

Comment

A licence to steal

The legitimacy of Ontario's drivers' licences as documents for identification when travelling outside our province may have been compromised last week by a damning report from Ontario's Auditor General Jim McCarter.

In his 406-page review, released last Tuesday, McCarter paints a disturbing picture of incompetence and alleged criminal activity from within the Ministry of Transportation. His most serious criticism involves more than 56,000 documents and licence plates being stolen or lost under the Liberal government's watch.

The report further details what McCarter characterized as a criminal element operating from within the ministry that oversees the Province's licensing of drivers and vehicles.

We find it most troubling to think that in our post-9/11 world, people with criminal records would be able to gain unencumbered access to such sensitive documents as licence plates, plate stickers, temporary vehicle permits and disabled parking permits.

The auditor general's report detailed the inability of several of the province's 280

privately-operated licensing offices to keep these documents secure. Making matters worse is McCarter's finding that the ministry has made no real effort to investigate its losses or recover the thousands of missing documents.

Other eye-opening discoveries by the auditor general's office included:

- Membership cards for wholesale warehouse clubs, employee and student cards without photos being accepted as one of two forms of identification necessary to obtain ministry documents;

- Only seven of 40 young offenders who should have received lifetime driving suspensions actually did.

Transportation Minister Harinder Takhar's promise of a zero tolerance policy regarding privately-run licensing centres and his insistence that the ministry will no longer accept Costco membership cards and other easily obtained forms of identification from anyone applying for Ministry of Transportation documents ring hollow.

His words are tantamount to closing the proverbial barn door after the horse — or in this case 56,000 horses — has fled.



Our Readers Write

Tax increases are getting out of hand

Dear Editor:

I know that we're taught it's more blessed to give than receive, especially at this time of year, but my personal Santa suit is beginning to feel threadbare — especially around the pockets.

According to the December 2 Champion, we taxpayers have been designated as the 'givers' this year. This recent issue contained several articles that have one thing in common — tax increases for next year, with a police budget hike, property assessments going up and a Conservation Halton budget request increase just to name a few.

I don't have any great solutions, but I do know that my pockets are just about

taxed out.

Who do I ask for an increase? Oh that's right, I don't have a taxpayer base. Soon all of Milton's original residents will no longer be able to keep up with the constantly-outstretched hand of the taxman.

There's also the Niagara Escarpment Commission parking fiasco, where the chairman mentions receiving other complaints about the situation. Makes me wonder if a petition of people in favour of allowing the parking for one more year would out-weigh the complaints.

Thanks for letting me vent, and season's greetings to all.

Al McKenzie
Wilson Drive

Blame game is nothing more than a cop out

Dear Editor:

We moved to Milton in 2002 and were delighted with our choice.

Our first impressions of the courtesy and politeness that we encountered warmed our hearts. Recent explosive growth, however, has shown us another side — the inability of the officials that run this town to face up to this challenge.

A recent article in The Champion of a meeting in the town reported councillors and the mayor blaming the various levels of government for their different agendas, including federal immigration, provincial planning and regional 'politics'.

Leadership is about manoeuvring appropriately amidst a variety of demands and being able to deliv-

er the goods. Playing the blame game is a cop out.

Road infrastructure and development may be difficult to co-ordinate for regional roads like Derry, but what about Thompson Road with hundreds of houses already built?

While the Town did an excellent job upgrading Main Street before adjacent housing was complete, it didn't schedule the Thompson Road upgrade before Fourth Line was closed.

With some creative foresight when approving subdivisions, the approvals can be made contingent on road upgrades. Perhaps then the developers will use their clout with the Region. They certainly appear

to have more power than our town council.

Or does the Town want us to believe that it doesn't have the final authority for approving subdivisions?

Another distressing note in the same paper that week was Halton District School Board Chair and Milton trustee Paul Tate blaming others for what was a wasteful episode — the paying out of a \$600,000 severance to its former education director.

Let's see more responsibility and less throwing mud at others. It doesn't become this town to lower its standards.

Selma Deans
Somerville Terrace

Unlike Liberals, Tories don't expect something for nothing

Dear Editor:

It has taken me several decades of federal government performances to learn the key distinction between a Liberal and a Conservative.

The Conservative has a hard work ethic and doesn't expect something for nothing, while the Liberal values can be spin-doctored and can be shown to be similar.

It's hard work having your hand outstretched all the time. Then you have to do something with the money you got for nothing.

When reduced to their core values, the implications become abundantly clear.

Jon J. Komow
Ontario Street

The Canadian Champion

Box 248, 875 Main St. E.,
Milton, Ont. L9T 3Z3

(905) 878-2341

Editorial Fax: 905-878-4943
Advertising Fax: 905-876-2364
Classified: 905-875-3300
Circulation: 905-878-5947

Ian Oliver Publisher
Neil Oliver Associate Publisher
Wendy McNab Advertising Director
Karen Smith Managing Editor
Tim Coles Production Manager
Charlene Hall Circulation Manager
Teri Casas Office Manager

The Canadian Champion, published every Tuesday and Friday at 875 Main St. E., Milton, Ont., L9T 3Z3 (Box 248), is one of the Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing Ltd. community newspapers. Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of a typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with a reasonable allowance for signature, will not be charged for, but the balance of the advertisement will be paid for at the applicable rate. The publisher reserves the right to categorize advertisements or decline.

CCAB Audited

RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE BY

ocna Ontario Community Newspapers Association CNA Canadian Community Newspapers Association SNA Suburban Newspapers of America

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION IS A PROUD MEDIA SPONSOR FOR:

Halton Healthcare Child Find ONTARIO WELCOME WAGON LTD. (SINCE 1930) TV AUCTION UNITED WAY OF MILTON ATHENA Awards MCRG The Oakville, Milton and District Board of Trade YWCA OF OAKVILLE FAO POLICE ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO MILTON Santa Claus Parade Showcase Milton GALA Awards

The Milton Canadian Champion is a Recyclable Product

Pud

by Steve Nease

