

Editorial

We get the shaft

In recent weeks I have been reflecting, somewhat, on the performances of our respective provincial and federal governments and their action - or inaction - on a number of issues.

To be honest, I have come to the conclusion that both levels of government can be tarred with the same brush and identified by the pseudonyms 'Tweedle Dumb and Tweedle Dumber' with the roles interchangeable.

If a major requirement in the art of governing is to get across to the people the perception they are being well-governed, then it is suggested here that members of both levels of government go back to school, because this is one course they have failed miserably.

And Canadians are increasingly getting fed-up. It seems the politicians get the gold mine, while we get the shaft.

Take the case, for example, of legislation recently rushed through in Ottawa that could protect MPs from police investigation.

According to published reports, the legislation, known as Bill C-79, was proclaimed just four days after Conservative MP Maurice Tremblay, from Quebec, had his offices raided by the RCMP.

Mr. Tremblay, in turn, telephoned the office of House of Commons Speaker John Fraser, to find out when Bill C-79 would be proclaimed.

Mr. Tremblay also telephoned government House Leader, Harvie Andre, who in turn, it is reported, asked his staff to ensure the Bill was proclaimed in short order.

The legislation was approved last month by Parliament and given royal assent at the time, but the manner in which it was proclaimed, reeks of impropriety.

The federal government has also refused to name the four ministers who signed the order in council.

A day after the proclamation of the Act, another Conservative MP, Gabriel Fontaine, also of Quebec, used it to gain a delay in his preliminary hearing where he is facing 14 charges of fraud, breach of trust and conspiracy.

Next month, according to reports, a Quebec judge will hear legal arguments on whether the Act will apply in Mr. Fontaine's legal proceedings.

Under the Act, the House of Commons board of internal economy, will have "exclusive authority" to decide whether an MP has misused any office funds, obviously sidetracking possible police investigations.

All together now, "On the good ship Lollipop..."

NATIVE RIP-OFFS?

Are Ontario Native Indians be-

"As I See It"

by Colin Gibson



ing given a carte blanche by Ontario's Minister of Natural Resources, Bud Wildman, to plunder fish and wildlife in the province? According to the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, this is most definitely the case.

John Power, a freelance writer and a member of the association, reports that through an anonymous tip, he uncovered what might best be termed "travesty of justice."

A 15-month undercover investigation by conservation officers, revealed that illegal netting was being done by the Cape Croker Band, in Georgian Bay, and that the Indians had exceeded their quota by 13,500 pounds of fish, mostly trout. It was reported the conservation officers had hard evidence to prove who was poaching, where, when, how they were selling the fish and to whom.

In a clear neglect of the duties of his ministry, Wildman ordered that no charges be laid.

The investigation, by the way, cost Ontario taxpayers \$150,000. Wildman also ordered that moose hunting charges laid against the Algonquins of Golden Lake, be withdrawn.

His rationale, according to reports, was that the laying of charges would create an unfavorable climate for governmental negotiations with the Indians.

Rick Morgan, vice-president of the OFAH, is quoted as saying he was appalled at Wildman's decision and that just two months previously, Wildman had assured the association Indians would not be allowed to engage in commercialization of fish and game.

Insiders report that conservation officers have been told to turn a blind eye to Native spearfishing and netting of fish on spawning grounds near James Bay.

In the same area, charges for night hunting and shooting deer with a .22 calibre rifle, have been dropped.

The Minister of Natural Resources, at the very least, can be accused of dereliction of duty by using Ontario's resources as a bargaining tool in negotiations with Natives.

As I see it, anyway.

