

Islanders awaiting eviction

# Alderman calls council's decision "senseless"



By BONNIE SANDISON

Over five hundred citizens from Metropolitan Toronto and surrounding areas jammed the St. Lawrence Centre Town Hall, March 20, to express concern for the 254 families to be evicted from the Toronto Islands.

Metro Council voted December 2 to evict Island residents by Aug. 31, 1974. The vote was 20 for eviction, 12 against. William Archer, Ward 6 alderman (Toronto Islands ward) and Karl Mallette, Scarborough controller, who support the eviction, were members of the panel.

Michael D'Arcy Goldrick, Ward 3 alderman and York political science professor said, "to sacrifice 254 houses to gain 24 acres of parkland simply doesn't make sense. It is not rational."

Goldrick added he was sure that if Metro was to "make Karl Mallette admiral of the ferry fleet he would turn around and change his decision just like he did on the expressway issue."

Bill Metcalfe, a representative of the Island Residents Association, said, "Yes, we are bitter about the decision to destroy our homes. They are worth a lot to us, and we will receive no compensation for them but we knew that. We are bitter because the decision is senseless and unnecessary."

The self-supporting island community is the home of 700 people from many different socio-economic levels, including professionals and those on welfare. They live on 24 acres of land, with 612 acres of parkland reserved for public use.

Former Toronto alderman, David Rotenberg spoke in favour of saving the Island community. "I agree with Karl Mallette. The island is not unique; therefore, Karl, treat them ordinary. Don't give the islanders this special treatment. These people own their own homes, just leave them alone."

Barbara Greene, North York controller, said "This island issue has become symbolic for peo-

ple all over Metro. People are happy with the community so let's keep it. Residents in North York and Scarborough are all sympathetic, and want to see the Islands as a successful community."

One of the most serious concerns of the Island residents is finding homes on the mainland, in the event Metro will not change its decision.

Energy Minister Donald Macdonald, Member of Parliament for Rosedale, sent a letter to the meeting which stated, "I hope the decision will be reversed. The Ontario Housing Board is responsible for finding housing for those removed from the islands, and there is much to be done to obtain more and better housing. Until there is no housing shortage do not remove the houses."

Many Metro residents who attended the meeting spoke in favour of saving the community.

Clifford Brown travelled 92 miles to express support for the Islanders. To de-populate the Islands is dehumanizing, not only for Toronto but the whole of Ontario. The government has developed so man must dance to the bureaucratic needs of an inhuman system," said Brown.

Samuel Ross of Weston said, "It's the height of sheer barbarism to force these people out of their homes and into some chicken-coop in the sky."

Metcalfe said, "Archer lied. He lied to the people who work in his ward and I think that is despicable." Archer said he had given the Island issue a lot of thought and would give it a lot more thought.

As more people expressed the view that Metro council ought to reverse its decision, Archer said that because of the consideration of the housing shortage, he might reconsider his decision, as nothing is irreversible.

## Summer dole soon available

CUP — Many students will be eligible to collect up to \$107 a week in unemployment insurance after classes finish next month. To qualify, a student need only have worked eight insurable weeks in the year prior to the submission of the application. These weeks could be a student's previous summer job or a sufficient amount of part-time work during the year.

Unemployment Insurance Commission (UIC) public relations officer Bill Barker warned interested students that "there's more to collecting unemployment insurance than submitting

your name to UIC. Students must be actively looking for work while collecting benefits."

"It doesn't matter if you are a university student, carpenter or painter," Barker added, "students are not a special breed."

Barker explained that as long as requests were "reasonable" students would be entitled to full benefits. A student could receive benefits during exams as long as he himself disqualified for the actual day of the exam. Students with daytime classes or overly specific job requirements would be ineligible, he said.

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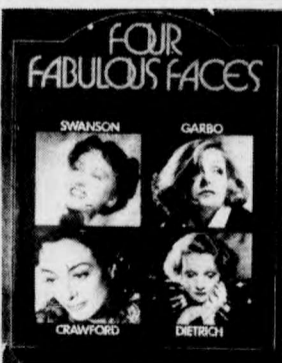
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