

EDITORIAL

With Paul Nolan



Acton voters have tough job ahead

Election Day is fast approaching and there's a tangible sense of apathy that's descended upon this community. Of course, this indifference is not unusual for a municipal election.

On the competition for Halton Hills' Top Job (as in mayor, not planning director of the "Georgetown Strip Mall Expansion" project) the most common assessment has been "Can you believe how many people want to be mayor?" The debate really hasn't gone much farther than that.

Like I said, this is not unusual. But if you're not excited about this vote yet, please try to get yourself worked up a bit in the next few days. After all, this is no regular old "move in a groove" election — Acton is at a crossroads, and we're staring square into the eyes of our uncertain future.

What will Acton look like in the year 2000? Will we finally have those extra 1,500 homes? Will the east end be extended out toward the Fourth Line with suburban sprawl girding a jewel of an arena-community centre? (And when it comes to selecting a title for this long overdue structure, how about the Grenville Masales Rec Centre? As you already should know, Tinny Masales, who passed away on Aug. 11 at the age of 89, was a legend in hometown sports.)

Will downtown Acton be cleaner, greener and offer more "beef" (that is, shoes, trousers, books and sports equipment) than its present assortment of shops? Will Levi Vernon, the new owner of the old YMCA building, be successful in converting the site into a seniors' residence, fitness club for youth and daycare centre for parents and tots?

Will the old Beardmore property still be an eyesore? A decaying and decrepit reminder of what we once were? And speaking of mid-town skeletons, what about the industrial area on Commerce Crescent? Might we see some infilling here, or will this area still be neglected in the year 2000?

Most of these important issues will be decided over the term of our next municipal government, and our collective success or failure will be, in large part, determined by how well we exercise our right to vote.

In this election, the question is not *What are the issues*, but rather, *What candidate has what it takes to get the job done*. What candidate is going to place Acton development at the top of the agenda, and who has the knowledge and fortitude to wrestle down the obstacles in our way?

The question really is that simple. And that difficult.

So make no mistake, dear reader — you have a large part to play in the Nov. 14 election. You have to take a serious look at the eight non-Acton residents running for mayor and determine which one can get us the results we need.

The future of this great town is at stake.

If you haven't already circled your calendar — do it now!

Tomorrow (Thursday) night is the Acton Tanner-Acton BIA All-Candidates Forum at Acton High.

This is your chance to see the candidates for Acton urban (Ward 1) area and Region council seats, along with all eight would-be mayors. The forum takes place in the school cafeteria from 7 to 10 pm.

Whether you come with prepared questions or you just want to listen to some lively debate, this is an important meeting for all Acton voters.

And if that's not enough — coffee's on the house!

There's More!

Hartley Coles is back; please turn to Page 8 for his thoughts on the upcoming municipal election.



LETTERS

Working class fed up with 'elites'

To the Editor,

Paul Martin, Canada's current finance minister, has stated that Canada is in hock up to its eyeballs. What a revelation, eh! Where has he been hiding all these years?

Why are we in such a mess? Why indeed!

Could it be that our politicians, past and present, federal and provincial, have misused and abused our tax dollars at every turn? A definite given, I believe.

Could it be because our present federal and provincial politicians are passing bills that keep people from working and thus from paying taxes? A bill such as Bill 79, Ontario's Employment Equity Act, will eventually keep the largest work force in the province from working and paying taxes.

Our federal government is heading in the same direction with a National Employment Equity program. Millions of able-bodied, Anglophone, heterosexual white male Canadians will be unable to work because of their health status, skin colour, linguistic ability, gender and/or sexual preference.

The manipulation of Ontario's, and I am sure soon-to-be, Canada's education system, in order to limit white heterosexual, English speaking males from getting an education above high school level (unless you are the son of a white politician), will complete this faze of keeping down an entire generation of white males and making them totally unemployable.

It doesn't make much sense, does it? Why any political body would legislate taxpaying jobs away from ready, willing and able individuals, while at the same time crying that there is not enough tax money to run the province and/or country, is incomprehensible.

Why would any political body want to orchestrate the illiteracy of an entire gender of one race? Perhaps politics and politicians should get their racist, discriminatory policies and/or hands, out of

employment and education.

Mr. Martin says that \$9.5 billion in spending cuts must be made in his next federal budget. He states that his Liberal government's mandate is to break the back of Canada's deficit at any cost.

I have yet to see a politician at any level give up their perks, benefits or lucrative salaries. I suggest to Mr. Martin that he set a precedent by making major reforms to all our federal politicians' pay and perk packages, long before looking at middle class Canadians as an avenue for making cuts.

Martin's reforms should start with the attachment of an age limit of 65 to our politicians' pension eligibility. This move alone will save Canadian taxpayers billions of dollars over time. Once this age limit is in place, politicians who are not yet 65 years of age should cease receiving their pensions.

In Ontario, the government can seize taxes retroactively, so I am sure a precedent can be found or made to take back pensions from politicians. Martin should then proceed to retrieve all pension money paid out to past and present politicians who are not yet 65 but have or are collecting a pension.

Martin should seek to abolish Canada's Senate. The Senate seems only to be useful as a tool for Prime Ministers to stack the deck in favour of personal and/or party agendas and to reward the "good old boys" for years of dependable service (double dipping, by receiving pensions as well as a salary while at their senate post).

The senate is a dispensable, huge financial liability — an expense Canadian taxpayers can no longer afford to maintain.

Politicians' housing allowances, travel allowances and all other tax-free perks should be on the chopping block as well. They, mixed with pensions, do contribute to our escalating debt.

Canada's working middle class is fed up with the elitist political representatives of our country and provinces, forcing them to shoulder the financial burdens created by political fiscal incompetence. It is time that the political and private upper class elite begin shouldering their fair share of Canada's fiscal responsibilities.

John D. McConnell
Greenore Crescent

THE ACTON Tanner

Publisher & Editor

Paul Nolan

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Georgena Petty

Reporter-Photographer

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PHONE:
519-853-5100
FAX:
519-853-5040