

# Protection of education system a public responsibility

One only has to pick up a newspaper, turn on the radio or spend some time in front of the boob tube to realize how much violence has become an almost integral part of our everyday lives

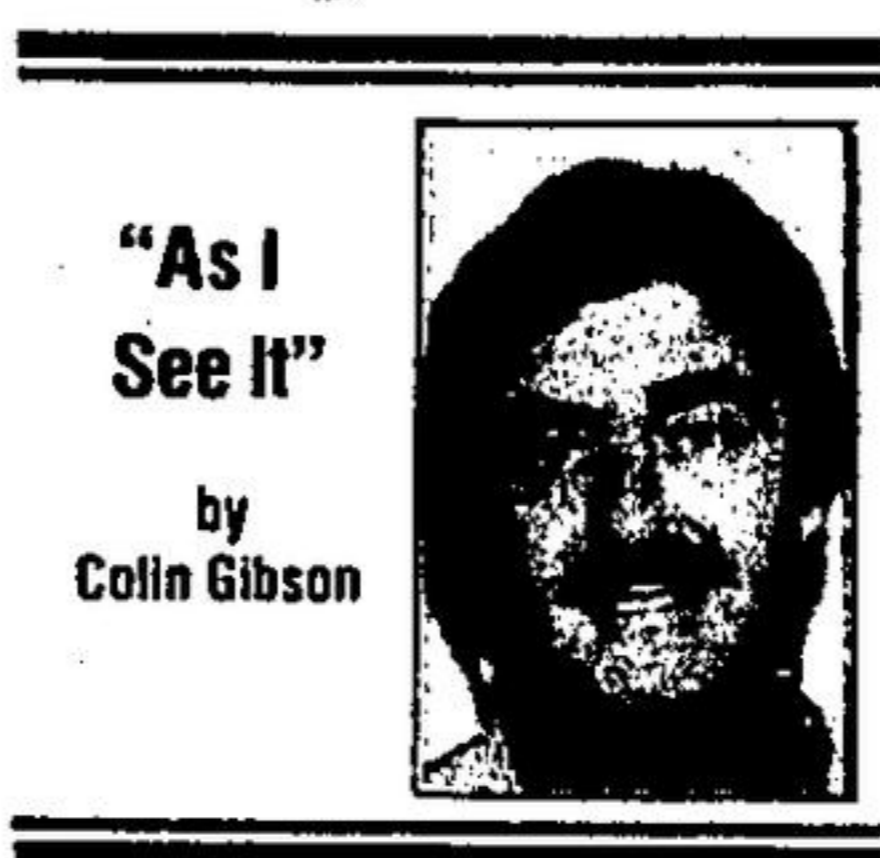
News of murders, rapes, assaults, incidents of female and child abuse are now received on such a regular basis that, incredibly, our so-called enlightened society appears to have accepted such previously abhorrent acts of violence as the norm rather than the exception in a world of upside-down societal values

A sad state of affairs, indeed. Increasingly, violence is also

creeping into our school systems and educators are being asked to handle situations and being thrust into roles light years removed from traditional teacher-student relationships.

The Ontario Teachers Federation recently released a shocking report which indicated major assaults have risen 150 per cent in schools over the past three years.

In a survey of 881 Ontario schools, principals reported assaults ranging from biting, kicking and punching to the use of firearms and knives. The incidents involved assaults on both teachers and other



"As I See It"

by Colin Gibson

students. It was also reported that minor

assaults increased 50 per cent over the same three year period.

The report further indicated the increase in school violence is province-wide, encompassing both rural and urban schools and even filtering down to the elementary school level at a similarly alarming rate of increase.

The solution if indeed one can be found rests on the responsibilities of parents and guardians.

Making sure a young person is getting the full benefits of our education system requires more

than merely trundling the youngster off to school.

It means becoming familiar with the school, with the teachers, with the curriculum and of prime importance, how that particular youngster is becoming acclimated to the education system.

Educators can only be expected to do so much. It is up to all of us to ensure the education system works and in turn, represents a safe, healthy and fulfilling learning environment.

As I see it, anyway.

# Councillors deserve praise for development decision

Congratulations go out to Acton councillors Norm Elliott and Gerald Rennie, as well as the other councillors who recently supported a development proposal for John and Church Street in Georgetown.

Congratulations is deserved because these councillors didn't permit their personal feelings to cloud their professional judgement.

The development application calls for the construction of three townhouses at the corner of John and Church Street. Following the lead of councillors Elliott and Rennie, a majority of Council supported the proposal because it represents a compromise solution.

