

Opinion

Hostility to immigrants

The federal government's decision to increase the annual flow of immigrants to Canada to 250,000 by 1992—50,000 more than in 1990—has made some Canadians uneasy.

People are afraid the new arrivals will take existing jobs or tax the social system by collecting welfare and unemployment insurance benefits. They also fear many of, or some of, the immigrants will bring the racial tensions and hatreds from their country of origin with them, upsetting still further traditions which have been handed down from generation to generation.

The Federal Business Development Bank, however, says the former is just not true. Their research indicates that Canada's thriving ethnocultural population is responsible for half of all small businesses in Canada and represents \$60 billion to the nation's economy.

"Most new arrivals become productive members of Canadian society who boost the economy," the Development Bank declares. "Many create jobs not only for themselves, but for other Canadians."

It's a fact that's observable every day. Few would dispute that immigrants have boosted our economy and made us much less provincial. They have created a multicultural society (especially in large cities), opened new avenues of commerce and brought color and change to Ontario.

Unfortunately they have also brought some bad along with the good. Some are illegals who have slipped past less than strict border surveillance. Others have been in constant trouble with the law which has created hostile feelings towards all immigrants when the vast majority of them are law abiding and anxious to become full-fledged Canadians.

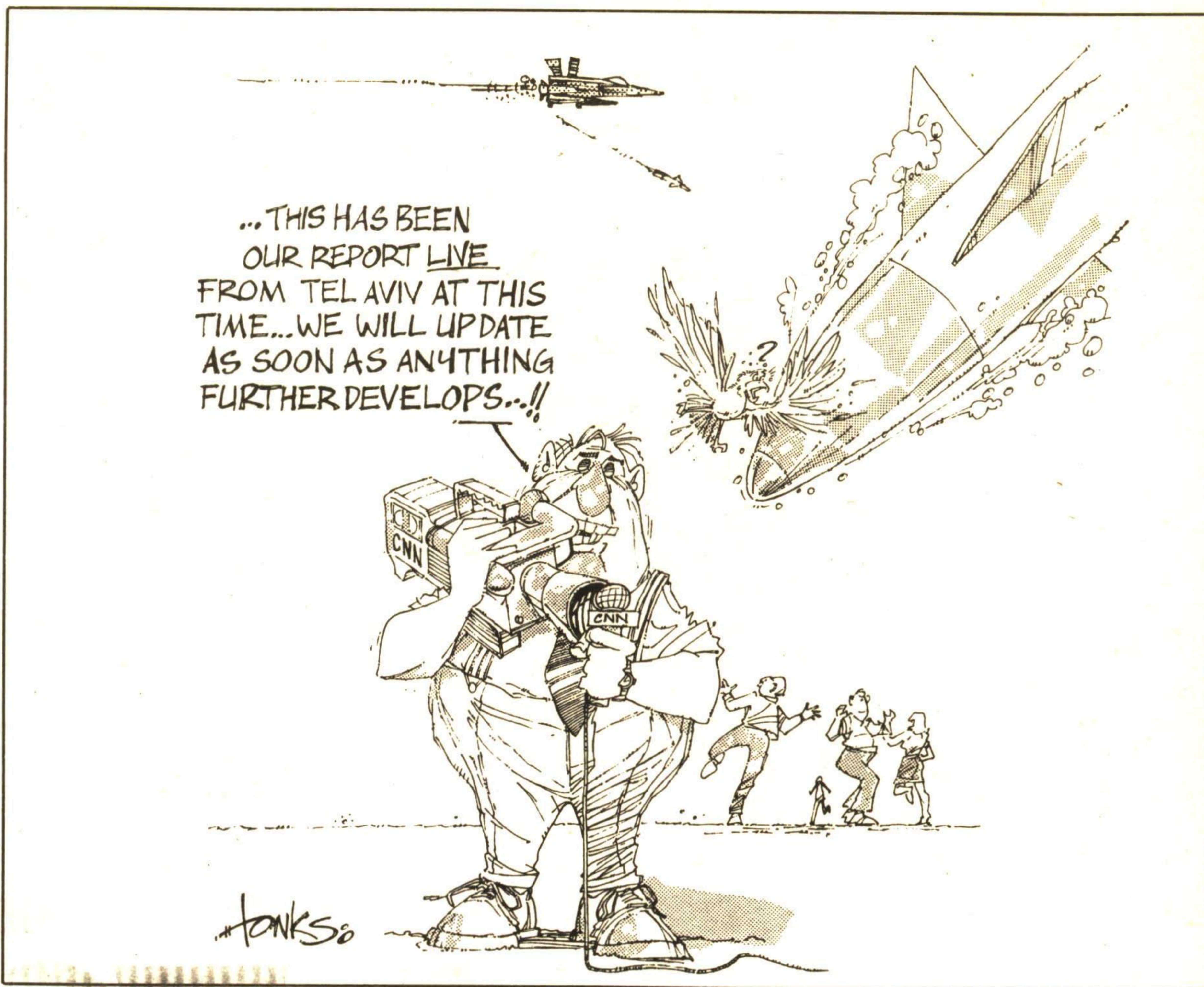
However, again, there are also pressures to change traditions which have long been part of life in Canada. Such things as the use of the Lord's Prayer, Christmas concerts in the schools, a tendency to pooh-pooh royal traditions (the latter certainly not restricted to immigrants) have created ill will.

