



# The Canadian Champion

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## Theatre of the absurd

Living in Milton right now a taxpayer could be forgiven for sensing it is the worst of times on some fronts.

The town is almost undoubtedly saddled with Halton's new 20-year landfill. To the west on the majestic Niagara Escarpment open pit mining consortiums bleat about the need to expand their operations, inflicting a visual and environmental blight upon southern Ontario's most admired natural attribute.

Community residential growth is non-existent, rental accommodation is expensive when it is available (rarely) and land speculators continue to bid up the price of rural turf so that it can almost be priced by the pound.

And now, we face the prospect of playing host to a new class of criminal at the local prison.

Monday the Minister of Correctional Services, Richard Patten, announced that Maplehurst Correctional Centre will be the new home for 272 prisoners come 1992, offenders of a sometimes different stripe from the current population.

They will include rapists, murderers and deeply troubled sexual offenders. But they will also be from Halton and Peel regions and Dufferin County.

We will not be importing the problems faced by major centres such as Toronto, according to Mr. Patten. Instead we will be taking back the problem people we have foisted upon others.

There is some merit to this. In fact we in Milton, or at least our politicians judging from their reaction Monday night at municipal council, could be accused of angrily practicing the "Not In My Back Yard" (NIMBY) syndrome.

This is commonly played out on just about any topic. In Halton, it went on for 14 years concerning the regional landfill site which now appears destined for Milton. But in this case politicians are saying 'not in my back yard even if it is my own garbage,' as it were.

While he would not put it exactly that way, Halton North MPP Walt Elliot made a similar case Tuesday morning by stressing that we must own up to the fact we produce our proportionate share of dangerous offenders without providing prisons for them. Instead we export this commodity of questionable value to places such as the Metro Toronto West Detention Centre.

It's time we started taking responsibility for our own, Mr. Elliot argued, and he's right.

We know Mr. Elliot is a political animal and he is putting the government face on an idea that is sure to be unpopular with many local politicians, but praise where praise is due. The right thing and the politically expedient thing dovetail in this instance. There is little argument to the fact that these people are a local burden.

That having been said, the government launched this initiative with all the grace and cunning of drunken sailors on dockside liberty. They failed to inform local politicians and didn't even allow the area MPPs the opportunity to make the announcement themselves and at least pretty it up somehow.

Instead, the government left Mr. Elliot and colleague Barbara Sullivan surprised and off balance with the press release, to which they were no more privy than the municipal politicians. And this despite the fact both are members of the reigning Liberal party. In the theatre of politics, it was theatre of the absurd.

## Looking back



The Rebekah Lodge goaltender (clad in Milton Police sweater) was lucky to escape with all his bones intact after he paraded his team to a novice championship in April 1966.

## Pages of the Past

### One Year Ago

From the December 7, 1988 issue

□ A gas station on Steeles Avenue knows now what it means to be in and out in a flash. The Flash gas station, at the corner of Martin Street and Steeles Avenue, was broken into twice last week between midnight and six a.m. The first incident occurred Wednesday morning when thieves entered through a window on the bay door and took cash, cigarettes and lottery tickets worth a total of \$1,845. On Sunday morning, the gas station suffered an identical break-and-enter with thieves getting \$200 in cash along with cigarettes and lottery tickets. The station just recently converted to Flash. Previously, it was a 24-hour Petro-Canada station. Now it closes from midnight to 6 a.m.

□ A new event was staged at E.C. Drury High School this week in what may become a Drury tradition. The school's social science department rounded up some ideas and some talented students and created a Social Science Fair, a project which may become part of the course requirements. The fair runs along the same lines as a science fair where students choose and research a topic. They're entered in competitions for awards and marks.

□ Constable Terry Brandt responded to a call for assistance when Guelph City police were chasing a stolen car near the Hanlon Expressway in Guelph on Highway 401. The car was travelling eastbound on the highway and Cst.

Brandt was able to position his cruiser in front of the stolen car near Highway 25 to slow its speed. However, the driver of the stolen car, in an attempt to skirt around the cruiser, sideswiped the cruiser and mounted the concrete median barrier on an angle, blowing the car's right front tire and continued on. Cst. Brandt pursued the car and pulled around the left side forcing it onto the south shoulder. However, the suspect's vehicle struck Cst. Brandt's car again forcing it to a stop. Fortunately, there were no injuries.

### 20 Years Ago

From the December 10, 1969 issue.

□ Neighbours of Mr. and Mrs. William Koski have started a fund to aid the victims of last week's fire which destroyed their South Side Paints and Windows shop and severely damaged their home and contents. A collection has been formed rounding up food, clothing and furniture to help the couple back on their feet. The money will be put in a trust fund to buy necessities and perhaps help them with rent until they can find a permanent place to live.

□ The high price of copper is causing problems around Halton and several thefts have been reported lately involving Bell Canada's copper telephone wire. But thieves went to a lot of work for 100 feet of copper wire at the Highway 5 West farm of Gordon King in Oakville last week. They cut down all the lightning protection wires, valued at around \$100, from the farm buildings.

□ Milton's Ed's Welding Peewees are on quite a streak. With 11 victories under their belt, the team has yet to lose a league contest. Milton blanked Burlington 4-0 Nov. 27 and have registered three big victories this week including a 3-2 win over Georgetown Thursday, a 7-2 win over Brampton Saturday and an 8-0 clipping against Streetsville.

### 50 Years Ago

From the December 7, 1939 issue

□ Streetsville businessmen are endeavoring to raise \$8,000 to provide for the erection of a new sports arena.

□ Don't forget to attend "Turkey Night" in the town hall, Milton, on Wednesday, Dec. 20. 50 Turkeys, 10 to 15 lbs. each. Each admission ticket represents a chance in every draw - 50 draws. Tickets 10 cents each or 3 for 25 cents. Bring or send your tickets.

□ A subscription to The Champion will make an appreciated Christmas gift. Only \$2.

## Pud

by Steve Nease



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