



# Bylaw 135-78: It's just a smoke screen

## Anti-smoking law goes unheeded in our stores

By TOM MALONEY  
Times staff writer

Since last September Mississauga's smokers have been under fire to butt out in public.

No smoking signs that warn offenders of a \$1,000 fine are posted in every store in the city.

Merchants can also be fined if they don't post warnings.

But we always suspected that the signs could be written in hieroglyphics and have the same effect. We were sure no one paid much attention to the signs.

To prove it, I was assigned by The Times to tour local plazas testing the bylaw. I was to be as obnoxious as possible by smoking a cigar instead of a cigarette and generally offending as many people as possible.

The Times promised to pay any fines I might incur.

Puffing on a cigar (a painful experience since I don't smoke) I toured Sheridan Mall and Square One, which is ironically situated beside the Bylaw Bastille of Mississauga, City Hall.

In two hours I left a trail of smoke in 18 stores and only twice was my smoking questioned. In fact, salespeople offered me more help with my smoking than hindrance. Two even offered me a light.

### 2 offered lights

At the Jack Fraser outlet at Square One I tried on a golf shirt in a change room equipped with an ash tray. My Old Port cigar went out, so I asked the courteous cashier for a light. She obliged, even though she was standing only inches away from the ominous no smoking sign.

The shirt didn't fit. At Tip Top Tailors a saleswoman assembled an outfit for me while I breathed smoke all over a rack of shirts. Just before I left a salesman, standing beside a pillar with you-know-what on it, asked me if he could help me further.

I didn't have the heart to ask him for an ash tray.

I browsed through Elk's, Woolco, Tie City and Marks And Spencer, do-

ing my best to attract attention to the cigar stuck in my mouth.

I switched to ladies' clothing stores, partially to look for a present for my girl friend and partly hoping to offend some saleswoman.

It didn't work at Lindon's and it didn't work at Fairweather.

Desperate, I headed to the Key Shop, blowing smoke in the face of the salesman. There I spotted my big break.

I spotted a Square One security man getting a key made and sent cigar smoke in his direction. He ignored me.

I headed to what I was sure would be Smoker's Purgatory — the Dominion store. I passed by four clerks in the produce section, sickened at the thought of my stale smoke polluting the fruit and vegetables.

I was served at the deli counter without question. I got a rather cold look from another customer, but the cashier ignored me.

Minutes later it happened. I asked Sandy Barfitt, the clerk at Coles, for a light.

"You're not allowed to smoke here," she said.

My faith in the law renewed, I headed to Sheridan Mall. There I breathed cigar smoke on the apples at Fruit Fair, the records at Mister Sound and the clothes at The Closet. I complimented the Country Style Donuts girl on her tan and blew smoke in her face.

The cashier at Da' Lats lit my fourth cigar.

The salesman at Tonara Art Gallery lit up a cigarette while showing me the beauty of Canadian art.

I walked into Flowercart and stared at the same flower pot for a few minutes. The salesgirl, Melanie Murphy, finally noticed.

"Oh, sir," she said as the flowers began to wilt. "I don't think you're supposed to smoke in here."

"Just let me finish this off," I persisted, not really wanting to.

"No," she said, handing me an ash tray. "you have to put it out."

Law and order exists. At least in two out of every 18 stores.

Melanie Murphy ends reporter Tom Maloney's smoking days

## Merchants say law a drag

"A police officer, in full uniform, walked in here smoking a cigarette," one store manager told The Times. "I told him he wasn't supposed to smoke in here and he said, 'Oh, we don't enforce that, anyway.' It blew my mind when he said that."

Many of the store managers interviewed said that they've instructed their sales staff to ask clients to extinguish cigarettes, but admitted they sympathized with a salesman's reluctance to carry out the order. The stores do not want to upset their customers.

Others agreed with the law, since it serves to protect merchandise from damage.

Bylaw 135-78 prohibits smoking on escalators, school buses, theatres, elevators and service counters of public buildings, retail shops, and specified areas of hospitals, banks.

The law has been in effect since September, 1978, no charges have been laid.

