

Women must be protected

There is a sickness in our society that gives the impression of being incurable. It is a malaise that could threaten the very core of our judeo-christian moral fabric unless a cure is found. It is the ever-increasing and now thankfully, increasingly well-documented, incidents of male violence towards females.

Recently-released statistics indicate just how serious the problem has become, but most experts agree, that even these revealing statistics may only be the tip of the proverbial iceberg as many incidents of male violence towards females goes unreported - for various reasons.

Marc Lepine's brutal and tragic assault on young female students at Montreal's Ecole Polytechnique, on Dec. 6, 1989, was a manifestation of his hatred towards women in general. The shooting spree made national and international headlines, but in reality, nothing concrete - in terms of laws or stiffer penalties aimed at curbing violence towards women - was ever forthcoming.

Last week, a news item from Nova Scotia provided a chilling reminder of the wanton violence against women.

As reported, a man shot and killed a young Dartmouth woman. His reason - he loved her from afar and if he could not have her, no one else could.

An all-party committee of five women MPs is studying the problem of violence against women and considering whether a royal commission on the issue should be established.

The committee has heard that one in four Canadian women can expect to be sexually assaulted to some degree. The committee also heard that every 17 minutes a woman is being raped - almost always by someone she knows.

Patricia Marshall, of the Metro Toronto Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children told the committee "We're talking of a national scarring of our soul right now that has to be responded to. There is ter-

Editor's Notebook
by
Colin Gibson



rorism. There is targeting of women going on daily ... We have to improve the national understanding of what violence against women is ... We can't continue to do so little for so many."

The Toronto Star reports that in 1989 the 78 transition homes in Ontario accommodated 9,838 women, accompanied by 11,000 children. It was reported that 87 per cent of these women were admitted after having been either physically or sexually attacked.

The committee of women MPs was also told that between 1984 and 1988, more than 100,800 sexual assaults were reported in Canada - an increase of over 63 per cent over the previous five-year period. According to police, however, only one in 10 sexual assault is ever reported.

In 1989, 119 women were murdered in so-called 'domestic disputes.'

The committee was also told of a new phenomenon of men returning after years of separation from their spouses simply to attack them again.

The issue must be addressed and not just by the law-makers or courts of the land alone. It must be addressed by society in general and treated as an accepted fact and not just as laments from male-labelled 'hysterical women.'

Similarly, the issue of violence against women must be addressed immediately and not put conveniently aside to be looked at, at some undetermined time in the future.

