

The Second Section

Established 1861

The Canadian Champion

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Parking meters

We have a beautiful downtown with great stores and friendly merchants. However, trying to park on Main Street is a major problem.

The Downtown Business Improvement Area (DBIA) merchants are concerned about this, as they should be. They say employees park on the street (not in front of their own store, mind you) all day and make it hard for shoppers to find a spot. At a recent DBIA meeting, the suggestion of installing parking meters was raised to the horror of some merchants and to the pleasure of others.

Councillor Rick Day noted Oakville has what he termed "the most successful downtown in North America." The reason for this, he said, is parking meters are used to keep the employees off Lakeshore Rd. He said parking meters on Main St. are inevitable. If employees are causing a parking problem, "make it a nickel an hour and that will put them on the back street," he said.

Parking meters are a mixed blessing. Twenty years ago, Port Credit tried it and it cost the mayor his job because the residents felt they should not have to pay to patronize the downtown. In subsequent years, the meters were taken down, put back up, and taken down again. Some still exist in the east end of Port Credit but they are generally ignored.

So what is Milton to do? Perhaps the answer lies in parking meters with special tokens. These tokens could be given by downtown merchants and made available in all service outlets and stores. That method has many holes and leaves room for abuse but at least it is some form of parking control.

With Carriage Square opening soon, an answer must be found. Encouragement must be given to employees to use parking lots on Mary and Mill Sts. for sure. But the long-range solution requires a meeting, now, of the town and the merchants to get a system in place to avoid a major problem this summer.

A bad move

The province has decided it will prevent a former Ontario Cabinet Minister, John Yaremko, to sever land he owns on Second Line (Campbellville) to create lots for five, two-storey homes.

The severance, had it been approved, would have resulted in 50 acres of superb hardwood bush being donated to the Ontario Heritage Foundation, and probably, finally into the hands of the Halton Region Conservation Area. The woodlot contains a stand of hardwood which is unique, because it is probably one of the last large lot of its kind in Halton Region.

The bushlot will now, no doubt, be pulled back by Mr. Yaremko and lost to the public. It's simply another case of foolish red tape spoiling a golden chance for the public.

Our Readers Write

Keep the bridge

(The following letter was mailed to Halton-Burlington MPP Don Knight. A copy was filed with The Champion for publication.)

Dear Sir:

I am writing to voice my concerns regarding the recent demolition of the bridge at Highway 401 and James Snow Parkway following the tragic accident there.

The actions of the provincial government to clear and re-open the roadway were quick and efficient under the circumstances; for that they are to be complimented. The ensuing talk of rebuilding a highway of reduced size or possibly not even rebuilding it at all is what concerns me.

The Town of Milton has done well in the past to attract various types of industry to the area. It has grown considerably in recent years and, hopefully, will continue to do so provided that our roads and other services keep pace with the growth. As you are no doubt aware, our roads in many areas are in drastic need of repair and upgrading. Town Council are doing the best they can with the funds available yet I read that they are fighting an almost losing battle. The permanent closure of the James Snow intersection would clearly make an already difficult situation worse.

This type of highway accident serves well to highlight the many shortcomings of our provincial system of motor vehicle in-

urance. Why should the public, an innocent third party, have to pay for the damage caused by an insured motorist?

The provincial government sets the minimum coverage of insurance at \$100,000; most people recognize that that is insufficient coverage for the operation of a private car let alone the operation of a large commercial truck, and yet the government sets no higher minimum for commercial vehicles. If the inadequate amount of coverage carried by the guilty party in that accident is the reason that the public are going to have to bear the cost, and clearly it is, then the province should accept responsibility for failure to set a realistic minimum. Unlimited liability is required in many other

parts of the world, why not Ontario? Are we too poor a region to afford it?

Let's not lose sight of the fact that Highway 401 is a provincial highway. It was built by the province, maintained by the province, even policed by the province. Clearly the province bears a great deal of responsibility for the safe and orderly movement of traffic along it, in particular for the movement of dangerous chemicals. Had a lower speed limit been set by the province for vehicles such as the gasoline tanker, there is a good likelihood that an accident such as this could have been avoided. Lower speed limits for commercial vehicles would increase the cost of transportation.

The province has chosen not to go that route, but why should the people of Milton have to bear the cost of that decision by losing valuable roads and, possibly, future industrial and commercial development?

