

EDITORIALS

There's an interesting development afoot regarding assessments within the county and it augurs for a fast re-write of some stale old legislation.

Allowing a developer to buy the difference between residential and commercial assessments for a favorable taxation ratio never was a good idea in the days when each municipality was individually responsible for its own destiny.

Today, when the taxing authority for education encompasses the whole county, the idea is ridiculous.

If such legalized graft is allowed, there should be a clause stating that such money must be apportioned throughout the rest of the county which will have to contribute to the support of an unbalanced ratio.

CASE

The case in point here is a Bramalea investments firm's \$11 million deal with Chinguacousy to permit the building of 6,000 homes without providing also 40 percent of the total value in commercial development.

"It's mine! All mine!" says Chinguacousy, who cannot wait to sink the windfall into municipal development that has nothing whatever to do with education.

And when the time comes to put up several million dollars worth of schools to accommodate the children from the 6,000 homes, Chinguacousy will say "Give" to the county board, who will say "Give" to every local government in Peel, who will pass the word down the line to every resident in the county.

Mississauga ratepayers will give 65 percent of the cost of the schools in Chinguacousy since they pay that much of the county's assessment.

Projecting this situation to the point of utter ridicule, we might suggest that Mississauga make similar legal "deals" with Erin Mills, Meadowvale, McLaughlin Associates and the numerous other companies building here. Brampton might do the same.

Surely the municipalities can find a place for all that lovely lettuce, even if it's only to hire Bob Hope or Phyllis Diller to soft-sell the idea of higher assessments and higher mill rates to the thousands already over-taxed private residents throughout the county.

It might be fair to assume that this wouldn't have happened had there been a regional government. Or if it did happen, the money would go into everybody's kitty rather than to one solitary municipality.

BLESSING

The thing that is quite remarkable about the whole deal is that apparently it has the blessing of the Education minister, who had previously acquired considerable merit in the eyes of the people by starting the whole larger educational unit idea in the first place.

There's one law that says it's all right to take cash in lieu of a proper assessment balance. Like a lot of other idiotic laws, it is perfectly legal — but is it right in this case?

Let us hazard a guess that most readers will agree it isn't.

What it all amounts to is irresponsible behaviour on a municipal basis.

THE DEAL

The developers' deal with Chinguacousy is interesting. Included in the \$11 million cash is a clause to the effect that the developer will pay half the cost of construction of all necessary schools.

This sounds fair on the surface except that it leaves the remaining half of the cost, the staffing, maintenance and all costs projected into the future in the hands of the taxpayer.

The company pays half the cost then washes its hands of the deal.

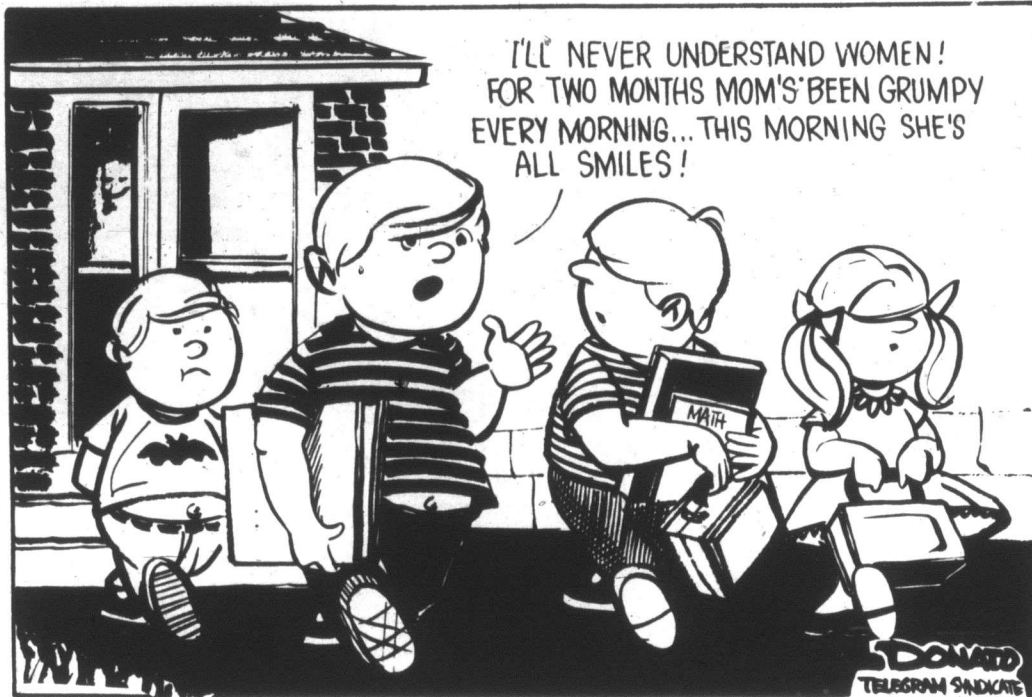
Town of Mississauga makes a different kind of a deal. To begin with, they stipulate 120 acres of commercial assessment for every 400 acres residential.

