



COMMENT



THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Circulation: 905-878-5947

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Two-tier health care is out of the question

Ernie Eves' recent comments suggesting a two-tier health care system would benefit Ontarians is disturbing to say the least.

Mr. Eves, who's aiming to be the next leader of the provincial Progressive Conservative Party, last week said a pay-as-you-can health care system would help alleviate the long waiting periods for some essential medical services.

Mr. Eves said he and other Ontarians should be able to spend their disposable income to help themselves or family members access adequate health care the same way people can pay for superior veterinary care for pets.

Flaws in Mr. Eves' logic are obvious. For one, a great number of Ontarians live at or below the poverty line. It's doubtful the term 'disposable income' gets tossed around too often by them.

Ontarians pay for health care through taxation and as such should be assured access to it. A two-tier system wouldn't speed up waiting periods. It would simply mean those who could afford health care would receive it; those who couldn't would have to get back in line.

There's little doubt our health-care system needs to be improved. Waiting lists for essential services shouldn't be common place. However, instituting a pay-as-you-can system isn't the answer, and it's up to Ontarians to make sure that doesn't happen.

'A person, is a person, is a person,' is what I say

Discrimination—in all its superficial forms—is a plague on this multi-cultural nation of ours. Unfortunately, its presence has been especially evident following the September 11 terrorist attacks.

In the wake of the attacks, some individuals felt it necessary to lash out at the Muslim community, setting fire to mosques and participating in verbal harassment.

With all this going on—and it's not just everyone else's problem, this happened in Halton too—it warmed my heart to see students come together last Friday to discuss ways of eliminating such barbaric behavior.

The 'Taking Action Against Hate' conference held at Bishop Reding Secondary School saw high school students from across the region share their experiences and thoughts on how to curb this tragic trend.

While there are no concrete solutions, the students put the wheels of action into motion. Schools from each of the four area municipalities developed action plans for their individual schools, as well as the broader community.

The most common factor in their plans was communication. This is key because, as executive director of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation Dr. Karen Mock said at the conference, "people are not born with these negative attitudes."

Environment is a major factor in the development of discrimination and hate—it spreads like a virus from one person to the next. But through education—a powerful form of communication—people may see the error in their misguided ways.

Communication is also key to holding those taking part in hateful actions responsible.



From my perspective

with RICHARD VIVIAN

Through their punishment, others will see hate/discrimination isn't okay.

Discrimination reaches much wider than the realms of race and religion. Sexual orientation harassment was identified by several students as the number one problem in their schools.

Casual joking may seem harmless, but it's the seed of bigotry. If it's not nipped in the bud, fur-

ther hateful actions can result.

Personally, I never quite understood the need some people feel to use others as scapegoats for their problems. It doesn't solve anything, it only makes things worse.

Because of this lack of understanding, I've been accused many times in my life of being naive. People have told me I just don't understand how the world works and that I better learn to be more jaded—though not in those words.

But I don't see it that way. That kind of thinking only incubates the problem and continues the legacy of discrimination. A person, is a person, is a person—I say. Judge each person on their actions, on who they are—not what they are.

It's doubtful discrimination and hate will ever be eliminated entirely, but I applaud these students for their efforts. Only through action can improvement be made.



OUR READERS WRITE

Reader believes Town Hall should stay put, but changes needed to Council Chambers

(The following letter was addressed to the Town of Milton, Mayor Gord Krantz and town council members and a copy was filed with The Champion.)

Dear Editor:

Re: Regarding the location of Town Hall.

I believe our Town Hall should stay where it is. When we re-modeled it, was it not supposed to have served for the next 50 years?

If you utilized the existing courtyard and reduced the size of the mayor's office, you should have enough room for the next 20 years.

I would also suggest that the Council Chambers could be revamped with some of our Mohawk Raceway slot machine money.

They could be made user friendly rather than the 'them-and-us' setup we have now.

Us the councillors lounge around on \$500 chairs and them the taxpayers sit behind a fence on \$50 ratty-back chairs.

Also, them the ratepayers, must stand at a speaker stand, as in a court of law, when presenting their case and the rest can only hear

about half of the presentation.

I have been to a few small town council meetings in Ontario and Milton is the least ratepayer-friendly I have seen.

I suggest the fence be torn down and the councillors be seated in a semi-circle. If not so comfortable, the meetings would be more productive.

Also, with better chairs for the ratepayers and perhaps more of us in attendance, we would all benefit.

Anthony Green
RR2, Campbellville

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