

the HERALD

Home Newspaper of Halton Hills - Established 1866

A Division of Canadian Newspapers Company Limited

45 Guelph Street, Georgetown L7G 3Z6, Ontario

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Second Class Mail - Registered Number 0913

Page 6 - THE HERALD, Wednesday, July 25, 1990

Gambling encouraged

A press release was received last week outlining the Ontario government's newest plunge into the lottery pool, 'Cleansweep.'

Tickets for Cleansweep went on sale to the public Monday and supposedly, the money raised is to be used to address environmental concerns.

It is to laugh, it is to cry. It is to become increasingly agitated over government and bureaucratic assumptions on the gullibility of the public.

As with all lotteries, Cleansweep simply represents another tax - albeit hidden - on the poor.

Your average upper-middle and higher income earner only buys lottery tickets as an after-thought. If a draw is missed, so what! No big deal.

Those hovering just below or just above the poverty line, on the other hand, view lotteries as an opportunity to start a new life and all too often spend money they can ill afford on the dream - the chance of a lifetime.

A ticket for Cleansweep costs \$2 and there will be a minimum weekly jackpot of \$225,000. Approximately 40 cents from every dollar spent on the tickets will go the environment ministry.

Bafflegab, or what?

Isn't the environment ministry already supposed to be using tax dollars to counter pollution problems?

Where does the balance of the money raised by the tickets go?

The profits from Wintario were supposed to go to the Ontario health system, so why is it in such dire straits?

Similarly, Provincial Treasurer Robert Nixon collected \$40 million in taxes to recycle tires and little has been done, as yet, to battle this environmental concern.

Environmental problems should be addressed by the Ontario government without the need to resort to gimmicks like Cleansweep.

If the tickets fail to sell, does that mean the Ontario government can wash its hands of environmental concerns and blame a seemingly non-caring public?

Basically put, Cleansweep represents governmental encouragement to gamble. For the most part, those who buy the tickets will have little thought on how they are helping the environment. In many instances, they will also be taking much needed food off the table in order to play the game.

A sad commentary on supposedly responsible government.

Hat's off to Frank

If actions do indeed speak louder than words, then Frank Bruno is well on his way to finally laying to rest the apocryphal words attributed to venerated baseball legend Leo "The Lip" Durocher who is reported to have said, "Nice guys finish last."

Bruno, if you will recall, is the young man who plays and has officiated in the Georgetown's Men's Flag Football League.

A promising young athlete, who starred in several sports at the Canadian College level, Bruno suffered a near-fatal head injury in an industrial accident six years ago that left him only able to function at 70 per cent of his pre-accident capacity.

Although he resides with his parents in Downsview, Bruno hails from Georgetown as his adopted hometown and he was playing in the Georgetown Men's Flag Football League at the time of the industrial accident.

In fact, at the time, he was leading the league in scoring and his soaring punts and kickoffs had punt and kickoff returners scurrying hither and yon to track down the orbiting orb.

He embarked on a rehabilitation program and his progress astonished the previous doom and loomers.

His athletic feats at the National Games, staged in Richmond, Virginia, earned him a spot on the Canadian team which is competing this past week in the World Games for the Disabled.

Colin Gibson

Editor's Notebook



ed in Assen, Holland.

He set two world records while winning gold medals in the 200 and 400 metres and also won a gold medal in the 100 metre event.

He also has won two silver medals - in the long jump and the shot put.

Throughout his near-tragedy and his triumphs, Frank has remained the same unassuming and affable young man that I knew prior to his injury.

The World Games for the Disabled end this Friday and no doubt, Frank will be in attendance this Sunday, when his flag football team, the Dawgs, challenge Karry Kitchens in an 8:45 a.m. scheduled game at GDHS.

No doubt, Frank will once more reply, "Oh, alright, I guess" in response to queries about his performance on the World stage.

He deserves more. The mantle of world athletic glory, fittingly, suits him perfectly.



TONIGHTS CHOICES... CHANNEL 3...
...AN ECONOMIST DISCUSSES THE DIRECTION OF THE CANADIAN DOLLAR...
CHANNEL 7... A PANEL OF ECONOMISTS EXPLAIN WHY THE DOLLAR DIDN'T DO WHAT THEY PREDICTED IT WOULD...
CHANNEL 11... THE FINANCE MINISTER PREDICTING TOTAL DISASTER FOR THE DOLLAR...
CHANNEL 13... THE PRIME MINISTER TAKES CREDIT FOR THE STRONG DOLLAR
CHANNEL 21 NEWS... AN INVESTIGATION IN TO WHY NONE OF THESE CLOWNS HAVE GOT ANYTHING RIGHT IN 10 YEARS.

Worrisome numbers pointing to recession possibilities

OTTAWA - Canada may not officially be in recession yet, but there are some pretty worrisome numbers floating around out there.

One of the latest batches is the business and personal bankruptcy figures released by the Consumer and Corporate Affairs Department earlier this week.

They showed a 30-per-cent jump in the first six months of 1990 over the same period last year. If that pace of financial failures continues, the final toll will be worse than the nightmare recession of 1981-82. In the January-to-June period, 23,651 bankruptcies were declared, according to the department's figures.

Much of the blame for this collapse is being placed at the door of the government's high-interest-rate policy, which now is starting to shut down consumer and business spending. In turn, this puts the squeeze on corporate profits.