The developer has to make land for schools available at a reasonable cost. The town builds the schools and operates them. Should the developer over-step the ratio, there is a clause which provides that he pay the difference an unbalanced ratio might incur and keep paying it until it is corrected.

The taxpaying public is protected all the way down the line.

Since the formation of the county board, other municipal entities have entered the picture and since taxation has become standardized in the field of education, there will be other instances of municipalities jockeying for individual advantages.

Something needs to be done about that in a hurry and Mr. Davis should be one of the first to see this.



Don Hunt

A western viewpoint of French

The French Fact arrived in several areas of Canada this month.

The Official Languages Bill which passed through Parliament after a lot of emotional verbiage enables the government to establish bilingual districts anywhere in Canada where a minority of French or English speaking citizens total 10 percent or more of the area's population.

Prime Minister Trudeau has continually stressed that to preserve Canadian unity it was essential to make French Canadians feel equal to English Canadians in all parts of the country. To him, the best way to force French-speaking Canadians into the mainstream of Canadian life was through the language bill.

Of course, in many parts of Canada, French-speaking residents are not the main minority. There are more than a quarter million Italians in Toronto and at the present rate of immigration, there soon could be as many Italians in Montreal as English-speaking Canadians. In Western Canada, people of other European origin outnumber the French. No one would dare suggest that these "minorities" be permitted to live with their original languages. But to them, it is just as ridiculous for the Canadian government to spend millions instituting systems to provide French language when the French community is relatively small.

The Victoria Colonist, which prides itself on being "An Independent Paper, The Organ of No Clique or Party," outlines the feeling of many Canadians outside Quebec:

"If he (Prime Minister Trudeau) and his fellow

Quebecois honestly feel that French Canadians can benefit the rest of Canada through the broader dissemination of their language and culture, they might also be made to see the move as more of a two-way street.

"It could in fact, be effectively argued that Quebec stands to gain even more than the rest of Canada in such an exchange if it encourages rather than discouraged — as it now appears to be going — Anglo-Canadianism within its own borders.

"Certainly Quebec's record in a wide range of provincial activities — from its high percentage of business failure, (55 percent of all business failures in Canada in 1967) to its ineffective law-keeping system (highest rate of bankruptcies, armed robberies and car thefts in the country) indicates serious shortcomings in the French-speaking province — shortcomings which it could possibly overcome

with the assistance of Anglo-Canadian expertise. Yet as long as the Quebecois hold to their Gallic pride — which far transcends their pride in being Canadian — and continue to regard English-speaking Canadians with suspicion and disdain, no request for help is likely to be made.

This viewpoint is similar to that expressed by Toronto Telegram columnist Dennis Braithwaite, an admitted WASP. In Braithwaite's view, the whole matter of bilingualism is a fake. Far from being a bilingual program, it is unilingual.

"How does the present Government's language policy differ from that of, say, Mackenzie King? Hardly at all. It is still the old political game of symbol-mounting and paper concession-granting that the Liberals have always played. In return for continued adherence to the Grit Party, Quebec is being offered a phony language bill and a flashy propaganda and spending

program to help a handful of French Canadians in Toronto or Edmonton pursue the lost cause of preventing their children's assimilation into the mainstream of Canadian life.

"This parallel unilingual has another name: Political immorality. While cynically invoking national unity, it is causing the country to break up."

There are many who take the opposite view — efforts to inject French-Canadian culture and language into other provinces is bound to help.

But Quebec Zabor Minister Maurice Bellemere doesn't calm the fears of English Canadians outside his province when he said recently he felt "Anglo-Saxon activists" were responsible for terrorist bombings in Quebec. Unless, the minister has knowledge that hasn't been made public, his comments only help to fan distrust at a time when the languages bill is trying to preserve unity.

Letters To The Editor

Council criticisms

Sir:

It would seem that the efforts of Ron Bator and the young people involved with Summer Assistance to Youth deserve much more support than they are getting; particularly from the Mississauga Council.

SAY has been the means of providing employment for a great many young people who are willing and eager to work at jobs of all sorts, full-time and part-time, wherever they can be found.

In answer to some critics of the drop-ins at Lorne Park Centre, "Why don't they get out and work?" these teen-agers on the whole have been doing just that in the face of discouragement and criticism.

One would expect that council would do everything it could to support Ron Bator

and his staff, who are working long hours and will no doubt end up in the hole financially without some assistance.

It would seem to us parents that keeping the students busy and earning a little money is infinitely preferable to Mayor Speck's injunction to "go into the bushes and do their own thing."

I would also urge any persons who have benefited from the SAY program but have not paid their registration fee, to keep their side of the contract and help keep SAY afloat. Many of those registered as well as the SAY staff have put in a good deal of volunteer time to make SAY successful.

Don't let them down because we need them, again next year.

R.E. Green