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Puritanism is eroding citizens' rights

We are living in a time of creeping puritanism and this puritanism is already beginning to erode the rights of all Canadian citizens.

An example of this trend towards puritanism surfaced locally last week when the Halton Hills town council voted to endorse a motion from the city of Oakville supporting Ontario cabinet minister Frank Drea's push to ban topless dancing and, also advocating increased censorship.

Puritanism, like racism and hysterical nationalism is a characteristic that tends to rear its head during times of economic troubles. During the Sixties, society was freewheeling and supposedly, anything went. Racial tolerance was on the rise and people weren't afraid to be critical of government policies.

It's easy for people to be accepting of others when they feel secure about having bread on the table, they don't feel threatened.

But 1978 is a long way from the Sixties. Our economy is on the rocks and there don't appear to be any easy solutions. Hardly anybody really trusts the government anymore and even the good old Mounties are turning out to be more than a little shady.

It's during times like these that governments try to deflect public wrath away from themselves. Pierre Trudeau has been desperately trying to convince Canadians that national unity is the major crisis now facing this country.

Most Canadians seems more concerned about getting a job and trying to stay ahead of the inflation rate.

Racism is on the rise as frustrated people try to blame economic woes on people who are 'different', easy targets for abuse. Just ask Toronto's East Indian community.

And now we have Tory Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Frank Drea blathering about the need to outlaw topless dancers. He does this at a time when his government is wielding the

cutback axe on social services in a manner reminiscent to Carrie Nation in a saloon.

So why not deflect public anger at 'pornography' and away from a government that is unable to come up with answers to more important questions.

And the Halton Hills town council has fallen into the trap. The motion they endorsed supports Drea's attack on topless dancers and goes on to call for a law that "should also ban pornography on public newsstands, television, in movies, magazines and other media...The citizens of our province and all of the people of Canada have a right to be protected from all influences that will undermine the moral rightness and goodness of our society."

The talk of "protection" in the motion is frightening. It represents a cooler attitude on the part of politicians who think they have the right to determine what types of books and entertainment citizens are capable of viewing.

Ontario is already strapped with an overzealous film censorship board that regularly slices off, bans completely, films that the public has a right to view.

We would hate to see other bureaucrats given greater powers of censorship over magazines, books, etc.

The alternative to censorship is choice. If people find a performance, book or movie objectionable they should simply stay away from them. We think it is important that this option remain open to the public instead of being put in the hands of government officials for them to make choices for us.

For that reason we oppose any move that will increase the powers of government to make 'choices' for the public and for that reason we object to the Halton Hills town council's decision to endorse regressive steps towards increased censorship by the provincial government.

Be careful while celebrating

The beginning of a new year is unquestionably a time for celebration, and those celebrations invariably involve socializing outside of the home for many people, and socializing is often fueled by alcohol.

These factors combine at such times to make the occasions satisfying memories for the remainder of the new year and for years to come, but in order to do so - in order to prevent these occasions from turning into nightmarish evenings that are memorable for all the wrong reasons - the recipe requires an extra ingredient: common sense.

The Halton regional police (and a special thanks to officers who draw the New Year's Eve shift for giving up their personal time so that others can be safe) inform us that there will be no special checks on motorists this year for possible impairment. Rather than bolstering the confidence of the town's big drinkers, though, this information should serve to illustrate the fact that the police too believe common sense will prevent most drivers from taking unnecessary risks.

So that we may all be alive and healthy to enjoy 1979 together and get a fresh start on another year, let common sense be our guide. If you're going out on New Year's Eve, plan your evening ahead and make arrangements that will ensure your safe arrival home again. If you're entertaining at home, lineup a tentative contingency plan for those among your guests who shouldn't be driving once the party's over.

Peter Marks of Acton, a former Halton Hills councillor who is employed as a consultant with the Addiction Research Foundation in Toronto, offers the following additional advice for party-goers and their hosts and hostesses:

- measure out the various ingredients of your own drinks, or else be sure that the person doing so for you has the proper sense of proportion;

- when mixing punch, follow the same rules as mixing individual drinks, that is, keep to the same ratio; often, various liquors

are added in quantity that disguises the strength of the punch;

- remember that, in terms of their effects, one beer is equal to one and a quarter ounce of liquor or four or five ounces of wine;

- spirits such as rye and gin are frequently mixed at a one to three ratio, but common sense would better advise a one to five ratio;

- there is nothing "unmanly" in a driver turning the keys to his car over to another driver who is in the proper condition to handle a vehicle; motorists should be fully aware that it doesn't take much alcohol to bring the driver's blood content level above .08 per cent limit at which the courts consider them impaired;

- in fact, many people's driving skills become impaired in the physical sense even before their alcohol blood content reaches that level; there is a wide range in which controlled tests have revealed serious impairment;

- people taking prescription drugs or antihistamines should be all the more cautious about drinking, if they do any drinking at all; common cold remedies tend to exaggerate the normal drowsiness brought on by alcohol.