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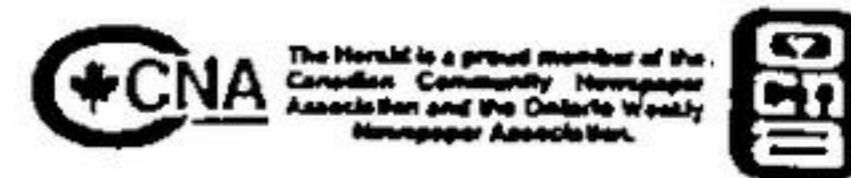
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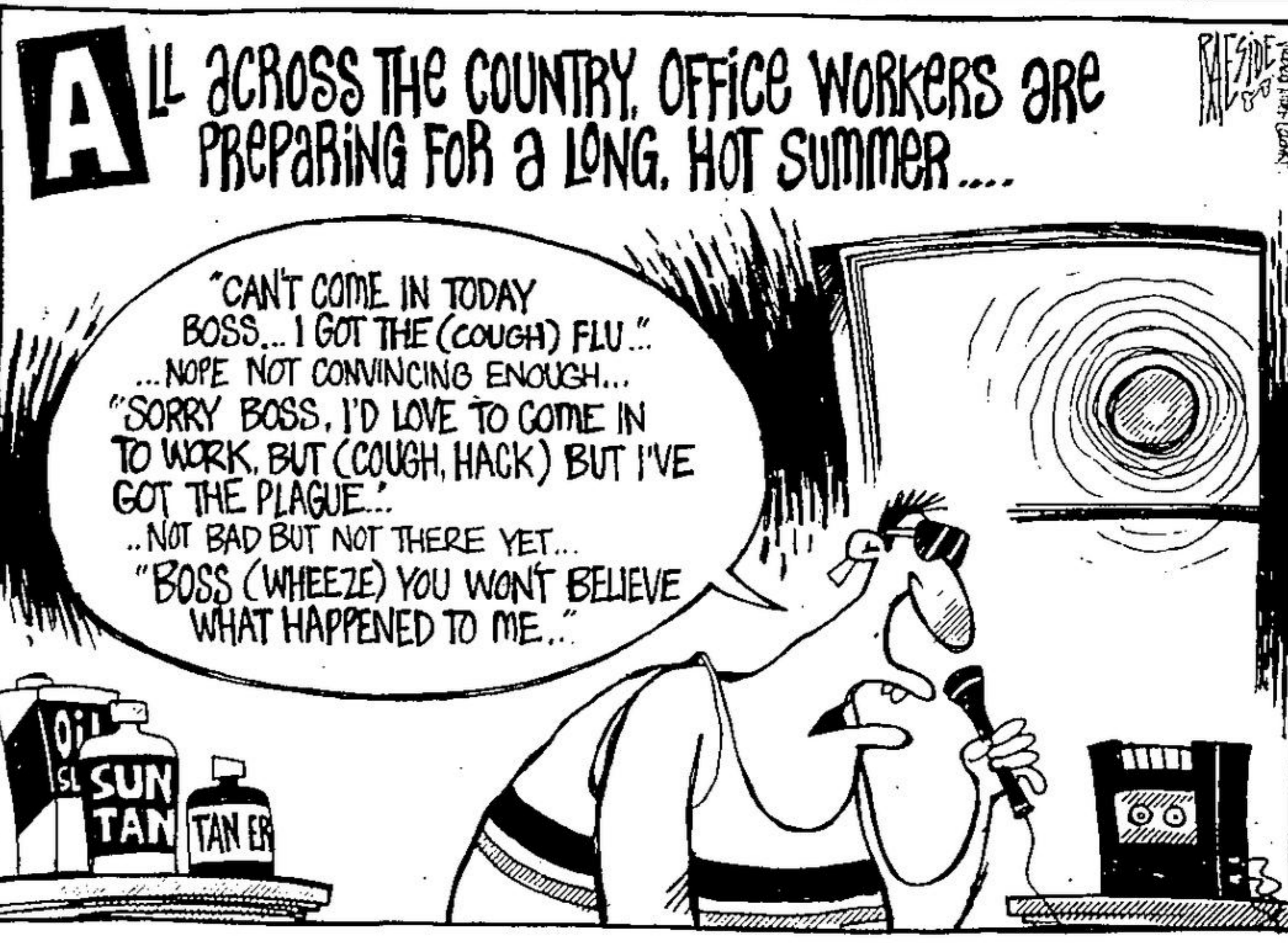
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Diving into deep waters

Occasionally, every columnist likes to deal with grave and weighty matters. So let's dive straight into truly Deep Waters. Let's ponder the question: what would it be like to wake up tomorrow morning and discover you were Dan Quayle?

