



# COMMENT



## THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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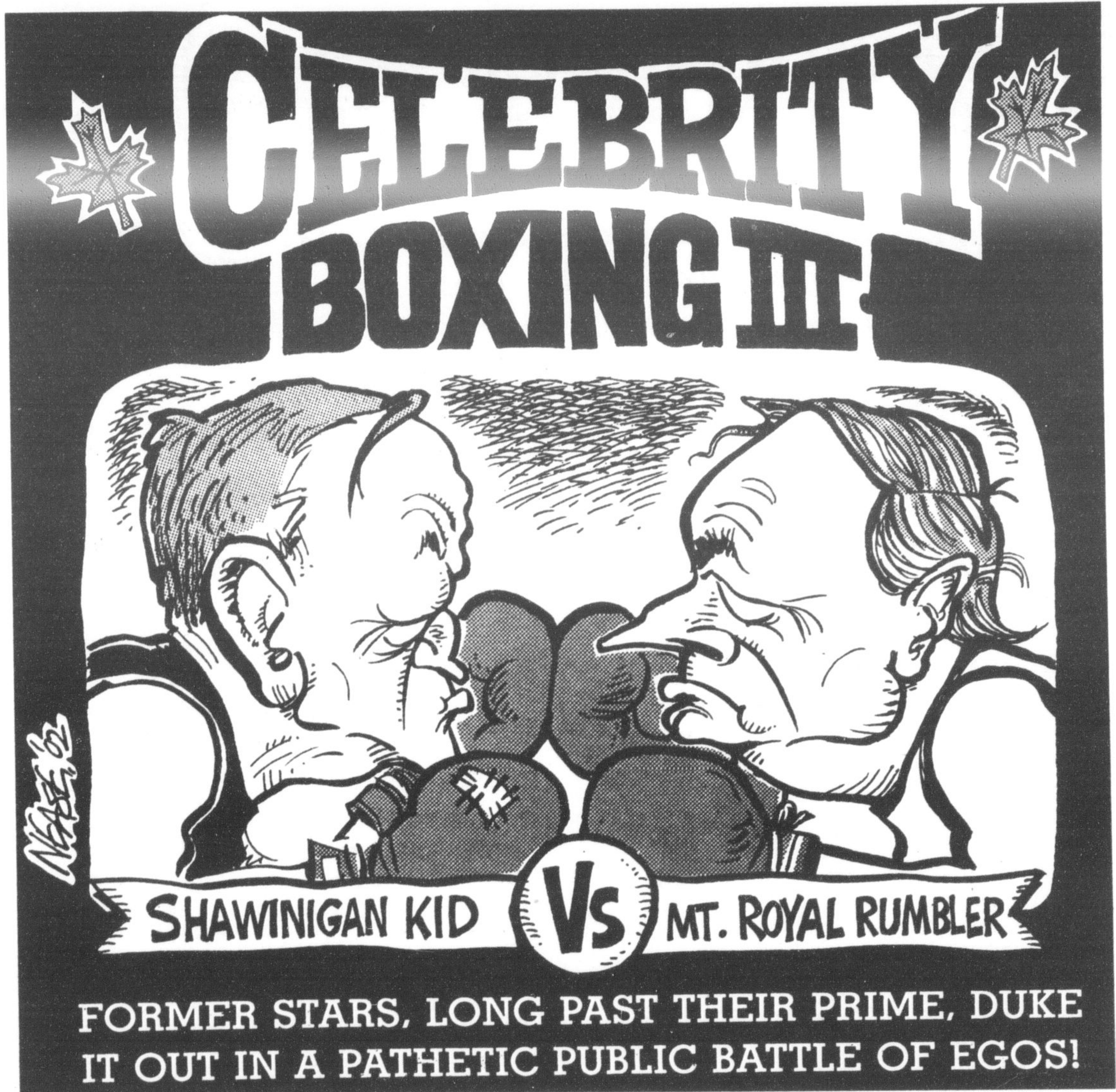
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## Who's minding mint?

Try as they might, Ontario Premier Ernie Eves and his government colleagues can't seem to escape from the muck and mire of Hydro One's privatization.

First they were overwhelmed by public opposition of the privatization of Hydro One, which was later compounded by a Supreme Court ruling calling the government's intentions illegal.

And now the provincial government is spinning its wheels with one empty explanation after another following the revelation that Hydro One's board of directors was going to benefit substantially from its privatization.

