

the HERALD 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.

877-2201

Second Class Mail - Registered Number 0943.

877-8822

PUBLISHER
K. Robert Malcolmson

STAFF WRITERS
Ben Dummett Lisa Rutledge

ADVERTISING SALES
Jeannine Valois Craig Teeter
Stacie Roberts Kim Haryott

MANAGING EDITOR
Colin Gibson

SPORTS EDITOR
Rob Risk

PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT
Dave Hastings, Supt. Myles Gilson
Stu Robertson Susanne Wilson

AD MANAGER
Dan Taylor

ACCOUNTING
Jennie Hapichuk Inga Shier

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING
Joan Mannall

CIRCULATION DEPT.
Marie Shadbolt

Rail policy questioned

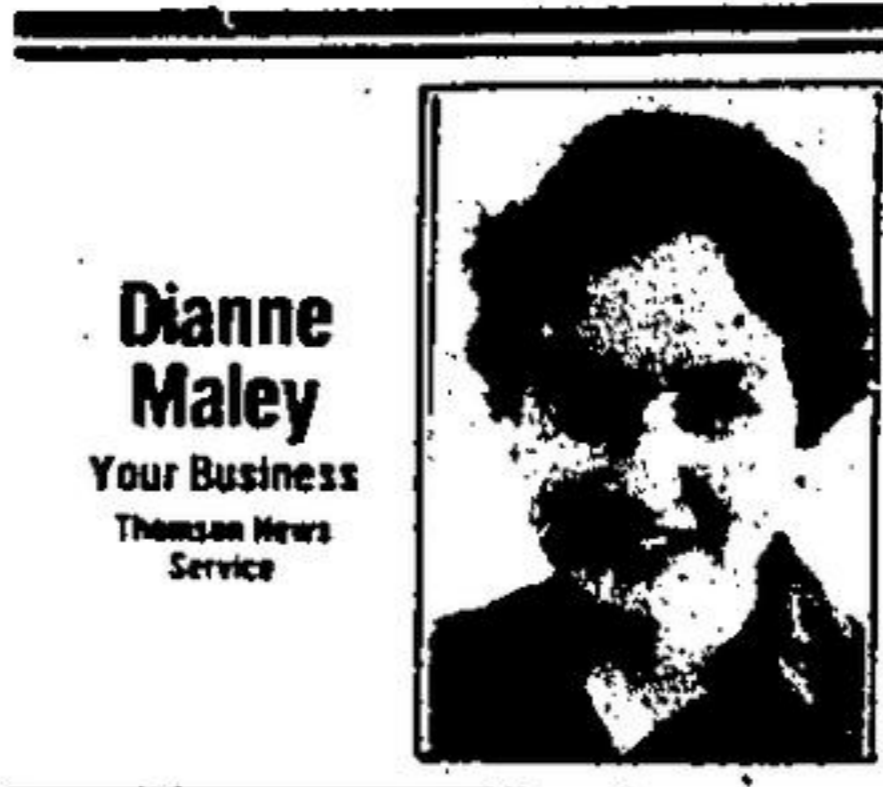
TORONTO - Airlines are raising their prices because of rising fuel costs. People may soon be wishing they could take the train instead.

But our short-sighted federal government shelved transcontinental rail service in favor of planes, trucks and cars. Current events in the Middle East show what a mistake this was.

Indeed, Via Rail is said to be bringing back some of the routes it cut in Ontario. Why it dropped them in the first place is a mystery. Is it too late to rethink our national transportation policy?

Let's look at what is happening. Automakers have not done much since the 1979 energy crisis to make it cheaper to drive a car. The fall in oil prices in the mid-1980s dispelled the crisis atmosphere and allowed the industry to sink into complacency. Big cars grew in popularity again.

Even a modest car is expensive to run. A motorist would have to pay \$556 a month to own and operate a Ford Tempo, a recent study prepared by Runzheimer Canada for the Canadian Automobile Association shows. That does not include an anticipated rise in gasoline prices.



