian statesman but not a great Prime Minister. These words have been echoed many times across the country, but wait a minute, let's look at the facts.

A closer look at the Prime Minister's five years of office reveal that he achieved a great deal. In fact, he did more in a shorter time than many predecessors. Some of these accomplishments would have been viewed as impossible only a few years back.

Possibly the one task which Mr. Pearson achieved that is best remembered will be the Canadian flag in 1964.

The Canadian Pension Plan took some fast-stepping to get agreement among the provinces.

Many countries have thought about unifying the armed forces, but Canada has done it.

That long over-due matter of redistribution of electoral districts was accomplished.

The enactment of Medical Insurance is well on its way though it may not be fully activated for a couple of years.

These are a few of the highlights of his term of office. There are more and Mr. Pearson can surely look back with pride on his achievements. He has also begun a series of conferences which, if followed through, should make this country more united than ever before.

Prime Minister Pearson is probably the most widely known statesman this country has ever produced. He deserves the gratitude of all Canadians.



ROAMING AROUND

Batman for P. M.

It's spring — that strange topsyturvy time of year when everything goes through a major period of change. When I say ever, thing, I'm referring not only to the outside world of greening grass and leafing trees. I'm speaking about the interior as well.

When my wife gets that house-cleaning gleam in her eye — look out! For about three weeks on end, our home was transferred into a veritable shambles of shifted furniture, upended mattresses and rug rolls.

This year was undoubtedly the worst yet. She embarked on a complete redecoration job of our bedroom and I was displaced to the much less comfortable confines of a studio couch in the basement. I accepted the bou-doir eviction notice without complaint for I was well aware that the term of residence in these compact quarters would be only temporary.

But something else was also destined for below-ground re-location — the living room television set.

"It'll be better for everyone," she said. "The children can watch their favorite programs in the morning, I'll see what I want in the afternoon, and you can watch it at night."

In theory, the whole idea sounded wonderful and I readily consented. Besides she paid the changeover bill of \$9.00 and even helped the repairman haul the heavy machine downstairs.

I'm really no TV-bug. During the summer months, I hardly ever turn it on. I do have a few favorite programs, however, and when I'm home in the evening, which isn't often, my choice of channels is given priority over the wishes of the others, or I should say was.

Ever since Mr. Pearson announced his intended resignation, I had been looking forward with enthusiasm to the upcoming Liberal convention in Ottawa. I was determined to catch as much of the three day deal as possible and with it suitably arranged at the end of the week, my chances appeared good.

On Thursday, I burst through the front door so far in advance of the supper hour my wife nearly plummeted face-first into a batch of freshly rolled pie dough. "Is it turned on?" I asked, tossing my coat across a kitchen chair. "Is who turned out?" she asked, slightly terrified. "The TV. The convention. The Liberal convention. Don't tell me you've forgotten all about it?" I enquired in an exasperated voice. "With six months to feed, I've got more to think about than that," she said. "Besides, the kids are watching something. I'm not sure what, they've been as quiet as mice."

I raced to the basement, two steps at a time and there they were, ringed around the set in absolute silence, all four. They were watching The Flintstones. Unthinkingly, I switched the dial to channel 6 and in unison, a cry of disapproval went up to rock the rafters. I quickly relented and peace was restored. After that, came a rerun of Lassie, then I Love Lucy and My Three Sons. This was immediately followed by The Flying Nun and a pre-Hallow'en comedy called Bewitched. Interference with this kind of programming was out of the question. I returned from whence I had come and caught a few comments on the car radio.

Tomorrow, it will be different. I muttered to myself. But it wasn't. On Friday, I ran into equally strong opposition from Gilligan's Island, Gentle Ben and Tarzan.

I tried the persuasive approach. It didn't work. I then resorted to an unethical bribe that didn't work either. As a last resort, I adopted an attitude of educational insight. "Do you realize," I asked my five year old, "that one of these men will be the next Prime Minister of Canada?" "I don't care," he replied, dancing up and down, "I like Batman better." I threatened to tell him that Batman was a Progressive Conservative.

Saturday was worse. How does an already outnumbered father compete with such rivals as The Three Stooges The Lone Ranger, Flipper, Top Cat Cartoons and Jackie Gleason? You're right. You can't.

And so, my humble apologies to you Mr. Templeton and to you, Mr. Depoe. And ten thousand regrets to you Mr. Winters, and you, Mr. Hellyer.

But take heart. A runners-up role to Pierre Elliott Trudeau cannot compare to playing second fiddle to Donald Duck.

SUGAR AND SPICE

Let's hear from you

By BILL SMILEY



Received a letter recently from the Managing Editor, no less, of the Petrolia, (Ont.) Advertiser-Topic, one of the papers that runs my column.

Gee, I wish I were a Managing Editor, and dash off memos that would make people shake in their shoes. Once upon a time I was a Managing Editor. It meant that I was allowed to carry the bags of newspapers up to the post office on press day. But I never got to write any terse memos.

