

Wednesday, August 21, 1991

Multicultural mosaic a finger-painting farce

Canada's so-called - and much-heralded - multicultural policy is in tatters.

Instead of our country being pictured in hues which suggest a multicultural mosaic, what we basically have is finger painting of the worst kind perpetrated by politicians whose only concern is garnering the ethnic vote.

Countless Canadians might suggest that these erstwhile artists put their collective fingers to better use. I couldn't agree more.

One only has to look at the tragic example of Yugoslavia and the bitter bloodletting between the Serbs and the Croats to realize the extent to which ethnicity, in its barest form, is nothing less than racist and the world community be damned.

How does this tie-in with Canada's multicultural laissez-faire policy you ask?

Very easily, when you note that Canadians of Croatian descent are flocking to the Balkans to defend what they view as their true homeland.

A disquieting article appeared in last Thursday's Toronto Star which chillingly pointed out how ludicrous Canada's multicultural policy really is.

As stated by a number of pointy-headed politicians who were pontificating on the respective party line as it relates to our multicultural policy, it is supposed to allow people of different cultures and ethnic backgrounds the right to retain their beliefs while adjusting to Canadian society.

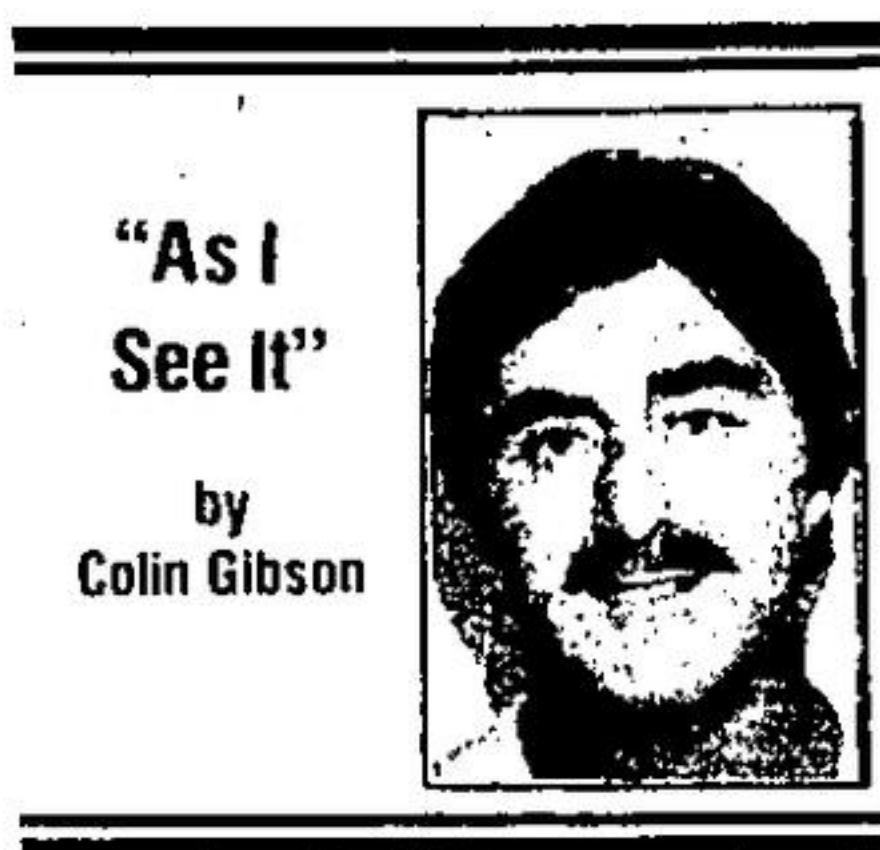
What a load of hogwash. What has happened is that Canadian society - including the North American lifestyle - takes a back seat to people who just can't leave their cultural and ethnic baggage behind.

The Toronto Star article concerned three young Canadian males of Croatian descent who left Canada to join the Croatian National Guard.

It is estimated there are 250 Canadians, of Croatian descent, involved in the fighting in Yugoslavia.

The brother of one of the three Canadians, a 21-year-old computer repairman, explained why his sibling had gone off to fight and possibly die in Croatia.