Obviously, one way a vulnerable company or individual suffers is by having to pay larger interest charges on loans - be they for investment, mortgages or purchases of necessary equipment.

But federal interest-rate policy is also pushing the Canadian dollar ever higher relative to its U.S. counterpart and that is causing severe problems for exporters. A strong dollar makes our products more expensive to foreign buyers.

U.S. RATES FALL

It could get worse. Although Canadian rates have eased somewhat in the last few weeks, they are not tumbling as quickly as in the U.S., where the central bank has been careful not to force the economy into a recession.

Even a giant like Canadian Pacific Forest Products Ltd. has been feeling the pinch. The strong Canadian dollar, said a vice-president this week, "is absolutely killing us."

Pity then the poor, smaller manufacturing firm struggling to compete for foreign business.

The bankruptcy figures show that 5,292 businesses collapsed in the first six months of 1990. That's a 25-per-cent hike over the same period last year.

Retail trade, construction, and accommodation, food and beverage firms are among the bankruptcy leaders. To a degree, that's expected.

Small retailers, especially so-called "mom-and-pop" corner stores; companies building homes and doing renovations; and restaurants all have comparatively high start-up and failure rates, regardless of general economic circumstances.

But, even in tough times, they display enormous resiliency. When the economy was slowing down in

Vic Parsons
Ottawa Bureau
Thomson News Service

1989, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business estimates, there was still a net growth of 28,000 firms.

DECLINING SECTOR

What may be more telling about the state of our economy, however, is the decline of the manufacturing sector. Broadly speaking, these are larger enterprises that require bigger cash investments in plants and equipment. Staff are likely to be more highly trained and paid.

These are businesses which are expected to last for some time.

But what do the statistics tell us?

Jobs in manufacturing have been tumbling for some time. Although the jobless rate has hung in at an unexpectedly chipper 7.5 per cent, manufacturing jobs have dropped by 150,000 from a year ago.

The bankruptcy numbers are gloomy too. In Ontario, for example, 120 manufacturing companies, with debts totalling \$103 million, bit the dust in the first half of the year.

In Quebec, another 184 manufacturers collapsed. Numbers for other provinces were British Columbia, 44; Alberta, 26; Manitoba, 17; Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia, eight; and New Brunswick, seven. Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island had no manufacturing failures.

There's no intention here to belittle industries other than manufacturing. Every failure means the loss of jobs, the end of perhaps, years of hard work and crumbled dreams. But manufacturing bankruptcies generally affect more people, involve greater sums of money and could mean the loss, forever, of business opportunities.

Canadian journalists show ugly traits

TORONTO - One of Canadian journalism's less charming traits is a tendency to feel superior to Americans.

This is quite often manifest in a belief that while Canadians know all about the United States, Americans are ignorant of Canada.

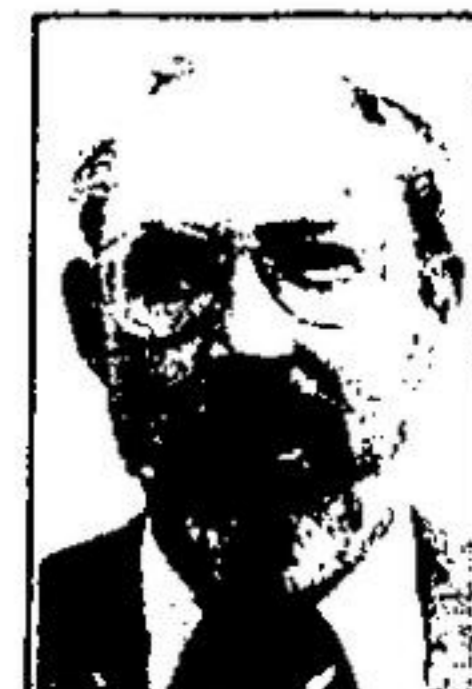
It is a caricature of reality, of course. Informed Americans know a great deal about Canada, just as informed Canadians are very aware of their next-door neighbor.

During a recent two-week visit to the United States, for example, I watched stories and analysis of and about Canada pop up almost daily in a wide variety of U.S. media.

This included the replaying of the CBC's coverage of the July 1 Canada Day celebrations - it was strange to hear Peter and Wendy's familiar voices 1,000 miles from home - on the C-Span cable network, which is available across the entire U.S. Such direct Canadian coverage is apparently a weekly feature.

Most interesting of all, however, was to see intelligent commentary on Canadian political matters appearing in the most unexpected places, such as the U.S. Deep South.

"Historically, Americans have tended to dismiss the entire country, as did Henry David Thoreau who said, "I fear that I have not

Derek Nelson
Queen's Park
Thomson News Service

got much to say about Canada, not having seen much; what I got by going to Canada was a cold."

The death of the Meech Lake accord and what it might mean was dissected not only in big city newspapers like the Atlanta Constitution, but in smaller cousins like the Anniston Star.

Anniston, Ala., is a city of 30,000 people where Canada is hardly a household word, yet editor and publisher Brandt Ayers had no problem devoting his entire editorial comment column to explaining what was happening here.

Whether one agrees with Ayers or not, it would be nice if Canadians looking at U.S. events showed as much originality and fairness in their analysis as he does in his.