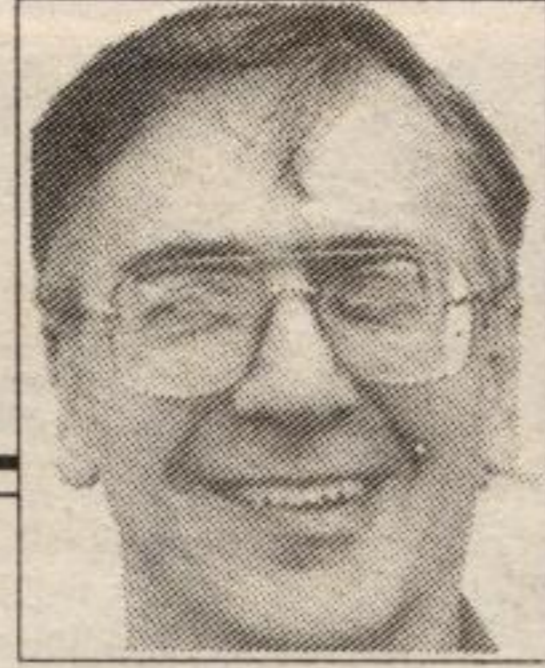


WORD'S WORTH

With Eric Balkind



Beware the creatures of the knight

Some folk thought that it was a sick joke; others that a few, peculiar locals had mixed up the timing of Hallowe'en. But it was neither; there they were, the guys who hide themselves under the white sheets and the peaked dunce hats, standing at the corner of Main and Mill in Acton Saturday and handing out their spurious little tracts of hysterical half-truths.

The Ku Klux Klan have been at it in North America for who-knows-how-many years, stirring up misunderstanding and converting the results into selective hate. I suppose that we may console ourselves that it was probably inevitable that eventually they would find their way to our town. Certainly we may utter a prayer of thanks that they only stayed for 15 minutes ... but they were here and we ought to take at least that fact seriously.

One thing about the KKK — you can always rely on their pointed little heads to pop up whenever the going gets tough. They are experts at taking a problem and subverting it into grist for their propaganda mills. No matter that most issues are the product of a dozen influences that collectively defy simple solutions; they always have the answer and that answer never varies — blame minorities for society's problems.

It's the dressup antics and the staged spectacles that can get to you. Here we have a posse of groupies that hides all identity under white sheets topped off with towering, pointy-headed masks. Klansmen frequently sport some kind of a Maltese cross on these uniforms; they also like burning crosses on front lawns and in farmers' pastures and traditionally they enjoy marching around carrying flaming torches.

Such show may be partially an attempt to convince others that Klansmen are believers in a cause, but the spectacle is meant to evoke sheer terror and — it can achieve just that. Make no mistake about it, cowards dressed in white sheets are no different to thugs dressed in brown shirts; the grand wizard is none other than the current edition of Adolf Hitler. Burning torches in such hands, whether in North America or at Nuremburg, symbolizes nothing so much as searing hatred.

But let's look on the brighter side for a moment. Perhaps we should be grateful for the sordid, little display which the town endured last weekend because, at the very least, it puts us on guard. Folk hidden beneath the anonymity of white sheets remind us that the little ones are out there and they are always ready, given any opportunity, to rise up and proclaim their misguided causes. They represent the forces of imbecility; in some parts of the world they are already in control and — no matter where you live they are always a potential threat.

