

Mississauga The Times

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Big government is here

Without the pomp and pageantry of a subdivision grand opening, Mississauga has evolved from a town into a city in this New Year.

Like it or not, big government is upon us. It calls for a change in our small-town mentality to recognize that we must no longer think of ourselves mostly in terms of neighbourhoods and voting wards.

The City of Mississauga is with us and our neighbourhoods depend perhaps even more today upon the mechanism of centralized municipal government.

It isn't much good to watch out only for your own backyard; the

whole city — Canada's seventh largest — is your backyard. Government is slipping even farther away from the individual and that means the individual must inform himself in greater detail about the issues that affect his city.

We can also probably look forward to higher taxes as the financial burden of forming regional government falls on our pocketbooks. Regional government is a huge bureaucracy and will take constant watching by citizens.

But vigilance is the price of citizenship.

Festive mood was blighted

Christmas lights sales were off in some stores by as much as 50 per cent this year — and it seems so was the Christmas spirit.

It was not on the part of merchants (this holiday season was the most profitable yet) that spirit sagged but on the part of we, the shoppers. Tension and irritability in line-ups seemed worse than ever and that annual "Merry Christmas" greeting seemed as rare as those elaborate light displays.

Some have blamed their down feeling on the absence of mile long

strings of lights that once bedecked entire subdivisions across North America. Others blame the sad condition of world politics and the energy crisis.

It has been said many times before but perhaps the spirit of the season might return if a small degree of the commercialism were taken out.

If Christmas is indeed symbolic of the reuniting of emotional bonds with relatives and friends it is sad that little reuniting can take place with cramped parking lots, hour-long line-ups and flustered salespeople.

Sheridan negating credo

The seeming fate of a Sheridan College journalism student (he says he was fired from a part time college job — the college personnel manager says he wasn't) would appear to be a case of the college negating its own philosophy.

The college's case is suspect in that Sheridan Sun reporter Chris Morton says he was fired the day a story he had written describing a management-non academic

worker union clash appeared. Community colleges were founded to provide practical courses to graduate students into the work force. Morton was following the philosophy in reporting a situation within the college newspaper's jurisdiction. It would seem that he has been penalized for reporting a reasonably balanced account of a labour disagreement — something he is being trained to do at the college.

Virtue can hurt you



By
Frank Touby

If you believe in New Year's resolutions, it's easy to write a column this time of year.

I believe in columns that are easy to write, but I don't believe in New Year's resolutions.

From millions of fuzzy New Year's brains spring forth billions of virtuous resolves, most starting with, "I resolve to cut down on my drinking in the new year."

They blow that the first day of the new year and it sets up a pattern for the other 364 days.

Only masochists make New Year's resolutions, because only a masochist can fully appreciate that feeling of low worth which comes from watching his resolutions crumble in the early hours of 1973.

You might as well say, "I resolve to start this new year with a well-founded inferiority complex."

I think the emphasis is all wrong. We set up too many tests of our virtue, most of which we flunk.

Virtue has become so important, you'd think it would be easier to achieve. Society won't let anyone starve to death, so why shouldn't it change its rules so we can all partake of virtue?

Why should so many of us have to stumble around with crippled egos because virtue is only for the few? It's time for a revolution of virtue, not resolutions.

All it takes is a bit of redefinition. First we have to forget about Original Sin. It's a degrading and stupid concept anyway. It gets everyone off to a bad start.

Then we have to come up with a looser

form of virtue — one which encompasses all but the intentionally unvirtuous.

Wouldn't you feel a lot better about yourself if you knew you were virtuous without even trying? How saintly.

In fact it should be considered a virtue to exist. Think of heads held high in soup lines instead of slumping shamefully with chin on chest. Existence should definitely be a virtue.

So should procrastination. That's quite often a virtue anyhow, but the present rules don't let you count it. I can think of dozens of things just this month that I didn't do, which it turns out I shouldn't have done. Still, there's that silly, nagging tug at my conscience that blames me for being too lazy to have done the things I shouldn't have done.

Being fat should be virtuous. And so should being thin. Either way, at various times of the year, I can't miss.

Buying the wrong Christmas present for your wife should be a virtue. I'd have been canonized years ago.

Tardiness might be a major virtue under the new rules. It all depends on who's waiting.

And absence can often be outright angelic.

There are so many sides to the traditional concept of virtue and vice that we might as well call it all virtue.

I'm not sure what we'd consider vice. Probably whatever's left over.

Intentionally hurting someone would be a vice. So would irresponsibly hurting someone.

Really, that's what vice should be all about anyway.

It's entirely too complicated and messy to have a long list of arbitrarily defined vices. Most of the things called vice nowadays actually fall in the category of Nobody's Business But Mine.

It's a good category and if we took it as seriously as we should, we wouldn't have police vice squads wasting money sniffing around apartment hallways, raiding stag parties and breaking up bingo games. So who needs vice squads?

