

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

Big oil profits

Can you believe it? In the face of constant criticism from motorists, truckers and government, the big oil companies raised the price of gasoline by anywhere from four to six cents a litre to coincide with the Victoria Day weekend. Nice holiday present.

Recently, the financial pages were full of the good news that the oil companies were making record profits, following the huge price increases they imposed when a barrel of oil went up in price. They used to say that it took 90 days for price increase to progress from the well head to the gas pumps.

Forget that. Now if there's a 10 cent increase in the price of a barrel it reflects almost immediately at the pumps. So the gasoline which is already in service station tanks is sold at a premium.

The oil companies, because they're the next thing to a monopoly get away with it. The consumer really has no choice unless they have a vehicle which runs on alternative fuels. Even diesel has reached astonishing price highs.

Of course, anyone with shares in oil is reaping huge dividends. They're not likely to complain about being gouged at the pump. Or by the fact big oil has swallowed most of the independents.

Most consumers wouldn't complain if they felt the oil companies were making a reasonable profit. That's good business. They get annoyed when they know they are being gouged. And, of course, they suspect price fixing, despite government commissions to the contrary.

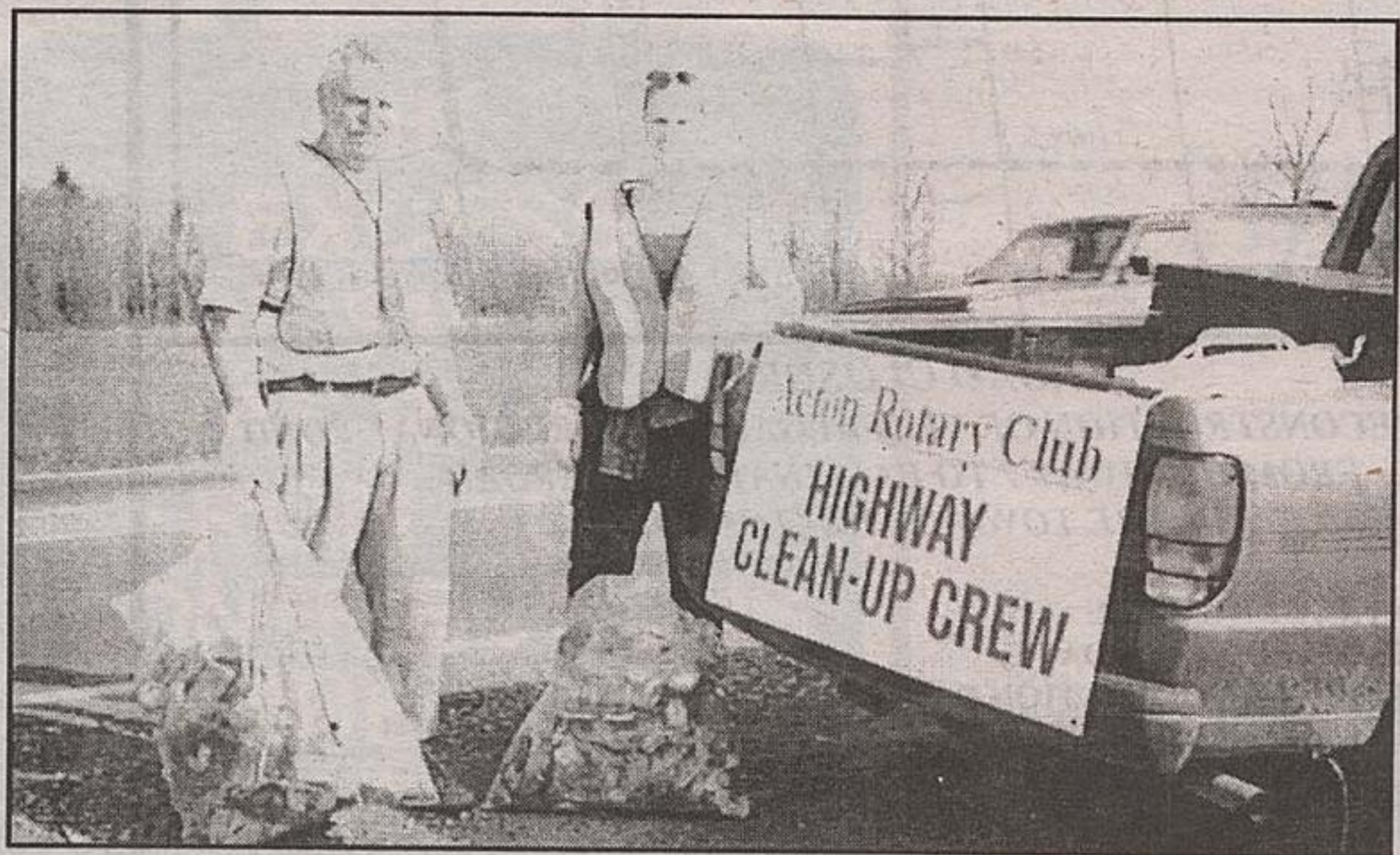
Remember the days when the Liberals, much to the consternation of big money in the west, kept prices reasonable. Maybe the Liberal government should think about bringing that type of legislation back.