Earlier this year, councillors rejected a development proposal calling for four townhouses to be built at the location in question. Councillors agreed the proposed density was too great for the property size. Council made this

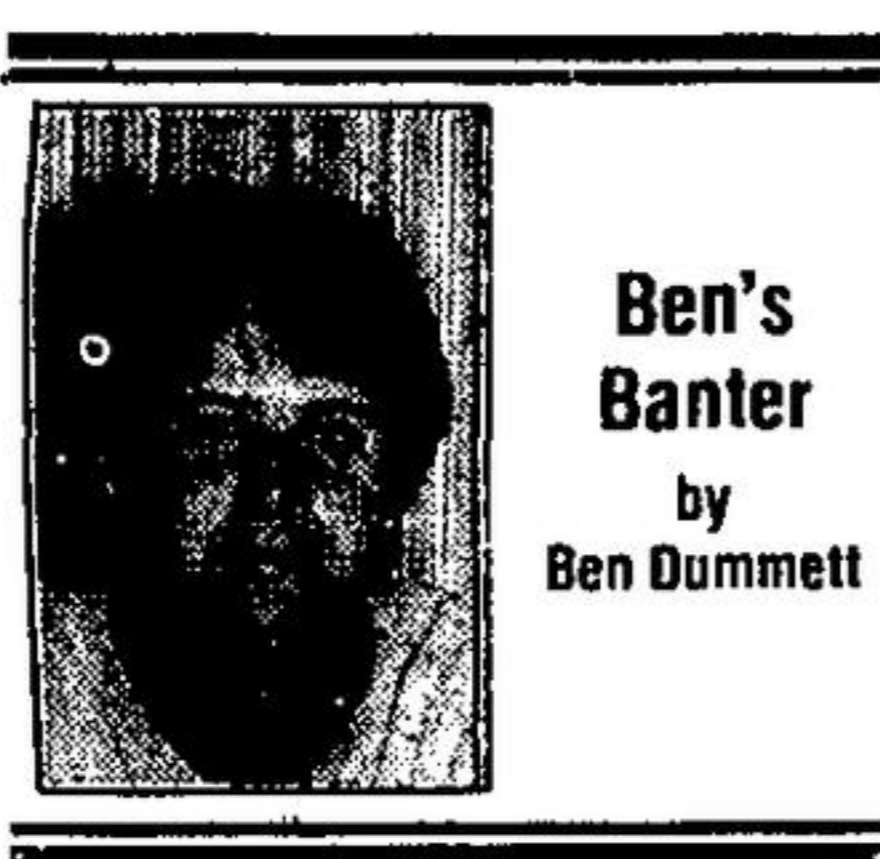
decision despite a staff report recommending four townhouses would be suitable for the location.

Councillors suggested if three townhouses had been proposed then the application would have received approval.

Subsequent to that decision the developer, Edward Bain, wrote a letter to the province claiming his original application was unfairly considered by councillors. At one point during the letter Mr. Bain described council as a "kangaroo court."

Understandably, several councillors were very upset with Mr. Bain's letter. And they made certain Mr. Bain knew how they felt when the application for three townhouses was recently considered.

However, both councillors Elliott correctly pointed out the province is pressuring municipalities to ap-



Ben's Banter

by Ben Dummett

and Rennie correctly pointed out Mr. Bain's letter and the new application are two separate issues.

Acknowledging he may lose some votes over his position, Coun. Elliott urged councillors to support the revised application because the Town needs this type of housing. He

prove higher density housing.

Following Coun. Elliott's lead, Coun. Rennie noted the Church and John Street neighborhood is comprised of a mix of housing types. "It isn't a nice neat single family home neighborhood," he said.

It's good to see politicians make an unpopular decision that will, in the end, benefit the Town.

With respect to the same application, it was also good to see a majority of councillors didn't let certain arguments against the proposal made by area residents affect their decision.

One argument used by opposing neighbors centred on the idea that Mr. Bain would profit from the construction of three townhouses. The implication being Mr. Bain didn't care about the effect his development would have on the surrounding neighborhood.

Hogwash!

Unless Mr. Bain builds a good quality development, he won't be able to sell the houses, and he can kiss his profit goodbye. The profit motive will encourage Mr. Bain to build a development that complements rather than detracts from the surrounding area.

Other objecting neighbors claim Mr. Bain won't build a quality development because he doesn't plan to live in it upon completion. Again this is illogical.

Mr. Bain's ability as a builder will determine the project's quality, not whether or not he lives in one of the houses.

The public must realize Halton Hills can no longer stop development other than single family homes. As a result, instead of objecting to higher density housing, it should focus attention on ensuring this type of housing is done properly and complements the community.

# Telephone technology grates at the best of times

Do you ever begin to feel, from time to time, that the world might be a happier place if Alexander Graham Bell had studied ornithology rather than electronics?

Oh, I'm certainly not suggesting that the telephone is a bad invention - like the hydrogen bomb, say, or aerobic exercise.

I'll certainly concede that the telephone makes our lives much easier. Without the telephone, for instance, salespeople would have to come to your door to make nuisance-calls.

Still, there are times when I start feeling that telephone technology is getting just a little out of hand.

I had that feeling just this morning when a friend - one of those who has one of those nifty dual phone-line hook-ups - put me on hold in order to determine whether the caller on the other line was someone he'd rather talk to instead.

I enjoy sitting on hold while my friends make sure that Caller Number Two isn't someone much more important. It reminds me of my place in the universe.