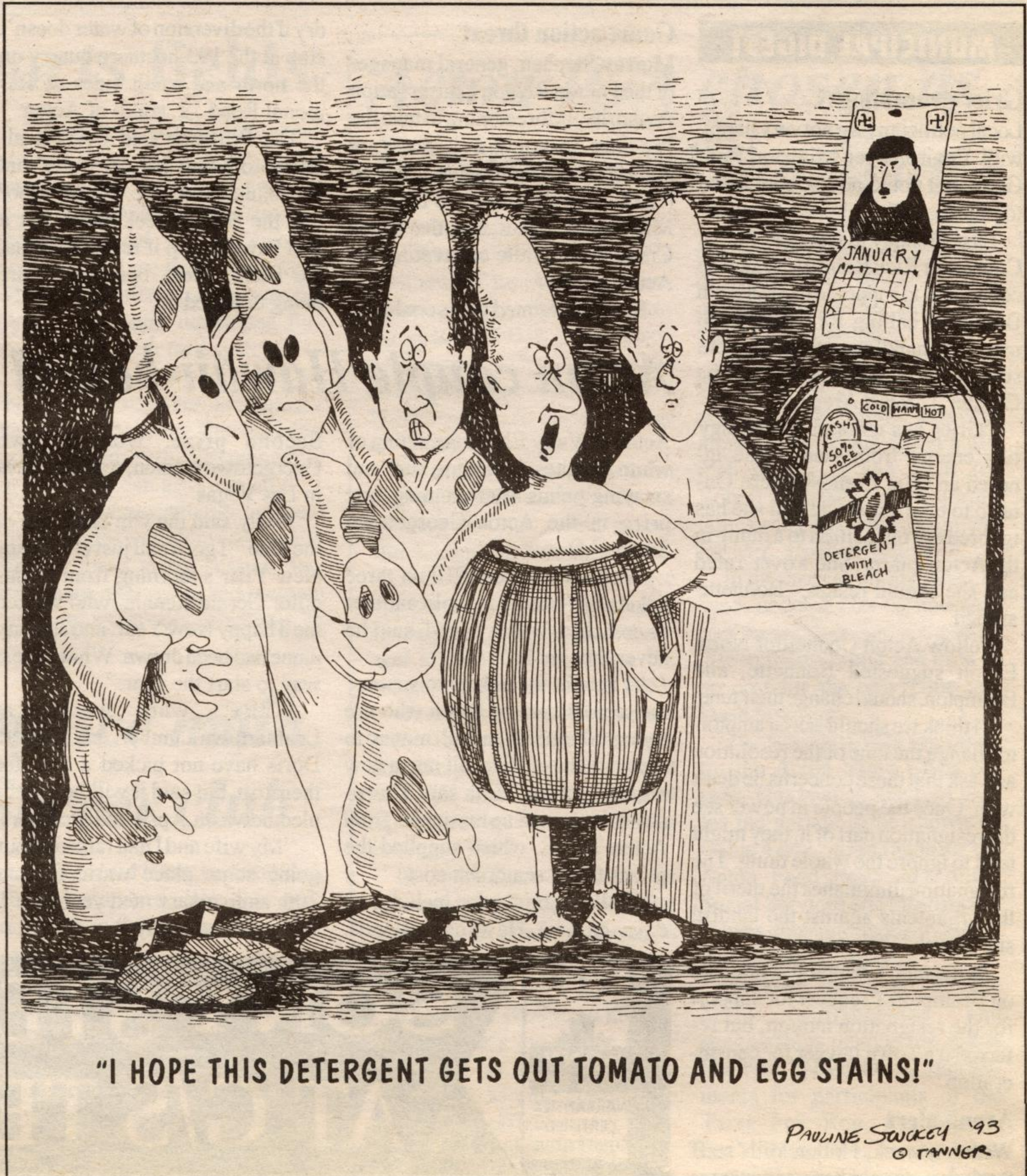
The Klan reminds us that while we do live in a free country all is certainly not well. There are blatant injustices and there are people who are hurting needlessly; there is grinding poverty and we are suffering troublesome levels of unemployment. On these many counts there is an essential need for enlightened leadership and thoughtful action; with such direction we will overcome, but without it there is always danger in the gutters.

Wit & Wisdom

So what do you do when the world refuses to recognise your particular gifts? Well, one way of handling the situation is to sit quietly opposite the mirror and with measured eye consider the genius before you. While you're at it, repeat the following, richly-deserved and long overdue, personal tribute.

*Ah, when I'm beat and bent with care,
Who seats me in an easy chair
And weeps for every bruise and crack
I take, and pats me on the back?
Who chortles at my mildest jest
And vows that I deserve the best?
Has done so since I was a tot
And will when I am old. God wot.*

*Who labours for me like a slave,
And knows I'm good and kind and brave
And free of malice as a lamb?
Who loves me just the way I am,
And is beyond the slightest doubt
The person I can't live without?
To think on whom my heart nigh melts —
Me! Who else?*



PAULINE SWICKI '93
O TANNER

LETTERS

Secrets aren't nice ...

To the Editor,

Congratulations on publishing the column by Eric Balkind, also the cartoon on government secrecy.

You may be interested to know that I have had a similar type "secrecy" reply to a request made to the Halton police.

There is no secret about my stand, and the stand of the Libertarian Party, concerning the gun amnesty scam. The idea of our police, who are supposed to protect private property, destroying property (guns) that are legal to own, and with which no crime has been committed, at the very least must make one wonder.

As a result of several pictures in the paper, and with my interest in the destruction of private property

by those paid to protect it, I requested, as Deputy Leader to the Ontario Libertarians, to be given (allowed) the chance to take a look at these weapons.

After talking to several police officers, I was contacted by one of the VIP's from the police. He made it quite clear I had no status, as a Libertarian, and that, under the *Official Secrets Act*, I would not be allowed to view the weapons that had been confiscated.

The Libertarian Party has more important things to do than worry about the insane statement by the police. This is typical government. Give some idiot power, then stand back and watch out.

In closing, it's interesting to note that pictures are published for publicity, but one cannot be allowed to see for oneself; I assume the police must think I am about to break in and steal what in essence has been stolen by those in power.

John Shadbolt,
Tidey Avenue

Not much to ask?

To the Editor,

I read with interest, your article on B.I.A. plans to improve the downtown area. I too hate the thought of losing any more stores, but in fairness I must confess I get really frustrated when I cannot get a skein of yarn or a ribbon or a

zipper without going to another town.

In short, what I'm saying is, we need a K-Mart or a Zellers to replace Stedman's. Perhaps we are asking too much rent or too many strictures so people can't afford to move here.

Florence Smart, Acton

Someone you know deserve a pat on the back?
Write a Letter to the Editor!

How about a slap on the wrist?
Jot it down and send it in!

Please sign your letters and try to have them to us by Friday at noon.

THE ACTON Tanner

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THE ACTON TANNER is published weekly on Wednesdays by Wicklow Hills Publishing Co. Inc. at 7 Mill Street, East, Acton, Ontario L7J 1G8. Mailing address: P.O. Box 150, Acton, Ont., L7J 2M3. Telephone: 519-853-5100. Facsimile: 519-853-5040. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. Ideas expressed herein are those of the author only.

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