



The Canadian Champion

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Should we fight?

Sunday was Remembrance Day, an annual rite made more poignant because of the looming threat of large-scale hostilities in the Persian Gulf.

For the first time in almost two generations Canadians genuinely face the prospect of being embroiled in a foreign conflict. So perhaps there was a bit more thoughtful pondering of what war has meant and could mean again as the nation paused for a moment.

There is strength, as well as a certain comfort, in numbers and the numbers confronting Iraq are significant indeed. A formidable array of forces representing the full spectrum of democratic and emerging democratic nations has lined up against Saddam Hussein.

But are we truly prepared to countenance the consequences of late 20th century warfare? Are we willing to truly commit Canada's armed forces to such a struggle? Or are we merely willing to ask a few fighter pilots and frigate sailors to wave our flag while we sit comfortably at home, hoping Saddam Hussein will pull back from the brink?

In the United States, a debate is beginning to emerge as to that country's willingness to go to war over the Kuwait invasion. Many Americans want a full House of Representatives debate before any new action is taken. In Canada, we deserve no less from our House of Commons. And there should probably be a free vote on increased military participation.

So far we have seen our elected leaders in the west — notably President George Bush and Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and Brian Mulroney — marching in lockstep toward a confrontation. We are not saying their actions to date have been wrong. They have been largely prudent.

But if our countries are to go to war, the citizens who will be asked to shed their blood and grieve for their dead deserve to be involved in the decision. And so far that hasn't happened.

Best of bad lot

There's an old axiom in politics which suggests people don't vote for new governments, they just vote old ones out. Generally speaking, that's true and it's probably why the New Democratic Party is in first place in federal polls released Tuesday.

We have seen little that should vault the NDP into top spot, beyond general dissatisfaction with the performance of the leaders of both the Liberal and the Progressive Conservative parties.

Liberal leader Jean Chretien has not said or done much of consequence since he was chosen chief and whether or not Prime Minister Brian Mulroney does anything of consequence or not, people don't trust him. We believe the country, and both so-called "mainstream" parties would be better off without their current leaders.

New Democratic Party leader Audrey McLaughlin, at least at this point, is not scoring particularly well with the electorate as a leader either. She only enjoys a 47 per cent approval rating. But she is at least a largely untried commodity, so maybe if her party manages to gain power eventually, she'll turn out to be a pleasant surprise.

Her competitors have proven to be, unfortunately, quite the opposite. Mr. Chretien is a political opportunist first and foremost, and Mr. Mulroney is too petulant and egotistical by half for his current position, despite the fact his party has advanced some good policy that will benefit the country in the long run.

Looking back



Sections of towers were being stockpiled in the Milton Hydro sjeelyard on Main Street East in November, 1976. Construction of two new hydro transformer stations was underway on Main Street East at Fifth Line and at Lower Base Line Road and Ninth Line.

Pages of the Past

One Year Ago

From the November 15, 1989 issue

□ The A & P store in Milton defied provincial law by remaining open but it was not charged under the Retail Business Holidays Act and no one seemed to know why. Halton Regional Police suggested the lack of charges might have been an oversight on their part. They were unable to determine the exact reason no charges were laid.

□ The regional daycare plan for the next five years was unveiled to Halton's Health and Social Services Committee. The plan considered Halton's child care needs and suggested that an increase in information for the public and quality control be implemented.

□ A commercial property landlord told town council's general committee it was discriminating against him by limiting his business options, an allegation which town planning director Bob Zsadyani disputed strongly. In the end, Anthony Agozzino lost his bid to get a big break on parking requirements, prompting him to fume at councillors. "I'm being rejected. I'm a taxpayer. I'm doing the best I can. Every time the door is shut on me."

□ Amid little fanfare, Milton council's general committee approved new spending procedures for politicians and staff attending municipal conferences, cutting off family members from town expense accounts. Previously, and with considerable controversy, councillors and staff members could bring their spouses along to conferences at Milton taxpayers' expense.

20 Years Ago

From the November 18, 1970 issue

□ Milton Council hired itself a new consulting engineer. A Weston firm, Duncan Hopper and Associates Ltd., was picked from 11 firms which applied for the position after councillors expressed displeasure with the current engineers R. V. Anderson and Associates.

□ Another large automotive plant was being established in the area. Chrysler Canada Ltd. announced it plans to build a highly automated \$15-million automotive parts depot at Erin Mills New Town, near Streetsville.

□ Milton firefighters were called to Guelph Junction to put out a balze when oil leaking from a diesel train caught fire near the CPR track not far from Campbellville. The fire department had no estimate of damage but the train car would either have to be towed away or repaired before travelling again.

50 Years Ago

From the November 14, 1940 issue

□ James Mockridge, Milton's oldest resident, celebrated his 90th birthday at his home. Born in Brantford in 1850, Mr. Mockridge was one of a family of seven, whose father, Rev. James Mockridge, was rector of Warwick, one of the clergy reserves in Canada. As a young man he worked for the old Grand Trunk, later joining the staff of the Bank of Toronto in 1871. Continuing his duties with the bank in Barrie, Cananoque, Thornberry, Collingwood and Toronto, he retired in 1915, then moved to Milton where he resided ever since.

□ The Misses Little of Toronto moved into the house on Robert street, formerly occupied by Harold Fay and family.

□ Mr. Chas. Kennedy's many friends were sorry to hear of his injuries and hoped that on recovery his arm would be better.

Pud



by Steve Nease