Editorial

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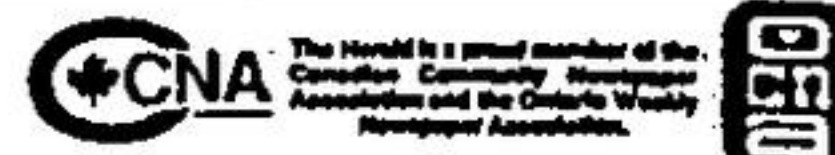
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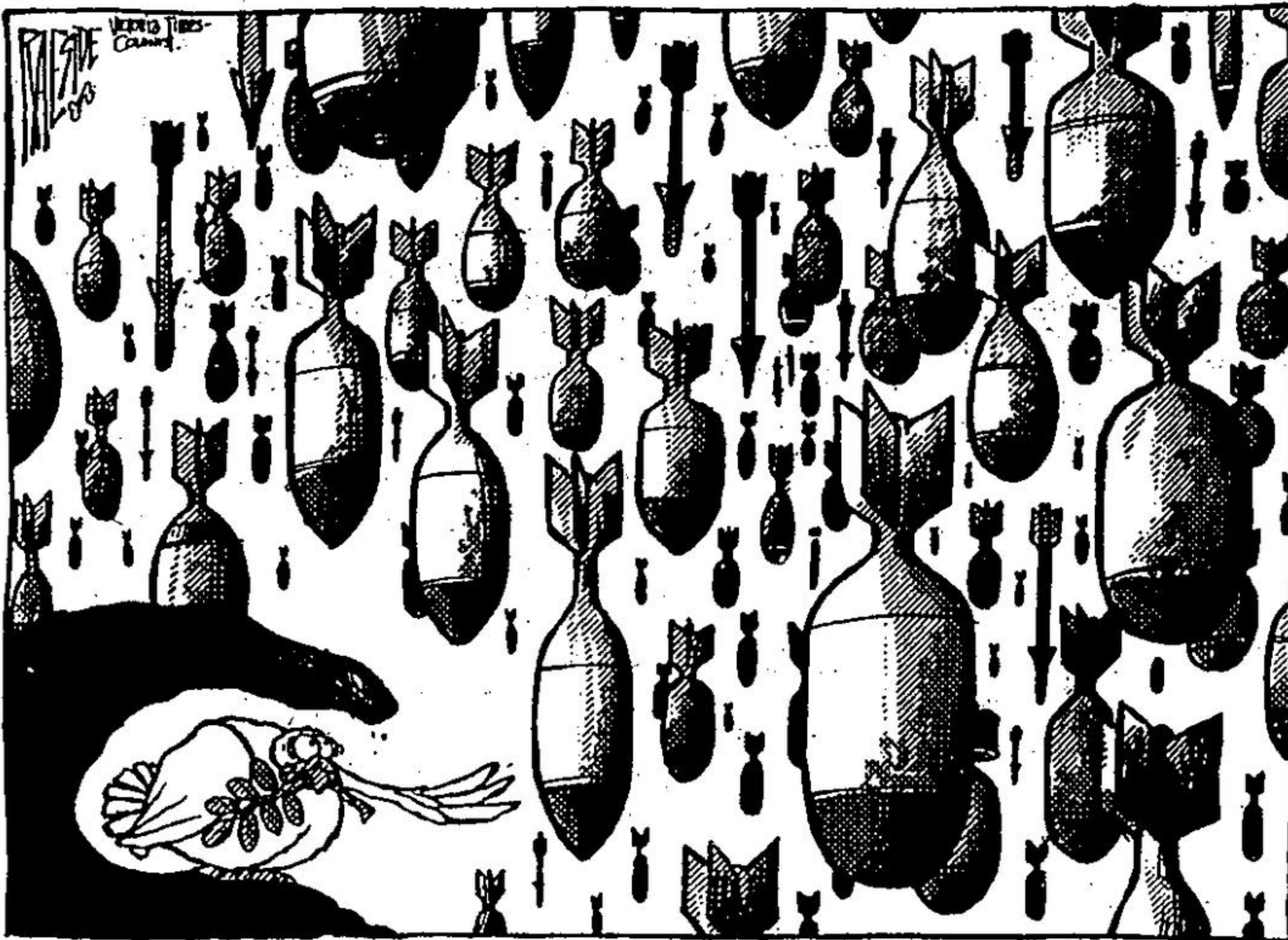
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Life is not all that bad

As we stumble through life, it's comforting to look around and be able to say: "There but for the grace of God go I."

Whenever I start feeling depressed about my lot in life, I'm able to remind myself: "At least you're not the man whose job is to read Prime Minister Mulroney the results of the latest opinion polls."

I feel the same way about the public relations director who gets phoned in the middle of the night by the C.E.O. of a major petroleum company and told: "Bill, we've had a little spilk. You've got 'til 8 a.m. to think of a bright side."

But most of all, these days, I'm feeling very glad I'm not Helen Rumph of Burlington Township, New Jersey.

You may not have read about Helen Rumph. Helen is - or at least was - the designated lottery-ticket buyer for a group of colleagues and friends.

A couple of Thursdays ago, she had the winning numbers in a New Jersey State Lottery with a jackpot of \$11 million - which would have won each member of the group \$82,000 U.S. a year for 20 years.

Unfortunately, she was late arriving at the ticket outlet, and was unable to play the numbers.

