

Comment

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Ability no asset at CVCA

The criteria for representing Mississauga council on the Credit Valley Conservation Authority apparently has nothing to do with how good a job one does.

That's what Mississauga council said in effect Monday in removing Councillor Hazel McCallion from the authority. For the last two years Mrs. McCallion has been an extremely capable member of the CVCA who has spearheaded attempts to finally get the city's Waterfront Plan on the road.

But she made several errors. She asked questions about policy, she questioned expenditures, she tried to establish clear-cut priorities and she generally upset the balance of an organization which had been used to a low-key folksy approach to its crucial work.

She also made an enemy of chairman Grant Clarkson and she paid the price Monday when Clarkson's political allies from his former days at Mississauga council combined with Councillor David

Culham, who is to replace Mrs. McCallion, to oust her.

The move was clearly prearranged and coldly calculated. There was virtually no debate — just a number of smirks when the vote was over.

Council gave Mrs. McCallion the courtesy to pass several motions she had sponsored before she left for a funeral but nobody bothered to tell her that as soon as she left a motion to replace her on the CVCA was to be put.

The financial and staff problems at the authority are well documented. Removing someone who tried to face those problems squarely won't make them go away.

The Streetsville councillor's removal could be sloughed off as just "politics" if she had not done such a truly remarkable job as a representative. For councillors Chic Murray, Harold Kennedy, Caye Killaby, Ron Searle and David Culham that apparently doesn't make any difference.

Mr. Bumble strikes again

Mr. Bumble's insightful comment that "the law is an ass" will be quoted with increasing frequency in the next few weeks as the full ramifications of Ontario's new seat belt legislation become apparent.

As usual, our legislators have led with their chips in a misbegotten attempt to improve public safety. The premise behind their action is, of course, well-founded. There is little doubt that seat belts do save lives and reduce injuries. Any motorist who declines to spend the few seconds it takes to buckle up is a fool.

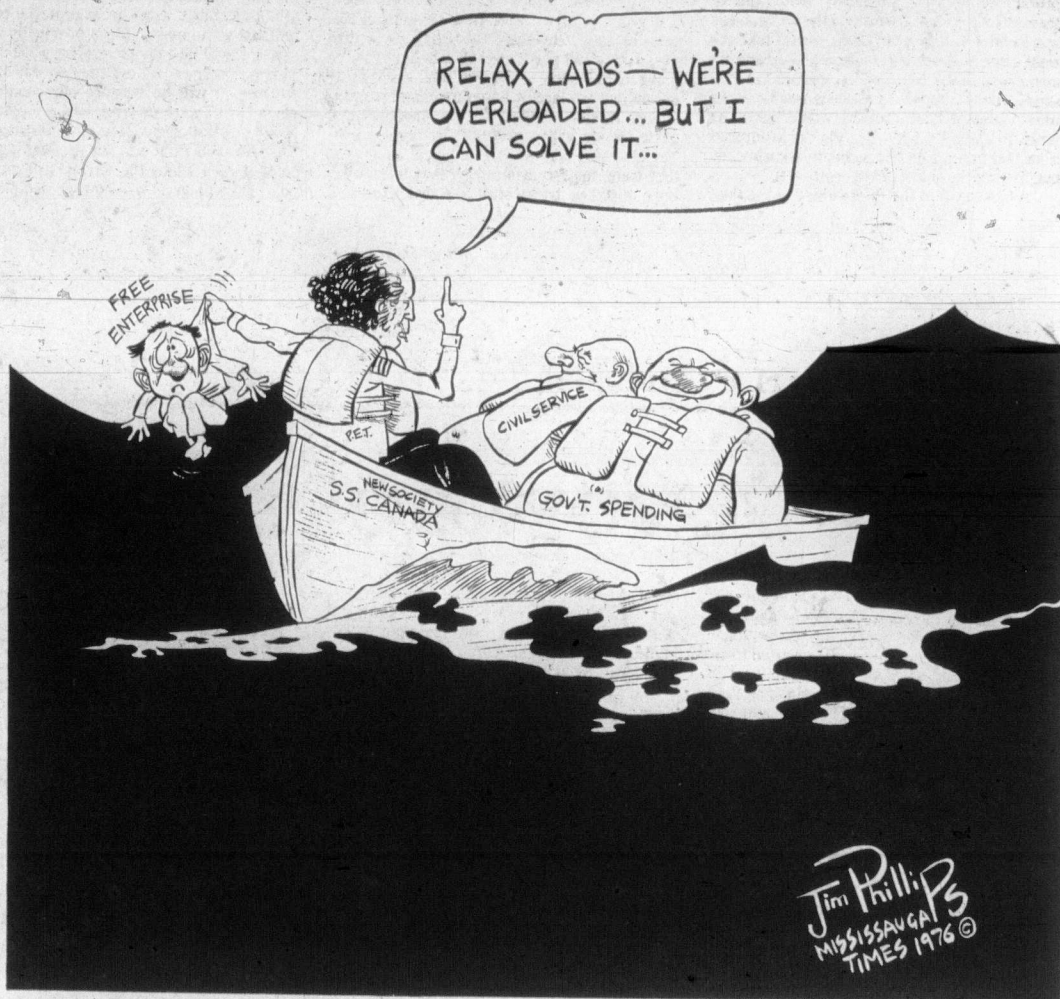
Opponents of the legislation argue that it is yet another restriction on personal freedom and the decision should be left up to the individual. This argument has some validity. It should, however, be remembered that the precedent for the