He referred to a conversation between his mother and the now modern-day warrior. "He said, 'If you had sent me to play



"As I See It"

by
Colin Gibson

hockey as a kid, or to things like Cubs and Scouts, then I wouldn't have this feeling... It's your own fault, mom, for bringing me up this way."

The mother, according to the article, spent hours teaching her son Croatian, in his formative years, and insisted he go to even more Croatian language classes.

The mother also dressed him up in Croatian costumes and had the young boy go up on stage to perform Croatian folk dances.

Only in Canada you say? Pity, isn't it.

But don't have pity for the young Croatian, or even his mother. Have pity for Canada.

Prime Minister Mulroney, Liberal leader Jean Chretien and NDP leader Audrey McLaughlin are whining about national unity and a sense of Canadian identity.

It is to laugh, it is to cry. The reason we don't have a Canadian identity is because interfering politicians, more interested in votes than the country's well-being, have fouled-up royally.

I was born in Scotland and raised in Canada.

I am Scottish by birth, but Canadian by choice. My loyalty is to Canada, not the kilt or Robert Burns poems. I would rather read Farley Mowat.

Were I to journey to other countries, even for a visit, I would be required to obey their laws and respect their customs and traditions. And I would.

In Saudi Arabia, I would not think of kissing my female companion in public, because I could be thrown in jail.

Why must it be so different in Canada?

An example.
The Royal Canadian Legion in

Red Deer, Alberta, is in hot water. Why, you ask? Because a baptized Sikh was asked to remove his turban when walking through the Branch canteen.

Ram Raghbir Singh Chahal is also the Secretary of the Alberta Liberal Party so you can be sure there will be reverberations.

Apparently Chahal was also heckled as he walked through the canteen. While this type of behavior is not to be condoned, Chahal himself, who was quoted as saying, "After all, I'm a Canadian citizen," in reference to the incident, is not blameless.

It is Canadian Legion policy that no headwear of any kind be worn in canteens. This is in respect to Canadian war dead, it is not a racist policy in any sense of the word.

Since Chahal is, as he claims, a Canadian citizen and since the Legion policy has become a Canadian tradition, there should be no question about which party was in the wrong.

It is this kind of ticky-tacky ethnic-cultural balderdash that really frosts my toes.

Only in Canada you say!
Yes, it really is a pity.
As I see it, anyway.

Better solution was available for town council

During Halton Hills Council's recent discussion over an application by local businessman David Tarzwell to operate the video store part of his business, Country Lane, on the Tenth Line in Georgetown, councillors put forth compelling arguments for and against the application.

However, was there a better solution?

Mr. Tarzwell applied for and received from Town council changes to the location's zoning and official plan designation thereby permitting the video store part of the operation to continue.

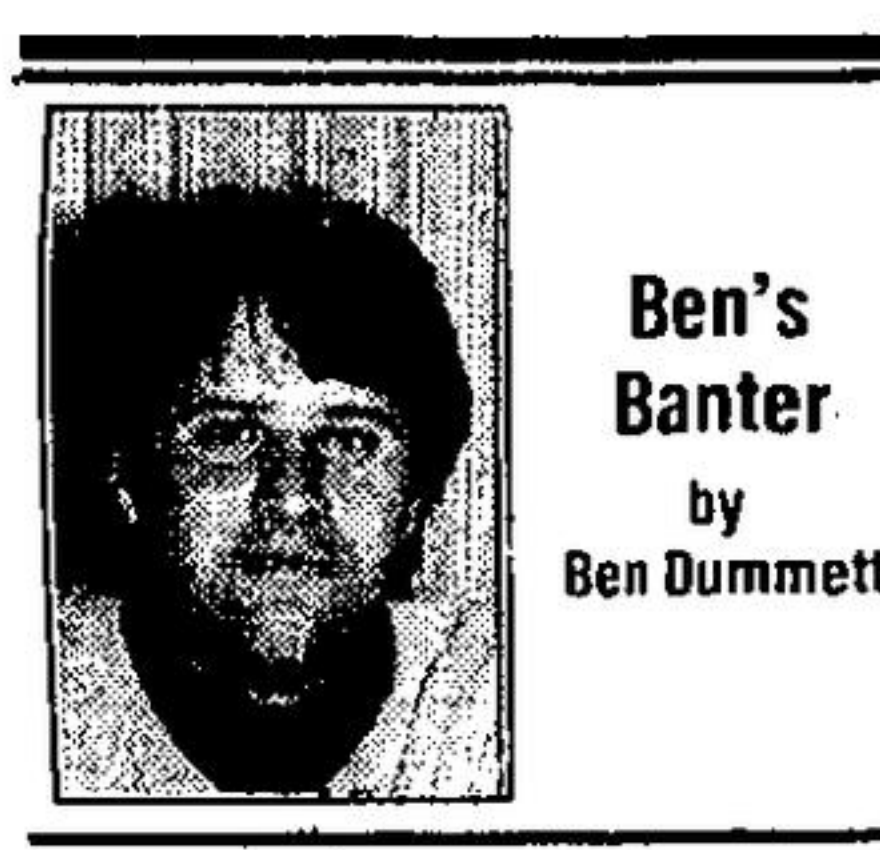
The majority of Councillors followed the lead of Town Councillor Joe Hewitt in support of the continued operation of the video store. Coun. Hewitt said the operation is in a location in transition. That means it is not clear what zoning the area should