Time for action

We have to agree with Deputy Police Chief Gary Crowell that the people of Acton must do their part to combat the senseless and costly vandalism downtown and anywhere in Acton. However, we are also in Councillor Norm Elliott's corner too, when he says something must be done. He called the corner of Mill and Willow Streets a "festering sore" that gets worse as the weather improves. And he's right. It has been going on for years and police can give us all the statistics they have in their brief cases, it has never improved.

What makes it worse is the fact it is right downtown and in full view of everyone who uses Highway 7 to go through Acton. This community's reputation has suffered even though most of the town is quiet and law abiding.

We've been lolly-gagging for years about conditions on Mill and Willow Streets. Most people's patience is exhausted. It's time something was done to clean it up. And other trouble spots, too. Call police when you suspect vandals are out there.



CLEANING UP: Rotarian Doug Fread and Off-the-Wall Youth Centre Worker Vanessa Box-Jones pause for the photographer during the club clean-up of Highway 7 east of town. Also helping the group were members of the Christian Reform Church youth group. - Ted Tyler photo



BRONZE AGE CASTINGS: Thanks to Artcast Inc. in Georgetown and their teacher's love of carving, Grade 6 students at Limehouse Public School were able to design and carve wax pieces that were then cast in bronze. Some of the class showed off their work last week including, Kim Corp and Kevin King (front left and right.) Michael Gillham, Brandon Nixon and David Garvie centre, from left.) Third row: Ashley Bassel, Kylie MacGillivray, Kenneth Wenzel and Chris Stennull. Back: Rebecca Howe, Darren Pezzack, MacKenzie Kimm, Sarah O'Hearn, Spencer Veness and David Moore. - Frances Niblock photo

Watershed suffered a setback

This letter was sent to The New Tanner for publication.

Chairman Brian Penman and
Members of the Board
Conservation Halton
Britannia Road,
Milton, ON

Dear Mr. Penman et al;

Re: Termination of the Board of Directors, Conservation Halton Foundation
Since receiving the hand delivered letter from your CEO, Ms. Maguire-Garber, on the morning of March 31, I have taken considerable time to reflect over the past ten years or so that I have sat as a voluntary member of the Foundation Board. Until recently this has been an enjoyable, productive and rewarding experience.

Throughout the 18 years that I spent as the MPP for Halton East and Oakville, I participated with the former Chairman, the late Brock Harris, and the Halton Region Conservation Authority General manager, Mr. Murray Stephen on many occasions. These included attending the Annual meetings of the Authority, participating in many sod turnings and official opening ceremonies for projects such as Mountsbury Dam, Glen Eden Skiing Facility, Hilton Falls Dam, Crawford Lake and Scotch Block Dam, to name a few. I also assisted the Chairman and Murray Stephen on many occasions in their applications for funding and project approvals with the Ministry of Natural resources. When requested by Garry Hutton and Murray Stephen to hold Chairman Brock Harris's retirement party in our converted barn, Barbara and I were most happy to donate the use of this facility for a most worthy and enjoyable occasion.



Shortly after this event Garry Hutton asked me if I would consider serving on the 'board of the Halton Conservation Foundation. Having just retired from my service to the people of Halton at Queens Park. I welcomed this opportunity to continue to serve in this small way in the promotion of conservation projects in the Halton watershed. During the ensuing years my three year extensions were initiated several times. Although, for various reasons, I had intended to step down as a director when my term would be up for renewal next year, I was certainly surprised, to say the least, to receive my termination notice on March 31. In my 70 years of living and working in Halton, it is the first time that I have ever been fired.

After finding out that all of my board colleagues, with the exception of the three Conservation Halton appointees, were also terminated was increasingly disturbing.

Why not terminate the total board, if you wanted to start afresh with a clean slate?

Why was it necessary to remove the honorary directors who had served with distinction for so many years and who had a continuing interest in the foundations objectives? The Foundation had already suffered severe losses in the resignations of long time members including Chairman Janet Mitchell, vice-chair Ken Moore, past chair Roy Wilson, members Barry Slater, Tony Beale, Bill Robinson, Ken Brandson, George Grummett, Alan Bennett and others.

I agree that over the past year the

Foundation has had some problems. This is emphasized by the number of resignations. The manner in which a number of long time directors resigned or were asked to retire was disturbing. The method of appointing the executive committee disturbed me. The decision, made by whom I don't know, not to distribute complete minutes of executive committee and board minutes to the board, left the members in limbo. Since Garry Hutton ceased to be the foundation's secretary it has been all downhill and not on your ski hills at Glen Eden.

Mr. Chairman, it is the opinion of many that conservation in Halton Watershed has suffered a setback that will take many years to heal. The other board members, including myself, have not only contributed thousands of volunteer hours, selling dinner tickets, books, etc., but have donated thousands of our own dollars to the foundation's projects. I am afraid Mr. Chairman, you and your colleagues at Conservation Halton, have cooked the geese that have been laying the "Golden Eggs." Over the past twenty some years. How can you expect these "so called big contributors" to have the confidence to make contributions now. Your "Planned Giving" initiatives are going to be very hard to sell now. I can tell you that Barbara and I have reviewed our plans to include the Foundation when our assets are divided up when we pass on.

In the opinion of many, the recent actions call for a complete review of your actions and the operations of your administration. I urge you to do just that.

With kindest regards, I remain,

Jim Snow
Former Director



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