The airline industry has been warning of big fare increases for some time. The effect of non-business travel could be dramatic. Travel within Canada already is expensive, with the exception of the occasional seat sales. If fares rise much further, it will be difficult for people to visit relatives in other parts of the country.

It is not too late - or too soon - to restore Via Rail service. With perseverance, we could end up with a new, improved rail passenger system. Chances are, though, that nothing will be done. Ottawa will point to its mounting deficit.

SALES SLUMP

With a rise in gas prices likely, automakers fear their already dismal sales will slip further.

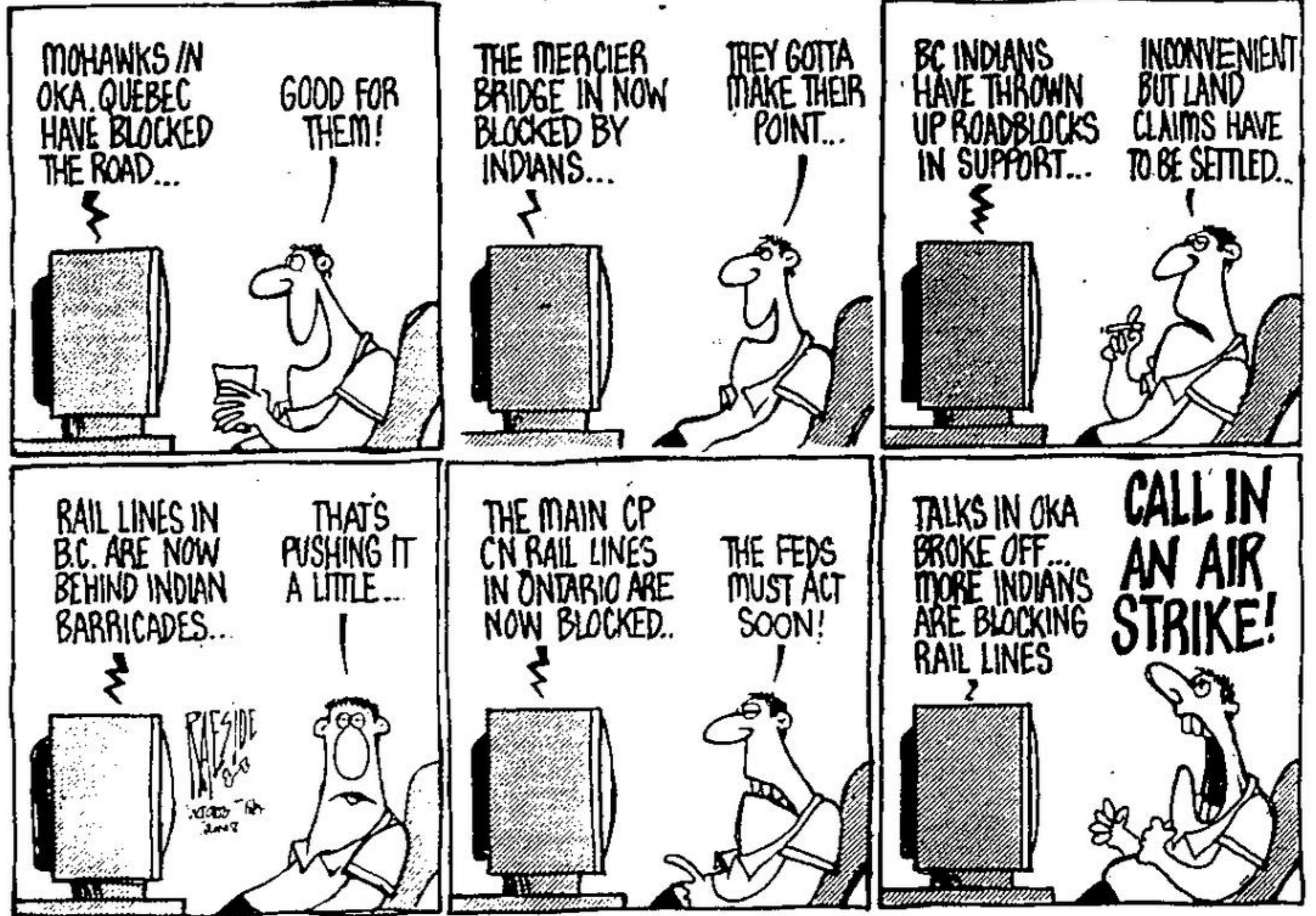
Meanwhile, airline executives say the cost of jet fuel has risen 25 per cent since Iraq invaded Kuwait. Air fares already were poised to increase because of lessened competition in the industry. The fuel price rise could push them out of reach of some people.

