

# the HERALD Outlook

## A pointed suggestion

About the last thing Prime Minister Brian Mulroney needs is more advice on what his priorities should be when the new Parliament meets. If he follows all the

board to act on these conclusions. The other four board members apparently feel they should, in effect, investigate the findings of the investigators.

"That may be a bit of an oversimplification," says a board source, "but that's the nub of the problem."

Some of the board members, all politically appointed, have aviation backgrounds, such as aeronautical engineering or flying, and others do not.

The most publicized division of the board concerned the worst aircraft disaster in Canadian history, the crash of an American airliner at Gander, Nfld., in 1985 with the loss of 256 lives.

The final result of the investigation was a majority report, signed by five board members, which pointed to ice on the wings as the probable cause. But the minority report from the four other members pointed at a possible internal explosion.

More recently, the board split again over problems at Toronto's Pearson International Airport.

Now, with increasing public demands for an inquiry into the state of air-traffic control in Canada, the government is reluctant to let the CASB tackle the job. What's not wanted are more majority and minority reports.

After assuming responsibility last year, Transport Minister Benoit Bouchard wrote to all board members asking that they show loyalty to Mr. Thorneycroft. But, from all reports, the letter did little good.

### NOT ACHIEVED

Ironically, when the safety board was created back in 1984, the whole idea was to put an end to perceived conflicts. Prior to this, all aircraft accidents were investigated by the Department of Transport.

But since the department's own facilities were often a major part of the investigation, it was frequently alleged that investigators were in conflict with their own employers. The board was created to eliminate these perceptions.

Now, it's back to square one.

The government does have legislation to create a new Transport Accident Investigation Board, whose jurisdiction would go beyond aviation. It would investigate all types of accidents under federal jurisdiction - including aviation.

What the legislation would do is provide clear guidelines for aviation investigations, settling the disputed areas of responsibility and ensuring the board chairman would have clear authority over all activities.

The legislation was actually introduced before Parliament was dissolved for the Nov. 21 election, but it died with dissolution.

It should be one of the first bills to be reintroduced. This is no time to be without an aviation safety agency that has the confidence of government and credibility with the public.

Obviously, the remedy is beyond mere tampering. It's a job for Parliament and no time should be lost when the new session begins.



Ottawa

Stewart MacLeod  
Thomson News Service

suggestions already offered, the Commons will be sitting non-stop into the next century.

Still, that does not prevent us from trying to stuff another ballot into the overflowing suggestion box. It's this: as soon as Parliament meets, the government should do something drastic about the Canadian Aviation Safety Board.

Scrapping it comes immediately to mind. Completely overhauling it comes more slowly to mind.

There has never been a time when it was so important that we have a confidence-inspiring aviation investigative agency. Never has there been such a preoccupation with flying safety, never has there been so much open concern about air-traffic control, never have we heard so much about near misses and over-crowded airports and skies.

And our Canadian Aviation Safety Board, the agency that should be looking into all these problems - not to mention all accidents - gives the impression of being in a shambles.

More than a year has passed since a private consulting group studied the CASB and told them transport minister John Crosbie that "divisions are so entrenched that, if allowed to continue, the board's effectiveness could be seriously impaired."

It has been allowed to continue.

The minister commissioned a second study of the \$17-million-a-year agency and, while it has never been made public, its title tells all - "Divided, Divisive, Disruptive."

### TWO EXAMPLES

There are two distinct groups within the nine-member board. Five members, including chairman Kenneth Thorneycroft, are said to feel that the 83 accredited investigators should be allowed to reach conclusions and it's up to the

## Berry's World



"Yeh, I'm Al, the kinder, gentler loan shark. Whaddya want, pal?"

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877-2201

877-8822

STAFF WRITERS

Brian MacLeod

Donna Kell

SPORTS WRITER

Paul Svoboda

ACCOUNTING

June Glendenning Tammy Leitich

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Joan Mannall

PUBLISHER  
David A. Beattie  
EDITOR  
Mike Turner  
AD MANAGER  
Dan Taylor

ADVERTISING SALES  
Jeannine Valois  
Sharon Hollingsworth

PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT  
Dave Hastings, Supt.  
Myles Gilson

CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT  
Marie Shadbolt

PRESSROOM FOREMAN  
Brian Aikman

PRESS ASSISTANT  
Lee Bittner

## SNAFU® by Bruce Beattie



"Sir Galahad had to slay the fire-breathing dragon. His smoke was causing acid rain."

## Mandatory retirement

The dream of many a working man or woman is to one day tell the boss goodbye, to leave the grind behind and retire to sunny Arizona, the sooner the better.

greatest teachers never really stop teaching.

