

# Editorial

## Take a pill, Mich

It's so comforting to know the Toronto Star has adopted at least one tenet of Ontario Premier Bobby Rae's increasingly right-of-centre ruling agenda.

We are referring here, of course, to make work projects and in particular, to the offerings foisted on the unwary public by the Star's Michele Landsberg. Rather than leave a blank space in its section devoted to fluff and stuff articles - which no self-respecting parrot would allow near the foot of its cage anyway - we get the uninformed and coquettishly in-crowd slanted Landsberg who gives new meaning to the phrase, "If you haven't got anything to say, don't say it."

Several weeks ago, blank space pirate Landsberg percolated a column which basically portrayed anyone opposed to a review of who controls the implementation of the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) as being a close cousin to that infamous marauder "Attila the Land Hungry."

In a column riddled with inaccuracies and innuendo and dotted with out of context quotes, she lambasted the Niagara Escarpment Landowners Coalition and tarred the group with anti-environment-pro-development feathers.

Her harangue was so out to lunch she should have offered doggy bags instead of her byline.

A review of the implementation of the NEP (which took five years) had been called by the province because of increasing complaints about the ineptitude of the then controlling body, the Niagara Escarpment Commission - a politically-appointed board, it should be noted.

The NELC was only exercising its democratic rights when it appeared before the review's officers to air its concerns.

The review hearing's officers were members of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Board, so if anything, protection and competent management of the NEP would be of paramount concern.

Yet Landsberg launched her self-righteous objections to the NELC's right to be heard at public hearings almost at the sound of the first gavel being dropped.

Can this be the same Michele Landsberg who would go to the wall for the right of freedom of speech; the same pretentious protector of those who get trapped in bureaucratic mazes of red tape; the same writer who might take up the cause of the right of the vampire bat to register with the Canadian Red Cross.

The NEP review hearing officers were harshly critical of the Niagara Escarpment Commission's handling of the Niagara Escarpment Plan and recommended, among other things in the 400-page tome, that implementation of the NEP be delegated to regional municipalities and counties along the escarpment.

Those opposed to this recommendation naturally vowed to fight on, which is their right, and the Niagara Escarpment Commission will also be allowed to respond before the Minister of the Environment and Energy makes the final recommendation to the Ontario cabinet.

So here we have Landsberg spouting off again in last Saturday's edition of the Star about exploiters slaving at the wallet just waiting to pillage and plunder this wondrously beautiful gift of nature.

Take a pill Mich - if we can call you that (if not, tough).

If you had been acknowledging reality instead of navel-gazing you would know the issue is about who controls the implementation of the NEP, not the Plan itself.

The NEP (a provincial undertaking) takes precedence over a region's Official Plan. So your fear of land-grabbing robber barons at the local level is not only misplaced, but dangerously wrong.

Ever try delivering papers, Mich?

Colin Gibson

## The People's Corner

### How can the economy pick up?

**To the Editor:**

Most people in Ontario will have read and heard the latest provincial budget news. What a grab - for example, 8% on insurance premiums. Not only you and I but all firms that have employee benefit plans. Will that entice foreign firms to build plants in Ontario?

An estimated increase of about \$325 million a year from automobile drivers, a three per cent income tax increase on all taxpayers, plus other surcharges for higher income people.

They even increased the tax on brew your own beer.

What the N.D.P. in Ontario and the Conservatives in Ottawa, with

their G.S.T., fail to realize is that when the average man on the street has all his surplus earnings taxed away, there is nothing left for discretionary spending. How can the economy pick up?

The last provincial Conservative budget had no tax increases and about \$2.5 billion deficit. Then came Mr. Peterson and his Liberals who about doubled the deficit in their short term of office.

But the huge increases in cost of running the government were brought about by the N.D.P., not only in the number of employees but the huge salary increases to a large proportion of those employees.

According to a Statistics Canada

report printed in the Globe and Mail, about 3.7 million adult working-age Canadians have given up looking for work because the situation was hopeless. However, our unionized provincial employees are strongly objecting to making any salary or income concessions.

It's going to be very interesting to see how Mr. Rae and the unions agree to cook the books.

