

# Comment

## The Canadian Champion

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## Tough election talk

Paul Martin has got to be giving some serious thought to calling a spring federal election.

Though his party's popularity has been significantly damaged by the sponsorship scandal, Martin's confidence has got to be buoyed by the political bombshell dropped by long-time Conservative opponent Joe Clark.

During an interview on CTV's Question Period, Clark said he would choose Martin over Conservative Party of Canada leader Stephen Harper in the next election.

Clark's message that Martin is "the devil we know" while the prospect of Harper leading the country leaves him feeling "extremely worried" is not what Harper and his supporters wanted to hear as they ascended popularity polls.

Clark added he doesn't actually like either party and advised voters to choose the local candidate they like instead of supporting a national party.

It's not surprising Clark is still bitter about his beloved Tories' merger with the Canadian Alliance Party last December. For Clark the wounds are still fresh, and a strong Harper showing against Martin

would be like having rock salt ground into them.

Still, few could have forecast Clark's torpedo-like assault on Harper and the new Conservative Party of Canada — potentially within weeks of an election call.

Members of the new Conservative party have to be asking themselves why Clark couldn't have just faded away quietly.

There's little doubt, too, that Clark's remarks were on the minds of Martin and his cabinet ministers as they gathered over dinner Monday night to strategize the timing of an election call.

In a Liberal party split by Quebec MPs still reeling from the effects of the sponsorship scandal, and Ontario MPs eager to call an election sooner than later, it would be next to impossible to ignore Clark's gift-wrapped criticisms of Martin's closest challenger.

Clark's comments seem like the desperate attempt of an obsolete politician to be relevant just once more.

It's strangely ironic that Clark's scathing words may have more influence on this election than any in which he was a candidate.

## Our Readers Write

### Resident's recent criticism of town's growth seems childish and overly dramatic: reader

Dear Editor:

Letter writer Pat Kelly's most recent rant about Milton's growth is paramount to a child stomping his feet and pouting when he doesn't get his way.

His fatalistic views would have one believe that Armageddon is now upon our town — that gridlock, bands of thieves and mayhem at grocery stores fill our daily lives. His comments would lead us to believe that Milton is deteriorating into this uncaring, crime-riddled, survival-of-the-fittest community.

Expansion of this town was

inevitable. Count me in with our councillors and 'small-town business minds' who believe that growth is good.

The opportunities that will come with this growth are limitless.

It's the nature of the development process that not everything will be completed at once, but I can already see the move toward a service and economic infrastructure that will be applauded in the years to come.

Assuming you don't move, Mr. Kelly, enjoy the new services that will be forthcoming.

Wave to your neighbours' chil-

dren, who'll now have a local job to help them pay their way through school. Pop into the new sports centre and enjoy the sounds of children involved in positive activity.

Exchange a smile with a new Miltonian as you stroll through one of the many parks in the development plan.

Mr. Kelly, it appears we have very different views of Milton. While you perceive your town as being destroyed, mine is just being developed.

Kevin Smith  
Norris Circle

E-mail all your letters to the editor to [miltone@haltonsearch.com](mailto:miltone@haltonsearch.com).

## Cup of coffee and some memories — great combo

I don't normally have much to do on my lunch hour. A typical 1 to 2 p.m. usually includes a visit to a few stores, maybe a bit of banking, and then lunch somewhere cheap.

As I pop in and out here and there, I usually chat with some of the store employees and owners. There's bound to be a funny anecdote or two.

As I was thinking about this column, I began thinking about memories and just how special they are. Is there anyone who doesn't have a childhood story he/she can tell over and over again, cracking up every time? Nearly every day, I'm privileged to hear some of them.

The other day I dropped into Espresso Yourself Cafe — which just happens to make the best coffee in the world — and employee Darlene took one look at my pink fuzzy sweater (which I soon learned was angora) and launched into a sordid tale of love and war about her own fuzzy sweater.

It was at Steadman's, she said, a store that used to be on Main Street, where she first saw the pink Angora sweater that, as a 16-year-old, she fell in love with. That Christmas, it was all she asked for, and she got her wish.

Not long after, her younger sister decided to borrow the much-loved sweater. Ladies, we all know how the story ends. But for the guys' sake, her sister stained the sweater, and put it into the washer and the dryer. When it came out, it was the perfect size for a toy poodle. War broke out. To this day, Darlene's sister doesn't dare ask to borrow anything from her older sister.

Over at one of the local gift shops, I often speak with a lady who grew up in a small town — much smaller than Milton — as a pastor's daughter. It wasn't unusual for misguided and lonely women to become infatuated with her father, she said. But he was smart. Whenever he was going to be



### Around town

with STEPHANIE THIESSEN

counseling or visiting a single woman, he took along his wife. That certainly came in handy the day he was asked over by a very single woman.

His knock on the door was answered by the woman who was wearing nothing but a barely-there negligee. Needless to say, she was quite surprised when the unexpected pastor's wife stepped out of the car.

Then there are more poignant memories to which I've been privy. One that comes to mind was shared by Joseph Manchisi while I was interviewing him about the tragic disappearance of his son, Joseph. When I asked the grieving father what his son was like, his mind drifted to a time years ago when an operation left Mr. Manchisi wheelchair-bound. With misting eyes, he remembered being pushed around by his son Joseph who seemed glad just to be with his dad.

Memories are special links to people who may not be in our lives any more. But as my chat with Mr. Manchisi reminded me, they're all the better when they can be shared with loved ones still a part of our lives. Being mindful of the grief that's struck the Manchisi family, why not spend a few minutes today calling up a family member or friend and sharing some special memories — while you still can.