Telephones have always had a wonderful way of making us face up to our own insignificance. You've undoubtedly had this experience many times, at convenience stores.

There you are, standing meekly in line with your loaf of bread and perhaps even your package of toilet tissue. You finally reach the counter. And the phone rings.

Naturally, the clerk answers the phone instead of ringing in your purchase.

So there you stand, head bowed, thinking: "Heavens, don't mind me. After all, I'm not an electronically-transmitted voice impulse.

I'm just a real live person." This, of course, is the same principle that lies behind the telephone answering machine. They exist to belittle others.

Be honest. We're often at home when our little recorded message



Weir's World

by Ian Weir  
Thomson News Service

tells the caller otherwise, aren't we? We're just screening calls - and the caller knows this, since he does the same thing himself.

If we were really truthful people, our messages would say:

"Hi. We're in right now, but we're not answering the phone until we find out who it is. If we don't pick up the receiver while you're leaving your message, it means we don't like you very much. Wait for the beep."

But somehow, there's something even more insulting about being put on hold when someone gets a call on his second line.

Just for starters, I can't help feeling a bit resentful of people who decide they need two phonelines at home in the first

place - the implication being that they're constantly expecting vitally important calls which must be dealt with instantly.

I mean, who do these people think they are? Amway distributors?

It's possible, of course, that I'm simply being oversensitive about this. Perhaps it isn't really a deliberate attempt to snub me. After all, I never hear what my friends say to the second caller after putting me on hold.

It's possible to cry: "Hang up, insignificant wretch! Don't you realize I'm talking to Weir?"

But I don't think so - especially considering the frequency with which my friends come back on the line saying, "Gee, Ian, it looks like I'm going to have to call you back..."

But I have a plan. I'm going to prove to my friends that I'm just as significant as they are by putting a new message on my answering machine.

Henceforward, it will run as follows:

"Hi. We're in, but we're not going to come to the phone, because we're busy having dinner with the Pope. So don't bother to leave a message, 'cause we're now too important to talk to you.

"Have a nice day."



SNAFU® by Bruce Beattie

"The only time we went to nice hotels was so Harry could get stationery to impress his friends."

# Poets' Corner

## WHAT IN THE WORLD IS MISSING?

There's a hole in my world  
That I'm falling through.  
Sweet Jesus!  
I just don't know what to do.  
We have a nice home,  
A dog with a bone,  
A garden with trees,  
All things to please.  
Toys in the basement,  
Hi-tech in the den,  
Friends come to visit  
Again and again.  
Machines in the kitchen,  
Family that cares,  
Two cars in the driveway,  
Few grey hairs.  
Good food on the table,  
A marriage that's stable,  
A feeling of worth,  
A love of this earth,  
Music to soothe us,  
Movies to move us,  
Good books filled  
with meaning,  
Molly Maid for the cleaning,  
An accountant to keep us  
Out of the red,  
An analyst to quiet  
The screams in our head,  
Political leaders  
To march us to war,  
The media to tell us  
What we're fighting for,  
Holy laws of the land,  
We always open,  
A judicial system  
To save us  
From those that do stray.  
Our kids learn each rule,  
Perform well in school,  
Know how to play fairly,  
But practice it rarely.  
We're all in good health,  
Appreciate our wealth,  
Eat all our greens,  
Hang on at the seams,  
We know we are lucky  
And give to the poor,  
So long as they stay  
Well away from our door.  
Sunny vacations  
We think are our due.  
We still enjoy kissing,  
I don't know what's missing,  
My God! of course,  
It must be you.

By J.B., Acton.

## THE THREE R'S

There's a rule for this,  
There's a rule for that,  
Wherever I go  
Wear a mental hard hat.  
Out of our denizens  
And even at home  
Rules, rules, rules  
Not trusted on our own.  
A license for everything  
Documents and pontificate  
Even a license to live  
Called a Birth Certificate.  
We are told what to do  
So we can't tell when  
Each will be an issued  
An adult playpen.  
I dream of life quietly  
My visions keep growing  
All goes on in my head  
The subconscious knowing.  
I'm not plagued with dumb  
rules  
No Boundaries to cross  
The freedom's unique  
Sleeps my albatross.  
It's an adventurous life  
I live in dream state  
I've more fun asleep  
Than I do while awake!

By Lois A. Richardson

"HOW DO I LOVE THEE?"  
"How do I love thee?", goes the  
quote  
"Let me count the ways."  
But I couldn't describe my love  
for you,  
If I had a thousand days.  
At just the thought of seeing  
you,  
My heart pounds and my legs  
go weak.  
I yearn for your smile and your  
kisses,  
Your gentle hand upon my  
cheek.  
My hands tremble when I  
phone you,  
I live to hear your voice -  
Thoughts of you encompass  
me,  
I'm yours - I have no choice.  
You haunt my every hour,  
You live within my heart.  
I can't exist without you -  
So why are we apart?

B. Brooke Acton