Again, New Year's Eve should be regarded in retrospect as a happy occasion that for most people marks new progress along life's highway, with new challenges and new opportunities ahead. Whether or not the past year brought with it good luck or bad or a fair measure of both, the promise of a new year - a new chapter in "the big book" - should be all the inspiration we need to guard ourselves through the initial celebrations and confront the days that follow with a fresh appreciation for the constantly changing tide of life.

All of us at The Herald sincerely hope that this New Year's Eve will indeed signal a new day and an exciting challenge for all of our readers. Wishing you a safe and joyful time of reflection and celebration, and a very happy New Year.



Happy New Year from The Herald

A look at government waste, rat trials, hog waste highlight

Ottawa Report
By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau of The Herald
When I came across this \$1,250 contract for "provision of technical support for rat trials," I realized that several months have passed since we last looked at the way the government is spending our money on these outside studies.

It's not clear, incidentally, just what type of technical support is required for rat trials, but since we are in a period of financial restraint I guess it's safe to assume that such support is absolutely necessary. And, anyway the price is right. It's far cheaper than the \$28,200 study for "the determination of the residue analysis of herring gull samples."

However, it is a bit more expensive than the \$19,000 study into "the development of procedures for preparing a compost of liquid waste absorbed by peat moss," but I suppose it's more difficult to catch gulls. I am sure the government would take all of these problems into account before awarding its research and development contracts.

Still, some of the contracts baffle me. For instance, with all the regulatory agencies and

commissions looking at broadcasting, I am not sure why it was necessary to award a \$44,000 contract to a university professor for a "review of present configurations and an analysis of future possibilities in Canadian broadcasting."

But I notice that the amount of this contract is almost identical to the cost of one trip to the "development of alternative scenarios for a computerized Canadian economy, phase 1."

This, to me, seems like a great bargain. If we can computerize the Canadian economy for \$41,000 it will be not time at all before we can start computerizing the post office. We'll soon be able to enjoy push-button recessions.

TV AND HERRING
Here's one. For \$24,996 - and don't ask me to explain why this was knocked down from \$25,000 - the government is going to get an "examination to find alternative solutions to herring fishing problems in the Magdalen Islands." I just hope that, for the sake of the contractor, someone has had the foresight to identify the problems.

And I bet you never thought we would be spending \$12,160 to "conduct an evaluation of a cultural exchange program by satellite between two Quebec communities." If we need a satellite to bridge the gap between the two Quebec communities, it's little wonder we have trouble getting Newfoundlanders together with British Columbians.

But perhaps this will improve when the government gets the results of its \$20,000 "examination of quantitative measurements of television picture quality." We can only hope that this study is completed before we get

that \$24,000 "analysis of television and culture."

There is no point in analyzing television culture unless we can enjoy a clear picture. GARBAGE GALORE

I am not sure why the federal government would have a particular interest in this problem, but it is awarding a \$22,200 contract to a Toronto company for the "development of a computerized garbage packer and appropriate transfer facilities." But perhaps it is somehow related to a \$5,000 contract for the "determination of the generation rate of solid waste at Dorchester Penitentiary."

Just a brief glance at the \$6-million worth of monthly research and development contracts leaves the distinct impression that the government, while obviously generous in some areas, also expects penny-pitching miracles in other areas.

On one hand, \$139,000 is being spent for a review of "knowledge on northern and Arctic insects," a project I wouldn't have thought deserved top priority. On the other hand, for a mere \$25,000 a Vancouver firm is expected to come up with the "development of a device for extracting energy from ocean waves."

That would be a bargain. Finally, I notice a contract, based on an unsolicited proposal, for an "evaluation of the effectiveness of displays and exhibits on low costs methods and Canadian technology to assist decision makers."

Presumably the successful bidder used effective displays and exhibits to convince the decision-makers that \$87,000 should be spent on such a study. Just imagine what \$87,000 would bring in the way of technical support for rat trials.

Committee system invasion is latest phenomenon

By DON O'HEARN
Queen's Park Bureau of The Herald

TORONTO - A phenomenon of the late twentieth century has been the invasion of the committee system.

Today everything is being run by committees, from multi-nationals to ladies aids to the Mafia.

There are those, those who probably have done a share of committee sitting, who look on this as a doubtful development.

No matter what the merits of this, it certainly would seem to be no way to run a country. Yet that is what we are trying to do in Canada.

JIG JABS
This has been most notable in the two federal-provincial conferences on the economy which have been held this year.

At these the prime minister and the ten premiers have gathered round a table with the ostensible purpose of drawing up and developing an industrial economic strategy.

this but you would be hard put to find anyone able to tell you just what.

It seems to be largely a case of a job at that and a jig at this and a big hope that things will get better.

Certainly there is no charted or even stated strategy about which one can say this is the platform from which Canada hopes to rise to better times.

A BRAWL
The most obvious reason for this is that the country's eleven leaders started to try and draw up a strategy from scratch. The president or somebody normally gives them some kind of a proposal and the girls scratch away at it.

Not even the wildest committeeocrat would expect a committee to create something without some lead.