Forced retirement, if it is sanctioned by the government, cuts across all these lines. It does not discriminate between the great teacher and the tired old widget-maker.



Your  
Business  
Diane Maley  
Thomson News Service

As the pension benefits roll in, the worker bee will be free at last. Free to write that novel that has been taking shape in his mind for the past two decades. Free to travel, to read, to study. Free to set up that little business he's been dreaming of for so long.

The fact is, most people retire as soon as they can. Why, then, are a growing number of thoughtful people opposed to mandatory retirement at age 65?

Arguments in favor of forced retirement are persuasive. We all know the guy who has been coasting into retirement for the past decade. He hates his job, he works as little as possible, but he's hanging in for the pension. Usually, he has more than earned it in his younger days, when the pay was low and people worked long and hard.

Knowing the guy will have to go when he hits 65 calms his boss's nerves; the boss won't feel he has to fire him, and the employee's dignity will have been spared.

### SLIDING SCALE

Higher up the employment scale, the situation is a little different. Many executives are hitting their stride at age 65; not all of them are willing to step aside gracefully. One might well wonder whether they should have to.

Among university professors, forced retirement insures an inflow of fresh ideas, keeping the already musty halls of Academe from becoming staler yet. But the

The strongest argument against mandatory retirement is that without it, employers would have to offer appealing inducements to people to quit working. There would be big payoffs and extended benefit plans.

Arguments in favor of forced retirement are legion: it opens up jobs for younger workers, cuts the employers' costs, and so on. It also forces low-paid workers, particularly women, into a retirement life of near poverty and low pension benefits.

### HELP YOURSELF

The poor need all the options they can get. But for those who can afford a little freedom, retirement should not catch one by surprise. It is the opportunity of a lifetime, plain and simple.

If you plan well in advance, retirement at whatever age can serve as a springboard to a new career, job or hobby. Over the years, money can be tucked away, skills learned. Many successful writers began their career in their 60s. Many people earn graduate degrees in their middle years.

Yes, age 60 and over is now considered the middle years. People in their forties, which used to be considered the middle-aged years, are considered to be young - now that the post-war baby-boom generation is turning 40. With our blue-jeans, running shoes and rock music, we have changed what it means to be 40.

In a few more years, with luck and good planning, we will change what it means to be retired. No more will a man or woman suffer a loss of status when he or she retires. A loss of income, perhaps, but a loss of respect, no. Few baby-boomers, I suspect, will be punching the clock much past age 65.

## Color us rustic



Staff  
Comment

Brian MacLeod

After reading a 14-page "community research profile" of Halton that was issued by Halton Region recently, a would-be business owner might conclude that Oakville would be the best place to set up shop.

The pamphlet is brimming with interesting and not so interesting facts, and relevant and not so relevant figures.

In the last 25 years, most of Halton's growth occurred in Burlington and Oakville, the document says. "Both municipalities are noted for their affluence, due to the fine quality of their homes and the high percentage of wealthy families that live there."

In addition Oakville and Burlington rank third and fifth on the basis of average household income. They are 37 per cent and 23 per cent respectively higher than the average household income in Canada. Here in Halton Hills, we only make 15 per cent more than the average Canadian household.

And Halton's industrial development seems to be switching from the dominant auto industry to other manufacturing businesses and the service sector, the pamphlet says.

Of the more than 520 "industrial concerns" (one assumes they mean businesses), two-thirds are located in Halton's two southern municipalities.

However, all that money they make down there seems to be spent on mortgages. Seventy-five per cent of the houses in Halton (most new growth has been concentrated in the south), has occurred in the last 25 years. And the average price of a house in Oakville is 50 per cent higher than the Canadian mean, 12 per cent higher in Burlington, 21 per cent higher in Milton and only 10 per cent higher in Halton Hills.

Retail sales in Halton are about 14 per cent higher than the rest of Canada, the pamphlet says. It then goes on to list a myriad of shopping and service facilities in the south. All it says about the north is that "growth is creating a demand for hotel and dining facilities" and that we cater to several small sized businesses.

In the culture and recreation department, we here in the north are also junior cousins. Once again, the pamphlet lists a host of parks and facilities located in the south. Here in Halton Hills "the countryside is rustic and is characterized by scenic country trails including the well-known Niagara Escarpment and Bruce Trail."

One would think they might have at least listed Acton's scenic Fairy Lake, and even Cedarvale Park in Georgetown.

But the pamphlet inadvertently tries to make up for our backward ways, here in the north. It gave us a brand new recycling facility in Halton Hills. Funny, I thought the South Service Road was in Oakville.

Ah, but never mind, we still have the rustic countryside: