

OPINION

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Keystone cop

Accountability.

It's a word that conjures up the idea of taking ownership of one's actions.

This week's theft of an unmarked Halton police vehicle might have been just another item for this newspaper's police blotter column had it not been for the contents of the stolen car.

While the grey 2004 Buick Century was found Tuesday, the thief (or thieves) got away with a set of Smith and Wesson handcuffs and a police radio.

It gets worse.

The culprits also acquired a bullet proof vest and three police-issue weapons— a canister of pepper spray, an expandable baton and a 40-calibre Beretta pistol with ammunition.

In the hands of criminals, these items could be used for anything from impersonating a police officer to cold-blooded murder.

So, who's accountable?

We can understand an undercover police officer leaving the pepper spray or baton behind in a vehicle overnight— but a pistol with ammunition?

Leaving a gun inside a police-issued car for 12 hours in any neighbourhood other than maybe the police service's motor pool is not exactly a moment worthy of Mensa membership.

While *The Independent & Free Press* is normally 100 per cent supportive of the men and women who patrol our city streets to combat crime, when public safety is jeopardized in such a careless fashion, we feel obliged to speak out.

This is definitely one of those times.

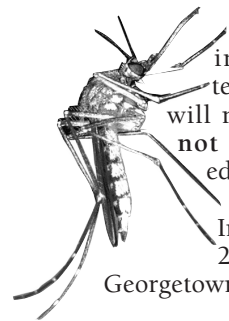
On its news releases, Halton Regional Police Service lists accountability among five words it chooses to describe itself. The others include: integrity, excellence, teamwork and justice.

These are five strong words purposely selected to instill confidence in a public that relies on the police to make it feel safe and secure at home, at work and everywhere else in the city.

The Halton Regional Police Service needs to be accountable for this officer's questionable actions and it needs to explain what immediate steps it is taking to ensure this episode is not repeated.

Something bugging you?

Send us a letter!



Letters to the editor must include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited for content and/or length.

Mail or drop off:

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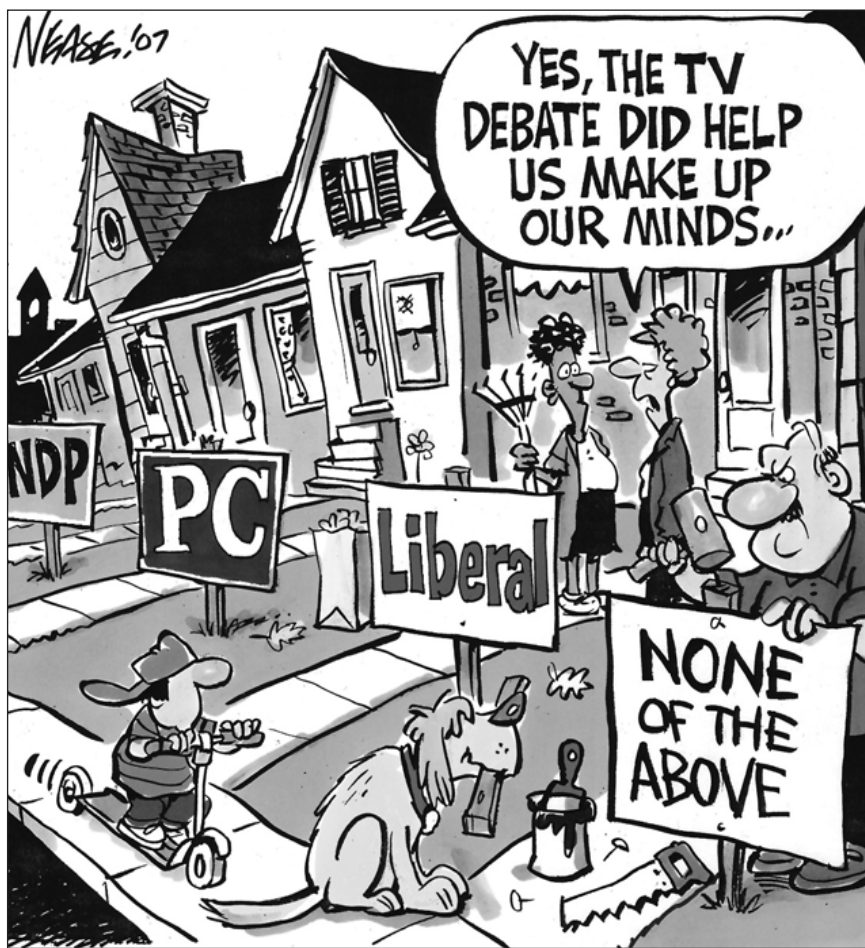
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mito March raises \$30,000 for research

