

Halton Hills Outlook

"OUTLOOK" is published each Saturday by the HALTON HILLS HERALD, Home Newspaper of Halton Hills, A Division of Canadian Newspapers Company Limited, at 45 Guelph Street, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 3Z6. Second Class Mail - Registered Number 8943.

877-2201

877-8822

PUBLISHER
Don Brander

EDITOR
Mike Turner

STAFF WRITERS
Brian MacLeod Donna Kell

SPORTS WRITER
Paul Svoboda

ACCOUNTING
Breat Borne
Paulline Miller

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING
Joan Mannall Terry Colter

MARKETING REPRESENTATIVES
Sharon Hollingsworth
Beth MacGillivray

PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT
Dave Hastings, Supt. Myles Iikson
Annie Olson Mary Lou Foreman

CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT
Marie Shadbol

PRESSROOM FOREMAN
Brian Alkman

ASSISTANT
Rycharld McKeown

Their Outlook

Turner shows courage



Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod
Thomson News Service

Say what you want about Liberal Leader John Turner's latest gambit on free trade, but you can't question his courage.

If ever there were an all-or-nothing initiative launched by an Opposition Leader - or any other politician for that matter - this has to be it. And, unless Mr. Turner is being personally tutored by mystic forces, such as Mackenzie King's leftover spirits, it's unlikely that he has any better idea than the rest of us about the outcome.

When an Opposition Leader throws down the gauntlet like this, and tells Prime Minister Brian Mulroney the Liberal-dominated Senate will hold up the free-trade legislation until a general election is called, it is - to put it mildly - a high-risk operation. Mr. Turner was quick to acknowledge he was venturing into dangerous territory.

No one party leader can control the agenda of an election campaign. And the issue that Mr. Turner has clearly chosen as the centerpiece of his campaign - that the prime minister was forcing free trade on Canadians without any mandate whatsoever - might well be shunted into the background.

For instance, a campaigning Mulroney could push this aside with attacks on the Senate and the alleged arrogance of this non-elected institution holding up the will of the elected House of Commons.

The Liberals, with expected help from the New Democrats, certainly have a case when they say free trade was foisted on Canadians after Mr. Mulroney had given assurance that he would "have no part of it."

But would that attack hold up? Or would the prime minister be more effective in arguing that, since both Liberals and New Democrats are committed to tearing up the deal if elected, a pre-enactment vote is entirely unnecessary.

A Tory defeat, whenever the election is held, would spell the end of this deal.

MANY UNKNOWNNS

And what would be the public's reaction if Mr. Mulroney simply ignored the Senate, and didn't send the trade bill down the hall? Since there is no legal requirement that the enabling legislation be passed by

Parliament, it could be argued that the government went farther than necessary in getting it approved by the elected Commons.

He hinted in this direction just a few days before Mr. Turner made his dramatic announcement.

"The House of Commons represents the elected representatives of the people," said the prime minister. "We're dealing with the elected representatives of the people. Once that process is complete, we'll look at things."

While Mr. Turner went out of his way - far out - to take full responsibility for his party's strategy, it's unlikely the Senate would escape the wrath of campaigning Tories. And once you get into Senate reform and all that political paraphernalia, free trade could become a mere appendage to the campaign.

Anyway, there are many Liberals who don't want to centre a campaign on this issue. They would much prefer to focus on the prime minister, his personality and his alleged shortcomings.

It would be different - and much safer for Mr. Turner - if passage of the free-trade legislation meant the deal was sealed for all time. But the fact that a Liberal or New Democratic government would have the right to terminate the arrangement casts some doubt on need for a blockade by the Senate.

It's a matter of how these arguments are presented and perceived.

TIME RIPE

From all reports, Mr. Turner and his close advisers, including Senator Allan MacEachen, spent many hours mulling over the strategy before calling a news conference.

It's unlikely that these political veterans, which also included Senator Al Graham, the party's campaign co-chairman, overlooked some of the practical considerations. That last Gallup poll, for instance, must have been on the table.

It showed that, since the previous sampling, the Liberals had dropped four percentage points to 37 while the Tories had soared by seven points to 35. A companion poll about the leaders also supported the theory that the momentum may be switching to the Tories. In reply to questions on which leader offers the best vision for leading Canada, only 15 per cent opted for the Liberal leader, while 27 per cent named Mr. Mulroney and 30 per cent chose NDP Leader Ed Broadbent.

There are rampant reports of internal party polls that suggest, all things considered, the Liberals would be better off with an early election.

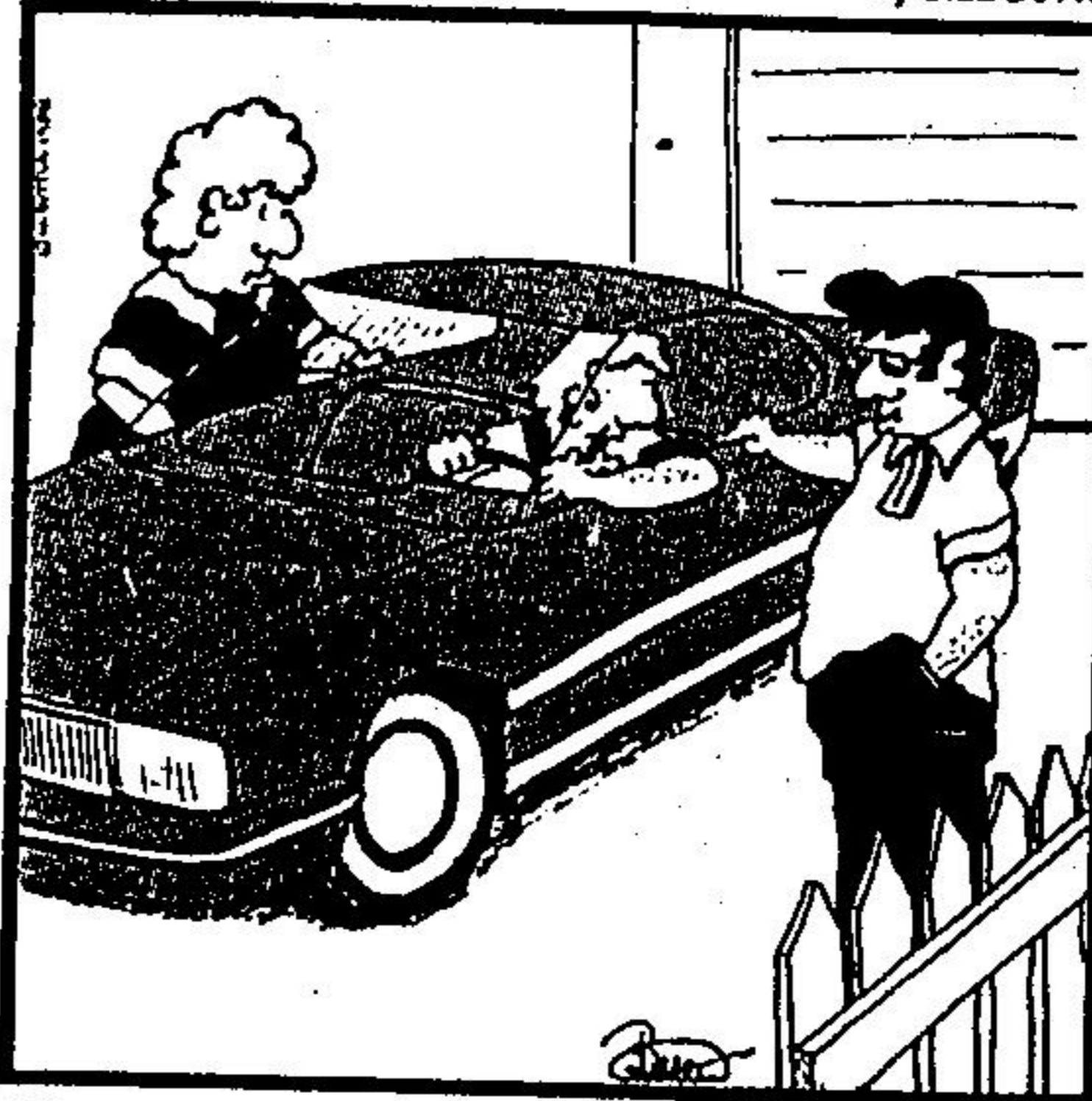
SNAFU® by Bruce Beattie



"My life is a rags-to-riches story. Unfortunately, the first chapter's already 83 years long."

Two's a Crowd

By BILL BUTTLE



Here comes the Cruise Control now!

Standing ground is important now



Your Business

By DIANNE MALEY
Business Analyst,
Thomson News Service

A friend just back from St. John's reports that the good people of Newfoundland are skeptical about Hibernia. Recalling the project's history of false starts and failed negotiations, they fear they may be disappointed again.

