

People's Forum

Animal tragedy prompts response from reader

The Editor,

Sir, I'm writing to you in the hope that you could spare a few lines in your excellent newspaper to bring attention to a problem that faces pet owners, mainly dog lovers at this time of the year.

As I usually do, I was taking my dog for an early morning walk in Prospect Park, Acton.

On Fairy Lake there were large numbers of geese, swans, etc. sitting on the newly formed ice upon the lake surface. Ice that was still not very strong. We had reached the farthest point of the centre point of the lake opposite the

Legion Hall, when I saw a German Shepherd dog come on to the ice from the Legion grounds, in pursuit of the ducks.

I could see what would happen but could do nothing. If I called the dog it would on to even thinner ice. Well, the inevitable happened. About 50 yards from shore the ice gave way and the dog went into the water.

We watched the dog attempt to get out for a few minutes, unable to help and then we made our way to the nearest telephone, in Acton Arena, and called the Animal Welfare authorities, who set out

right away, and we returned to the scene.

Alas, it was too late, the cold had taken its toll, and all that remained of a once beautiful animal was a hole in the ice. It was sad and for me, very distressing, and I'm sure for the owners of that beautiful pet.

The point of this letter is hopefully to remind pet owners, mainly dog owners, of the dangers of allowing your pets to run by lakes, ponds, etc., unleashed. Later the ice will thicken and the problem will disappear until the spring.

Another point on which I would appreciate a little guidance by anyone who knows the problem: when we walk by the lake, I always take a little food for the wild fowl, but lately I have begun to wonder whether or not I am doing them a grave disservice. I am not wise in ways of the countryside, being brought up in the city.

I've always understood that the birds migrate to warmer climates in the winter, but it seems that ever increasing numbers are staying and a lot are not surviving, being frozen into

the ice, etc.

Am I contributing to their suffering by giving them food and maybe causing them to stay? I would appreciate any expert advice you could give.

I realize these problems must arise each year and that warnings are given but a reminder could save a lot of suffering.

Thankyou for your time.
Yours faithfully,
P. Brooks, Acton.

P.S. There is nothing but praise for the Animal Welfare people, they did all they could promptly. They were as distressed as I.

Lions Club thanks

Dear Sir:

Through the facility of your editorial page, the Lions Club of Georgetown wishes to extend its appreciation to all who participated in our 59th Annual Santa Claus Parade on November 24th.

We gratefully acknowledge the generous assistance of the local business and merchants who supported our effort financially again this year. We have acknowledged each on an individual basis in an advertisement placed in this edition of

your newspaper.

We also extend our thanks to the Halton Region Police for their efforts in traffic control.

Above all, we wish to thank all of the community groups whose enthusiastic participation again made the parade a success.

We look forward to seeing everyone back for our 60th Annual Parade next November.

Yours very truly,
Mark Rush,
Chairman,
1990 Lion's Santa Claus
Parade Committee.

Successful bazaar

Dear Editor:

The Tenant Association of 8 Durham thank everyone who helped make our bazaar a great success. Prize winners are as follows: Afghan - M. Williams,

Cushion - M. Cleave, Doll and
Candle - S. Donalds.

Sincerely,
Greta Lenz, Secretary
Durham St. Apt.
Georgetown.

Writer upset with Chamber

To the Editor,

The message published Nov. 24th, by the Board of Directors for Halton Hill's Chamber of Commerce, leaves me to understand their emphasis tends to be oblivious to the needs and grievances of the Town's residents. Understandable, perhaps, for the Chamber, since it is strictly business oriented. One can hardly blame the Chamber's directors. Theirs is a distinct focus we are able to understand. But, for the Board of Halton Hills, it is not quite as easy.

Where is the concern for the less affluent, for the less advantaged? Those whose wages do not rise with the increasing cost of living? What happened to affordable housing?