Price is one factor arguing in favor of trains. Pollution is another. Arguing against a revival of Via Rail is the fact that few people used it. That could change if air fares and gasoline prices rise.

PASSED ON

Ottawa's problems are of its own making. Unfortunately, politicians are making problems for the rest of us. We're in debt up to our ears, our interest rates are among the highest in the world, after subtracting inflation, and our economy is grinding to a painful halt.

Chances are we will escape serious recession, (that's an euphemism for depression). But if depression comes, and come it might, we will be even poorer than the folks were in the Dirty 30's. Back then, the unemployed could ride the rails from town to town looking for work. If depression strikes in the 1990s, there will be few rails to ride.



Kuwait battered on all sides

TORONTO - Poor Kuwait.

Not only does the country get overrun by the Iraqi army, but countless Western commentators have since added insult to injury.

"The nation is run by a sheik, who has even less claim to power, in democratic terms, than Saddam Hussein himself - at least he is head of a (political) party," is how Canadian commentator Walter Stewart put it.

Other analysts have played variations on the same theme that the Kuwaiti government isn't really legitimate.

Some go further, suggesting outright that, if the Kuwaitis didn't quite deserve the Iraqi occupation, at least they bear partial responsibility for the crisis. After all, they were pumping oil in excess of OPEC quotas, thereby driving down the price and hurting Iraqi income.

Subsidiary negative themes accuse the Kuwaitis of not sharing their oil wealth, but stashing it in "Swiss bank accounts." They are also a "feudal" society, not "modern" and "progressive" like Iraq in matters such as health, education and women's rights. And besides, they were "British-created" and really belong to Iraq.

SURROGATE TARGET

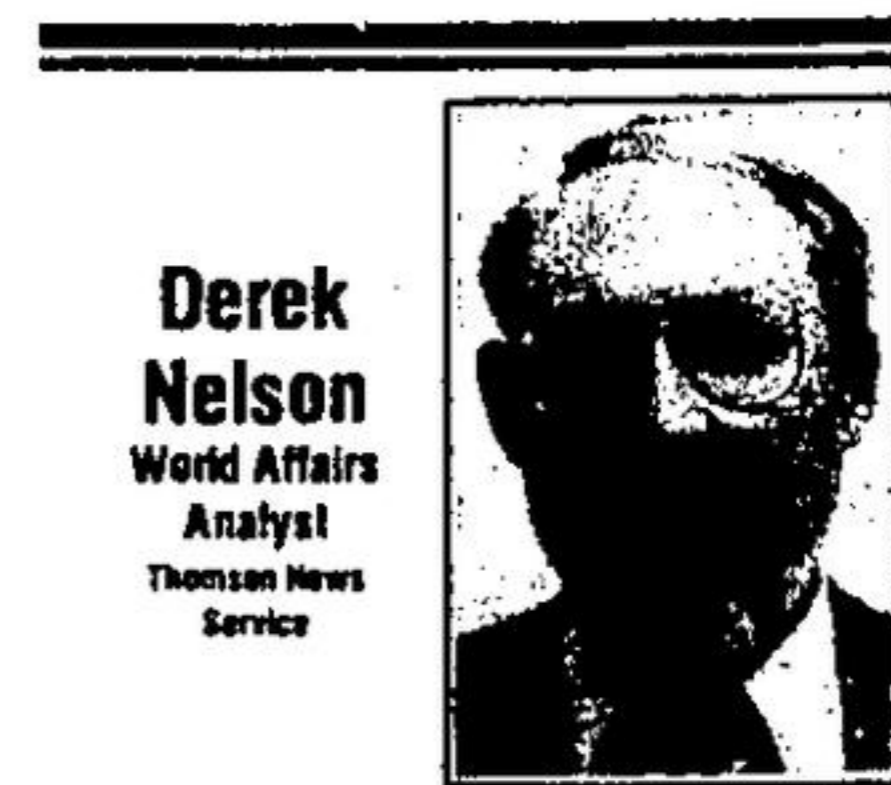
Frankly, there is something deeply offensive about this kind of reasoning. And a little puzzling - unless Kuwait is simply a surrogate target for the real enemy, the U.S.

