

# OPINION

## We're getting old

While there may be some debate over whether we're getting better, there's no question we're getting older.

According to 2006 Census data released by Statistics Canada last week, Canada's senior population (those over age 65) leapt by 13 per cent from 2001. Stats Canada projects that within a decade, seniors could outnumber children under the age of 15.

While the fact seniors today are healthier and living longer than ever before is certainly positive news, the country's aging trend may present problems down the road.

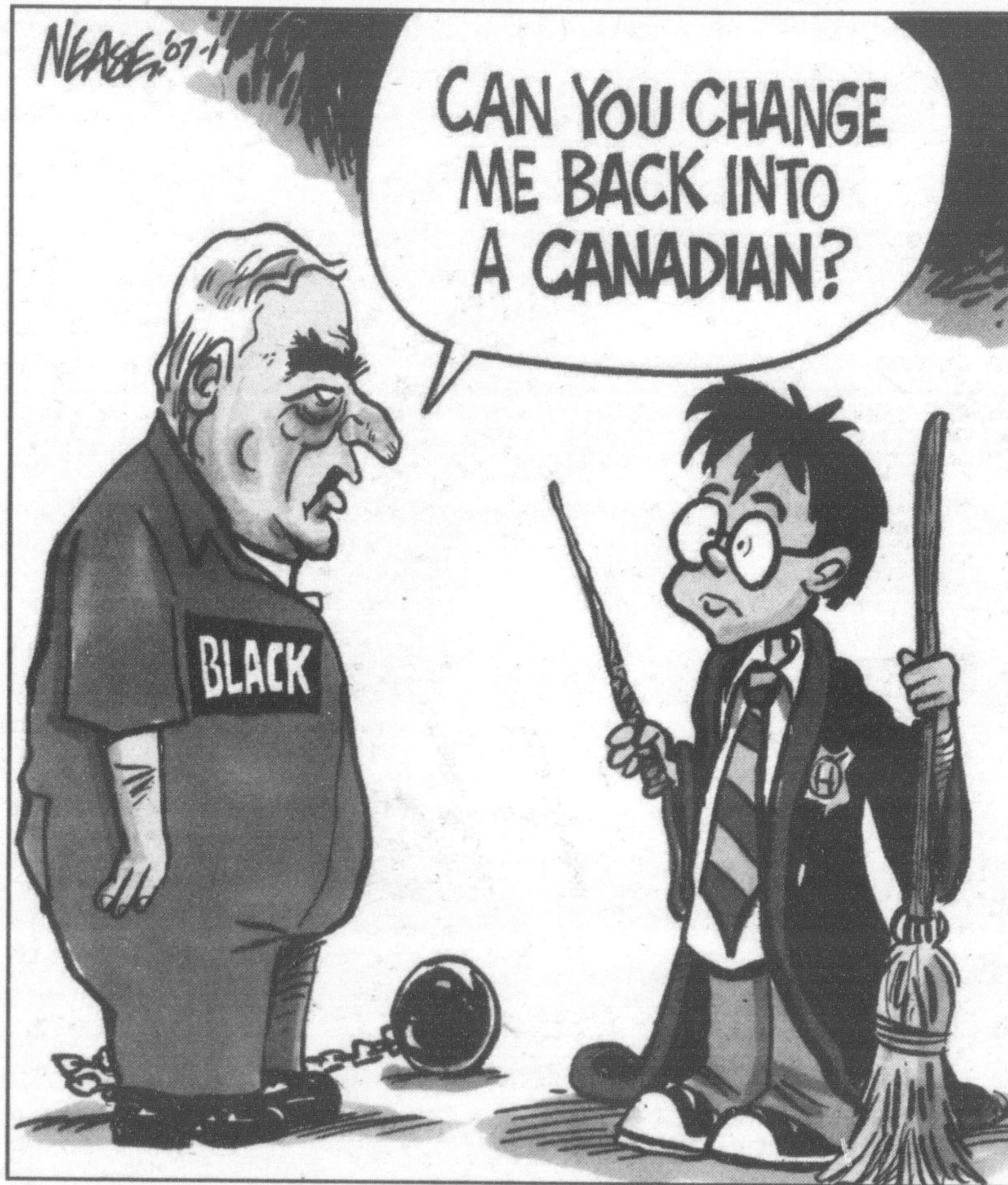
For example, there is a 1:1 ratio of people (age 15-24) about to enter the workforce compared to people (age 55-64) about to leave it. This will mean major challenges for employees in the future when it comes to training and turnover.