Frankly, I feel for the unsuspecting. Some able to come up with a downpayment but not able to maintain their homes, mostly due to the rising costs of utilities, and services.

The purchase of a house is about as comparable to that of a car, only more so. Almost anyone is able to purchase a car. It's maintenance is another matter.

Does anyone really believe they actually own their home, their property? If one is unable to come up with the taxes, they will soon find out who really does own it. Taxes are forever subject to change.

The suggestion of more units per acre is tantamount to ghettoing. Smaller roads, when much more space is essential for much needed parking! The higher the

density, the more services and maintenance we are required to

pay for. We already have quite a fleet of police vehicles. The claim is: 'To correct the imbalance of residential taxes is business'. Does 'business' ever help Toronto residential taxes? If so, just try convincing its residents.

The real 'horror' is to even suggest that the Niagara Escarpment and Credit River is a barrier to growth. Nature does not recognize our borders.

The current issue is 'environment' and clarity begins at home regardless of where we live.

I am not anti-development. I am anti-self destruction; anti-sabotage!

Lois A. Richardson,
Georgetown.

Opinion

Guest columnist

Wage and price controls should be brought back

By A.J. DEWDNEY, P. Eng.

Mr. Wilson has said it! We are now officially in a Recession. But not to worry! His recent flyer providing "Important information about Canada's Economic Plan" states clearly that all is well under control (page 5). Is it indeed?

We learn much from this flyer. For example, the national debt has accumulated in the last six years from 200 billion dollars to 300 billion during the Mulroney era at an average rate of 30 billion per year. This is largely attributed to the compounding of interest at an average rate of 10% on the original 200 billion. The rest of the increase has been due to the inability of the government to even meet the initially small, but ever increasing, interest each year on the debt itself.

We have the same situation still. Notwithstanding a variety of disagreeable cuts in service, privatization, provincial funding, or whatever, at no time has it apparently been possible to reduce the deficit to offset the increase in the national debt and the attached increase in interest.

Wilson is reported to have predicted a 25 billion deficit for next year and it is also suggested that it will be eliminated by 1995. But, in view of the conflicting anti-inflation policy of the Bank of Canada (Crow), Wilson's credibility has long since gone. It would seem highly probable, under present policies, that the debt will increase to nearly one half trillion (1/2 T) by 1995. Some control! It is difficult to see the "light at the end of the tunnel" that Wilson sees. It is more likely that the "tunnel" has a dead end where the "contractors" funds run out!

To support this dismal forecast one must consider that the economy is in such a slump that the tax returns, a major source of funds for the reduction of the deficit, will be seriously reduced. Unemployment payments will

have to be highly increased, job training programs enlarged, and many other expenses incurred. At the same time relief, by way of cutting services, is becoming increasingly difficult politically. All this is happening at the same time as the interest, added annually to the increased debt, has to be considered. The 10% figure assumed in Wilson's flyer may well turn out to average much higher as the government is forced to borrow under duress.

We have currently to assume that without drastic increases in personal and corporate taxes we have no hope to even balance the budget. That is not all the bad news. We still have the national debt hanging, like the proverbial albatross, around our necks. This represents a monstrous mortgage, constantly on the increase, which must be tackled and reduced before we can entertain thoughts of any new programs or restore old ones - such as our railway and postal services, already in a shambles.

This said, and hopefully properly realized, the following suggestion is humbly submitted to Mulroney and his unpopular administration in hopes that he is capable of accepting new, but old ways that may even enable them to win back a measure of popular support.

Wage and Price Controls (WPC) were first proposed by Stanfield in a watered-down version during the 1974 election. It met with a cool reception by the electorate and Trudeau, who cautiously kept clear of it, won his reelection with a good majority. Shortly afterwards he decided to introduce it himself realizing the sheer necessity of controlling the rapidly escalating inflation of 1971 to 1974 (see Wilson chart). It may have been a bit of a political manoeuvring, but Trudeau, though he may be arrogant, is no fool.