Dear editor,

On behalf of the Mito March organizing committee, I would like to take this opportunity to thank: *The Independent & Free Press*, the citizens, schools, and businesses of our community for contributing to the success of the 3rd Annual Mito March: Kure for Kirkland that took place May 27.

Proceeds from this year's event have resulted in a net donation of \$30,000 which was recently submitted to Sick Kids Foundation under the Kirkland Kilbride Research Fund.

These monies are directed to Dr. Brian Robinson's team of mitochondrial researchers in the Metabolic Research Lab. We began our mission to raise funds and increase awareness of rare mitochondrial diseases in 2005, at a time when scientists were

finding it difficult to obtain research grants from traditional sources. This need continues and since that time, Mito March initiatives have netted more than \$98,000 for the team.

Proceeds from the first event allowed for the purchase of an innovative piece of genetic equipment called a Real-Time PCR machine which allows scientists a more detailed look at the genetic make-up of cells. Last year's proceeds were used to start a study aimed at locating the gene responsible for Complex One Deficiency, one of the more prevalent mitochondrial disorders. Our recent donation will provide the funds necessary to continue that project.

We are also excited to share news that Dr. Robinson's team recently

identified a new gene mutation—the benefits of which will be felt worldwide! In addition to that, preliminary experimentation is about to begin on three potential drugs for mitochondrial disease. This is positive news for all of us, especially for the thousands of victims of 'mito' disease, who sadly are forced to live (and die) because of diseases for which there are presently no proven treatments or cures.

We have faith in the abilities of our team at Sick Kids and thank you for trusting and supporting our efforts to promote advancement in this rare field of research. We also celebrate the fact that in doing so, you have granted Kirkland a very rare and immeasurable gift of honour and legacy.

For all of this, we sincerely thank you.

Kelly Kilbride,

Co-Founder, Mito March: Kure for Kirkland (and mom to Kirkland)

Tory's funding plan an 'affront to all citizens'

Dear editor,

John Tory's announcement that, if elected, his government would implement the expansion of funding for separate religious schools is an affront to all citizens of this province.

Not only is it morally unreasonable to expect us all to finance the promotion of religion in our education system, but nothing more than a shameful ploy to extract votes from our recent immigrant explosion and those who wish to promote their personal beliefs on us all.

History, past and present verifies that the seeds of religion and its diversity, destroy. To cultivate this

psychosis is preposterous.

Do we wish to teach this to our children, encompassing the imaginary creationism versus the factual evolution?

Is this the type of society we wish to promote for our future?

The assortment of religious beliefs that one can acquire is very personal and should not be forced on children through the education system.

We need to straighten out the system already in use, cast on us by the infamous William Davis and his government of the time.

Wm. Pomeroy,
Norval

Minority ruling majority?

Dear editor,

Re: Sept. 7 article, Town will fly Pride flag.

The report begins, "Despite the opposition of at least one member of the public, the Pride Flag is now flying at the Halton Hills Civic Centre."

My question is, How many member of "the public" were contacted to voice their opinion about the raising of the Pride flag? Seems to me that the "human rights" of a minority group have already replaced the "democratic rights" of the majority.

Doreen Palmer, Georgetown