have, he said.

Since the area is in transition and the video store services a significant number of people in the area, the business should be permitted to continue, explained Coun. Hewitt. He said opposing the video store would benefit neither the owner nor the public since the operation would collapse if the video store operation was forced to close.

Mr. Hewitt's position makes sense because there is no point closing down a viable business when there is no clear consensus on the future land use for the property. Since the location is in transition no one knows for certain whether in the future a video store operation would be perfect for that location.

From this perspective it makes sense to permit the operation to continue until council decides



Ben's Banter

by
Ben Dummett

how it wants the area to develop.

Opposing the zoning and official plan changes was Coun. Al Cook. He opposed the application on the basis approval would send a message to the general public that council supports members of the public breaking Town bylaws

"when they feel like it".

Coun. Cook was referring to Mr. Tarzwell having full knowledge he was breaking the Town area zoning bylaw when he established his business during the late 80s. Mr. Tarzwell only applied to the Town for the official plan and zoning changes a year after starting his business, Coun. Cook reminded his fellow councillors.

There is much validity for this position because support for the application is precedent setting. Council has now left the door open to other businessmen to carry out similar actions.

Faced with putting a company into bankruptcy or setting a dangerous precedent, council should have chosen an alternative course permitting the

video store to continue without setting a disturbing precedent.

Council should have deferred deciding on the zoning and official plan changes until it had completed its official plan review.

The review, which will start early next year, calls for Town planning staff to consider if any changes to the plan are required based on such projections as expected population growth predictions in Halton Hills. During this review staff would presumably determine the type of development suitable for the location of Country Lane.

By deferring any approval on the Tarzwell application until the official plan review, the video store would be permitted to operate without a dangerous precedent being set.

Leaders not always perfect

Nowadays it is not very easy to remain a hero for long.

After years of wholesome praise, President Kennedy's personality has been the object of a revisionist flow of books and articles which practically reduced one of the most loved presidents to the level of a hoodlum.

It is not the public persona of Jack Kennedy which is reduced, it is the private life of the murdered president that provides material for the revisionist writers.

President Kennedy turns out to have been a compulsive womanizer, always ready to go for a good pair of legs. Also he seems to have lied about the authorship of his book "profiles in courage" and exaggerated his heroism during the war. Apparently he also lied about his health conditions.

And, more now than ever, Americans like their politicians to be "Mr. Cleans" not only in public life but in private life as well.

It is a trend which is naturally spreading over to Canada, and it is reaching, or has reached a point where the scrutiny of ones private life has become a major factor for talented women and men to stay out of public life.

It is interesting to note that, with very few exceptions, a muddy private life or even some not-very-pleasant personal attitudes, have seldom been a reason for poor performance in the political arena.

Behavior in one's private life does not seem to transfer on to the public functions of the individual as is rather well proven by the likes of Churchill, Roosevelt, Trudeau and other successful political figures.