It seems as if the existence of Kuwait can be made questionable and if Iraqi actions can be made at least partially supportable, then the U.S. role can be called into question.

Stewart illustrates this nicely: He called the U.S. military build-up the action of a "bully." While he conceded Saddam's actions were "blatant international aggression," he labelled the U.S. response "more of the same."

It's true that Kuwait isn't a Western-style democracy. But then, no Arab land is or is ever likely to be, given the power and importance of family and clan relationships over interest group politics.

But it is beyond imagining how anyone can compare the 44 people



Amnesty International considered were unjustly imprisoned in Kuwait to the thousands in Iraqi jails, and Saddam's bombing, gassing and shooting of whole towns and villages inside his own country.

It's noticeable that Saddam Hussein won power in 1979 through a conspiracy, and immediately massacred his opponents. This is what Stewart calls a political party. The Iraq that Saddam rules, incidentally, was far more a British creation (in 1920) than Kuwait.

The Al Sabah family has ruled Kuwait continuously since the 1600s, even when nominally under first the Turkish and then British protection. On at least two occasions, it was the Sabah who gave

the Saudi royal family sanctuary during 200 years of civil war in adjacent Arabia.

In fact, by most any comparison, the easy-going family-run welfare state that was Kuwait (even houses were free for citizens), was a superior place to live than the "Arab socialist" dictatorship of Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

INTO WEAPONS

Iraq is broke not because Kuwait was selling too much oil (and what if it was? - it is Kuwait's oil), but because Iraq has poured most of its oil wealth into weapons of war.

Kuwait, meanwhile, has invested much of its profits in the Western world (not "Swiss bank accounts"), aiming for a steady cash return from those investments in the days after the oil runs out. For such foresight, Kuwait should be punished?

It was no accident that the Iraqis couldn't find a single Kuwaiti of note to serve in the puppet government they set up, and which lasted only a couple of days prior to Iraqi annexation.

There are many reasons for opposing Saddam's conquest. There are a few for allowing it to go unchallenged - but one of those isn't and shouldn't be any moral ambiguity about Kuwait's right to exist.

Berry's World



Jim Berry
© 1990 by NEA, Inc.

"Who loves ya, baby?"

Poets' Corner

WITH OR WITHOUT

You can read without writing
Without reading - you can't write.
You can look without seeing
Without looking - you can't see.
You can listen without hearing
Without listening - you can't hear.
You can feel without touching
Without feeling - why touch?
You can love without lust
Without love you should not lust.
You can receive without giving
Without receiving - you can't give.
You can love without hating
Without loving - you won't hate.
You can leave without going
Without leaving - you can't go.
You can live without me
Without you - I don't know.

By J.B.
Acton.

LITTLE BOY OF MINE

For that little boy of mine
Oh, the sun has got to shine
He goes off to school each day
And his work should be like play
Must be happy and wear a smile
If his life is to be worth while
Should have love grow in his mind
If he is to grow up kind

Would like to do things for you
When a boy, I'd like them too
There are things in life to do
Live a life that's good and true
Oh, that little boy of mine
He does make the sun to shine
On this world we have to stay
Make the best of every day
As in life we twist and wind
There's a job for you to find.

By Albert Brooks
Limehouse