

the HERALD

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School system on the spot

In his most recent column Georgetown District High School Principal Bryn Davies defends his school and the Halton Board of Education in light of recent criticism about the province's education system.

He correctly points out Halton's dropout rate is approximately five per cent, while the provincial average is approximately 30 per cent.

To explain the board's success, Mr. Davies writes: "I believe the overwhelming reason for our success is the careful planning and hard work of our staff. The board has been proactive in systematically pursuing a Retention Strategy."

First of all, we want to congratulate the board on the work it is doing to keep young people in school.

However, we question why the board gets so defensive when Ontario's school system comes under scrutiny?

Instead of considering the criticism as an attack, we think the board should look upon it as a challenge.

The challenge being to push itself that much harder to improve schooling throughout the region.

By focusing on how much better the Halton board is in comparison to other boards, the region's educators and citizens may be lulled into a false sense of security.

The point is, no matter how good Halton's education system is, it can always be improved.

As well, the board's "me attitude" works against the betterment of the entire school system.

Instead of telling others how good its system is, the board should be sharing its knowledge with less successful boards.

That way students across the province benefit.

Community Forum

Is our school system doing its job?



KELLY ZYTARUS, GEORGETOWN: "No, the system is too lax. Staff are too worried about pumping kids through and they lower standards so students won't fail. I think they should have standards for every grade level and every grade level should have a prerequisite standard for students to meet before they get to enter that level."



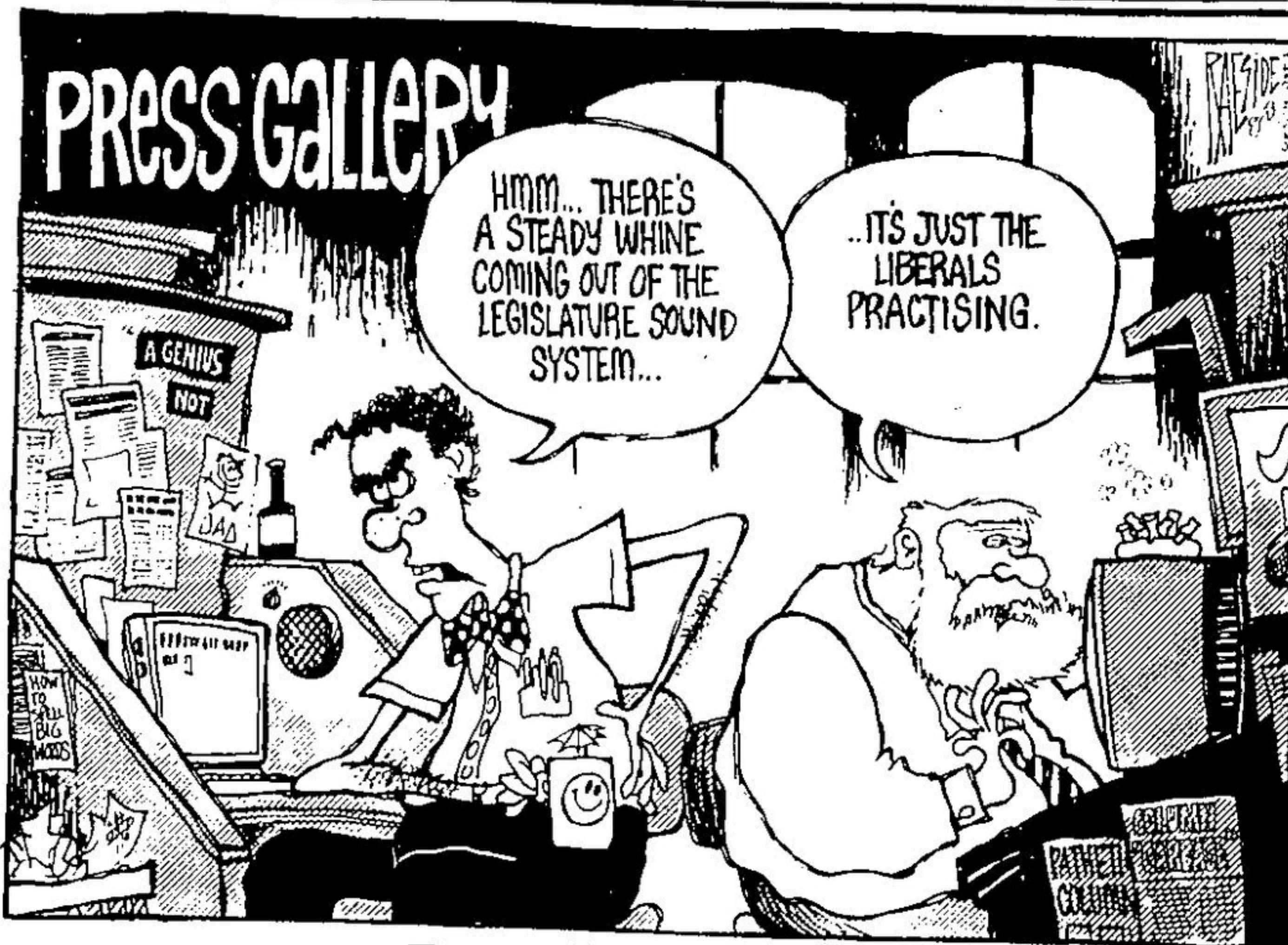
LISA SCOTT, GEORGETOWN: "It's good but it could be a lot better. It's good that teachers are using new philosophies in teaching methods and are taking the time to accommodate all children. But schools are overcrowded and there's not enough one-on-one teaching."