The letter reads:

"Smiley: I'm getting so weary of those columns on education and teen-agers. Talk about adults. I distrust teachers who talk about school and students. You're better as a non-expert. One more education column and I cancel.

Regards,
Chas. Whipp."

Now, who could resist answering such a belle lettre? I couldn't.

"My dear Mr. Whipp:

Thank you for your warm and courteous letter. It brightened up my whole day. But I think you have me confused with columnist Richard Needham of the Globe and Mail, who preaches rank anarchy day after day, exhorting students to drop out, see the world, forget about a formal education, live and love.

I'm as straight and square as they come, as my daughter (whoops, there's a teen-ager) will assure you. I deplore the use of drink, drugs and demonstrations by students. I urge them to drop in, not out, and find out what the mysteries of life are all about.

Now, let's have a look. You're weary of columns on education and teen-agers. Why? Were you once bitten (or bitten) by a teacher when you were a teen-ager?

Second, education takes about half your tax dollars. And within a couple of decades, adults will be outnumbered by adolescents. A couple of horrible thoughts, but surely worth a column occasionally.

Third, my columns about these topics bring more mail than any others. The letters are funny, poignant, sympathetic, tragic. One lady wrote telling me I'd helped her son. Another poured out her heart over the death of her sixteen year old.

Fourth I think a check would reveal that these topics are far from dominating the column. I'd get sick of them if they did. Why not let your readers decide? All your readers, not just a couple of cranks. You know, I do write about sports, the family, the church, politics, the seasons and anything else that is part of modern life.

Next, you say "Talk about adults." I do. But adults are merely teen-agers out of their teens. I've nothing against them. Some of my best friends are adults. But how would you like your sister to marry one?

Then you say, "I distrust teachers who talk about school and students." I don't distrust Managing Editors

who talk about newspapers or dentists who talk about dentures. Who would you trust to talk about school and students? Managing Editors, Plumbers? Doctors? Hair Dressers?

Again, "You're better as a non-expert." Dear Mr. W., that's exactly what I am, in the field of education, and any other field you can mention. And I think that's why so many other non-experts read the column. They're a little disillusioned with the glib solutions of the experts and identify with the amateur like me.

Finally, you threaten to cancel unless I comply. Others have tried to lean on me before: politicians, advertisers, preachers, the educational es-

tablishment, to name a few. But never before a Managing Editor.

Maybe I should be flattered. But I don't flatter, or flatten, that easily. Education, school, students, teen-agers. There, I've said all the dirty words. It's a free country. Cancel if you will. Never mind about my wife and brains.

And regards without rancour to you, dear Chas.

Bill Smiley"

Is Mr. Whipp right? I'm often wrong. Readers are invited to give their opinions to him, at the paper, Petrolia, Ont., or me at 303 Hugel Ave. Midland, Ont., or to their local editor. Let's hear it.



THIS WEEK & NEXT

U. S. guessing game

By RAY ARGYLE

A smooth transfer of power is underway in Canada this week following the Liberal leadership convention and the naming of a new Prime Minister. But for the United States, an agonizing seven months lies ahead before the new President is chosen, followed by another three months before he takes office.

For the next ten months the United States and the West will thus be led by a "lame duck" president who will be pursuing policies which the world knows could be reversed overnight when the new president is sworn in next January.

While President Johnson's withdrawal parallels President Truman's action in 1952 in stepping down amidst the Korean War, there is also a fantastic similarity with John Diefenbaker's years in office in Canada.

Mr. Diefenbaker was elected with the greatest parliamentary majority in Canada's history in 1957. Six years later he was out of office, having lost the massive support he had enjoyed by ousting the Liberals from 22 years of power.

Mr. Johnson was elected President in his own right by the greatest majority in American history in 1964, having taken office in one of the darkest hours of the Republic. Six years later, he too, would be out of office, unpopular and unmoored.

Although President Johnson's action hit like a bomb shell, his popularity had been dropping fast. The latest Gallup poles showed only 26 per cent of the people in agreement with his Vietnam policies, and only 36 per cent approving of his overall handling of the presidency.

Any President has the right to retire gracefully when his policies become unpopular. It is therefore somewhat surprising that political observers did not more widely anticipate the likelihood of LBJ stepping down.

Last October, I wrote in this column that "there was a serious possibility that LBJ could step aside at the end of his present term." I cited the trend of the polls, the deepening Vietnam quagmire, and concluded by not-

ing that President Johnson "could surprise the world by retiring to the sidelines in 1968."

Now that this has happened, what does it mean in terms of the Vietnam War and in the likely outcome of the Republican and Democratic races and the November election?

It must be presumed that President Johnson burdened with the weight of an unwinnable war in Vietnam, recognized that his continued presence in the White House both divided America and made a settlement in Vietnam impossible.

The United States has lost the war militarily, but now there may be a chance of a political victory, although somewhat tainted. Undoubtedly, the war has cost Mr. Johnson the presidency, however, the world can be grateful he had the courage and insight to realize this.

