

# Comment

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## Housing pessimism justified

Prophecying doom and gloom is often far too easy for those who enjoy cocktail party predictions but the hard facts of housing in this province and city are enough to make a soothsayer out of the most determined optimist.

There are 2,000 completed but empty housing units in Mississauga, the slow selling victims of outrageously high prices, interest rates and sometimes just plain lousy design and location. After all, who would buy a \$60,000 apartment condominium on Dundas Highway when they can still find a small detached home with a backyard for the same amount?

Developers are running scared. New home construction dropped by 44 percent in Mississauga last year and so far

in 1975, housing starts are off by almost 90 percent over the same period in 1974.

It has been fashionable over the past few months to blame the municipalities for holding up development. But the figures speak for themselves — 16,000 housing units have been approved for development in this city since 1970 and have still not been built. Combine this with the 31,000 units under development application and Mississauga will soon have a housing potential of 47,000 new homes.

The blame lies in a complex web of rising expectations on the part of home buyers, rampant land speculation, profiteering by developers, higher costs of labour and materials and too-rapid growth rates.

## Court delays don't aid justice

Rock singer Ronnie Hawkins was charged with various drug offences on April 4, 1974. Last Friday, well over a year since the raid which resulted in these charges, Hawkins appeared in court and waived his right to a preliminary hearing, which means that he will proceed to trial in a few more months.

In other words, the time elapsed from date of arrest to date of trial in the Hawkins' case will be at least a year and a half, and more probably about two years. This kind of delay is ridiculous.

A court system which

routinely takes a year or more to bring accused persons to trial is obviously inefficient and operating against the best interests of society. The delay in many cases is caused by the accused himself through his defense lawyer, since it is rarely in his interest to have his case go on quickly.

These delays are caused to some degree by a shortage of manpower in our courts; however, they could be obviated significantly by judges exercising firmness in scheduling trial dates, and insisting that trials go on as scheduled.



## 'Let's learn from tragic death'



Physical education teacher says we should learn from the tragic death of Paul Chun. Writer says similar accidents could take place in other areas through overcrowding of classes.

I am writing this letter because I was upset by the death of Paul Chun and sympathize with his family and friends. This unfortunate accident has made me aware of how easily a similar incident could occur in any of our classes.

As a physical educator I have always been concerned about our large crowded classes but since Paul's death I've been thinking of the many times we've been lucky that an accident didn't happen when we've used faulty equipment, left the gym unsupervised to help a sick student in the changing room, covered two classes instead of one because we couldn't get a supply teacher, or driven students to competitions to save transportation fees. We know these situations are wrong and yet it sometimes seems necessary to do less than the ideal.

In this specific case hindsight is a wonderful thing! Looking back on the incident we all realize it would have been better if:

A parent permission form had been issued and returned;  
A minimum swim requirement had been demonstrated by each participant;

Life jackets had been present in each canoe.  
The newspaper reports seem to indicate that if these steps had been followed the drowning would not have occurred. Perhaps! But, unfortunately it is possible to have parental permission, to have a student pass a swim test and to have a life jacket in his canoe and yet he could panic in the cold water and drown before ever reaching the life jacket.

In the past physical education classes were confined to the local school grounds. Physical education departments are now attempting to provide programs with enough variety to appeal to all students. In doing so we hope that each individual will be able to select activities, participate in them at school and enjoy them enough to participate in them in their adult years, thereby maintaining their physical fitness.

Since it is unlikely that ten to 12 adults would get together to play basketball or volleyball, new individual activities have been added to the curriculum. Some schools offer squash, hiking and camping, skiing, cross-country skiing, sailing, yoga, judo, canoeing, badminton, tennis, golf, swimming, archery, scuba diving, curling, skating, bowling and cycling.

Obviously to organize and offer these courses the teachers must work longer and harder since many of these courses are taught before and after school and even on the weekends. It also means added costs to the school and the students participating.

However, the time and money spent is worth it if each individual finds an activity he enjoys well enough to continue through adulthood. I feel we are fortunate to have a board of education which allows us to offer these programs and admire those teachers who give us so much of their time to teach them.

