

Comment

The Canadian Champion

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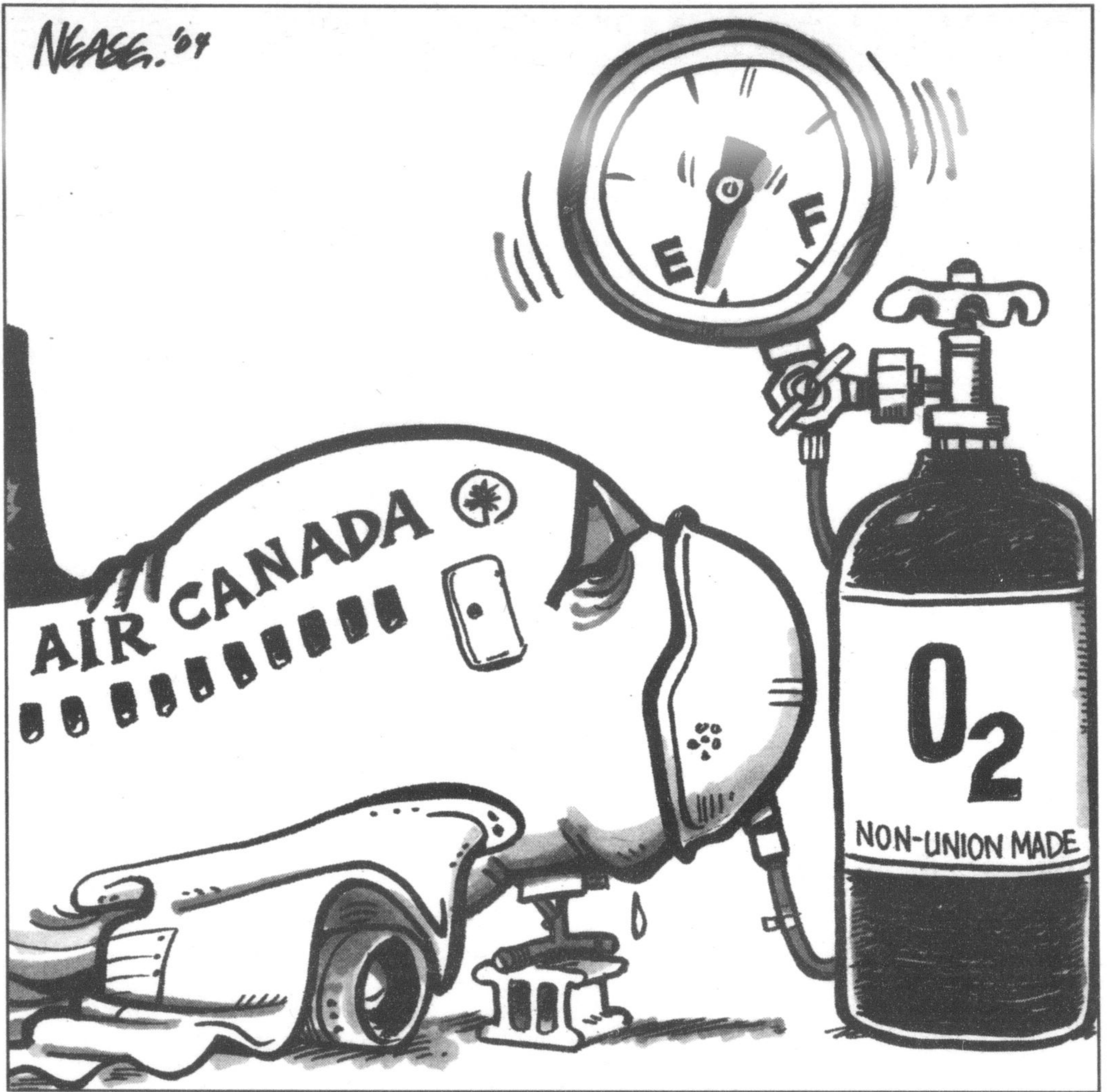
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National insecurity?

If we are to believe Auditor-General Sheila Fraser's latest report — and there's no compelling reason why we shouldn't — Canada is no better prepared to prevent a terrorist attack than it was before September 11, 2001.

So, what exactly have we been spending all the reported millions of taxpayers' dollars on?

Fraser, who brought to light the sponsorship scandal, last week unveiled a list of security horror stories that showed Liberal "measures" taken in the wake of the devastation of 9/11 have done little to give Canadians an easier night's rest.

Included in her report was:

- Information on the 25,000 Canadian passports lost or stolen each year isn't passed on to front-line border security personnel.

- Transport Canada has failed to investigate as many as 4,500 airport workers — who must have restricted area clearance — with possible criminal ties.

- Watch lists, used for screening people entering our country, are "in disarray". Frighteningly, past omissions included two of the September 11 hijackers whom American authorities identified in August of that year.

