

OPINION

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Box 248, 191 Main St. E.,
Milton L9T 4N9

878-2341

Toronto Line 821-3837

Fax - 878-4943

Classified Advertising: 875-3300

Ian Oliver *Publisher*
Nell Oliver *Advertising Director/General Manager*
Jane Muller *Editor*
Karen Hulsman *Circulation Manager*
Teri Casas *Office Manager*
Tim Coles *Production Manager*

The Canadian Champion, published every Wednesday and Friday at 191 Main St. E., Milton, Ont., L9T 4N9 (Box 248), is one of The Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing Ltd. group of suburban companies which includes: Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, Aurora Banner, Barrie Advance, Brampton Guardian, Burlington Post, Collingwood Connection, Etobicoke Guardian/Lakeshore Advertiser, Georgetown Independent/Acton Free Press, Kingston This Week, Lindsay This Week, Markham Economist & Sun, Mississauga News, Newmarket Era, Oakville Beaver, Orlia Today, Oshawa/Whitby This Week, Peterborough This Week, Richmond Hill/Thornhill/Vaughan Liberal, Scarborough Mirror, Today's Seniors, and Uxbridge/Stouffville Tribune.

Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of a typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with a reasonable allowance for signature, will not be charged for, but the balance of the advertisement will be paid for at the applicable rate. The publisher reserves the right to categorize advertisements or decline.

Sure-cure triple 'e' theory

I have the solution to the constitutional crisis over senate reform. I've also just lost half my readership.

COME BACK, Come back, Don't turn the page. It'll get better, I promise.

Now fold the page back... thanks.

My idea? Get rid of it. NO, NO, NOT THE PAPER!... the senate. Whew, I thought I lost you that time.

It is possible to abolish the senate and conform to the demand of some provinces for a Triple E senate; elected, effective and equal. First, we will have elected not to have a senate. Second, what could be a more effective political body than one that doesn't exist and therefore vests its power in another already elected body, the House of Commons. Thirdly, it would be equally non-existent for every Canadian.

Unfortunately, true political reform in this country, is not going to happen unless the reform is complete. No matter what recipe we decide upon for a senate, we're still cooking in the same pot. For effective reform we have to use another pot.

If Quebec is going to insist on special powers, based on its regional and cultural approach to government, then special powers must be granted to every region. Provinces cannot claim the same homogeneity that regions sport. For effective government, provinces would disappear and perhaps five Canadian regions would take their place.

Our confederation will have a further weakened central government whose reduced powers would need to be spelt out. Defence, international trade, treaties and the like would be handled on a federal basis, because they affect the whole country. All domestic concerns would be handled at the regional (provincial) level. Canada would function as an umbrella for a number of virtually independent nations.

Perhaps five independent political entities would emerge under the Canadian maple leaf. The Territories would still be federally administered, and representation from each of the five regions would form the federated

REAUME WITH A VIEW

with BRAD REAUME



government.

The other parts of Canada would take on a more regional feel. That would be nice. The Maritimes would band together to solve their common problems; such as a complete lack of economic viability. Quebec would remain a beachhead of xenophobic French in a sea of English.

Ontario would muddle along for a few years trying to please everybody and succeeding in pleasing nobody until it threw off the yoke of socialism, when, determined to please nobody, Ontario would please everybody. Socialism would likely land in the Maritimes, where despite denials, it is institutional.

The Prairies would band together and become rich off wind and oil power, food and a lack of anyone wanting to live there. British Columbia would remain just slightly, pleasingly, off-kilter.

The upshot? There would be a lot less waste, duplication and taxation due to a less convoluted government. Two levels of municipal government could be reformed along this principle. Government would be brought down to size and its effectiveness increased.

Of course, given time we might grow so far apart that our Canadianness would be hard to define. But hey, it can't get any worse than it is now, right? This isn't Yugoslavia.

Though possible and equally viable in theory, the opposite approach, one of strong federalism, is left out of the realm of consideration because of Quebec's insistence on insulating itself from the rest of us. Pity.

There was no hanky panky in catnapping

It was a case of mistaken identity. I swear I didn't mean to kidnap him.

Here is how the story unfolded. Let me begin by saying that our family is getting a bad track record for misplacing cats. First P.C. three months after she took up residence with us, then Hanky 15 months ago and now Panky last week.

