

# Halton Hills Outlook

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## Their Outlook

### Errors in omission

#### Review

By KENNETH HILBORN

What are the characteristics of a bad biography?

One of them is unrelenting hero-worship on the author's part, leading him or her to mention the hero's defects, only to excuse them or explain them away. Another is failure to draw attention to mysterious inconsistencies in the hero's attitudes and conduct.

Most serious, however, is the omission of significant and readily available evidence, either through ignorance or as a means of putting the hero in a more favorable light than the facts justify.

In her biography of South Africa's Anglican archbishop and anti-apartheid campaigner Desmond Tutu - *Tutu: Voice of the Voiceless* (General Publishing, 296 pages; \$29.95) - Shirley du Boulay is guilty of all these transgressions.

The worst of them results from her attempt to convince readers that in calling for economic sanctions against South Africa, Tutu has been "speaking for the great majority" of that country's blacks. As proof, she cites a single poll that she fails to identify, except to say that it was taken in August, 1985.

There have been more than a dozen surveys of black opinion on economic sanctions and on the related issue of "disinvestment" - foreign investors' withdrawal from their South African businesses. Nearly all these studies have shown that supporters of such measures are outnumbered by opponents who fear disadvantages for black workers, especially increased unemployment.

The poll that du Boulay seems to regard as conclusive was a freakish exception, probably because it relied on the smallest sample and was restricted to blacks living in urban areas. It was conducted under the auspices of a British newspaper, the *Sunday Times*, which later sponsored a wider poll that included the rural population.

Published in the *Sunday Times* on Aug. 3, 1986, the wider poll (which du Boulay completely ignores) agreed with the overwhelming majority of other surveys in finding that fewer than one-third of those questioned considered sanctions desirable.

#### GRAVE DOUBTS

By using evidence so selectively to make Tutu appear to be what he has never been, the spokesman for the bulk of his "voiceless" fellow blacks regarding sanctions, du Boulay raises grave doubts about her own credibility.

In many respects, however, her written portrait of this ecclesiastical politician rings true.

Tutu emerges as an avowed socialist who "abhors capitalism" - perhaps one reason (though the author fails to make this point) for his advocacy of disinvestment.

He is also a deeply devout Chris-

tian, who believes that in prayer he hears directly the "voice of God." To him, therefore, his personal conscience and opinions seem not merely his own but the expression of God's will.

This conviction may lie at the root of Tutu's authoritarianism and intolerance of dissent. When a colleague in the South African Council of Churches dared to disagree with him on some matter, Tutu dismissed the unfortunate culprit as a "silly child" and ordered him to "get out of my office." For three weeks, Tutu refused to speak to him.

On another occasion, without consulting black unions, he called on workers to stay away from their jobs for a "day of prayer," an act that would cost them wages they sorely needed.

Tutu himself has always been casual about spending money, and in his present privileged position, he can afford to be. He lives well, and the generosity of anti-apartheid admirers overseas enables him to travel like a prince. Du Boulay refers to his riding in "sleek black limousines," and to him crossing the Atlantic on the supersonic Concorde.

Tutu has certainly displayed both moral and physical courage in the course of his career - for instance, in saving the life of a black whom a mob of black extremists intended to murder. But when he advocates sanctions, arguing that suffering from the consequent unemployment will be temporary and "with a purpose," many economically vulnerable workers doubtless understand that Tutu is unlikely to share in the hardships he considers acceptable for them.

#### REALISTIC

Black workers may also be more realistic than Tutu about the durability of the white-controlled South African government, and thus about the meaning of "temporary." As early as 1980, du Boulay reports, Tutu predicted that the country would have a black prime minister "within the next five to 10 years."

Tutu's flaws become obvious to the attentive reader of du Boulay's book. But the author allows none of them to restrain for long the gushing flow of her adulation.

Swept along by this flow, unwary readers may overlook unexplained inconsistencies. To give just one example: As Anglican Dean of Johannesburg, Tutu refused to live in his official residence in a segregated white area, because he was unwilling to accept special privileges as an "honorary white." As Archbishop of Cape Town, however, he resides in a white suburb.

In mentioning his Cape Town home, du Boulay does not even remind us of Tutu's earlier stand, let alone tell us why he abandoned his previous scruples.

Despite bias and some demonstrable inaccuracies, this book may be of value as a source of information on Archbishop Tutu. But it should be used with care, caution and skepticism. It is by no means a reliable guide to the South African situation.

-Prof. Kenneth Hilborn teaches 20th-century history at the University of Western Ontario, London.

### OUR LANGUAGE

by Jeffrey McQuain

Use a clew for a ball of yarn or thread. I gave up learning to knit, because I didn't have a clew.

Ergo comes from Latin for "therefore." I'm no ogre who withholds spelling clues; ergo, I'd recommend spelling ogre backward.

Q. We're having a reunion of the

alumni soon at our school. Or should we say alumnae?

A. Alumni is the plural of alumnus, the masculine term for a graduate or former student. Female graduates are alumnae, the plural of alumna. To avoid offense, use both alumni and alumnae, which shows more class than using alumni alone for a combined group.