It is one of hundreds of bylaws in Mississauga, yet there are only four bylaw enforcement officers. Is the no-smoking bylaw unenforceable?

No, says Mississauga bylaw enforcement manager Charles Moore.

"The bylaw was amended and we're giving people a couple of months grace period," says Moore. "Pamphlets will soon be prepared. Right now though, our big demand is on the garbage problem. After that, we'll be in the stores."

Eric Austin, store manager at Jack Fraser at Square One, wasn't aware that stores must enforce the law.

"I didn't think we had to enforce the law," he says. "I thought we had a police force to do that. We're in the retail business to please people."

Tip Top manager Dean Wilson agrees.

"When the bylaw first came into effect I set a special section aside for smoking," he says. "But people had no respect for the bylaw. A customer is in here to spend money and it's difficult to tell him to stop smoking."

The store supervisor at Marks and Spencer, where I had smoked my cigar the day before, says that as soon as a customer "sets foot in the door he's told to put out the cigarette."

Jack's manager Frank Malfare isn't too keen on the law.

"I think it's ridiculous," he says. "It interferes with private lives. We might as well move to Russia and become Communists. It's an insult to tell a customer to put out a cigarette. He'll just walk out."

TOM MALONEY

## Shangri-La, Atlantis and our downtown

We get them all the time. Somebody will call The Times and in a voice crackling with frustration ask us the question we've heard a thousand times: Where is Downtown Mississauga?

The frustrated caller will inevitably explain how he followed the signs on the QEW or 401 and ended up either in Brampton or the lake. Any requests they've made for directions to Downtown usually elicit confused looks, unintelligible replies and laughter.

The Times decided this week to come to the aid of those who must now believe that Downtown Mississauga is somewhere between Shangri-La and Atlantis and just south of the Land of Nod.

We have lined your bird cages, wrapped your fish and housebroken your pets. Now we will find your downtown.

The Times assigned the case to two teams of crack reporters, fresh off an intensive investigation of organized crime's alleged involvement in minor hockey.

The teams, crack reporters that they are, decided to make their search from two directions.

Team One, after spending two hours trying to find a restaurant that didn't serve surf-and-turf for a pre-search lunch, approached from



Chris  
Zelkovich

The City

the QEW eastbound. Team Two set out along the 401 westbound, keeping in constant contact by CB radio.

Team One followed the QEW sign and headed north on Hurontario Street. They found traces of a downtown near Dundas Street but their hopes were dashed by the lack of parking meters and sidewalks.

One reporter stepped into a health studio for directions and returned an hour later with no information. He did file for a \$25 expense cheque, though.

Meanwhile Team One received encouraging news from Team Two, which had been directed to Square One by a passing car salesman.

The teams met at Buffalo Bill's but soon realized that this could not be downtown Mississauga. First of all, it was indoors and secondly, there wasn't a bus or taxi to be found inside.

One reporter rejected it on the basis that the sound of grinding metal in the parking lot was more consistent with a scrap yard than a downtown.

Another excitedly reported that he had spotted panhandlers and beggars, a sure sign of a downtown. Further investigation found several apparent beggars but they turned out to be candidates in the next federal election.

Stymied, the group decided to poll the denizens of the indoor pseudo-downtown for directions. A survey of 100 shoppers and

merchants produced the following results: 42 pointed east, 20 laughed, 15 frowned deeply, 12 said it was near the Dairy Queen, six threatened to call the police, four claimed they didn't speak English and one middle-aged woman said it was in Streetsville.

Following the consensus, the teams split up again and headed east along two routes.

Team One took Dundas Street but found no evidence of a downtown until it reached Dixie Road. That brief flurry of excitement was dampened by the realization that four self-serve gas stations in a row do not make a downtown (five is the minimum). They continued.

Team Two pushed on along Lakeshore Road, looking desperately for stores that weren't behind parking lots.

After two hours of intensive investigation and painstaking searching, The Times' crack team of reporters reached their goal.

They found downtown where they had suspected it would be — at the corner of Yonge and Bloor.

Jubilant they returned to their typewriters, preparing for their next investigative assignment — to find Mississauga's stadium.