This fact seems to indicate, and Fraser concurs, the U.S. (and other nations) have done an equally poor job when it comes to shoring up national security.

Again, as with the sponsorship scandal, much of Fraser's criticism revolves around a lack of communication between government departments.

Money has been spent and directed to proper areas, her report indicates, but the lack of co-ordination between various government agencies has led to continued weaknesses at our borders and airports.

Surely, the federal government isn't waiting for another terrorist wake-up call before fixing these very serious problems.

According to Fraser's review of security measures taken by Canada since al Qaeda cells rained down terror on U.S. soil, our government has spent quite a bit of money without delivering much in the way of protection from terrorism.

It makes us question — again — a government that has spent millions and has very little to show for the expenditure.

It seems the public coffers are leaking as profusely as our country's borders.

We suspect Paul Martin is crossing his fingers that scathing Auditor General reports don't come in threes.

Our Readers Write

Father Curtis says Easter is the perfect time to remember God's love is the ultimate prize

Dear Editor:

Last week, most of us heard the exciting news pertaining to the winner of the largest lottery prize in Canadian history.

Surprisingly, the real story didn't deal with the historical amount of money won, but rather the fact that the winner waited almost a year to claim the \$30-million prize.

In fact, the prize winner was only three days away from losing it all if he hadn't come forward. Why would someone keep such news a secret for so long?

One could well understand and appreciate the initial shock period and the time needed to make proper arrangements when accepting such

an amass of fortune.

Maybe a month or two — but a whole year? As you can imagine, much speculation has come up about the lengthy silence, and maybe we'll never know just why he waited so long. But, it does seem odd, don't you think?

And yet, many might question why we Christians — like the lottery winner — might be slow in claiming our prize, which is far greater than any silver or gold.

It's a prize won for us by Jesus, and celebrated every Easter — the gift of eternal life, the gift of love. The celebration of Easter is a time for us to remember that God's love is the strongest power.

It's a gift one must claim and proclaim daily, through our personal decisions.

Love is more than a feeling, it's a decision and this is clearly evident in Jesus' final hours on earth. When it could have been so easy for Jesus to react with anger to those who judged, mocked and crucified Him, He chose gentleness, forgiveness and compassion in return.

It's when we say yes to love, forgiveness, kindness and compassion amidst the anger and negativity that surrounds our lives that new life begins to flourish in our relationships. Easter challenges us to claim Jesus' love as our way, our prize.

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Smart car a prelude to smart growth in Milton

You might have seen a photo elsewhere in the paper, showing off a neat piece of machinery which twirled its way around Milton Tuesday. It's a fuel-efficient automobile made by Mercedes-Benz called the 'Smart fortwo Cabriolet'. It's popular in Europe and is expected to hit the Canadian market this fall for the first time.

The car grabs the eyes. It's small — so small two Smart cars fit in a regular parking spot. It uses diesel, is powered by a three-cylinder, 40.2 horsepower engine. A typical car has some 120 horsepower. Fuel efficiency is a main strength.

I was chauffeured by Motoring 2004's Jim Kenzie, a renowned car buff from nearby Speyside.

Tuesday morning was sunny and made for a perfect day to tour around Milton to see what's becoming of this burgeoning town.

That got me thinking about the name of the car

— Smart — and the issue of smart growth, a not-so-totally-defined concept the Ontario government, led by the Tories, created a few years back.

First, we pulled out of the parking spot on Main Street. Right there, I was struck by the ability to solve this town's parking issue in the core by parking two cars per spot. (I'm not sure if bylaws allow for cars to park with their bumper to the back of the curb, as the Smart car can.)

We zipped along Main Street past Bronte Street and found ourselves in the middle of the proposed Sherwood Survey expansion land area. Here's a great opportunity for the Town to get development right and ensure proper densities, woodlot preservation and trails.

Up Tremaine Road we went, over Hwy. 401 — a main artery for this town — where an interchange might go. We hopped onto the 401 and passed businesses that have set up shop as well as



The big picture

with JASON MISNER

some farming properties — I'm not sure how long they will stick around.

We passed by the future site of the power centre, off of Steeles Avenue and James Snow Parkway. Down Trafalgar Road we went, east on to Derry Road, past Trudeau Drive — where many of Milton's new home are popping up frantically.

We zipped by the new Milton Sports Centre and approached Milton District Hospital, which has acres of empty land. It's awaiting its expansion anticipated to happen in the next few years.

South on Bronte Street we headed, passed Exxxotica, which precipitated the Town to create legislation to determine where adult businesses must go.

Eventually we passed Town Hall, which is proposed to undergo an expansion, and made our way back to The Champion office.

The car didn't break a sweat, but I did, turning my head looking at all that's going on in town. It took engineers a few years to get the Smart car right. Milton, too, must be planned right. Residents should think of themselves as engineers and tell the Town how they think their town should develop.

Your voice is your "Smart" engine.