Last week, the board of directors of Hydro One resigned after the government introduced legislation to remove members from their jobs over their failure to roll back executive salaries and benefits.

Those salaries included \$2.2 million for president and CEO Eleanor Clitheroe, including a car allowance of \$174,000 and a \$6 million severance package should she quit or be fired along with an indexed pension of about \$1 million a year.

Needless to say, there was an uproar when these figures were made public a few weeks ago.

But just when did these lucrative severance packages become known to Mr. Eves and his government? They would like us to believe they were in the dark until mid-May, just a few days before the public uproar began. But Energy Minister Chris Stockwell says he made the matter known to Mr. Eves in April, shortly after he took over his new Cabinet post.

We find it hard to believe the government could have been totally in the dark about the hefty salaries and severance packages the Hydro One board of directors was ready to collect.

## OUR READERS WRITE

### Mr. Ganton's letter about Exxxotica simply a bid to convert others to his religious beliefs: reader

Dear Editor:

Richard Ganton's letter concerning Exxxotica's influence on promiscuity was filled with nothing but empty rhetoric.

He makes ludicrous and arbitrary claims, solely for the purpose of converting others to his strictly religious point of view.

I'll make it clear from the beginning that I don't even care whether Exxxotica stays in business.

But I do have an interest in protecting everyone's freedom of expression, even if they don't agree with the values propagated by one's religion of choice.

Mr. Ganton claims that pornography will lead to an increase in teenage promiscuity, thereby encouraging date rape and divorce. Teens are well aware of sex, and will continue to take part in the act,

regardless of pornography. Rape has always been a disgusting and deplorable part of human history, and the divorce rate has risen largely due to judicial activism, as well as the praise-worthy feminist movement of the second half of the 20th century.

If one were to ask teenage males how they come into contact with pornography, it would most certainly be found that most of them are watching their own father's collection.

Do you have sons, Mr. Ganton?

As for the AIDS epidemic, the answer is education, not abstinence. To be educated is better than to simply be fearful.

I won't even address Mr. Ganton's concern that AIDS may 'break into the heterosexual population of North America' as a result

of promiscuity.

His prejudice and ignorance on this matter speaks for itself.

I dread the emergence of a North America in which the tolerance of personal differences will be subjugated by the scourge of religious monomania.

Tired concerns about capital punishment, abortion, and pornography drone on and on like an evangelical white noise, threatening to drown out any and all differing opinions.

The Crusades are over. Religious convictions should be used in a more meaningful way, by being a truly positive force in society and by rising above clichéd hatreds and fears.

Adam Gassner  
Milton

## This whole situation is just a little too taxing for me

Gouge, gouge, gouge. Everywhere you turn. What I'm talking about is fees, fees, fees, taxes, taxes, taxes.

That's what came to mind when I first heard about the Town of Milton looking to start charging a fee to businesses that use space on the sidewalk in front of their stores.

I just thought, give them a break. Mercy! The fee may not be bank-busting — \$100 per year to rent up to 500 square feet of space and \$300 for more than 500 square feet — but is it really necessary?

As if it isn't hard enough to keep a business going without another expense.

I also understand the Town is considering

charging organizations (except non-profit ones) a fee for closing roads for special events.

It's another attempt at a gouge.

Mayor Gord Krantz knows what I mean. He hit the nail right on the head at last week's community services committee meeting where he called the proposal "nickel and diming."

He went as far as to say it's another form of taxation, and he's right.

And we wouldn't want a tax revolt. Or would we?

Isn't it nice how we're not charged to park downtown (please keep it that way) and we can visit a family member or friend in the hospital without worrying about the parking tab.



From the  
editor's desk

with KAREN SMITH

I think about former prime minister Brian Mulroney resentfully every time I buy a product or service that has an extra 7 per cent tax added

on to the purchase price.

"Prices for the consumer will come down," I remember Mr. Mulroney promising when he brought in the GST. Did that happen? Yeah, right.

Think about it. We're taxed a whopping 15 per cent on almost everything we buy. We've come to accept it — let it roll off our backs. But really, paying an extra 15 per cent for purchasing a new outfit for work, cat food or toilet paper.

It's not enough that we get a good chunk of our pay cheques removed. Then we have to pay at the cash register as well.

I can't discuss this any longer. It's way too taxing.