Something could go wrong with the big, offshore oil project. Oil prices could dive or the economy could grind to a halt, making the \$3-billion helping hand the government is giving the oil companies look like a waste of money.

Sure enough, the politicians are coming under fire for their support of the project. With Newfoundland and federal elections impending, cynics say the politicians are investing in votes, not oil.

But if Sheik Ahmed Zaki Yamani is right, we had better hope Mobil and its partners waste no time in bringing Hibernia into production. In Yamani, a book about the man who was Saudi Arabia's oil minister for 24 years, author Jeffrey Robinson asks Sheik Yamani how oil markets will develop in future.

THIRD PRICE SHOCK

The former Saudi oil minister warns that unless the industrial world cuts oil consumption, learns to conserve and invests in alternative energy sources, we will be in for a third oil-price shock in the mid-1990s.

Clearly, investing in non-conventional reserves such as Hibernia and the Beaufort Sea will be at least as important to North America's security of supply as investing in alternative energy sources.

Meanwhile, some Newfoundlanders are preparing quietly

for a boom, snapping up real estate and beefing up their businesses. This time, they hope, Newfoundland really will become the Texas of the north.

Indeed, if the Canadian economy falters - as many believe it will - Newfoundland, with Hibernia, could be the only strong spot in the country. In its early stages, Hibernia will employ about 1,500 people directly and many others indirectly.

Hibernia is not home free yet. It could be postponed if oil prices tumble, or if costs get out of hand. But media critics and analysts who call it a huge gamble are ignoring the risks involved in not developing the field.

To the world economy, oil prices that soar and dip are every bit as dangerous as volatile interest rates. If, as some people predict, we are in for a whopping deflation, Hibernia will be the least of our problems.

YAMANI'S WARNING
Oil companies are betting that the price will have risen substantially by 1995, when oil from Hibernia will start to flow. To break even, oil will have to hit \$22 (U.S.) a barrel by then; it is about \$14.50 a barrel now. Understandably, oil companies are not willing to take all the risk.

Whether there is a third oil-price shock in the mid-1990s, as Sheik Yamani predicts, depends also on economic growth between now and then. The boom since 1982 has been helped by relatively low oil prices, which have had the unfortunate effect of discouraging new production.

How serious the oil shortage will be depends on how events unfold over the next three years, Sheik Yamani says. "The glut has helped the Western economies, this is true. But the ultimate results of short-term thinking will come later on and they will not be pleasant."

Indeed, if anything brings the North American economy to its knees, it will be our tendency to view things from a disturbingly short-term perspective.

Chasing their tail



Staff Comment

By BRIAN MACLEOD

It was a somewhat funny scene in the council chambers at Halton Region July 20.

Here was a lawyer telling the people who hired him, right out in the open, that they must practise responsible government.

The question was whether or not Halton Region should endorse a recommendation by Thomas Lederer to ban area municipalities from appearing before an Environmental Assessment hearing on proposed public landfill sites.

The buck should stop at the Region, according to Mr. Lederer.

Each municipality is represented at the Region and that should be the place of their final battle, he said.

Right now, the City of Burlington and the town of Milton are presenting their cases before the EA board.

Both are fighting the possibility of having a Regional dump in their municipality.

The Region and the area municipalities are spending millions of taxpayers' dollars fighting each other.

Halton endorsed Mr. Lederer's proposal.

It's a tough call. But in the end it boils down to the question of what is responsible government?

Halton has 25 members on council including the chairman. Nine councillors are from Burlington, Oakville has seven, Halton Hills five and Milton has only three.

Regardless of where the best scientifically safe spot is in the Region, councillors will never - nor should they really be expected to - put the interests of another municipality before theirs.

You fight for the people you represent. It's difficult to justify taking that right away in such an awesome case as this.

Yes, it means spending more money. The question is would the taxpayers rather spend the money and keep the trucks, the seagulls, the bulldozers, the smell and the ugly hole, out of their own back yards?

If the answer is yes, as the work of citizens groups in Milton and Burlington seem to show, then area municipalities must never have that right taken away.

It's just a flaw in the system that's really difficult to correct.

Making another flaw won't fix the first one.

Poets' Corner

By MARLOWE C. DICKSON

It's not
the summer sun
that
causes pain
It's
thoughts of you
that
sear
my brain.