A critical labour shortage is a real possibility, as is the belief many baby boomers, who may not be able to afford retirement, could face a conundrum if their health prevents them from staying in the workforce.

An aging population will also put a strain on a variety of services, particularly those involving assisted living. And who will be around in years to come to provide necessary assistance to today's caregivers?

Will the health-care system and pension plans be able to withstand the pressure of the boomers 10 or 20 years hence?

The recent census statistics should not be a cause for alarm, but rather a wake-up call for our politicians — and society in general. Adopting a proactive approach today in how to handle our aging population tomorrow is not only sensible, but vital.



## ReadersWrite

E-mail your letters to [miltoned@haltonsearch.com](mailto:miltoned@haltonsearch.com).

### Where's the accountability?

DEAR EDITOR:

Town council approved themselves hefty raises, apparently without any discussion.

This is unacceptable. If they intended to give themselves a raise, this subject should have been part of their campaign during the last election.

The mayor received a 20 per cent raise. He says that it is neither too high nor too low compared to other municipalities. This is Milton — it should not matter what other town mayors and councillors salaries are.

And when you add on the benefits they also receive on the job, they make substantially more than their salaries would indicate.

One of the councillors claims that she deserves this increase because of the long hours she puts in answering e-mails and doing research on the computer for her constituents, and because of all the community event tickets she

has to buy.

Do the rest of us not buy the same tickets? Maybe we townspeople should ask the Town of Milton to give us some of the money from Mohawk Slots. As far as the e-mails and research goes, I'm still waiting for my own councillor to return my phone call from months ago.

There should be a referendum any time there is a major decision to be made, like for raises or the expansion of Town Hall.

Why does our mayor need his own 407 transponder? Is there any accountability for the use of all the 407 transponders floating around Town Hall?

When I spent \$5 to get information on the use of these transponders, it turned out to be incomplete and quite useless.

Therefore, there is no accountability.

**AGOSTINO GALIOTO  
MILTON**

### There are too many unsafe drivers in town

DEAR EDITOR:

I agree with R. Devine that Ward 2 Councillor Mike Boughton's statement that 90 per cent of drivers do not stop at stop signs is inaccurate.

In fact, I believe that 99 per cent of drivers do not come to a complete stop at stop signs.

In my opinion, Devine must not be paying too much attention, as I notice that drivers who are making a right turn on a red light only slow down enough to make the turn.

I have seen a lot of other things that

drivers do around town that probably would be considered unsafe.

Although there are many incidents, I will reflect on only one. While waiting to make a left turn at a red light, I noticed that the young lady next to me had a cell phone tucked under her ear and was obviously eating her morning cereal out of a large bowl.

Why am I not convinced that there are a lot of safe drivers around town?

**R. SCHILLING  
LOWVILLE**

### Resistance to washroom use quite disappointing

DEAR EDITOR:

I recently was out shopping with my daughter in downtown Milton when I had an experience that could have turned out to be rather embarrassing for me.

We had been out for quite a while and we were in a store when I had the need to use the restroom. Now before anybody thinks that this is just a young mother that held it too long, let me explain.

I am not a young mother anymore, as my four children are now grown and all have families of their own — some with grandchildren. So you see I am well into the sixties-plus group.

Anyway, as we were in the store I asked the young girl working if it was possible for me to use the restroom, and she immediately told me that they had no restroom that I could use. Then to our shock, this young lady suggested that I walk across the four lanes of Main Street to use the restroom at a fast-food outlet.

I tried to explain that at my age I couldn't wait long enough to cross four lanes of a dangerous road, but she stood fast that I could not use the restroom.

My daughter asked to speak with the store manager, who when summoned would not show her face, but spoke from behind a partially open door. When informed of the problem, she admitted that she most likely could not hold it that long either and reluctantly let me use the restroom.

This is a fairly common occurrence in a few Milton stores. I find it hard to believe that a store that is open to the public and depends on it to survive would refuse to allow a customer — let alone a senior — to use the restroom. As I mentioned, this could have turned into a very embarrassing situation had I not been allowed the use of the restroom.

I think that some stores need to be a little more appreciative of their customers.

**SHIRLEY RYDER  
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