

# the HERALD Outlook

## Unhappy? - Just say cheese



**Your Business**  
Diane Maley  
Thomson News Service

Feeling a little blue and in need of a quick lift? Say cheese, or better still, stick a pen between your teeth.

Emulating a smile can give rise to happy feelings, medical researchers say. The theory dates back to Charles Darwin, who wrote about it in 1872.

If most people tried putting on a happy face, it could cause some unhappy looks on the faces of people who sell caffeine, alcohol and "happy pills." No one would need mood boosters anymore, thanks to the ease of saying cheese.

Psychiatrists, too, could see their client list dwindle as formerly depressed patients walked around pronouncing the "e" sound and chomping on their pens and pencils. Mind you, the technique only works when people do not have a good reason for feeling sad, researchers caution.

Many different studies have been done of the relationship between facial expression and mood, according to a recent story in the New York Times. The obvious rebuttal is that we tend to feel happy before we look happy. In other words, the mood causes the facial expression, not the other way around.

That's not to say there is no connection between the two.

### HOTHEADS FROWN

Indeed, Dr. Robert Zajonc, a psychologist at the University of Michigan, links changes in facial

muscles to the temperature of blood flowing to the brain. The higher the temperature, the worse the person's mood. Cooler blood results from a pleasant facial expression. Other researchers say the link has yet to be proved.

Even proponents of the link admit that thoughts, memories and real-life events are more important than face muscles in determining a person's mood. But people who go around scowling all the time may be contributing to their own unhappiness, they say.

Just think: A simple parting of the lips, a flashing of teeth, could change a person's life if done often enough.

"I'm not saying that all moods are due to changes in the muscles of the face, only that facial action leads to changes in mood," Dr. Zajonc says. If he's right, he certainly has uncovered a useful body of information.

In his opinion, the physiology of the change is that as face muscles relax or tighten, they raise or lower the temperature of blood flowing to the brain. The temperature changes affect the part of the brain that regulates emotion.

### MONKEY SEE

Researchers tested the hypothesis on different volunteer groups, asking people to adopt certain facial expressions without telling them the mood the expression was supposed to reflect. For the most part, people reported feeling surprised when they opened their eyes wide and let their mouths drop open, for example.

This leads one to wonder how deeply the feelings run. People may mimic a sense of well being without really feeling it; the happy face may be little more than an act.

"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 0943.

877-2201

877-8822

STAFF WRITERS

Ben Dummett

Donna Kell

PUBLISHER  
David A. Beattie

EDITOR  
Brian MacLeod

AD MANAGER  
Dan Taylor

SPORTS EDITOR

Collin Gibson

ACCOUNTING

June Glendenning Joan Mannall

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Tammy Salt

ADVERTISING SALES

Jeannine Valois

Craig Teeter

Stacie Roberts

PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT

Dave Hastings, Supt.

Annie Olsen

Myles Gilson

Susanne Wilson

CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT

Marie Shadbolt

PRESSROOM FOREMAN

Brian Aikman

PRESS ASSISTANT

Todd Aikman

## SNAFU® by Bruce Beattie



"Now you tell me this doubles as a lightning rod!"

## Nuclear safety needs not being met



Ottawa

Vic Parsons

Almost a year ago, the Commons energy committee told Parliament the agency which regulates the nuclear industry was "substantially deficient in money and manpower."

However, someone in Ottawa was either asleep or cared not to hear. Rather than improving, the situation has worsened.

The Atomic Energy Control Board (AECB) is not some minor agency which designs heraldic crests or mulls over landscaping plans for the prime minister's garden. Its purpose is to ensure that use of nuclear energy does not endanger public health, security and the environment.

No matter which side of the nuclear debate one takes, there must surely be agreement on one point - that the industry must be regulated so that safety is assured.

Nuclear energy plays a major role in Canada today. One-half of Ontario's electricity comes from nuclear plants and the provincial government is committed to more over the next decade. About 15 per cent of electricity generated across Canada comes from nuclear reactors.

The public might reasonably expect, then, that high priority would be given to a watchful eye on the industry. Instead, regulation is being shoved to the backburner.