We need Wage and Price Controls now as ever before. Witness

the 6% wage gains by the auto workers, a direct flouting of government policy. They are not needed because inflation is high, which it is not, but because it is only being kept low by a policy which is throwing the whole economy into a made-in Canada depression of extremely threatening dimensions. With WPC in place inflation would be under substantial control and Crow's rigid policy of holding up the dollar and interest rates can, and should be, abandoned.

This would surely induce a tremendous upsurge in business activities in construction, manufacturing, merchandising, "the whole bit." Consumer and investor confidence would return, and much employment be regained. More money would be freed for investment, for consumer purchasing, and more relief for the deficit through increased tax returns.

The trade unions, as always, would be major opponents to a return to controls which might be best sold to them through the experiences of the early 1970's. It is unfortunate that Wilson's flyer was given such poor distribution. Was it recalled because it gave away too much information? Those who were lucky enough to get and retain a copy should refer to the chart on page 6. This illustrates roughly the variation of the CPI from 1970 to 1990. During the period 1971 to 1975 the index rose in three and a half years from 6% to 11% according to the chart. This alarmed Stanfield, at the time of the general election, who set out to control it.

Trudeau and his Liberals, however, did bring them in as noted earlier. It is interesting that the CPI fell to 7 1/2% within a year. At this point Chretien, as he relates in his autobiography, was created Minister of Finance (chapter 5). We read that "Trudeau (etc.) wanted to keep the controls because the program was working well," as the chart

clearly shows. But Chretien, on his own initiative, for debatable reasons, terminated the policy against the wishes of "Trudeau and many of his senior advisors."

Contrary to Chretien's expectations, the CPI took off again immediately. This time it rose to 13%, even higher than in 1974.

Clark's little attempt to stem the tide during his short-lived regime was thwarted by the Liberal's return under Turner, and the CPI continued to climb at a faster rate to its peak in 1981, after which it fell in 3 years to 5%, the lowest since 1971. This fall was not due to Wage and Price Controls this time, but a real, though moderate recession. When Mulroney and the Progressive Conservatives took over in 1984, badly frightened by past events, a policy was adopted to control inflation by control of the interest rate and the dollar. The result of this policy is now all too evident. It is hoped that this summary will put the varying results of government manipulation of the economy in true perspective.

This done, there is more! Wage and Price Controls can, and will, exert a strong influence in bringing the economy back from the depths of depression, but will not, in themselves, do much for the national debt. What that will amount to by the time a balanced budget can be achieved is anyone's guess. In any case, the

debt will represent a monstrous mortgage against the people. How it can be repaid to the point where the interest on the debt, and other desirable expenditures can be covered within the budget is of vital importance. Considered as a mortgage, it could possibly be arranged to be repaid on an amortized basis over a period, mandatory and enforced, i.e. mainly through taxation.

But there is another possibility in the chain of events. If our debt should reach such a total, as it well may do, that it cannot be financed by taxation or reduction in services, we will have reached a critical stage. Reading Wilson's chart, our economy now has achieved an apparently stable situation, under Crow's policy of a roughly 5% CPI/year. But this masks the real situation where the economy is far from stable. Unemployment and bankruptcies are increasing by the day to catastrophic levels, and there is no end in sight - no "light at the end of the tunnel."

Experts' views on this situation range from the callous attitude that we are just in a "period of adjustment"; to that of a growing fear of a hyperinflation with CPI increases of perhaps 100% per year. Is our government going to "roll the dice" once more, or will it take corrective action now while still in power? Or will it leave an impossible legacy for the next administration?

Write us a letter!

The Herald wants to hear from you. If you have an opinion you want to express or a comment to make, send us a letter or drop by the office. Our address is 45 Guelph St., Georgetown, Ont., L7G 3Z6.

All letters must be signed. Please include your address and telephone number for verification. The Herald reserves the right to edit letters due to space limitations or libel.