BLAKE HARRISON, GEORGETOWN: "I grew up in Georgetown and went to school here and I think our standards of education are high. There are high standards to get into institutes of higher learning. The only downfall is that classes have too many students."



MARGIT McNAUGHTON, GEORGETOWN: "Well I'm a teacher and from working in the system, I see a lot of teachers that work hard to provide the best education within the guidelines presented to them. There are gaps and room for improvement but overall I think we provide a well-rounded education."



People's Forum

Landfill proposal ludicrous

Dear Editor:
I would like to submit this letter for possible publication in your letters to the editor page of your paper.

In recently visiting the POWER group from Halton Hills, I was amazed that after four years the Minister of the Environment has not already put a stop to this ludicrous idea of

Turner replies

Dear Editor,
Suicide was a tempting option after reading Melvin McCallum's letter in the Herald last week.

Mr. McCallum forecasts a dismal 1992 for the economy and keeps talking about this recession really being a Depression. Well, I don't agree. With low inflation, low interest rates, low commodity prices, a social safety net, strong banks and positive economic growth - however modest it will be in the first quarter of the year - the main factor we are missing for recovery is consumer confidence.

I have some trouble understanding why people want to torpedo that further. Surely, telling our friends and neighbors that The End is Nigh hardly inspires them to go and buy a new car or a home. In fact, doesn't it just make things worse?

Finally, Mr. McCallum is perfectly free to lay the blame for every single problem we have at the feet of the prime minister. The PM is a big boy, and he can defend himself. He can also point out, if he chooses, what has happened to the Ontario economy since September of 1990, when the provincial government changed.

By the way, Mr. McCallum says things are bad because, "one only has to look at the railways that once united this great country." I hope he noticed that last year VIA Rail's business took off. All it needed, it seems, was to be booted out of the public trough, and into the real world.

Yeah, it's cold and scary out there - but we don't get to the future by going backwards.

Sincerely,
Garth Turner,
MP Halton-Peel

disposing of solid waste in the Acton Quarry. The quarry is above the main drinking water aquifer in an area that is part of the "protected Niagara Escarpment".

Why would any government agency want to put a leaking landfill in a protected area, over peoples drinking water supply? There is no question of whether the landfill will leak, only how long it will take to pollute. Has the Canadian government, like the U.S., chosen to ignore the warnings of Love Canal and so many other sites that have created massive evacuations, public health damages and unbelievable amounts of money to rectify?

In the states we have had three community evacuations due to folks living near a "perfectly safe" garbage dump. We have had homes and a government building blow up due to leaking gases, and we have an untold amount of health related problems in our families. Is this what the Ministry of Environment (MOE) is consciously choosing for her people. MOE cannot claim that they had no knowledge of problems related to

a solid waste dump. Nor, as far as I can tell, have the best scientists been able to build a landfill that won't create these problems.

To add insult to injury, this proposal is located in an area where the local folks are putting in time and money to recycle, reduce and reuse their solid wastes. The local Waste Wise Recycling Center is a growing effort in the Halton Hills area. The message that the Ministry of the Environment is sending is one of discouragement by not stopping this proposal now. Ruth Grier should applaud the Halton Hill folks, not dump on them. She should also take the protection of the Niagara Escarpment seriously. Once it's destroyed it can never be reclaimed.

People across Canada should speak out and let Ruth Grier know that you will not allow your natural resources and fellow citizens to be sacrificed for profit or governments neglect. As a victim of Love Canal in Niagara Falls, NY I can tell you it's easier to act now than trying to undo the damage later.

Respectfully submitted,
Lois Marie Gibbs

Clear your sidewalks

Dear Neighbours,
After our recent burst of winter on January 14th, I have not been able to walk to work due to the snow covered sidewalks. If I had to option of driving I would, unfortunately my blindness prevents me. The route I walk takes my guide dog from the train station along the East side of Queen St. to Guelph St., East

Great idea

Dear Editor,
When I looked at your article in the newspaper I thought, "What's this?" "Red noses?"

What a great idea! We all need something to brighten up our day! We need a break from our problems, taxes, etc.

I support your idea.
Wear your red nose. "Lighten up Canada!"

Yours truly,
Doreen Gates
GDHS Adult English
Learner Program

on Guelph St. past Durham to the intersection of Guelph and Maple. I then cross the intersection and resume walking along the South side of Guelph St. heading East to my office near the Dairy Queen. Some of my neighbours on Queen St. diligently clear their sidewalks, while other make walking almost impossible. My guide dog has to travel on the road in oncoming traffic risking both our lives to get around the snow banks.

As a disabled person living in a rural community, travelling is limited at the best of times. If I were a sighted person I might be able to pick a path around these obstacles, but I am not. The guide dog tries his best but, if there is no path to follow he can become confused.

To my Georgetown neighbours I would really appreciate having the sidewalks shovelled when you clear your driveways.

Your neighbour,
Donald Anderson