### APPEAL MADE

Last summer, Rene J.A. Levesque, AECB president, appealed to then-energy minister Marcel Masse to restore a half-dozen positions cut from the agency's staff. He asked for a 50-per-cent increase in staff and budget so the AECB could effectively do its job.

The reward for his impertinence was another cut. In the 1989-90 fiscal year, the AECB will see its "person-years" - that's the amount of work one employee can do in a

year - fall to 264 from 269, and its budget drop to \$24 million from \$24.4 million last year.

Last month, Levesque and his officials were again before the Commons committee. Their remarks reveal frustration at the inability to do their job. For the public, the comments are downright scary.

Levesque said there are 3,300 users of radioisotopes in Canada. "One third of radioisotope users, about 1,100, did not meet acceptable standards in 1987, and their number is increasing. This is because inspections are too infrequent and the incidence of unsafe practices is too high."

Levesque added that inspections should be made at least once a year. But, in practice, it is sometimes longer than two years between inspections.

Among users the AECB regulates are 18 nuclear reactors, 10 research reactors, uranium mines, hospitals and cancer treatment centres and industries.

As technology in the nuclear industry changes, the AECB falls even farther behind. Levesque told the committee the agency has no resources for retraining or updating the knowledge of reactor operators.

A divisional manager, Pierre Marchildon, added that the AECB thinks there should be some design changes to the shutdown system of the Pickering A reactors near Toronto, but so far only a superficial review has been possible. He said a review should also be made of the new Candu 3 reactors now being designed but this can't be done because even operating reactors put a strain on staff.

Jim Harvie, another divisional manager, told MPs that as reactors get older "more things wear out." He said he would not say there are greater risks, but it is difficult for AECB officials to satisfy themselves that risks don't exist.

The dismal list goes on: Levesque said the AECB has fallen behind in its safety commitments to the International Atomic Energy Agency which, by the way, ranks Canada last among developed countries in terms of staff and money spent on reactor inspection.

## Spending estimates are ignored

By RENNIE MacKENZIE  
Ottawa Bureau

In a spring ritual followed by many Treasury Board presidents before him, Robert de Cotret presented Parliament in April with the estimates, the federal government's annual spending blueprint.

The detailed plans for dispensing government largesse over the coming year and reviews of departmental performance are referred directly to House of Commons committees for critical examination. But there is concern the estimates - described by Auditor General Ken Dye as "the best single source of information" on department programs - are largely ignored by MPs.

Senior bureaucrats claim the politicians seldom take full advantage of the estimates and miss the best opportunity to measure government accomplishments.

Parliamentary Library research officer Peter Berg, who prepared a two-part review of the handling of the estimates, found the scrutiny of MPs usually leans to matters of constituency interest and items of embarrassment to the government.

Public interest in government spending has grown over the years and so have the estimates, from a relatively simple single volume to a hefty, three-part set of 86 documents. Recent additions and refinements require departments to outline results they expect to achieve from program expenditures and account for use of past funds.

### POWERFUL TOOL

Yet former correctional services commissioner Donald Yeomans has said most parliamentarians don't seem to realize or care that the departmental estimates provide them with a powerful tool.

"In four years of presenting (estimates) to the House of Commons committee on justice and legal affairs, I only encountered two members of Parliament who showed interest in the reported actual results or achievements of the Correctional Service of Canada," he told an Australian audience several years ago.

Douglas Hartle, an economist, educator and former deputy-secretary of Treasury Board, described the attitude of MPs as "less than enthusiastic."

Hartle noted that the committees - there are 20 perusing this year's estimates - are stricken with high absentee and turnover rates among members.

In a Canadian Tax Foundation paper, Hartle said there is a lack of interest on the part of MPs in reviewing established program spending. There is no incentive for government MPs to be critical and opposition MPs concentrate on department managers and "feign outrage at the extravagant expenditures made for such line items as entertainment, travel and furniture."

There's a reason for that, Yeomans said.

"I learned 23 years ago... that the Canadian public is not interested in good management in the public service. Therefore, parliamentarians and ministers lack real motivation in this subject."

To help MPs understand and evaluate departmental programs in their committee reviews, Berg has prepared a list of 16 general questions to consider when reviewing the estimates.

## Berry's World



Jim Berry  
© 1989 by NEA, Inc.

REMINISCING IN BEIJING