government legislating personal safety has long been established in this province. No one nowadays seriously questions the Ontario law requiring motorcyclists to wear safety helmets, although, again, the issue is entirely one of personal safety.

The real difficulty in compulsory seat belt legislation is that it is unenforceable, and unenforceable laws bring our entire system of justice into disrepute.

It would not require the ability of a Robinette for a lawyer to convince a judge that there was a reasonable doubt about the guilt of his client if a police officer testified that a motorist appeared to be driving with his belt undone but the belt was fastened by the time the car was stopped.

Our courts have enough problems.



Dual fare plan 'discrimination'

The recent proposal by Mississauga Transit and approval by city council of a dual fare with a 66 percent increase for commuters demonstrates an indifference to our current concerns, lack of imagination and is unjustified discrimination against rush hour travellers. Public transportation is meant to serve the public by providing an alternate, effective means of mobility. At this particular point in time this service should be acutely aware of its responsibility in diminishing the regular use of private cars driven by the commuter in the interest of conserving energy. Most suburban transit systems have demonstrated their consideration by designing special commuter fares — monthly or quarterly passes — which even provide a modest economy factor.

While I can appreciate that a fare increase may be due, why 66 percent and why should the commuter bear the brunt of this rise? Also your definition of rush hours — four hours at either end of the day — far exceeds the established concept which usually spans two hours in the morning and evening and could conceivably be avoided by a slight flexibility in scheduling.

I can also imagine the hassle. I go to work at 7 a.m. so I scramble for a 50 cent ticket. If I happen to come home early one day, I scramble for a 25 cent ticket. Suppose I am on the Islington Station plat-



Reader complains in accompanying letter that Mississauga Transit's dual fare system demonstrates an indifference to current concerns, lacks imagination and is unjustified discrimination against rush hour commuters.

form to catch the 2:50 bus which doesn't arrive until 3 p.m. Is that then a 25 cent or 50 cent fare? What determines whether a particular trip costs 50 cents or 25 cents? The time of departure from the point of origin of each bus or the time the passenger boards the bus? Anybody boarding the bus at 9:15 a.m. will pay 25 cents while everybody else on the same bus will have paid 50 cents and we will all arrive at the subway at the same time. Don't

we have enough headaches? Surely Mississauga Transit can come up with a more rational, equitable solution. Having travelled with you for six months, I realize the number of regular patrons, many of whom would probably be prepared to buy a monthly ticket for say \$15 (37.5 cents per trip Monday to Friday) or pay 40 cents per single fare.

A uniform fare structure is simple to administer, democratic,

and in keeping with the TTC fare policy. I would urge you to cut out the 10 cent treats, show the government the gasoline conserved by the commuters you have regularly served over the years, and by exercising a measure of good judgment at this particular point in time, prove to the public that you share our concern regarding inflation and the conservation of our resources.

G. N. EGE
 MISSISSAUGA

Hughes' claim 'unrealistic'

Tom Hughes, executive vice-president of the Ontario Humane Society, in a letter Dec. 23, made statements with which I must disagree. His claim that I have no first-hand experience in any form of animal welfare is unrealistic. Having served as vice-president of the Canadian Council of Animal Welfare and as co-founder and president of the Peoples Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), with thousands of hours spent in voluntary work, hardly adds up to inexperience.

I must assume Hughes refers to the fact that I do not receive pay for my animal work, as he does, because PAWS is a totally voluntary organization.

Our position on operating the impound and kill system is stated on page three of our guidelines for program planning: "We must never become operators of animal pounds for all our energy and resources must be directed into humane achievement."

Our position is further stated on page five (10-a): "We must never allow the need for steady jobs or careers to create a vested interest which could prevent effective program planning."

Any pet birth control program that would reduce the number of surplus animals would also reduce the job potential. Therefore any paid employee who supports pet birth control must do so with some risk to his own job. As a volunteer organization we avoid this conflict of interest.