But that's the way we are trying to do it with our country.

The boys gather round the table, Trudeau

fires the starting gun and off they rush in eleven directions.

The realistic approach, of course, would be for the federal government to table some proposal and then have the premiers discuss and develop it.

But this can't be done. Wounded dignities of the provinces of the past have developed a protocol to the stage of "full consultation" on fundamental matters such as this. And if the feds went even so far as to submit a proposal on its own, ten bleeding premiers would be crying foul.

It's a hell of a way to try and run a country.

And presumably, or at least hopefully, one day we will wake up and realize that for a nation as a whole there can be, or should be, really only one leader and Ottawa will be allowed to do the job. With consultation, yes. But not with main bout participation. Eleven men in a ring can mean only a brawl.

Halton's History

From the Herald's files

ESQUEJING ACCLAMATIONS
...THIRTY YEARS AGO - All offices were filled by acclamation at the annual nomination meeting of Esquejing Township, held in the new township hall at Stewardtown on Monday. One change took place on the council when Reeve George Cleave retired. Deputy Reeve George Currie moved into the vacancy and Councillor George Leslie assumed the deputy-reeve's post. Councillor Wilfrid Bird and Craig Reid retained their seats and Walter Linham retired from the School Area Board to become a councillor.

A fire believed to be caused by defective wiring in a string of Christmas tree lights caused extensive damage at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Watkins on the 9th Line on Tuesday morning. The tree lights had been left on while the family was away from the house. Apparently the tree had been smouldering for some time, for when Mrs. Watkins entered the house about 11:30 the open door fanned the flames and the tree burst into flames.

What came close to being a disastrous fire occurred at the noon hour last Friday at Fred Sinclair's garage on Main Street. A car belonging to Don Wilson, proprietor of Duffy's was being thawed out and the insulation took fire while the motor was running. Mr. Sinclair put this out, but apparently the fire had burnt a hole in the hose connections of the car and oil which leaked out on the floor also caught fire. Flames shot up, but luckily the car was pushed out of the garage before further damage was caused and the fire burned itself out.

WHITELOCK RETIRES
...TWENTY YEARS AGO - Just 12 hours separates the Georgetown police department and its goal of a fatality-free 1958. However, police are more concerned with that period right after midnight when people will be starting for home from New Year's Eve parties, many of them unfit to take the wheel. Police are urging motorists to make that one for the road hot coffee.

J. Earl Whitlock, agricultural representative for the county of Halton for nearly 25 years will retire early in 1959. A native of Oxford County, Mr. Whitlock served overseas in the first Great War, and later was graduated from the Ontario Agricultural College in 1922.

The Christian Reformed Church has been without their own minister since the opening of the church, but arrangements have been made and they are expecting that Rev. Los will arrive from Holland in March to take over the work here.

Georgetown's fatality-free year came within a matter of inches of coming to a terrible conclusion late Monday afternoon when only the alertness of a local driver saved the life of a child crossing Mill Street. The driver, William McNally, had just rounded the corner on Mill Street when the child darted from the curb and slipped and fell in front of the oncoming car. Mr. McNally brought the car to a halt less than a foot from the sprawled youngster.

SIX-LEGGED STEER
...TEN YEARS AGO - Spider is a six-legged, two-tailed Holstein steer who is the number one attraction around Rockwood in North Halton County. The two-and-a-half year old steer, owned by Max Storey of RR#1 Rockwood probably is the most photographed written about and visited steer in the entire area. And 256 persons lined up to see the extra pair of legs suspended behind his neck when Spider was the featured attraction at Rockwood carnival earlier this year.

Members of the Halton Separate School Board voted themselves a salary of \$1,800 a year at their second meeting Wednesday night. The salary, or honorarium, as board members prefer to call it, of \$150 a month is the maximum the board can give its members under provincial regulations. Board chairman Peter Waters of Oakville will receive an extra \$50 a month.

Two Canadian Shorthorn herds scored major wins at the Chicago International, rated as the continent's strongest show, Louada Farms, Peterborough, and R.W. Gardhouse, Milton, focussed attention on Canadian Shorthorns with their fine wins.

CABINET REJECTS STUDY
...ONE YEAR AGO - The Ontario Cabinet last week rejected any further study of alternatives for the Bruce to Georgetown hydro transmission lines. Energy Minister James Taylor said in an interview. Interested Citizens' Group proposed to Taylor earlier that a Kitchener route for the line would save time, construction costs and provide better systems security. But Taylor said such a route would have to go through environmental assessment board hearings, which would take two to five years.

Ontario ministers of the environment officials confirmed last week that monitoring of a new flow meter is underway at the Georgetown sewerage treatment plant. Ari Thomas, manager of utility operations, said the new meter is being calibrated by the firm which installed the device in the recent expansion of the plant to three million gallons capacity per day.

The first meeting between the Halton separate school board and its teachers since the appointment of Toronto lawyer Jane Devlin as mediator was successful, according to the chairman of the salary negotiating committee.

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