

# Editorial

## Smell the roses

To borrow a line from a Mac Davis song, isn't it about time we all stopped to smell the roses.

It seems that no matter which direction a person turns, in this day and age, some sort of a crisis rears its ugly head and the resultant confrontation - because all escape routes appear to be barricaded - just frazzles the nerves even more.

National unity and the economic recession notwithstanding, if societal and familial interaction doesn't improve drastically in the next little while, what we have left won't be worth bothering with, anyway.

Some may say the afore-mentioned issues are intertwined, interchangeable and all part of the intricate machinery that keeps our apparent merry-go-round of life leading nowhere, turning and turning.

We beg to differ - but with qualifications.

Despite disclaimers - even from some citizens - Canada has a uniqueness that invites envy from all parts of the world.

We are a peaceful, yet proud nation, that has chosen through the years to solve our internal disputes through reason rather than the sword. Not many other nations on this fractured planet can boast the same record.

There have been some blemishes, granted, but for the most part, Canada has a human rights record which has been lauded on the international stage.

People of different color, different cultures and creeds have flocked to Canada because they recognize its uniqueness and physical grandeur.

Canada has survived - and yes, even flourished - through two world wars and a near-devastating depression.

Canada has also survived political change and politicians - some may say hacks masquerading as politicians - more concerned with their own personal well-being than the well-being of the country.

Canada has managed, as a nation, to make it into the 1990's because its people have always stuck together, worked together, helped out each other and even defended each other and color, language or religion be damned.

This is what is missing in Canada today.

To paraphrase and reverse a quote from a speech delivered by the late United States President, John F. Kennedy; individual Canadians appear to be thinking not what they can do for their country, but what their country can do for them.

Unfortunately, this is negative and self-defeating. For without the parts, you cannot have a whole. And similarly, without the whole, the parts are useless.

This thinking seems to have filtered down to even the personal level.

It's no longer how can I help my neighbor, but, what can my neighbor do for me!

We are seeing the same thing in families.

Children out for all they can get and taking advantage of their parents, or parents treating their offspring like chattels demanding the children perform the most menial of tasks.

Perhaps if we all backed off and smelled the roses, even in a perceptual sense, our country could get back on track and forge ahead into the future.

Respect for others, especially the young, will be reciprocated in kind.

Appreciation for a job well-done, does wonders for a person's self-esteem.

Compliments don't cost anything, but can reap huge dividends.

Rather than griping about things we don't have, perhaps we should appreciate more the things we do have and strive to hang on to them - especially our children.

Pride in one's neighborhood, one's community can be infectious and can bring people closer together - as it should be when times are hard.

The solution to Canada's problems, lies with the strength of the country - its people. By working together we will survive.

Take time to smell the rose that is Canada.

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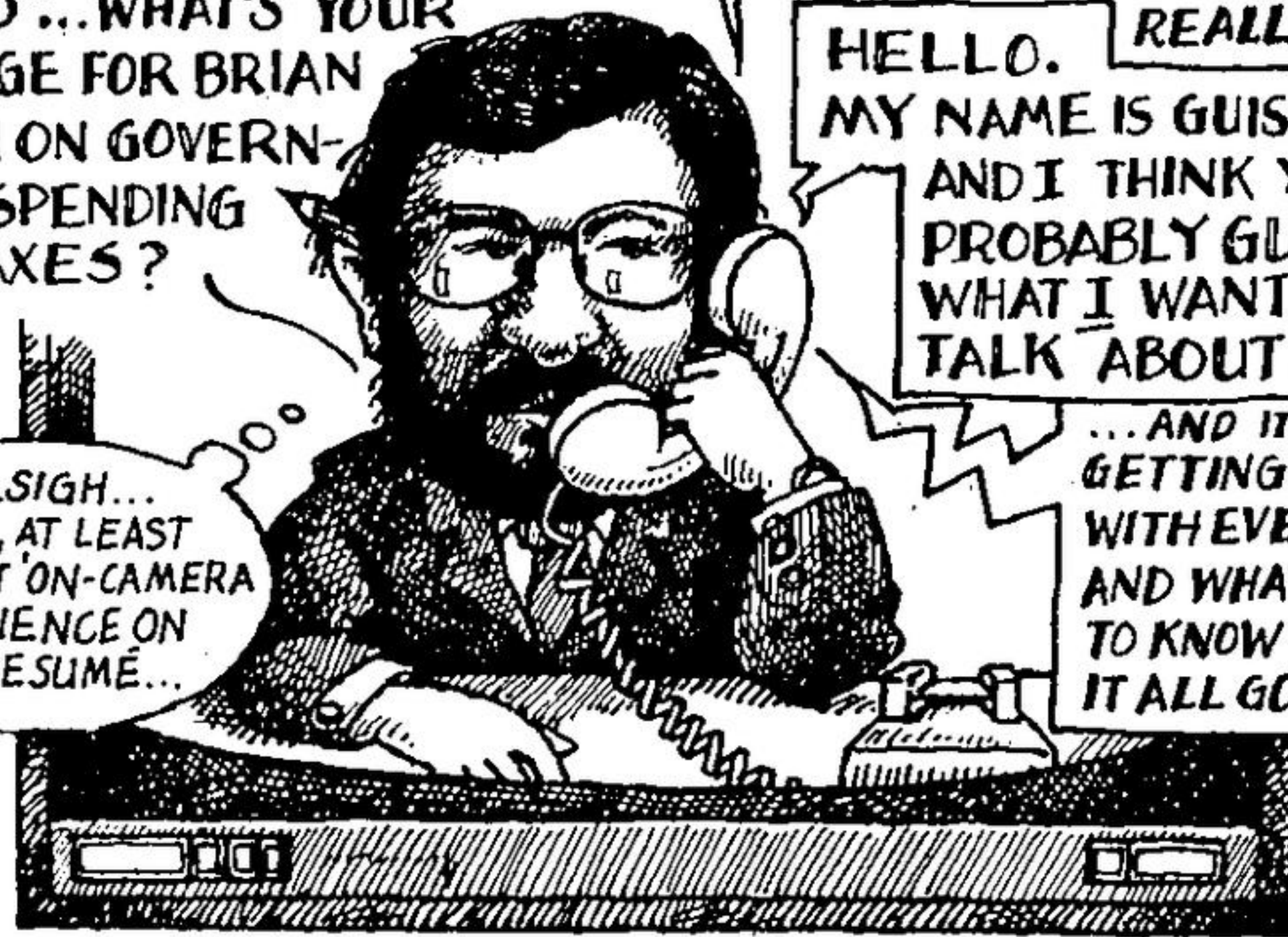
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### HALTON CABLE LAST THURSDAY NIGHT...