Everyone wishes the accident never happened. Let's hope it will be used as a positive learning experience to prevent further accidents, rather than a negative isolated experience to be forgotten when the case is closed. It could have happened in any of our classes.

Let's work for smaller and safer classes in future. John Tutty has been a well respected teacher in Peel for ten years. Let's not judge him by the newspaper writings about this one incident.

NAME WITHHELD BY REQUEST



Bud Gregory



Ron Searle

## 'Council trio have their own minds'

Regarding James Bailey's 'Potshots' (The Times, May 7):

Thank goodness we have councillors like Searle-Gregory-Kennedy. They are independent and not a coalition as stated. These gentlemen have the strong feelings of the duty that their constituents trusted them with. They each have and exercise their own minds, fairly, for the benefit of the people of Mississauga and not for personal gain.

Maybe Mayor Dobkin should try the other side of the bed. It must be an awful thing for intelligent men who for years have worked hard to form a city and have improved our living conditions and have given more than they have taken, such as the above councillors and our beloved Robert Speck.

James, there is a shortage of police in Mississauga — about 37. Why don't you take a pot shot at the officer on duty and ask him? He will tell you he has to rush to another assignment.

I agree on head nurses, but why are you any better than the service men at gas stations, some of whom don't have good warm clothing or waterproof clothes. You are probably the type who would ask them or tell them to wash your windshield in the pouring rain or snow storm. They are trying to make a living, do you think they enjoy it?

Parents think their children are cute and allow them to do what they want. What surprised me is you missed one of the worst possible acts, how in the world did you ever find a place to lie down in a park? Did you look first because I was not aware there was that much room left that the dogs had not covered. They cock their leg on flowers, trees and even our Port Credit cenotaph.

Caye Killaby was not mentioned in your pot shots. I hope you don't, as she is a lady not to be fooled with and knows her job.

JESSIE HAWLEY  
MISSISSAUGA

## Oppose increase, Hydro urged

The following letter to Hydro Mississauga chairman A. E. Bradley has been filed with The Times for publication.

A recent announcement in the press indicates that Ontario Hydro has advised the Minister of Energy of its intention to raise bulk power rates by about 30 percent in 1975. A formal application to this effect will be filed with the Ontario Energy Board in the near future.

Undoubtedly Hydro Mississauga will be required to increase its retail power rates by an equivalent amount hence we view this announcement with grave concern.

We trust that your commission, as elected representatives of the electric power users of Mississauga, will intervene in and vigorously oppose this proposed rate increase. In doing so there are

several salient points to which we would draw your attention:

- A large number of homes and housing units in Mississauga are electrically heated and are basically incapable of utilizing alternate fuels for heating purposes. The bulk of these homes were constructed under a promotional program sponsored by Ontario Hydro and endorsed by Hydro Mississauga.
- The rates envisaged by Ontario Hydro are composed to a large extent of charges for the enormous capital investment for new thermal and nuclear generating plants. These plants are required for future customers. They are not required to serve present customers including those I have mentioned above.
- Under these circumstances it might be appropriate to

place some of the onus for increased costs upon new customers of your utility rather than on present customers.

We would also draw your attention to a number of other matters which might receive your consideration at this time.

• The present system of decreasing block rates for electricity charged by the utility encourages consumption. It might be preferable to consider introducing a different type of rate structure which would provide an initial low cost block of power to each customer but which would penalize excessive use by increased charges for all energy used in excess of the basic block.

• We are unilaterally opposed to the bulk power metering of apartment buildings and town

houses. This encourages excess consumption and waste.

• We question the standards of service reliability used by your utility. We consider that a lesser standard of service reliability could produce power at lower cost. Those customers requiring a high standard of services should be required to install supplementary equipment at their own expense to ensure this, rather than providing a virtually interruption free supply to all customers.

I would appreciate it if this letter could be tabled for discussion by your commission and that we be advised of the action you propose to take in the light of the large increase in electric power rates which we are facing.

M. J. PROSSER, P. ENG.  
VICE CHAIRMAN  
Mississauga  
Concerned Citizens