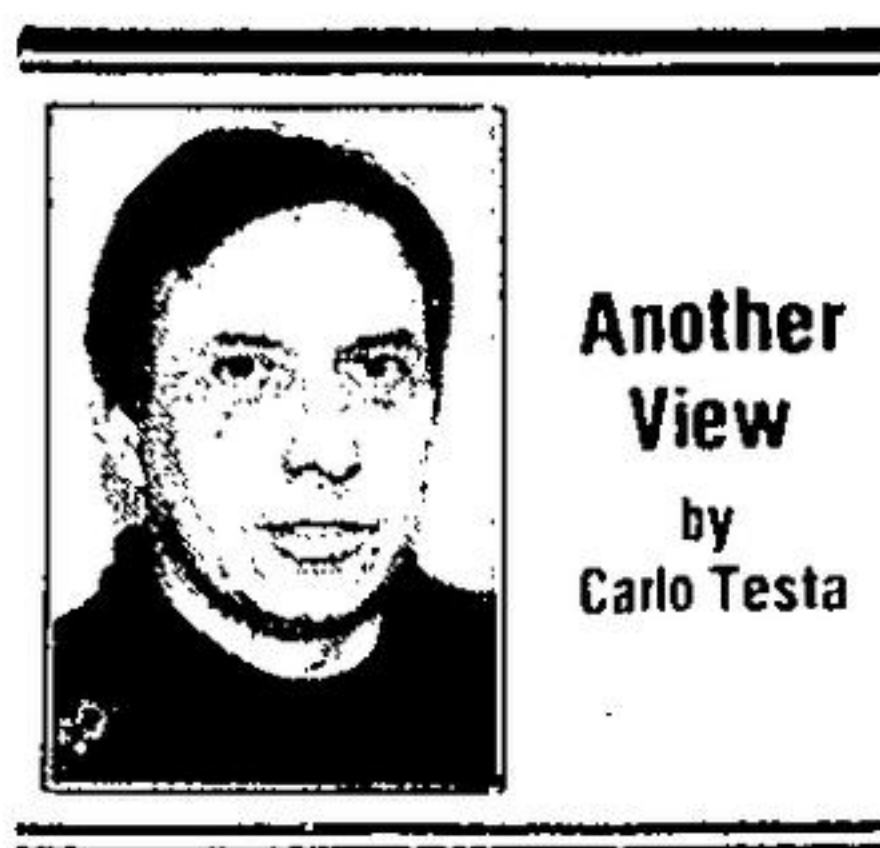
This would be of just passing interest if it were not for an interesting counter-example in Canada.

Our Prime Minister is described, by those who know him well, as a humorous, affectionate and open personality in his private life, while we all know that he projects a stuffy, unctuous, shifty persona in his public appearance.

This has become a major embarrassment not only for Mulroney but even for journalists. There is no avoiding reporting on the poor public performances but how to report on the positive private, hidden side of the man?

Even more intriguing is why we, who by know have been told more than once that Mulroney has a nice private side, still are unwilling to forgive him his poor public persona.

Two weights and two measures? Surely if we are willing to forget the positive public performance of a president because of his poor private life we should be willing to give credit to a guy for a good private life even if his public persona is appalling. Naturally we don't. And so be it, but do we really need a public person to be perfect in private.



Another View

by
Carlo Testa

Do we really have to care about his/hers personal habits?

Are we trying to elect a Barbie doll or a competent, even if rough woman?

We are in the process of acquiring perfect dumbbells as political leaders because we want them "perfect". And nothing is more "perfect" than an empty-headed, blow dried nothing. Some would not even be able to sin so mentally under-equipped they are!

In our looking for the perfect product we ignore real competence and pursue a well packaged product, the kind who will go to Ottawa or Queen's Park to "learn", to "be-of-service" and the hell with contributing.

Having the choice I still prefer an ugly specimen like Lincoln or a rough one like Johnson and why not a boozier like Churchill.

After all what the politician does in his/her bedroom or parlor is not the business of the Nation.



Father knows best

Georgetown father Charlie Fendley (left) treated daughters Rebecca, 8, and Amanda, 5, with tickets to the Kelly-Miller Circus Thursday evening at Georgetown's Alcott Arena. Founded in 1938, this is one of North America's oldest three ring circuses. The circus has been on the road since mid-March and ends its travels in October. (Herald photo)