

Town should join local Chamber of Commerce

It was disappointing to learn only one Halton Hills councillor attended the recent Federal government initiated Community Talks meeting on Canada's future prosperity held at Georgetown District High School.

Through this and similar meetings happening across the country, the Federal government is attempting to learn what the general public believes is necessary to improve the country's economic competitiveness to develop future economic policies.

Since all current councillors campaigned during the municipal election on the platform of greater local and industrial growth, the lack of councillor participation doesn't make sense.

As Town councillor Rob Heaton - the sole councillor to attend the meeting - told the Herald, "often councillors hear more from

businessmen and residents on a one-to-one basis than anyone else, so they could have brought these comments to the meeting on behalf of the Town."

Some councillors might argue there was no point attending the meeting because its purpose focused on Canada's economy in general and not how Halton Hills specifically could improve its local economy.

However, this logic fails to recognize the trickle down effect - the more Canada's economic situation improves, the greater chance the local economy will benefit.

This argument aside, more councillors should have attended the meeting as a symbolic gesture to show they take an interest in the country's economic future.

Learning of the low councillor



Ben's Banter
by Ben Dummett

turnout, people in the community would probably ask themselves; if my local political representatives don't want to participate in the process to improve the situation, then why should I participate?

This scenario seems that much more plausible recognizing the widespread public apathy towards these kinds of government initiated meetings.

When contacted by the Herald about the lack of councillor attendance at the meeting, several councillors denied having any knowledge of the meeting.

Doug Penrice, General Manager of the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce, which co-sponsored the event with Halton and Peel Industries Training Advisory Committee, said press releases about the meeting appeared in both the Herald and Independent.

This brings me to my next point. It's understandable councillors might have missed the press releases. However, they would have definitely known about the meeting if the Town had been an official

member of the local chamber.

Mr. Penrice said only official chamber members receive direct mailings of Chamber related events.

As the Town is not a chamber member, councillors must rely on Halton Hills Mayor Russ Miller for all chamber news. Mayor Miller sits on the chamber's Board of Directors as an honorary member.

Given the mayor's hectic schedule, he probably doesn't have time to act as an effective liaison between the chamber and council.

It makes more sense for the Town to pay the \$100 membership fee and become a formal chamber member.

Not only would council members be kept abreast of what the chamber is doing, but also they would be in a better position to help the local business community prosper.

A different kind of solution to constitutional problem

The Soviet Union is no more. A new, yet nameless Commonwealth is going to replace it.

We in Canada are still struggling with the momentous issue of the distinctiveness of Quebec. The two largest (in acreage) countries of the world are trying to find a new way of being. And so are Western Europe, Yugoslavia, South Africa and that chunk of the Middle East once known as Palestine.

Next year this time we could have a few Canadas, a new Palestinian state, a bunch of South Africas, three states in the ex-Yugoslavia, a not yet unified Europe. The atlas publishing business must be booming!

The turmoil has totally different histories, but some common causes. It may be difficult for us Canadians, used to seeing ourselves as a very democratic society, to accept that at the roots of our problems is the very same reason which challenges the status quo of other jurisdictions. Canada, like the Soviet Union, like Israel, like South Africa is a

country which force created.

We took, by force, the land from an existing population, we took control, by force, of another nation. We believed, for a very long time, that our union was accepted and peaceful, and we were mistaken. The break-down of the stifling bi-polar world, (USA-USSR), and the explosion of the electronic communication era have lifted the obstacles in the way of the revisionist forces and... the old order crumbles.

This powerful wind of change should not inspire any fear. What should give us serious concern is our inability to deal with change.

Change is the only constant in the universe. But when we listen to debates about the future of Canada we can only conclude that the only shared idea between vastly different opinions is the inability to shed the ballast of the old.

Precedents, constitutional tenets stemming from the XIX Century are brought forward as argument in the age of space exploration, instant communication



Another View
by Carlo Testa

and genetic engineering. It is like taking our cars to be fixed at the local blacksmith.

The only sensible statement I have heard so far about our constitutional mess comes from Premier Clyde Wells. In a recent debate in Alberta he said that he did not really care about which agreement would be reached, but about the way that agreement could be changed. Which indeed is the key question. However, despite the solution our leaders could put together, there is only

one thing certain: it will have to be changed, again. And it would be nice if next time around we would not have to go through a national trauma to decide if there have to be six or 10 senators from Ontario!

In fact the major flaw, possibly the only flaw, of our present constitution is that, practically, it cannot be changed, without "a lot of noise meaning nothing".

Just think: with a decent amendment formula Meech Lake would have been passed, an elected Senate would have replaced the present joke, and we might even have been able to respond to the demands of the native population.

Can we bring our leaders to abandon their futile search for the perfect solution and just fix what is clearly wrong?

Probably not. It takes prudence, humility and brains. Qualities in limited supply. Now, just as a Christmas gift, let me give a way out. A rather unexplored way out of the stalemate.

We all know Quebec wants to

secede; we have heard the West flirting with secession and even Nova Scotia was grumbling, a couple of years ago, about joining (?) the USA.

What about us seceding? You know, play a "Russia" on the rest of Canada.

Just imagine: one day Bob Rae declares Ontario independence and asks for real money from the federal government for rent, hydro, water,...

