

OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Reader calls for democracy debate

Dear Editor:

In his letter of November 28 to the editor of The Champion, Jim Timbers criticized the anti-democratic allegations directed toward Bill 160 by another writer to The Champion (Tom Martin on November 4).

In an entirely specious and facile tone he questioned the assertion that Bill 160 is undemocratic.

Along with Mr. Martin's letter, a letter of mine critical of Bill 160 also appeared in the November 4 issue of the Champion.

As Mr. Timbers named me along with Tom Martin as holding opinions on Bill 160 to which he takes exception, I feel honour-bound to issue the following challenge to him.

Sir, defend your position on Bill 160 in a public debate. The resolution shall be: "Be it resolved that Bill 160 will cause long-term damage to public education in Ontario."

You can defend the 'Nays'. Choose any partner you want. I suggest you start with our MPP, Ted Chudleigh. I will invite Mr. Martin to join me in presenting the case for the 'Ayes'.

We could hold the debate on neutral turf such as a municipal meeting room and ask the editor of The Champion to serve as moderator.

This debate would serve two purposes: It would provide the public with a democratic forum in which to engage in the issues surrounding Bill 160; this would be

the only form of local democratic participation in Bill 160 that anyone will ever have.

It would provide some instructive role modelling for Mr. Timbers and those of his persuasion on what democracy is and how it works.

Apparently they have forgotten.

Bill Templeman
Milton

Reform needed now

Dear Editor:

I have witnessed carefully the huge rise in the education portion of my tax bill over the last decade or so with inflation and increased enrollment having only accounted for a small part.

I am genuinely curious as to where this extra money has been going. These increases in funding could have decreased class sizes significantly and increased quality. Has the money gone to consultants, administrators, 'educrats', unions, etc?

The increase in spending seems to have had little effect on quality or class sizes. Academic standards continue to be lax and disruptive behaviour in the classroom ignored.

The current system run by our school boards is incompetent and badly needed of an overhaul a decade ago.

It has been because previous Ontario governments have not had the stomach to take on the task. Kudos to Mike Harris for initiating some desperately need changes.

I would like to pose a suggestion to Ted Chudleigh.

Can we develop an educational infrastructure where parents could choose a school outside of the state-run monopoly, but still be funded by the general tax base?

Private schools could therefore compete against the state schools with equal access to everyone.

Perhaps only within the context of competition will the taxpayer receive value for their dollar and more importantly will students receive the education they are being denied.

James Masluk
Milton

We couldn't have done it without you

Dear Editor:

This letter is regarding the United Way of Milton's golf and mini-putt tournaments of which Donaldson Bourgon Financial Services was a major sponsor.

As you may know by now, the United Way Golf Tournament held on September 6 was a great success. The event raised more than \$10,000 for the 1997 fundraising campaign. The figure represents a significant increase from the year before.

On behalf of the United Way of Milton and myself personally, I am writing to offer our sincere thanks for the contribution to this event.

It is this kind of support from so many individuals and businesses that has made this fundraising event possible.

Thank you!

Hal Watson, chairman
Milton United Way golf tournaments



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