Secondly, Hughes stated that the Ontario Humane Society (OHS) operates a public spay-neuter clinic in Scarborough, implying that it is structured for public service like those operated by the City of Los Angeles, to which again I must disagree. According to its newsletter of Feb. 24, 1975, the OHS spay program is basically for lower income people, without defining the level of income below which one may qualify. This way almost anyone can be refused.

The letter referred to the 1,933 animals spayed or neutered which to the public may appear impressive, yet in reality it only represents approximately 65 percent of the services of one veterinarian for a year work-

ing with an assistant which in a borough the size of Scarborough is not a pet-overpopulation control program.

So instead of having a low cost municipally-operated spay-neuter clinic in Scarborough we have a privately-operated hospital which performs limited spaying and neutering for disadvantaged people. In other words a people's welfare program not an animal welfare program which would make pet over-

population control its prime reason for existence.

Finally, we oppose any further legislation which would impose needless hardship on pets and pet owners. Harsh and restrictive pet bylaws have proved both ineffective and unenforceable. What we do need however is public information.

The public which pays the bill for animal control knows very little about the

operation. Killing is called euthanasia and the impound and kill system is referred to as sheltering. We must take the public into our confidence, give them statistics and open the incinerators to their view. In short, we trust the public and we believe if we tell them the whole truth they will become protectors of less-fortunate animals.

D. B. MacDonald, President, People Animal Welfare Society.

SOTAS wonders if CVCA can maintain credibility

The Save Our Trees And Streams Society (SOTAS) has always maintained a strong interest in the Credit River Valley system and feels impelled to publicly express concern for the future of the watershed. Over the past few months, the Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVCA) has lost professional staff in the area of land use planning, hydraulics and environmental concerns. In the past year we liked what the authority staff was saying. Now, we have a feeling the authority has reverted to its position of three or five years ago.

SOTAS has observed that most people do rely heavily on the authority for direction in the management of the Credit Valley system. Most CVCA recommendations to the city go unchallenged. We question now, however, whether the authority can maintain its integrity and credibility with

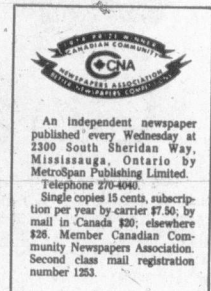
such a low level of professional staff.

Both the city and region maintain a high level of capability in planning and engineering. While we do not deplore this, we are concerned lest parochial interests may endanger the watershed as a whole. Can the authority develop future policies that can guide other high-powered agencies?

SOTAS feels that at this low point in the authority management, an overall review of staffing and program would be timely. The basic inventory and report for the watershed was done in 1956. Most data must now be

out of date. After 20 years the flood control lines for some tributaries have still not been adequately located and rim line controls on even the Credit River itself are not adequate. Such controls are absolutely basic to the CVCA program.

SOTAS is also seriously concerned at the apparent lack of any overall planning in the watershed with respect to storm water runoff. Streams in the watershed are still being engineered to carry off water in excess of their natural ability with seemingly little thought being given to the eventual effects downstream. Quite apart from the way



Cawthra-Elliott estate government duplicity?

There are so many conflicting reports about the Cawthra-Elliott estate that I would like to read in the press an honest appraisal of the situation.

The City of Mississauga is reputedly authorizing purchase of the property at a cost of \$2.6 million without any assistance from the provincial government. I have a very vivid recollection of a statement by Premier Bill Davis at one of our local meetings (before the last provincial election) — actually when Doug Kennedy was nominated as a candidate.

Davis stated his government was in favor of retaining this estate as an historical site and was against it being used as another development area.

So why is the provincial government leaving it to Mississauga to supply the funds for purchase of this site?

I am becoming very disillusioned with our Conservative government and would like to quote another example of the duplicity of its actions.

Some time ago the public stated its opposition to the proposed mandatory laws governing seat belts. The Ontario government decided to waive enforcement of a new law and make it compulsory for everyone to use seat belts, and now, after we have become accustomed to the freedom of choice, we are being forced to accept this dictatorial infringement on our

rights as citizens of a supposedly free country.

I say use seat belts if you wish but don't make me do something against my better judgment.

It is still a matter of concern that seat belts should be used only when the driver and passengers feel the need to buckle up but it should be left to one's own feelings of comfort and safety instead of a stupid law making it compulsory to anchor oneself into a car, especially after having driven for a long number of years unencumbered by such restrictions. Please cancel this law now because it won't work.

(MRS.) JANE ENGLAND
 MISSISSAUGA

Letters to the Editor

The Mississauga Times invites its readers to submit Letters to the Editor. Letters will be published as they are received. We ask letter writers to keep in mind the shorter their letter the higher the readership it is likely to receive.