

OPINION

Too much info?

Open up a newspaper or tune in to a radio or television news program these days and you are likely to be exposed to a story about our deteriorating environment.

With last year's release of former U.S. vice-president Al Gore's film, 'An Inconvenient Truth', global warming has become the "sexy" topic pursued by news gatherers around the world.

From in-depth reports detailing the irreversible effects of climate change on glacial ice fields, to scathing reports detailing how Canada has fallen behind the rest of the world in taking action against the impact of global warming, the picture being painted by the world's scientific community and environmental organizations is bleak.

While the media's role has been to report on scientists' fear that we may be headed down a path of environmental catastrophe, there's an inherent risk that information overload may cause some people to begin tuning out the message.

Is it possible the flood of information could be having a Chicken Little effect on people who either don't want to be bombarded with so much bad news or simply don't believe the situation could be as dismal as it's being portrayed?

There's no denying evidence of dramatic climate change is there for those concerned enough to seek it out.

Statistically, the number of Category 4 or 5 hurricanes has doubled in the last 30 years.

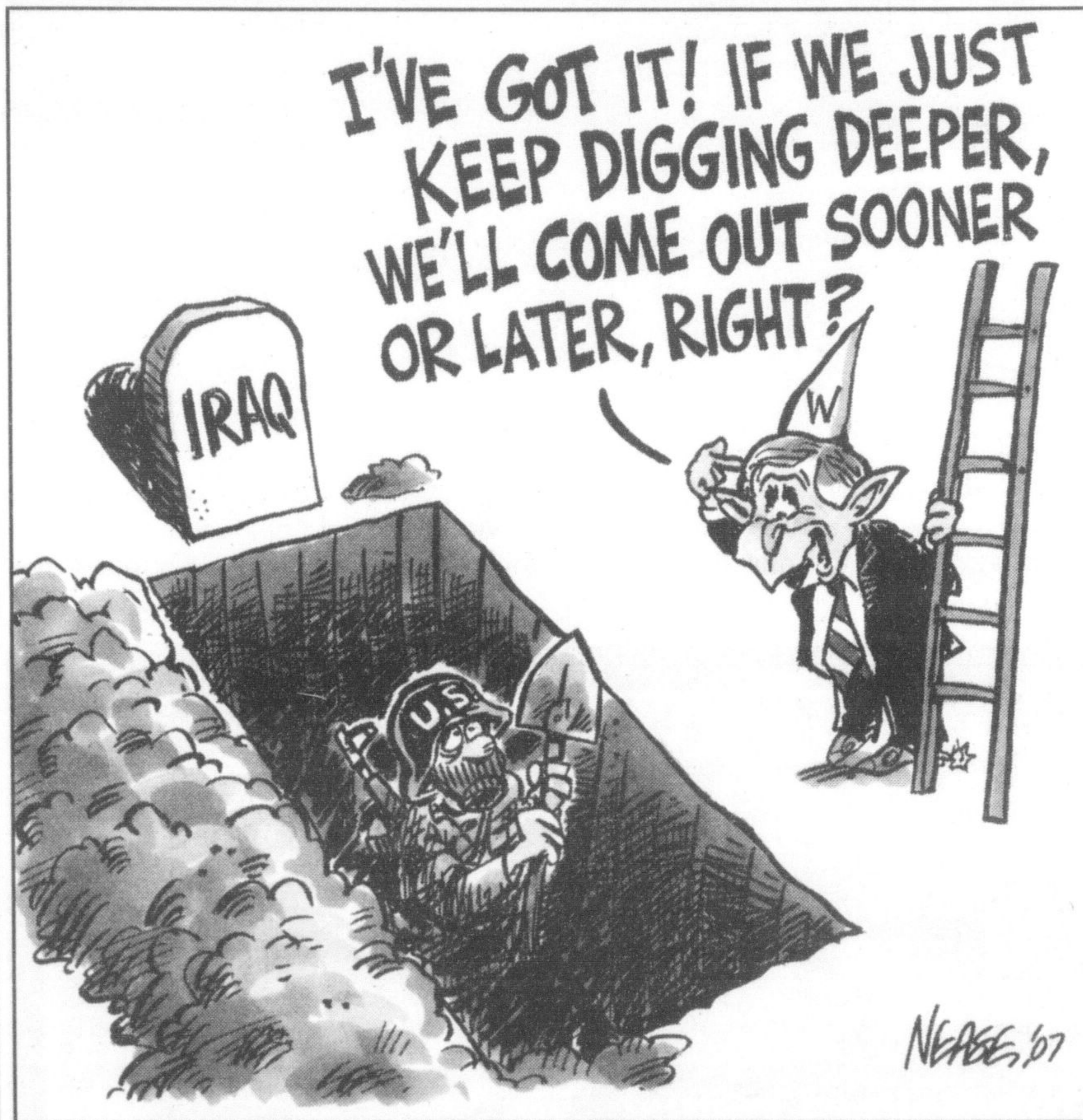
In the summer of 2005 a giant ice shelf with an area comparable to 11,000 football fields broke free from Canada's Arctic, forever changing a part of our country's geography.