Panky's disappearance took place only hours before I planned to take him to the vet's. He had been limping badly and although we could find no visible problem on his right front leg, it was sensitive. But hubby left him out that morning and he just never returned. Two hours later, kids and hubby left for the cottage. I meanwhile, experienced an attack of domesticity and stayed to tidy up. All that time I waited for Panky to meow at the door.

Two days later, on my final evening at home before striking out for the cottage for the summer, I decided to bicycle to the library to return two books I had found gathering dust under furniture. A few blocks from home, I caught sight of a black cat. I parked my bike and approached the animal. He didn't run away and in no time he was purring and rolling over enjoying my petting. And I kept looking at him trying to figure out if he was Panky. You would think I would recognize my own



ON THE HOMEFRONT

with ESTHER CALDWELL

cat, but I couldn't.

Unfortunately, Panky bore no distinguishing features, apart from a certain attitude and personality. I looked into his eyes. Were those Panky's eyes with the hooded lids? I checked the right front leg several times but this cat didn't flinch. Maybe the wound had healed. But so quickly? I picked him up. He seemed smaller and thinner than Panky. Could he lose that much weight in two days? His meow seemed weaker than Panky's too.

So there I stood with the black cat in my arms, wondering and wondering if this was Panky. If I decided against it and left him there, what if I were mistaken and he really was Panky? I began walking towards home, cradling the cat in my left arm and pulling my bike with my right.

Maybe, I thought, my mother would be able

FILLET OF DOLE



Pre-teens need pumping up

Friendships become much more intimate and important when children hit 10-12 years of age, and with this intimacy comes all kinds of new upsets.

The changes can be very dramatic (and confusing) to a parent. The child seems so insecure all of a sudden, and her self-esteem so fragile. She's so dependent on what her peers think of her. The emotional ups and downs drive you crazy, as she becomes at times fickle, critical, unreasonable, judgemental, impatient (to name but a few).

Why? Kids at this age crave the attention, affection and acceptance of their peers, and they want to reaffirm those friendships every day.

Feelings of jealousy, sadness and insecurity come and go on a daily basis, depending on an off-the-cuff comment here or not getting the expected phone call there. These feelings can be very intense, the children fragile, as they live and die on a daily basis because of what their friends say or think, or what your child thinks they think.

Some children will even try to exclude other children in order to protect their own exclusive relationships. They may put other children down, talk about them behind their back, or make fun of them in front of their friends.

If Maureen's good friend, Joan is starting to



PSYCHOLOGY IN THE '90S

with DR. ARNOLD RINCOVER

see Sally a lot, Maureen might tell Joan bad things about Sally. Kids often try to build themselves up in the eyes of others by putting other children down.

It's also an age when they start to notice differences, and almost any differences can be used as a "put-down", to make fun of another child. If a child is very smart, he becomes a "nerd"; if a child is black, short, uncoordinated, has curly hair or big ears, children may use it to make fun of (exclude) that child.

There is a temptation for children at this age to act in ways that make them more acceptable. A smart child may act "dumb" in order to fit in better, going so far as to skip homework or do poorly on tests at school. If a child doesn't find a way to "fit in", she may get depressed or anxious, refuse to go to school, avoid her peers altogether.

Children are judgemental and critical for other reasons too. They may have unrealistic expectations of a friend. If a friend doesn't sit next to you, pick you first for dodgeball, or if she goes to a party and doesn't call five minutes afterward to tell everything that was said, then a child may question the friendship.

Sometimes, the problem is really in the child's perception. They're so insecure that they think the worst, even when it's not true. They may think they're ugly, dumb, that people are saying bad things behind their back.

It's important for parents to talk to their children about these things, openly and honestly. Children need to feel proud of themselves. They need to know that being smart, black, short or bad at soccer is not a limiting condition in life. They need to know what's really important in friendship and life, what makes a person "good".

They need to be pumped up, so they feel more secure, confident, with a strong sense of family to fall back on. And you'll have to talk to them regularly, because it will come up again... and again. At first the effects of a pep talk may only last a moment — until the next school day — but those moments do add up.

Explaining to your child isn't enough, however. He or she can't stand alone forever and be happy. Children need to have a friend. Parents have a crucial role to play here, as we'll see next week.