

# Opinion

## Brother can you spare a beer

A beleaguered economy? Constitutional problems? Fear and loathing in the streets? Stick with me, I've got a new plan to cure all those woes and more.

We need a new currency; a new medium of exchange. Faith in the CanBuck is lagging. People across this great nation of ours need something to boost their spirits. My plan? Make beer the official medium of exchange.

I heard your scream of outrage, but it's okay. I didn't expect everyone to see the light as quickly as did I, and my quintillions of happy brain cells. Happy that with beer as the currency we will have an excuse for spending money like drunken sailors. I will explain my idea step-by-step and lead your brain synapses, like a pied piper, down the garden path of understanding.

All the problems in this country are reflected in the beer trade. The GST, free trade, inter-provincial trade barriers and all that stuff are perfectly reflected in the difference in beer prices, availability and quality between Canada and the United States.

Beer has all the necessary properties of money. It's portable and it's divisible into infinitely small units. Beer holds its value because unlike the CanBuck, it actually is something. The dollar just represents a notion of something.

At the same time it is more easily convertible into amounts we can all understand. Think of a tank of gas as costing a case of beer. A night in a nice hotel: three or four cases of beer.

For really big numbers we could represent, say, the Ontario deficit at 50 million cases of beer or, for a deeper appreciation the number of 18 wheelers that said beer would fit into. Something like 5,000 — 18 wheelers filled with beer is easier to understand than some huge number of dollars.

The best part is, if we were to convert our currency to beer, then things like the GST and inter-provincial trade barriers would have to come crashing down, thereby making this a better place to live.

### Reaume with a View with BRAD REAUME



We'd have to level the taxation playing field to make free trade work. The only other option is a semi-closed economy to protect our beer industry.

In an open economy we'd have to make production of our currency more efficient. Thus tax and regulations demanding a brewery in every province that the beer is sold would be quickly done away with.

We couldn't have our currency taxed because it would throw out the balance between American currency and Canadian, which would force people into making their own currency or purchasing cheap, plentiful American currency, which takes a little getting used to, but is more pleasant than you'd think.

Of course paying for beer with beer might seem a little strange but so does buying money with money, as we do now when we cross the border.

In the end we would have to make a judgement. Do we level the taxation, social and health playing field and go for open markets, which should raise our standard of living by using efficiency to keep prices down? Or, do we want closed markets and more say in the type of society we want, a wider range of job possibilities, but a lower standard of living because of higher priced goods produced by small, inefficient factories?

In reality, beer is a perfect microcosm of the problems with the Canadian economy. Presently we have failed to choose the type of country we want to have. Until we solve our constitutional crisis with a concrete idea of what we want then we cannot solve our economic crisis. The two are inextricably linked. Conflicting economic policies are now in place. We have to choose. Now.



## Two dogs aren't better than one

### Pets and you with ANNE NORMAN

him. A dog with strong retrieving drives may carry your belongings all over the house, sometimes even chewing them up in his agitation. A dog who is very physical in his relationships with people may paw at you constantly when you sit down to read a book or watch television.

It is up to you to reassure your dog that he means as much to you as he ever did. A little extra time with him may be needed to keep him happy.

Your puppy needs a lot of time, too. Kids may enjoy playing with the cute little guy but magically disappear when the pup has an "accident" or the yard needs to be de-pooped. It was your decision to bring in another dog and, ultimately, the responsibility for his welfare rests squarely on your shoulders.

It is great when you come home after a weary day at work and your dogs give you that excited "Oh, wow, you came back! We're so happy!" greeting. You may find, however, that two dogs jockeying for the position closest to you is a little more "hairy" than you want life to be when you walk through the door.

Each dog will try to jump and lick and lean on you more than the next one. Unless they're trained, both of them, to sit and wait for pats and praise, you may find yourself unceremoniously knocked over or scratched as though you'd run through a raspberry patch.

Remember when your first dog was growing up and he hit puberty? Remember those power struggles over whether or not he was going to do what he was supposed to do? Prepare yourself for the same thing with your puppy. Try not to let this happen in front of your older dog. He will be watching closely and may try to join in when you have a disagreement with your puppy.

Your second dog will tend to be much more "dog-oriented" than your first. It's only natural, since he'll be spending a percentage of his time with his older buddy. If he doesn't anticipate your every move it is because he is looking to a canine leader instead of a human one for direction.

Finally, two dogs together will get into 20 times as much trouble as two dogs separately. You might want to bear this in mind.

## Your child's 'style' reflects on her success

Many personal characteristics contribute to a child's success in school and later life, such as intelligence, creativity, perseverance and social perceptiveness. Some are intellectual skills, but others are a matter of style. One element of style that is turning out to be quite important is "reflectiveness".

When your child is given a problem to solve, does he tend to guess, to answer quickly, or does he think long and hard? When your child is reading, does he read too quickly, often mistaking words and not understanding much of what he is reading? On those games where a number of pictures are identical except for a single detail, such as a missing bowtie or buttons, does your child scan all the examples to find which two are the same, or does she respond quickly, guess, and get it wrong?

These are examples of tests given to children to find out if they are "impulsive" or "reflective". Impulsive children tend to respond quickly, without checking carefully to see if their answer is right, and they make a lot of errors.

Reflective children take more time to answer, they examine the problem more carefully, and they make fewer errors.

These characteristics tend to be relatively enduring. While all children tend to become more reflective as they get older, children who

### Psychology with DR. A. RINCOVER

are rated as impulsive at 7 years of age also tend to be rated as more impulsive than their peers at 12 years of age.

Although impulsive and reflective children don't generally differ in IQ, they differ quite a bit in many other ways. Reflective children do much better in school — they get better grades and are better readers. Impulsive students make more errors in reading — for example, they are more likely to jump to conclusions and identify a word incorrectly based on one or two letters.

When given a list of words to memorize, both groups of children tend to remember (and forget) an equal number, but the impulsive children still make more errors as they name words that weren't on the original list.

When you pour water from a normal glass into a tall skinny one, reflective children are more likely to have the principle of "conservation" (know that the same amount is in both glasses) while impulsive children do

not (answering that the second glass has more because the water line is higher).

Impulsive children are more likely to do things that are risky, such as walking near the edge of a ledge or joining a group of children they don't know. Reflective children tend to be more cautious and more anxious not to make mistakes.

Most important, perhaps, are the differences in how they view the world and their role in it. Reflective children expect to succeed. They have more confidence, they choose more difficult challenges, and they are less likely to give up easily. Why? Reflectiveness tends to result in more success on intellectual tasks, so reflective children develop more confidence in their abilities; impulsiveness leads to more mistakes, so these children develop less confidence. It becomes a vicious cycle as these attitudes tend to get stronger over time.

Impulsive children can become more reflective. They can be taught, with systematic coaching, praise, and feedback, to become more careful, take more time, give more thought or analysis to a problem, check their answers, and so on. By breaking "reflectiveness" down into smaller, discrete objectives, we can teach children to be more thoughtful and careful, and thereby improve their success and confidence.

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