We stop sending tax money to Ottawa and we spend it locally. A few weeks later Quebec will secede, and so will Alberta. The federal government will cease to be. (Sigh of universal relief across the Country!). AND, a few weeks later, we will hear of a new commonwealth, with North Bay as its capital. The Maritimes, in a hastily arranged meeting, will ask to be allowed to join. And so, with a bit of delay, will the Prairies and B.C.

By golly, a new Canada... without a Federal Government! What about this as a Christmas present?

Julia Roberts would do just fine, thanks Santa

To: Santa Claus, North Pole, Canada, HOHOHO.

Dear Santa: Well, it's that time of year again, isn't it? So I thought I'd better drop you a line.

How's every little thing up there at the North Pole? Cold enough for you? HO HO HO.

I realize it's a little early to be writing you, but you know how slow the mail can be at Christmas. I've often thought things would be much simpler if you'd just send me your fax number, along with my present.

If you're planning to give me my usual Christmas shirt, perhaps you could pin the number to the sleeve. On the other hand, perhaps you could send me Julia Roberts, and just ask her to memorize it.

In any case, Santa, I have a question to ask you. It's something that's really been bothering me, so I'd like an answer as soon as possible.

We're both guys, Santa. We can be honest with each other. So tell me: you and the elves never start making Christmas presents before Christmas Eve, right?

This may seem like a bit of a strange question, so it probably needs some explanation. Basically, it has to do with all the dirty looks I've been getting lately from The Love of My Life.

Tragically, this is true. The Love of My Life has been giving me dirty looks for two weeks. And she hasn't even read that bit about Julia Roberts yet.

The problem is that we have vastly different theories on Christmas shopping.

She believes that Christmas shopping should begin in mid-October, to make sure you have time to search out the perfect gift for your loved ones. My belief is

that anyone who really loves me will be quite happy to receive anything I can scoop up at 4:55 p.m. on Dec. 24.

Like most guys, I've always believed Christmas shopping should be done under pressure. Just give me half an hour 'til closing time, a sturdy credit card, and a running start.

Naturally, Santa, this is why I've been haunted by the thought that you yourself might start preparing for Christmas months in advance. But I keep telling myself this just isn't possible.

Just for starters, you need to be sure who's been naughty or nice, right? So why would you waste time making a mountain-bike for some kid who's just going to blow it all by microwaving the cat on Dec. 23?

Besides, Santa, you're a guy. And surely you wouldn't go and let down the side.

Now granted, I'm not arguing that waiting until the very last minute is always the ideal way to Christmas-shop. To be fair, The Love of My Life has advanced some reasonable arguments.

If you wait until the last minute, as she points out, you may discover that you can't find anything appropriate for someone special.

Still, this depends on how you define "anything appropriate". Personally, I've always felt Christmas presents should come straight from the heart of the giver - which is why I like to give people books I plan to borrow back and read myself. And my reading tastes are very catholic.

It's also true that a guy can postpone Christmas shopping for selfish reasons. If he stalls long enough, he knows it's quite possible that The Love of His Life will

Weir's World
by Ian Weir
Thomson News Service



give up in disgust and start buying his presents for him.

But let's remember that Christmas is a time for people to lend a helping hand to others. So I like to facilitate this, wherever possible.

Ah, well. I know, Santa, that you understand perfectly well what I'm saying. And I remain confident that The Love of My Life will eventually stop giving

me dirty looks, and embrace the true spirit of the season.

While I'm at it, in fact, let me put in a word on her behalf. Since I don't think she's written to you yet, I'll enclose a list of the books I know she'd really, really like for Christmas.

And pay no attention if she sends you a letter asking for Mel Gibson instead.

Yours sincerely, Little Ian.

More letters on gun control

To the Editor,
John Sommer's article indicating "private ownership of guns should be outlawed" is interesting. He's against hunting and political polls and it appears he fears guns will end up in the wrong hands. His solution guarantees this will happen.

Banning all guns will mean that only the criminals will have them which is really frightening for everyone. I suspect the increase in violent crime is the cause for his concern. If this is so, the reason for it is hidden in his article and it has nothing to do with guns. First, let's look at the facts.

The Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics Division of Statistics Canada conducted a study which showed the murder rate in Canada remained the same over the 15 year period. It also showed the use of firearms in homicides decreased, by 25 per-

cent while the use of firearms in robberies declined by 28 per cent. The use of knives and other weapons in assault and murder increased as the rate of violent crime soared by 59 per cent.

In Toronto last year, approximately twice as many people were stabbed to death as were shot. Mr. Sommer should be in favor of banning knives if he wishes to eliminate the tools of violence rather than the causes of it.

Why our society is becoming more violent? Mr. Sommer gives one of the answers in his closing remarks where he refers to "Our collective peace and happiness..."

There is no such thing as a "collective peace or happiness" except in the minds of socialists who have consistently used the big 3 1/2 federal political parties to force their views on Cana-

dians. To achieve their utopia, the rights of the individual are trampled on until none are left as happened in the Soviet Union.

Violent crime is a gross infringement on the rights of individuals using force and weapons. Lack of respect for the rights of the individual is encouraged by governments driven by special interest groups. With government setting such an example, why should criminals respect your right to a peaceful life free of violence?

Government must begin establishing a positive example by protecting the rights of the individual. Until this happens, the murders, rapes, beatings and robberies will continue unabated.

Yours,
for a better Canada,
Hilliard Cox
Deputy Leader
Libertarian Party of Canada