I'll pause briefly to let you recover your bearings. Admittedly, this is an unsettling question. For starters, you may feel the mention of the word "deep" doesn't necessarily bring the name "Quayle" leaping instantly to mind.

Besides, there must be many worse things than waking up and discovering you were vice-president of the U.S. For instance, you could wake up and discover that you were a Reform Party candidate in Quebec. Or that you were married to Don Cherry.

Still, being Dan Quayle can't be easy these days. Now I realize I'm on awfully thin ice here. I'm on the very verge of sounding sympathetic toward a politician. But try to imagine how it would feel to realize you'd officially replaced Oscar Meyer as the world's most famous weenie.

This was brought home last week when the Western World flew into a panic over the possibility that Quayle might have to serve as president for an hour while George Bush was under anesthetic. I must confess I shared in this general reaction. Part of me - the logical part - realized there must be a limit to the amount of damage any vice-president could do in 50 or 60 minutes at the helm. By the time he'd experimented with the presidential dictaphone

Weir's World
by Ian Weir
Thomson News Service

and tried out the presidential washroom, George would have been conscious again. Still, I could never banish the ghastly mental image of Dan Quayle sitting in the Oval Office with a look of boyish wonder on his face, exclaiming: "I wonder what THIS little red button does?"

Now granted, Quayle has brought many of his problems on himself. If he'd wanted to be taken seriously as a national leader, he should have avoided growing up to look like a blurred photocopy of Robert Redford.

He should certainly have avoided saying, on the eve of an official tour of Latin America, that he was anticipating communications difficulties on account of his inability to speak Latin.

Except that it's highly unlikely of course, that he said any such thing in the first place. This sounds very much like a "Quayle the geek" joke that somehow managed to get taken seriously.

In all likelihood, Dan merely said that Latin American politics were Greek to him or something along those lines. It's also true, of course, that

Dan Quayle is hardly the only politician in the world with image problems. Indeed, a recent poll showed that 19 per cent of Americans believe that Quayle actually IS qualified to serve as president - which means that his approval rating is higher than Brian Mulroney's.

But there are differences. For starters, Mulroney isn't actually scorned. Besides, just think how well he'd score in a poll asking Canadians if he was qualified to be president of the U.S.

As a rough guess, you'd get 85 per cent exclaiming "Yes!" and offering to ship him down first thing tomorrow morning.

Ah, well. As I say, it's unbecomingly to sound sympathetic about politicians. After all, they're the ones who got themselves into public life in the first place.

Indeed, you have to wonder if poor Dan Quayle sits alone sometimes and reflects on the crucial mistake that landed him in this whole mess. I refer, of course, to his failure to remember in that time that there are two possible responses to a presidential nominee who asks you to be his runningmate.

One response is: "Thank you, sir, I am honored, and I accept." And the other is: "Barbara? Come quick! Georget must be drunk!"

Oh, those roads not taken...

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 Street, Georgetown, Ontario 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.

Poets' Corner

BALLAD

The cuckoo broke out of her shell,
Aware that she was out of place.
Her instincts served her well,
She knew that she needed her space.
She edged and pushed at the others,
Until one by one they fell.
Joined their sisters and brothers,
In a pile of bodies and shell.
Mother bird, blind to deception,
Mourned the loss of her chicks.
Lavished her maternal attention,
On the one full of nature's cruel tricks.
Mother brought food in profusion,
Eager to serve Cuckoo's need.
Cuckoo suffered no moral confusion,
At her selfish act of greed.

Cuckoo was satisfied, easy, at rest,
Mother slaved on, fulfilled.
When Cuckoo was ready she left the nest,
No regrets for the siblings she'd killed.
There's no moral to this story,
No matter how hard one looks.
The fact is, despite all earth's glory,
The law of nature sucks!!
By J.B., Acton.

TALE END OF A CITY

Goodbye, goodbye old Montreal,
You lost your fascination after all.
That cloak of charm you once wore
Can never be as it was before.
So, now we're gone - you are alone,
We left you with the Francophone!
Lais Richardson,
Georgetown.