On the face of it, if the James Snow intersection were not rebuilt we would have lost only an insignificant section of highway going "from nowhere to nowhere." In fact, that intersection would have served industries that the Town is hoping to attract. Without that drawing card they might well not come to Milton.

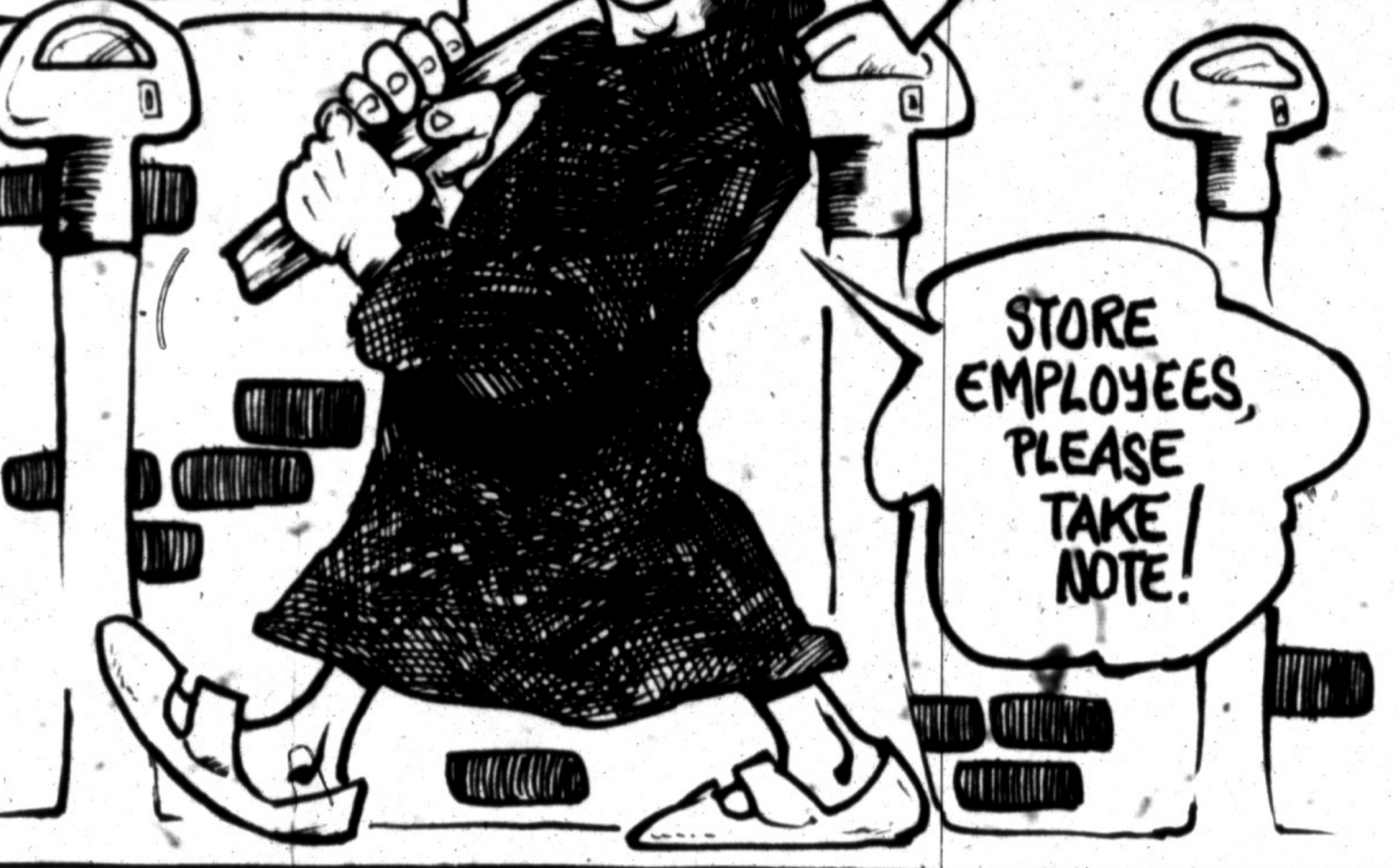
Area growth will have been curtailed resulting in a lessening in the growth of real estate values in the area. One way or another we are all going to pay for that bridge.