Canadians feel rightly, we think, that if more immigrants are going to be accepted, the government should be more selective, not from so much an economic viewpoint, but from a cultural and social view. Those people who would fit into the existing society without being disruptive and anxious to change Canadian society to mirror their country of origin, should have a priority.

Certainly we should welcome peoples of all races, creeds and colors but not those who will only prove to be a problem to their new country and create new hostilities.—H.C.



These two Norval "groundhogs" (who look suspiciously like Barb Stephens and Bud Carter) asked for their weather forecast at a "groundhog party" Feb. 2, replied in unison, "Blue skies shining on me, nothin' but blue skies do I see. We never saw the sun shining so bright..." etc. etc. Although this forecast differed greatly from that of Wlarton Willie and Halton Hills Herbert, who saw their shadows and plunged right back into burrows, this pair were downright optimistic they were right. And they have been so far. - Photo by Catherine La Perle



Our Readers Write

System works against Acton

Dear editor,

I was not the least bit surprised to read that the Town of Halton Hills budget committee had scrapped plans for a new arena in Acton. I believe the vote was 8 to 5.

My fellow hockey parents often marvel at the beautiful new facilities we visit in places such as Hespeler, Delhi and Waterloo. I tell them it'll be a long, long time before we ever see such a facility in Acton. The reason is, as usual, regional government and Acton's position in it. Most people have never had the "opportunity" to see town council in action.

Allow me a slight digression to give an example of how the system works:

A few years ago my neighbors banded together to try to get something done about the gross inequities in the local tax system. We went to council armed with good documentation including an excellent report on the tax structure by Councillor Ross Knechtel. I think it took Ross six months to prepare that report.

It was obvious to any logical person that implementation of a new tax system, such as market value assessment, was necessary. Two of my councillors backed the proposal. The mayor at the time said he felt we were being treated unfairly and that we had made an excellent presentation to council. Then he proceeded to cast the deciding vote against the measure. (He has since moved on to the \$70,000 per year position of Regional Chairman where he can do even more damage).

Vested interest, you say? What do you expect when you are outnumbered 3 to 10 on town council and 1 to 24 on regional council?

Getting back to the arena issue, normally I'd say that those interested should go to council and express their views before council approves the new budget. Unfortunately, as you can see from the above example, this would be a waste of time. Also, I don't believe the new provincial NDP government can or will do anything about this problem.

It's a shame that the kids and parents of Acton have to put up with third rate facilities compared to other parts of Halton Hills. The old arena simply cannot handle the pressure put on it by the

many young people in the area. It was so crowded at the figure skating carnival last year that a friend of mine and his wife couldn't even get in to see their daughter skate. The cooling pipes have broken at least twice this year, causing cancellation of hockey and figure skating. I hear that the arena is now floating on a kind of quagmire. The dressing rooms look and smell like jammed piggens.

Councillor Rick Bonnette can tell you some real horror stories about what it will cost to keep repairing Acton arena. Pumping repair money into that facility is just plain economic stupidity.

By the way, this is not just an "Acton" problem. If the arena does break completely, imagine the chaos and bad feelings that will result when Acton user groups are forced to share Georgetown facilities. That is, assuming we will be allowed that "privilege."

With all that said, I still have a deep affection for the "old girl by the lake." No, not the kind of affection I feel for my mother. More like the feeling you had for the old girls you used to see in the Warwick Hotel in Toronto. Well used, but still breathing—just barely.

Don Fosbury,
Acton.

Disturbed by cartoon

Dear editor,

I was disappointed at your choice of cartoon for the February 2nd issue. I had hoped you would have not advanced enough to give political cartoons without warfare, we had at least progressed beyond such juvenile forms of overt propaganda.

To serve better as the provoking vehicle it should be, the cartoon should have included a choice of masks—among them, 'righteous George' and 'unctuous Brian.'

...THE GRIM READER!! Sincerely,
Catherine Ward,
Georgetown.

Halton Hills

WEEKEND

The Georgetown Independent and Acton Free Press

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