Complicating the issue is a push by a small, but extremely vocal group of oil and coal industry-financed scientists who refute the threat of global warming and deny climate change is anything to fear. In the '90s some of these same scientists were employed by the tobacco industry to dispute the link between cigarettes and cancer.

There are signs the anti-global warming lobby has influenced public opinion.

On the local front, there are environmental issues that continue to be the subject of debate. The impact of pesticide use on our environment remains one subject that isn't going away. Last year there was a push by some Halton residents to establish a region-wide ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides.

With so much information — and disinformation — out there it's easy to understand why ordinary people don't know what to believe — or do. Perhaps the real fear should be that so much talk of impending doom for our planet may drive those who fail to see how they can impact this global problem into a state of complacency.



ReadersWrite

Send your letters to miltoned@haltonsearch.com or drop them off at 875 Main St. E.

West end needs better bus service

DEAR EDITOR:

I'm a resident of the west end of Milton who relies on public transit for my daily commute to and from work.

Route 2 services my area. I have noticed in the last few months the service provided to this particular area of town has become less than satisfactory.

It used to be that the bus schedule matched the GO Train schedule, so that wait times at the station on Main Street were minimal. That's no longer the case.

Now buses are regularly late, and in some cases they don't show up at all.

Case in point was my commute on December 13. I arrived at the Milton GO station at 6:42 p.m. There's supposed to be a bus that leaves the GO station at 6:55 p.m. It never showed up. The next scheduled Route 2 bus was 7:25 p.m. It showed up eight minutes late.

During that time, two Route 3 and two Route 4 buses came through the

• see TRANSIT on page A7

Upfront

Let's recognize all of our hockey volunteers tomorrow

A quick trip to the Milton Sports Centre last weekend was met with one of those comments that become all-too-familiar for community sports scribes.

"Hey, can you write something about the great timekeeping?" inquired two parent volunteers with the tyke Winterhawks.

They were kidding, of course — realizing that such things don't really have a place in regular game reports.

However, acknowledging their efforts — and those of Milton's countless hockey volunteers — certainly seems appropriate in this space and at this time. That's because tomorrow this country (at least those who embrace our beloved pastime) will celebrate its seventh annual Hockey Day in Canada.

While we revel in OUR GAME, let's all take a moment or two to recognize the people who keep hockey going — particularly at

the community level.

Now I'm not suggesting the two guys in the timekeeper's box that evening deserve a tickertape parade, or even an award. The fact is, they'd probably be at the arena anyway. But consider this — if things like running the clock aren't that big a commitment, why are the same people doing it year in and year out with very little influx of new blood?

Truth be told, most people can't be bothered to help out, especially with the ever-present potential for criticism — no matter what role you're assuming. As much as we may accept that nobody's perfect, many hockey fans conventionally forget that seemingly obvious notion once they arrive at the arena and jump all over every little mistake, whether it's made

by a referee or timekeeper.

If we're so quick to be critical, should we not be willing — at least one day a year — to switch gears and offer a little appreciation to those who volunteer their time and energy to making minor hockey an enjoyable experience for our kids.

And there's plenty of them to be grateful for here in town — from those who recently put in an exhausting three days running the holiday Beaver Tournament to all those supporting cast players who help make the overall machine that is hockey run a little more smoothly.

We don't need to give them a lot of hoopla or fanfare — just a simple "Good job" or "Thanks for your help" would suffice.



Steve LeBlanc

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