



# COMMENT

## PM's musings ill-timed

Prime Minister Jean Chretien has long been rumoured to stifle loose cannons in his caucus.

But now, with his retirement looming, he appears to be the loosest of them all.

The prime minister's egotistical desire to leave a legacy has brought Canada-U.S. relations to a modern-day low. That Canadian businesses will be harmed by his reckless disregard for common diplomacy — not to mention courtesy — is undeniable. Yet he shows no signs of stopping.

In the most recent embarrassment, Chretien used his presence at the G8 summit in France to deride U.S. President George W. Bush's economic policy, including the admittedly mind-boggling deficit the country is running up.

As usual, the prime minister used the defence of "sovereignty" as his excuse for the astonishingly gratuitous commentary, which also criticized Bush for his views on social issues. He then went

on to praise former President Bill Clinton.

Canadians often define themselves through the differences with their sprawling neighbour, an unhappy practice that no true patriot has any need of.

But Chretien's musings are particularly unwelcome when Alberta's mad cow scare, Toronto's SARS situation and the Liberal plan to decriminalize marijuana have made border issues more tense than ever.

Canada needs the United States to keep its border open for trade. It needs American tourists to come and spend their money in this nation.

It doesn't need an outgoing prime minister on an ego trip shooting off at the mouth and putting Canadian businesses at an ever-increasing risk of economic reprisal.

Chretien appears to pay no heed to the consequences of his arrogance.

Similar to his slow crawl to retirement, his timing here is lamentably off.



## OUR READERS WRITE

### Reader says women's recent letter is example of how some people unnecessarily thrust their concerns onto others

Dear Editor:

I wasn't impressed by the attitude expressed by Lynn Shire in her May 23 letter to the editor.

As a teacher, Ms Shire took exception to a photograph of students in a school library, which appeared in your paper in an advertisement by Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh.

She was upset that there were well-ordered shelves and healthy plants because, she claims, in her school such things don't exist as there are no staff members to do them.

I suggest, however, that at whatever school is in the photograph, the staff cared enough to re-shelve books and water plants, even if it meant staying a few minutes longer than required.

At that school, union rules didn't get in the way of providing a better experience for students. I'm sure Ms Shire would agree that her concerns are only for the children.

She was also upset with a photo in the same advertisement taken in a health care facility. She called it a private clinic

because it wasn't paid for with public funds. Given that logic, every doctor's office in Ontario is a private clinic. Services in the facility in which the photo was taken are fully funded by OHIP and accessed by presenting an OHIP card. Does she really want her tax dollars going to fully fund every health care facility?

Ms Shire also complained about the third photo in the ad, which showed Mr Chudleigh presenting Halton police with funding from a provincial program to help cover the costs of additional officers. Halton has 43 more police on the streets because of this program.

The funding was made permanent by the provincial government precisely to help municipalities cover the costs of police. Ms Shire is fearful that the Province will pull the funding. It's my understanding that the Tory campaign platform promises to double the current size of this program.

Ms Shire was upset that none of the photos were taken in Milton. In fact, Mr Chudleigh's office confirmed that the

photo with police was taken at the Milton police station. Also, Ms Shire should understand that Mr Chudleigh's riding encompasses a large part of Halton region and some of his constituents live in areas other than Milton.

Frankly, it's unfortunate that Ms Shire wouldn't vote for Mr. Chudleigh and the other PCs. However, in order to get her vote, the Ontario PCs would have to commit to policies that created the near depression of the early 1990s, which I believe the majority of people in Ontario find abhorrent and don't wish to return to.

At my late stage, I seldom forget the great respect I had for many of my teachers who were never too busy to work beyond normal limits and who, when problems arose, resolved them internally without fuss.

Some of us aren't inspired by those whose concerns are thrust too often unnecessarily onto others.

Peter Berry  
Milton

#### Letters welcome

The Canadian Champion welcomes letters to the editor. We reserve the right to edit, revise and reject letters.

Letters must be signed and the address and telephone number of the writer included.

You can fax letters to (905) 878-4943, e-mail them to [miltone@haltonsearch.com](mailto:miltone@haltonsearch.com) or drop them off at The Champion, 191 Main St. E.



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### Pud



by Steve Nease