The provincial government should rebuild and be done with it; then, perhaps, they should have the wisdom to review the minimum insurance requirements for commercial motor vehicles and set some meaningful standards.

Bernard Swain
 Hayward Cres., Milton

NEWS ITEM:
 COUNCILLOR RICK DAY SAYS
 PARKING METERS ARE THE
 ONLY ANSWER ON
 MAIN STREET.

CUSTOMER
 PARKING
 ONLY



Viewpoint

with RON BEZANT

1,000 words



Back about 1975, while serving with the Canadian Forces in West Germany, some long since forgotten routine affliction saw me waiting for the pharmacist to loudly mispronounce my surname through the open upper half of the dispensary's Dutch door in the local Canadian military hospital.

Let's you might have reckoned otherwise, the complimentary reading material in Canadian military hospitals — ranging as it does from "Canadian Mother and Child" to that perennial favorite, the "1971 White Paper on Defence" — is no more invigorating than the offerings in your typical civilian infirmary.

It was thus that I paced, rather than sat, and thus that my eye caught sight of the joke tacked to the hospital's notice board.

An oil-sheik summoned his three sons to the side of his deathbed and announced, "I'm afraid that your father isn't long for this world, my sons. So before I depart, I would like to buy a lasting gift for each of you. Something that will help you to remember me." He turned inquisitively to his eldest son, a 21-year-old.

"Well, if it wouldn't be too much to ask, Dad, I'd love to have my very own 18-hole golf course."

"No problem, my son. I'll have the workmen begin construction first thing in the morning." The sheik then turned to his next eldest, a 17-year-old, and asked what gift he might buy for the youth.

"I'd really like to have a fleet of Rolls Royces to impress my girlfriends with," came the reply.

"That's fine, my son," said the sheik. "I'll call the dealership first thing in the morning." And finally, the sheik turned to his nine-year-old.

"Dad, I want a Mickey Mouse outfit," said the boy.

"Be serious, my son. I said that I want to buy you a lasting gift to help you remember me when I'm gone. Now, what would you like?"

"But Dad," the youngster persisted. "I want a Mickey Mouse outfit!"

With exasperation written on his face, the sheik said, "Now look here, son, I'm not even sure that Canada wants to sell its armed forces."

I can say without equivocation that the joke's presence on the notice board bore no reflection on the integrity of the men and women in the forces. What it did convey, however, was the collective frustration and embarrassment of going on manoeuvres with Korean War vintage Centurion tanks — since mercifully replaced — and then returning to read Canadian media reports of broken down Centurion tanks littering a German field during a NATO exercise.

Though I wasn't a pilot, I knew well the envy felt by

the Canadian CF-104 pilots for their NATO counterparts who flew the F-4 Phantom, an aircraft belonging to the generation of fighters that Canada neglected to purchase because of mishapen government priorities and Neanderthal political foot-dragging. The CF-104, designed as a high-level interceptor, was ever unforgiving of pilot error in its unaccustomed low-level role with the Canadian Forces in Europe. Its replacement, the CF-18, will do much to help change the air element's antique collector image.

Of the navy's tribulations we'll say nothing, partly out of benevolence and partly because the deplorable state of her ships has been aired ad nauseum on television, interspersed between oft-times repeated showings of the likes of Gwynne Dyer's "War" and Peter Ustinov's "Russia."

Oddly, one could argue, Dyer advocates that we'd be better off out of NATO while Ustinov pooch-pooches the notion that the West has anything to fear from the strictly defensive political attitude and military posture of the Soviets.

How many times have I sat through a TV documentary promoting a hail-fellow-well-met disposition toward the Soviet ideological persuasion, only to wake to the news on the morrow of some massive, patriotic helicopter gunship offensive against a vital and strategic target in the form of an Afghan village full of women and children who failed to see the light? Far too often, I'm afraid.

All of which brings us to the question of whether or not national security is a vital issue. I think that it is. Far too vital to see Canadians fail to appreciate the plight of our servicemen. Sent abroad to speak softly and carry a big stick, they were reduced by years of government neglect to speaking in hushed tones about Mickey Mouse outfits while wondering what happened to the stick.

It was the late great hiatus in a certain senator's customary culinary conduct that set me off on this diatribe. Where was the high-profile personality willing to forgo his asparagus for the sake of publicizing the potential jeopardy awaiting the futures of a larger segment of young Canadian society than the Katimavik handful?