### Two's a Crowd

By BILL BUTTLE



"Of course it's expensive! — That one was five months' work!"

## Retailers cope with the 'herd' mentality



Your Business  
Diane Maley

Thomson News Service

If the stock market is going to pick itself up, it will have to do so without much help from new investors.

Only two per cent of people who do not own stocks plan to buy some over the next year, a recent poll shows. Their decision holds for both common and preferred shares. Only 18 per cent of Canadians hold shares in publicly traded companies.

The poll, conducted by Environics Research Group for The Globe and Mail, surveyed 2,021 people and found that saving money is foremost on our minds.

If the poll is right, the judgement of most Canadians on the stock market parallels that of the pros: we're in a bear market in a scary economic environment; the next move in the market is likely to be down.

This pessimistic view is held by wave-and-cycle theorists and fleet-footed traders alike. Pushing aside the disaster scenes, one reason experts are cool to stocks is because they expect interest rates to stay high, perhaps creeping higher in the months ahead.

Why take a chance on the stock market when you can earn 11 per cent on a savings certificate?

#### FEAR OR PRUDENCE

The Globe-Environics poll found that people plan to save more and spend less. By and large, we expect our fortunes to stay about the same in future, rather than worsening or improving. But the number of people anticipating a weakening in the economy is up slightly, to 24 per cent.

Compared with the previous poll, fewer people believe this is a good

time to make major purchases. Confidence in the economy is relatively weak in the West and the Atlantic provinces, while the Toronto region remains the most optimistic.

Our choice of investments is not surprising. Canada Savings Bonds top the list, followed by registered retirement savings plans. Next in line come guaranteed investment certificates and term deposits, followed by savings accounts, real estate and company pension plans.

Blue-chip stocks follow on the heels of pension plans, taking precedence over a category that includes treasury bills and corporate bonds.

One of the more interesting facts to emerge from the Globe-Environics poll is the proportion of Canadians who anticipated recession or worse in wake of last fall's stock market crash. After the crash in October, 1987, 38 per cent of us believed recession was at hand. Nineteen per cent expected a depression.

In the most recent poll, 33 per cent still believe a recession is coming; 15 per cent anticipate depression. As to the stock market, 22 per cent of Canadians believe it will crash again.

Given such a gloomy outlook, one wonders how long consumer spending will hold up. Forecasters are calling for good Christmas sales for retailers, followed by a slowdown next year. Undoubtedly, if a third of us foresee recession and another 15 per cent depression, our fears should soon work their way through to spending, becoming, as always, a self-fulfilling prophecy.

This brings up the question of the good and bad things about polls. As they do with politics, polls can influence our thinking. If we read that everyone else has stopped spending and started saving in earnest, we're likely to quickly fall in line. This herd mentality, right or wrong, is enough to make retailers tear out their hair.

## Election hangover



Staff Comment

By BRIAN MACLEOD

Ever since last Tuesday morning things have slowed down.

Words have come less naturally to the finger tips pounding on my trusty Underwood typewriter, and there is that feeling of something missing.

Now, I've figured out what it is. It's election hangover.

Some of you may have noticed the Herald reached your doorstep a few hours earlier on Tuesday, or you may have been able to pick up a copy at your local variety store as early as 4 p.m. following the municipal and federal elections.

The idea was to allow you the reader to find out the inside story locally before you sat down for supper on Tuesday.

With a staff of four, including our intrepid sports editor Paul Svoboda, we managed to catch all the action in both elections.

Paul became our official photographer for the municipal election, while myself and Donna Kell bandied about the floor at Gordon Alcott Memorial Arena as the results came in.

And as we settled in back at the office afterwards, after some lively discussion, we found out that 3 a.m. came early.

But not for Paul and editor Mike Turner, who made the Herald their home the entire night for both elections.

Fielding phone calls from inquiring minds asking about the results of the municipal election and writing the story at the same time, you would think the whole idea of the elections would lose its lustre.

It didn't. We enjoyed answering the late night phone calls and reading what we couldn't remember we wrote on Tuesday afternoon.

In contrast, Monday's federal election brought nary a phone call. I guess television did the job initially.

Were we a bit jaded the second time around?

Not thanks to an extra large pizza, Jolt cola and free coffee from next door.

The federal election made for a long night but it could have been longer. If voters had delivered a minority government we might have stayed at the North Halton Golf and Country Club taking in results and getting reactions from our local victor, Garth Turner, until the British Columbia results came in, in the wee hours of the morning.

As it was the typewriter keys were thumping by midnight.

But there are some blank faces around here now.

We've kind of gotten into the habit of making sure each candidate has equal space in our paper, making sure certain issues are discussed each week and making sure we take in the all-candidates and free trade debates.

We've gotten used to talking free trade, taxes, abortion, free trade, submarines (both kinds), garbage, free trade, affordable housing, roads, free trade, industrial growth, who's going to win, free trade...

Covering two elections at once has proved taxing (pardon the pun) but it's been a blast.

It's likely one chance in a lifetime right?

Think again. The municipal elections will be held again in the fall of 1991. The last provincial election was held in September, 1987.