Mind your own business and have a Happy New Year.

'I did not call Nixon dictator'

I wish to correct several errors which appeared in a Dec. 19 report which if left uncorrected would only confuse readers and represent me as a muddlehead.

The Times Dec. 19 edition contained an article purporting to represent the substance of a talk I gave at the Unitarian Congregation entitled "democracy and capitalist crisis." The article, written by John Stewart contained three serious errors so contradictory as to render what I did say nonsensical.

Firstly, it is nonsense to say that the ruling ideology shaped voters so that they did not identify with Nixon. On the contrary, what I suggested, and it was crucial to my point, was the opposite.

The ruling ideology so shaped character structure and opinion that many voters did identify with Nixon, and thus voted for him, even though his interests and their's conflicted considerably.

This is the point behind Freud's analysis of societies with single leaders — that a symmetry exists in the character structures of leaders and led, and as behaviour is rooted in character structure, so for many people the leader can do no wrong.

Secondly, it is nonsense to say that in times of economic crisis violent repression by the state is directed against imperialism and inflation. What seems not so nonsensical, and what I suggested, was that a state, acting in the interests of a ruling class which feels threatened, may employ violent repression in an effort to contain the unrest of other classes which suffer as a result of imperialist and inflationary policies (i.e. student and labour movements).

This is what Marx meant when he pointed out that a ruling class will always resort to violence to defend its class privilege even though social progress calls for the abolition of that ruling class.

Finally, I did not say that a "U.S. dictatorship exists" as your headline alarmingly attributed to me. I applied the methods of social analysis as suggested by Marx and Freud to contemporary America, and put forth, as a hypothesis, that if certain conditions are fulfilled (and these required that facts concerning unconstitutional Presidential involvement in Watergate be established) then according to Marx and Freud, it may be concluded that a presidential dictatorship has been established.

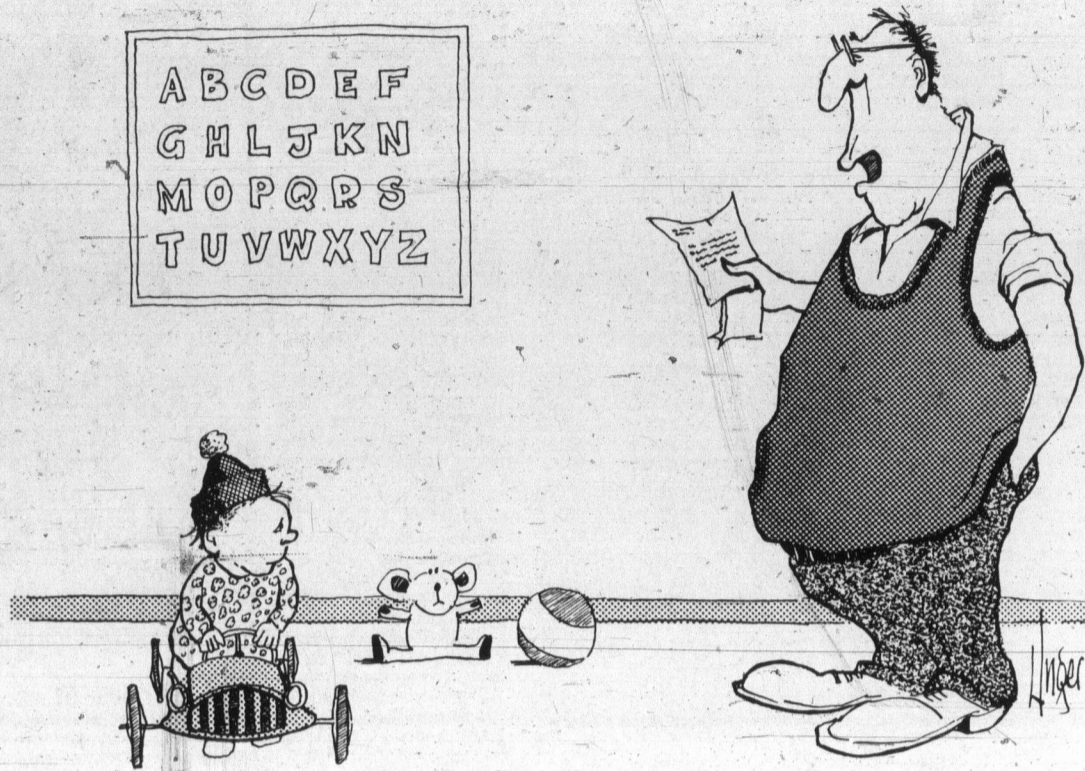
Although many of the symptoms suggest this possibility, and these I discussed, I am not clear on all the facts concerning Watergate, nor am I convinced of the total adequacy of the Marxian or Freudian analyses though starting points they may be.