Well, at a time like this, we can only hope that Helen is a positive sort of woman who is able to take the optimistic view of things.

Possibly, Helen is able to remind herself that she is - all things considered - much happier than, say, the average food-taster in the household of Lucretia Borgia.

Weir's
World
by
Ian Weir
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We can't be sure about this, however, since Helen doesn't seem to have made any statement to the media.

Presumably, this is either because she isn't returning reporters' calls, or because there is no phone service to her ice-cave on Baffin Island.

Quite frankly, this is the sort of situation that should encourage us to re-examine the existence of lotteries in the first place. Personally, I've always had mixed feelings about them.

For starters, lotteries pander to greed, that most vile of human emotions. Lotteries encourage us to believe we can get rich without having to do any work.

And to top it off, I've never won so much as a nickel in any of them.

I actually knew a fellow who won \$1 million in a lottery back in the 1970s, and I always wondered whether the burden of this sudden wealth would ruin his happiness in the end.

Unfortunately, I didn't get the chance to find out. We were never more than passing acquaintances,

and I wasn't able to convince him to adopt me.

My parents might have been slightly wounded by this adoption scheme, but they'd have understood. My mother has frequently repeated my grandfather's theory that a person has just two realistic chances in life to become rich - he can be born into money, or he can marry into it. And a man who fails on both accounts deserves no sympathy.

But I digress. We were discussing Helen Rumph. And at a time like this, we should try our best to be philosophical.

In such a situation, we should reflect, you can at least be certain whom your friends are. They're the ones forming a lynch-mob in the driveway.

But wait. Perhaps this is too cynical. Perhaps Helen's friends are standing by her - just as your friends would surely do for you if you had just cost them \$11 million.

Granted, this could be one heck of a position in which to place a friend - requiring him to prove that friendship means more than \$11 million to him.

Still, decent folks care much more about human beings than they do about money. Heck, I know people who wouldn't trade their kids for ... well, for at least a couple of thousand. And lots of husbands and wives like each other even more than that.

As such, let's hope that Helen Rumph is discovering that this little spot of adversity is serving only to bring out the very finest in her friends.

Besides, Baffin Island can't be that bad.

Poets' Corner

LONELINESS

One loonly and gloopy night,
You had one great big fright,
In the dark,
You heard a bark,
You hear a bell,
You run like hell,
Now you're at home,
Alone and alone and alone.

By Robert White,
age 11, Milton.

DOG AND CAT

Dog and cat,
Small and fat,
Chubby and skinny,
Mickey and Minny.

Fish and toad,
Young and old,
Lumpy and brown,
Hard to be found.

Rat and bat,
Black and fat,
Tall and small,
We've seen them all!

By Katie Anderson,
age 11, Milton.

RAT AND BAT

Rat and bat,
Black and fat,
Tall and small,
We've seen them all.

Wealth and health,
Is what they do not have,
But it is what we want.

By Alyson Ashbee
age 11, Milton.

STUPID LEAFS

There once was a team named
the Leafs,
They couldn't play so they

would cheat,

They scored on their own net
and now they're in debt,
Oh, those stupid Leafs!

By Ryan Jensen and
Daniel McDuff,
age 11, Milton.

WINTER FUN

Wintertime at last is here
We know that it won't last
all year

And when it finally has begun
We know that we are in for fun,
Melting leaves an empty space
But winter goes at its own pace
So dress up warm just in case
It blows all over the place.

Slides are built to glide
with speed
We never mind who takes
the lead

Happy with the falling snow
Jack Frost painting our
windows.

Making snowballs so
very white

They glimmer and sparkle
in moonlight
Making them either large
or small

Stacking them any way at all.
Sculpture almost anything
While still cold, a nice
plaything.

A snowman makes good
company

Out in the yard for all to see
Friendly eyes and smiling face
Melting - leaves an
empty space.

But winter is a long,
long season

We can start again for just
that reason.

by Lois A. Richardson,
Georgetown.