HELLO CALLER... THANKS  
FOR CALLING "GARTH'S  
WORLD"... WHAT'S YOUR  
MESSAGE FOR BRIAN  
OR DON ON GOVERN-  
MENT SPENDING  
AND TAXES?

...SIGH...  
WELL, AT LEAST  
I CAN PUT ON-CAMERA  
EXPERIENCE ON  
MY RESUME...



TOTTEN.

HELLO? MR. TURNER?  
... DO YOU AND BRIAN EVER  
REALLY TALK?

HELLO. MY NAME IS GUISEPPE  
AND I THINK YOU CAN  
PROBABLY GUESS  
WHAT I WANT TO  
TALK ABOUT...

... AND IT'S JUST  
GETTING WORSE  
WITH EVERY BUDGET  
AND WHAT I WANT  
TO KNOW IS WHERE'S  
IT ALL GOING TO END?

## Turner 'talk' a success

Halton-Peel MP Garth Turner's foray into television was a qualified success.

Mr. Turner invited myself and former Georgetown Independent-Acton Free Press Managing Editor Hartley Coles to participate in the electronic form of his more commonly known Town Hall meetings. "A talk with Garth Turner" was the name of the show that aired last Thursday on Halton Cable.

Mr. Turner explained to me and Mr. Coles before the scheduled hour-long program went to air, he hoped this type of forum would encourage more public participation as compared to the number of people that make it out to his Town Hall meetings.

We soon found out theory and reality don't always mirror each other.

According to plan, the show started off with Hartly and I questioning Mr. Turner on any topic we wished. In front of us, but out of sight of the cameras, was a board of three lights. When a light lit up that meant a caller was on the line. Excited when he first saw the light shine, Mr. Turner immediately cut to what eventually became a familiar line! "Ben, Hartley what do you say we answer another call."

Mr. Turner went to engage the line early in the program but instead of a voice the line was dead. He tried again and again and then a third time but nothing. Needless to say the three of us were a little surprised.

To make a long story short Mr. Turner left the phone calls and Hartley and I continued our questioning. Unbeknownst to the viewing audience, a technician was on the floor underneath our



Ben's  
Banter  
by  
Ben Dummett

seats trying to fix the phone.

It soon became evident it would take some time to fix the phones, so as they do in television-land we cut to a commercial.

I must say Mr. Turner handled himself well in a situation in which a lot of people might have panicked.

Twenty minutes later the first caller got through. From here on in the calls were frequent showing the programs potential.

Questions from both the public and Hartley and I focused on the economy, immigration and the constitutional crisis facing Canada today. Surprisingly, at least from my perspective, only the odd question focused on the unpopular Goods and Services Tax.

As for the questions on the economy, Mr. Turner provided the expected answers. All were variations of the debt and deficit having to be reduced or else Canadians can expect higher and higher future taxes and slow economic growth.

"The deficit is deferred taxes and not just a line in an accounting statement," Mr. Turner told one caller.

On the question of immigration, Mr. Turner agreed with

those callers who said criminals of non-Canadian origin should be extradited immediately. Mr. Turner said he was urging the minister of immigration to change the legislation so this kind of action becomes the norm.

Mr. Turner predicted the legislation will be changed this fall. I asked him if he would consider introducing a private members bill. He said he would, if the minister takes no action.

The callers seemed to favor Canada staying together, as long as Quebec doesn't ask for special privileges. Mr. Turner said a national referendum would be appropriate to decide the issue once English Canada decides if it is willing to give up anything and what Quebec wants. Mr. Turner said a referendum today would do more harm than good.

Most of the callers seemed quite knowledgeable about the Canadian political scene. However, in some cases, they spent too much time telling us what they knew as opposed to asking a question.

Given the unpopularity of the government, I thought there would have been a lot more angry callers. For those interested in lashing into the government, Mr. Turner was fair and let them give their spiel. But correctly he showed no tolerance for foul language. One caller was allowed to go on and on but as soon as he used the word "ass" he was cut off.

I agree with a suggestion that the program would have run more smoothly if a moderator had been delegated to answer the phone calls.

That way any technical problems wouldn't be a distraction to the program's main participants.