

Gamesmanship

Let the games begin. Okay, not the Olympic Games, they're done. And the Ontario Summer Games already got underway last week.

No, we're referring to that seemingly endless contest of wills between the provincial government (this time represented by the Liberals) and some of the province's teachers' unions.

The teachers have had a bit of history in waging war with the provincial government. They weren't too keen on the Social Contract of Bob Rae's NDP in the early 1990s, detested the policies of the Tories and Premier Mike Harris to the point of waging the biggest education strike in North American history later in the decade and now are accusing the Liberals and Dalton McGuinty of "bullying."

"The bullying tactics leveled against education support workers are contrary to everything that everyone in Ontario's education sector has been trying to achieve for years," says Fred Hahn, President of the Ontario Division of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE Ontario), the union representing more than 55,000 education support workers.

"The government is showing contempt for the bargaining processes that are enshrined in law and that have always worked," huffed Ken Coran, President of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO).

The union leaders' salvos are in response to Education Minister Laurel Broten's threat of legislation to freeze wages for two years and short-circuit strikes or lockouts to keep kids in the classroom.

She poked the bear last week by saying, "I don't believe the average Ontario worker would expect to get a 5.5 per cent pay increase after taking the summer off and refusing to negotiate." It was a shot at unions representing elementary and high school teachers that walked away from bargaining with the province.

While both sides always contend they are acting in the "best interests of the students", this inane posturing has gotten old and should be left in the sandbox... where the kids play.

WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to www.theifp.ca)

Ontario currently has no regulations specific to private zoos and other attractions with wild animals. Should there be provincial oversight?

- Yes (81%)
- No (19%)

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Letters to the editor

Reader defends plant editorial

Dear editor,

In reference to my friend Christopher Dawes' letter of August 7 (*Editorial was 'biased'*), I would like to point out that this newspaper has always allowed our elected representatives to communicate with their constituents via columns in this publication.

Since both our federal and provincial representatives hail from conservative parties, naturally their columns will be written from a conservative perspective. I'm sure that when Julian Reed, a Liberal, was the local MPP, *The Independent & Free Press* also ran his columns as a public service and I'm sure that those columns had a certain political slant. However, I am confident that the average voter is able to filter the political rhetoric to arrive at their own conclusions.

As for *The Independent & Free Press* criticizing the provincial government for the cancellation of the Mississauga power plant, isn't it the role of a newspaper to point out irresponsible and inefficient government spending? *The Independent* is

a Metroland newspaper, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Torstar Media— easily the most pro-Liberal and anti-Conservative media company in Canada. So, a charge of conservative bias is a bit of a stretch.

May I also point out that the cost of \$190 million for cancelling the Mississauga power plant works out to be around \$14.60 for every man, woman and child in Ontario. That means it cost my family of six, \$87.60 not to build a power plant in Mississauga, not to mention the added costs of beefing up the power lines to bring that power back to the GTA from Sarnia.

Maybe Chris doesn't mind this waste of money, but I certainly do.

Bill Roest, Georgetown

(Editor's note: *The Independent & Free Press* has, for decades, run monthly columns from MPs and MPPs, regardless of party affiliation).

The mail will come

Dear editor,

Why is Tony Taylor upset that some mail is not yet being addressed as Glen Williams (July 19 letter, *Glen issue still needs 'addressing'*)? Are some people not receiving their mail?

I understood the no-cost address change was optional. Why does it even

matter what your mailing address is, as long as you get your mail— that's the important issue, isn't it? Good grief, would you like your street name changed as well?

Have the town and the post office employees handling this issue been working for free? Was the paperwork informing us of the optional, no-cost address change sent to us at no cost? I hope none of my tax dollars have been wasted on this nonsense!

The mailing address change was approved. Be patient.

Joyce Winger, Georgetown

Manager will be missed

Dear editor,

I wanted to express in a letter the outstanding job a lady has done the past 20 years.

Joan Wilfong, owner and manager of Sears, is a friendly and courteous lady, always with a smile and ready to provide the best prices for your purchases.

We will miss her very much. Her staff are also great— Steve, who has moved on, and Irene and Isabel, who are staying on, are a pleasure to know.

I wish the new management all the best and Joan, whatever you do next, I know you will do another great job.

Andrea DiMonte, Georgetown