Now comes disclosure by Hanoi that it will come to the conference table to discuss peace in Vietnam. About the lone stumbling block to a compromise in Vietnam is the Americans' continuation of bombing between the 17th and 20th parallels. If the U.S. eliminates the bombing completely, peace will come.

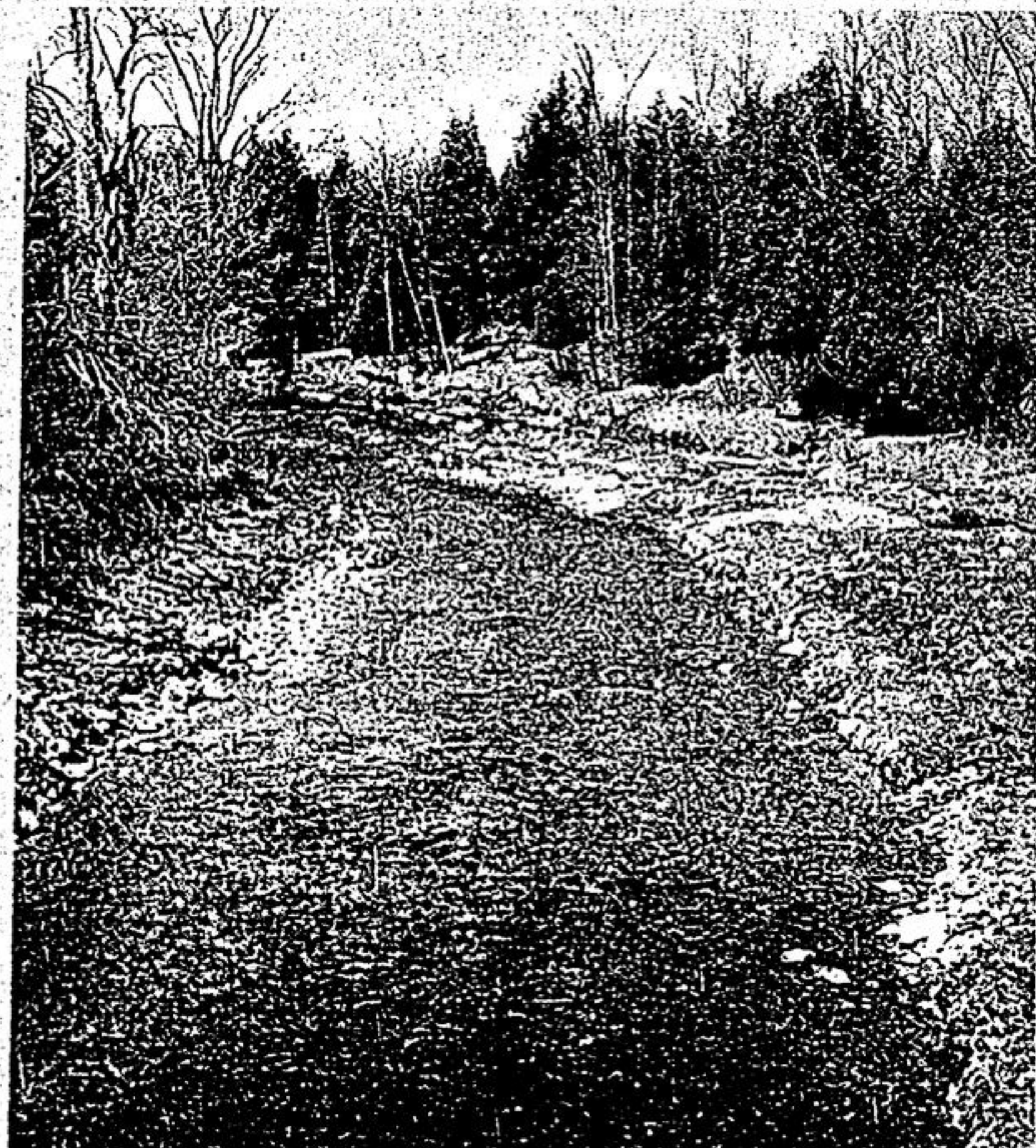
And it is likely President Johnson will agree to a cessation of the bombing, giving the new president a clean slate with which to begin his duties.

At home the Johnson withdrawal and the unimpressive victory in the Wisconsin primary by Senator Eugene McCarthy has been viewed in many quarters as a knock-out victory for Senator Kennedy.

But as the senator said when he heard the news, it is a long way to the convention, and even further to the election.

There is now room for a strong right-wing, "win-the-war" candidate in both parties. The Republican spoils will certainly no longer be left to Richard Nixon to feast on in solitude.

The Democrats will not leave the nomination to only Kennedy, McCarthy and Humphrey. The U.S. is in for a wide open race in both parties, and it would be foolhardy to try to predict the outcome so soon.



Duffin Creek flows free

With the ice now gone from the waters of Duffin's Creek, Pickering Township, the stream flows free toward Lake Ontario. This is a view looking north from conc. 5 at Whitevale.

—Staff Photo

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