

Letters to the editor

Irony in OMB's ruling

To the editor of The Herald:
There is irony in the recent OMB ruling not to hold evening sessions during the expected three months garbage dump hearings at Milton.

PUBLIC arbitration on evidence presented for and against destroying prime farmland - should be held when it is most inconvenient for the public affected to attend!
Surely, when only two members of the OMB are involved and they (like every other

agency attending at the hearing) are funded with tax dollars - those paying those tax dollars should not have to sacrifice time from work (i.e. more dollars) for three months trying to save their land?
Apparently the evening sessions are so repugnant that the

OMB rejected having even one per week.
It's no wonder the OMB isn't elected - they don't play fair with those who pay the bills!
Yours truly
Julie Bates
Burlington, Ont.



English readers write

To the editor:
I thought you might find this edition of our local newspaper interesting on account of its report on the

time our city was blitzed, the pictures may interest you. Of course it has been rebuilt to a lovely modern city now. I deeply appreciate your Herald I receive

each week through the courtesy of Ray and Hazel Wiggins. I dearly love Georgetown and I like to keep in touch with all the

news.
Cheerio
God Bless Georgetown
John Hill,
Plymouth, England

Letters to the editor

Reader praises car dealer for years of faithful service

To the editor of The Herald:
I am a firm believer in the fact that we all these days complain and criticize a great deal but hardly ever say thank you. It appears to be an ever growing case of "I'm all right Jack" and "It's not my money, belongings, car or whatever, so who cares". So here is my accolade for 1979!
Since 1973 I have had the pleasure of dealing with Geo. British Cars in Georgetown which was where I bought my first new car and recently my 2nd new car.

During the whole time that I have dealt with this company I have been given service, courtesy and friendliness above, far above, the call of duty - not 100 per cent as any good company should offer, but 150 per cent!!

At a time when good manners seem to be a lost art I have come across real gentlemen in the true sense of the word and this includes employees who have since left the company.
There has of course been the very occasional "good" but

this has been cheerfully rectified.

I really appreciate the honesty and kindness of Mr. Ray Barleer one of the owners and the friendship, kindness and gallantry of Ron Lawton I will always remember - he does not know how many grey days he has cheered up and put all right by a joke, a reassuring word or an act of kindness.

The mechanics too deserve high praise for good work and friendliness. Even one's first contact, the lady on the switch

board has such a nice welcoming voice.

As the ad goes "at Speedy you are a somebody - well - at G.B.C. you are a somebody" and what is most important to me is that when I pick up my car from a repair or servicing, I can know it will be safe and as reasonable price as is possible.

So, to you all at GBC - a happy and prosperous New Year and thank you all.
Sincerely
Ann Lidbury.

Education's 'good old days' not the answer for today

Education seems to be of growing concern to Halton Hills residents.

They say we can't avoid death and taxes and education is something a good portion of our tax dollar goes towards. You also can't avoid heated opinions about anything people spend lots of tax money on.

At MP Ross Milne's recent town hall meeting, the assembled audience had the strongest opinions on education a provincial matter. Much of the MP's question period was devoted to discussion of schools rather than federal business.

Disturbingly to me, many of the gripes expressed were related to the 'liberalization' - no slur on Mr. Milne - of education.

SEEKING SEATS

At the same time, getting back to the basics was a sentiment voiced by many of the candidates seeking school board seats in the November municipal elections.

And a strong blast of hot air can be felt from Halton Hills' south in Milton as Reverend Ken Campbell of Renaissance International, an anti-gay, anti-sex education, pro-morality group makes his regular pronouncements for purity.

Reverend Campbell and his group were successful in the past in getting the Halton school board to pull some excellent books, they deemed unfit for young minds, from the local schools' curriculum.

I view this all as a big step in the wrong direction.

I recently had the opportunity to discuss this conservatism of parents of school aged children with the principal of Georgetown's Howard Wrigglesworth School, Eric Balkind.

SHARED CONCERN

Mr. Balkind acknowledged this trend and shared my concern about it.

He said that basically the conservatism manifests itself on two levels - spending and curriculum. It seems those parents bemoaning the death of the good old days want more strictly disciplined schools, with a more limited curriculum at a lower cost.

While not denying that there are probably areas in the school board budgets where money should be saved, Mr. Balkind says educators should be prepared to save where possible but also to spend where needed.

I have to agree. To begin with school boards must remember that every unnecessary expenditure and every inflated administrator's salary discredits the legitimate expenses of the board. That said, I maintain that it is foolish to embrace the cutback trend by wildly reducing school board budgets.