Accordingly, I left many important questions unanswered which apparently troubled many people. At this point and until more is known, it would have been unscientific and irresponsible had I concluded as categorically as the article, here criticized, suggested.

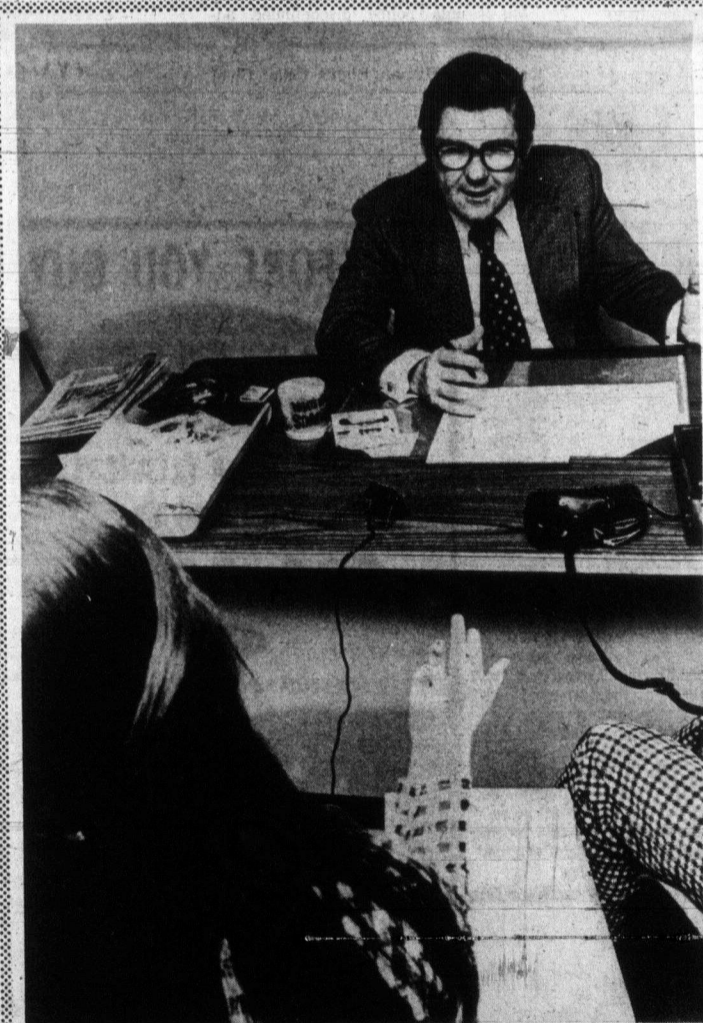
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You're getting your knocks early Ralphy.... your new cars being re-called!



Reader says Don Blenkarn should have spent more time seeking LIP grants for Mississauga than preparing for the next election and working on public relations.

'Negative attitudes hurt LIP grants'

Regarding We Get Short End of LIP Stick (The Times, Dec. 12) I was sorry to see your printing of the charges against the allocation of these grants.

It seems to me that the allocation to our riding is more a reflection of the inability and negative attitude of our MP Don Blenkarn and the LIP advisory group chairman Bud Gregory.

Perhaps if Don paid more attention to productive work for this riding and less to public relations and future campaign activities he would get more grants.

Instead of collecting half vast mailing lists he should go out and solicit more good ideas from good people.

Perhaps, too, if Bud wasn't openly negative toward LIP grants (even in the

article) he would attract more excellent proposals. The fact that he has only two excellent proposals that were turned down indicates even if all such ones had been approved he would not put our area much over \$100,000 (compared with the \$529,000 earned by such an able and active man as Donald MacDonald in Rosedale.)

I know Don and Bud well and, aside from partisan politics, consider both to be my friends. They are just the right men in the wrong jobs.

If either of them ever runs, on a non-partisan basis for an elected office (such as the Hydro Commission) they can be sure of my active support.

E. Bruce Peters
Mississauga

'No one wants to make license stickers'

Regarding Ontario Gives Jobs to U.S. (Letters The Times, Dec. 19)

It is apparent when reading this letter that the writer is not in business or in the personnel department of a company.

I am sure that if he were he would know that there are in Mississauga alone more than 1,000 jobs available (the count could be higher — I'm not sure).

For instance I applied for a clerk typist's job and it was five months before the position was filled. Where then would this company find employees for the production of these stickers for license plates.

As my father used to say — there will always be unemployment because there are people who will never work as long as there is a free hand out.

In a country that is as prosperous as Canada, and with all the industry here in Mississauga alone, the unemployment rate should be only about one per cent.

Lorraine Teeple
Mississauga

Letters to the Editor

The space on this page is reserved for the readers of The Mississauga Times. We invite comment on any issue and are particularly interested in any letter which takes a point of view in conflict with our own as expressed in the editorials. All letters must be signed although, if circumstances require, we will allow a pseudonym to be used. The Editor.