**Mr. Rod Pinkney  
Georgetown**

*Editor's Note: The NDP has only governed Ontario since 1990. The PC's have governed Canada since 1984. You figure out who should shoulder most of the blame for our financial woes!*

### One statement fits all matters

**To the Editor:**

Your recent front cover piece "Silence is golden" reflects the essence of Noel Duignan. The only mistake your newspaper made was to assume that Mr. Duignan had a personal opinion to offer. The reason he didn't contact you was because he was waiting for his predetermined opinion statement to arrive from Queen's Park.

I would like to provide you with what I refer to as the basic "Duignan response".

If at any time in the future you require a response from Mr. Duignan simply print the following statement: "The government's recent decision to (add decision here, for example - raise taxes) was a fair idea which will benefit the majority of Ontarians and not just a select few. I support it fully as it will create jobs and maintain services". Unfortunately for the people of this riding, as far as Noel Duignan is concerned, one statement does "fit all".

**Tom Ridout  
Acton**

### Apology accepted

**Dear Mr. Gibson:**

Reference: Bang-O-Rama  
Thank you for the very handsome apology, which you issued in the May 29th edition of Halton Hills This Week.

Due to the marginal weather, this year's Bang-O-Rama proved to be more difficult than most to put on. Your reference to the Kinsmen proved to be the icing on the cake for several club members. However, having done some amateur editing myself, I am only too well aware how errors occur when a schedule is tight.

Incidentally, other than for the Kinsmen error, your coverage was excellent. Thank you very much.

**Peter Welling,  
President  
Optimist Club of Georgetown**

## Do we want another Don River?

**By J. G. Imhof**

I have been struck by the vociferous nature of the rhetoric over the requirement for additional water supply for Acton. It brings to mind the old cornball adage, "Fish or People". I find this somewhat disheartening as a resident of the town for seven years and as a research scientist who has spent 20 years in the field of environmental restoration.

Dismay as a resident, because I chose to live in Halton Hills because of the environmental features, the quality of the water, the groundwater resources and the natural features in the Black Creek and Credit River Valley. I also saw a community that appeared to be trying to grow in an orderly and careful fashion in a way that didn't destroy these natural assets.

Unfortunately, the community has had to make very difficult decisions over the last several years on growth and environment that has pitted various groups against one another. This appears to be reflected in a council that has very distinct division of opinions over these matters.

I am certain that all council examine these issues from the perspective of their own constituents' interests without bias or conflict of opinion in the community. It is unfortunate that we seem to wish to make decisions that will affect the health of our wetlands, water supply, streams and forests and ultimately ourselves without the benefit of objective information.

We as a community need objective information to tell us the implications of the additional removal of water from the water table in Acton on the stream, wetlands and streamside forests in the Black Creek and Blue Springs Creek valleys.

I hope that people in Halton Hills realize that if additional water can be extracted for Acton without major changes to the environment of the area, that we must plan knowledgeably for the possible changes wrought by the development generated by the additional water. It is all inter-related. Without integrated planning and analysis (which is lacking in

### Guest column

Halton Hills), development permitted by the additional water will definitely alter water quality, likely by the additional water will definitely alter water quality, likely pave over the recharge areas that locally feed our water table and water supply, increase flooding and erosion and damage other environmental assets of the Black Creek valley.

If we do not wish this to happen, we must allow a little time for good information so that we can make sound decisions on our fate with the knowledge of the implications.

As a research scientist and practitioner of environmental restoration, I have seen many communities plan in haste and ignorance and pay big dollars, unfortunately, not at their leisure, to clean up the mess they created through their haste and ignorance. There are processes and good scientific techniques to collect information at a watershed or sub watershed level so that the environment within which a community is embedded can be understood, the physical processes and pathways identified, and implications of various management and development scenarios determined. The community itself can then decide on the fate of its biological and economic environment. I do not see this process occurring now in this community but rather the process is occurring in a piecemeal fashion that will ultimately provide this community with another Don River.

If the community wishes a Don River in their back yards and all its pollution, degraded water quality and fragmented environments, so be it. But do they have the information to make this choice and are they offered the alternatives? I have worked with the development industry, with federal and provincial governments and municipalities both regional and local. It can be done, you can have your cake and eat it too...but you need objective information, no rhetoric and posturing.

## Halton Hills THIS WEEK

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**HALTON HILLS THIS WEEK IS INDEPENDENTLY OWNED & OPERATED.**

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### GOT A BEEF OR A COMMENT?

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