SOCIETY BENEFITS

Mr. Balkind argues that society benefits by proper spending on education now rather than on 'reaction' spending later. He means that money spent on for example, a 'problem child' now, to help solve his or her problem is more meaningful than dealing with their problems later in life when all society can do is react to, rather than try to solve these problems.

At times of cutbacks, the supposed "frills" are the first to go. Unfortunately these frills are often extremely important programs. In Toronto, for example, special education courses are taking a beating as special ed. teachers are paid from the board's payroll. Since special education teachers usually operate with small groups, they



Michael Hollett

Herald editor

are not that economical. They are also extremely important since children needing special education often would simply be unable to function without help.

And who knows how many valuable programs have not seen the light of day as educators respond to cost cutting?

The curriculum conservatism is related to many things including taxpayers' and school boards' desire to cut costs.

IS CHEAPER

... It's certainly cheapest to stick strictly to the three R's. After all, how much does it cost to toss a few textbooks in the direction of a room full of public school kids, have them write out a page of Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew" ten times, memorize multiplication tables and have their spelling done for tomorrow. Why one teacher could supervise 42 kids involved in such 'basic' - as in back to - study.

But I question how useful it is. As Mr. Balkind says, perhaps the major problem with the education system today is that it hasn't kept up rather than moving too fast. I'm not convinced that the education system of the Fifties and other 'good old days' is really worth getting back to. When the Sixties rolled around and educators tried to stick with the old system, students complained about the lack of relevance in their education.

DRASTIC CHANGES

Certainly things have changed drastically since the Cold War Fifties when attitudes towards young people, women, sexuality and learning itself were drastically different than today.

Little girls are no longer simply expected to be housewives, sex is no longer something people talk about only on their wedding night, and authority - including teachers' and governments' - are not always accepted unchallenged. These are positive changes and ones that pose new challenges for developing children. To get back to an educational system that does not deal with these challenges would leave children less equipped for society around them.

NOT TV

And of course, in the good old days, children did not have to deal with television. Television IS the new literacy and through it children are exposed to a seemingly limitless amount of information, so much that they may have trouble handling it all. An education system rooted in the 1980's - the decade is almost upon us - has to deal with this reality.

A dialogue on education is needed. The public, and educators themselves, must be encouraged to find new directions to deal with the realities of teaching in this period. But a kneejerk regression to the "good old days" will surely mean that the current generation of school children will suffer.

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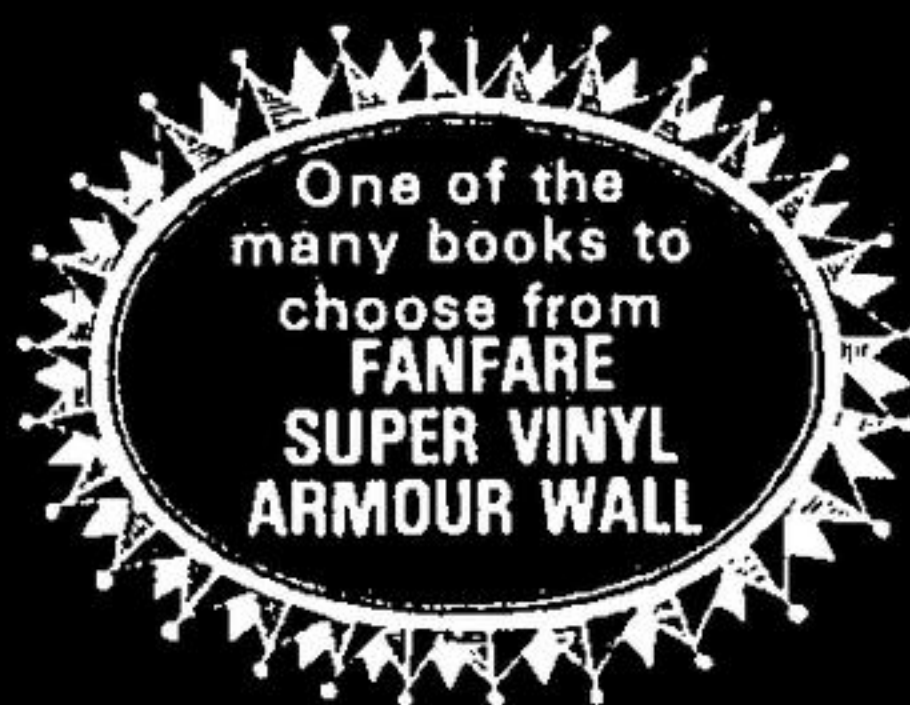
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