When I worked at National Defence Headquarters just prior to my 1982 decision to resign from the Canadian Forces, I was rather fond of a particular pithy saying pinned up in my cubicle: "Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they're not out to get you." "They" of course were the politicians and "get you" implied "through the sins of omission."

Sometimes a few words are worth a 1,000 pictures.

Pages of the Past

One Year Ago

the April 17, 1985 issue

• Several residents have expressed major concern that a moto-cross facility in north Milton is dangerous and that plans to hold seven meets this year should be cancelled while their concerns remain.

Paul Hunter, who said he spoke for the North Milton Ratepayers Association, said the track's managers have failed to uphold several aspects of a bylaw put in force last year. However H.L. Doberthien, representing the motorcycle meets planned for the track, said the residents requests would cost \$100,000 and effectively put an end to the track and its meets.

• Eight citizen groups opposed to plans for a toxic-waste facility in Ontario have announced they will seek joint funding to help prepare their case against the facility.

The Group of Eight, have applied to the Ontario Waste Management Corporation. J.W. Beaver, who was appointed the waste funding adjudicator in February, had announced that \$75,000 would be made available to any group or body wishing to review OWMC data. The Group of Eight, however, has asked for \$41,350 more than the total budgeted amount.

20 Years Ago

From the April 13, 1966 issue

• The tax boost in Milton was confirmed to 75.95 mills for residential and 83.15 mills for industrial, a rise of 9 per cent. The Town's total expenditures are \$904,739.

• Milton Council debated at length its freeze on residential development. Mayor Syd Childs pressed members for a decision on the question, following earlier consideration on development of an area on Bronte St. south for commercial and residential construction.

• A call for an immediate diversion of truck traffic along Ontario St. rather than Martin St. was sounded by Councillor C. Johnson at Monday's council meeting. Councillor Johnson said the corner was at its maximum width and the diversion should not be delayed any longer, waiting on possible widening further east on Main St.

• Mayor Syd Childs called for consideration by Milton Council on its plans to purchase or continue renting the present library quarters. The Town earlier had an option extended to permit presentation of the budget and allow consideration of whether to acquire the building.

50 Years Ago

From the April 16, 1936 issue

• Mrs. R. Reid (nee Marjorie McCannett), of Toronto, formerly of Milton, won the large chocolate Easter egg in the guessing contest in W. T. Barnard's confectionary store, here. There were 1114 jelly beans in the jar. Mrs. Reid's guess was 1,113.

• The Halton Agricultural Society held their annual Old Time Dance last night and proved a very pleasant evening. Mrs. Bundy and Mr. Harry Carwright were the winners at progressive euchre. Prairie Mountaineers' Orchestra provided real old-time music, which kept everyone on the toes all evening.

• On Monday last, Sergt. Major Mackenzie, with his family, left town to take over the duties of instructor at the Niagara Riding and Driving Club at Niagara Falls, Ont. "Mac," who was very popular in Milton, will be greatly missed by a large circle of friends, as will also his wife and family. "Mac" was much interested in the athletic association, was a good golfer and was a real soldier. He was a member of the Halton Lorne Rifles (Scottish) and has a war record to be proud of, having many decorations including the Belgian Croix de Guerre, which he received at the same time as King Edward VIII, then Prince of Wales, received his. The Champion wishes "Mac" and his family every success and congratulates the Niagara Riding and Driving Club on securing the services of such a fine instructor as Sergt. Major Mackenzie.

120 Years Ago

From the April 12, 1866 issue

• Gold on the Niagara River! Did anyone imagine that a Canadian California is so near to us? We are informed that gold — the real, pure shiny dross — has been found on the Niagara River.

Nay, that it appears to be sufficiently abundant to make mining profitable. At all events, a company to take it out is now forming. The leader in the enterprise is a Mr. Thompson, the active and public spirited manager of the Erie and Niagara Railway. Rights to prosecute mining for gold, in various localities, are being secured and we may ere long, have the pleasure of publishing weekly accounts of shipments from the Niagara River.

• Hon. George Brown has, it appears, made an extensive purchase of property on the Grand River near here. It consists of a large and valuable farm. The price paid, we have not learned, but this much we do know that the land thereabouts is not to be had short of something "handsome."

