



# OPINION

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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## Memo from hyphen police

Memo: From the OntaRAEo Department of Hyphenated Affairs

To: All departments

Subject: Hiring practices — point system

Dear Sir / Mrs. / Ms / Miss / Madame / Mademoiselle:

There is an obvious confusion amongst our citizens concerning hiring practices and the department has devised the following to clarify procedures. Points shall be awarded in the following categories and the cumulative number of points shall determine hiring priorities.

Categories: race, colour, creed, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, handicap, immigrant status and those with criminal convictions. Subgroups will be defined later.

For the purpose of this study, Canadian is not a race, white is not a colour, Christian not a creed, male is not a sex (unless said male is an immigrant, homosexual, handicapped or has been convicted of a sex crime), heterosexual not oriented, married with children not a status and overtaxed not a handicap.

A form in 17 languages (same as *Readers Digest*) will be available as a checklist.

Example 1: a Vietnamese-yellow-Buddhist-female-homosexual-single-two children-kleptomaniac-boat person. How many points?

Answer: 8 — Reason: count the hyphens

Example two: Canadian-white-Christian-heterosexual-married-two children-unimpaired-born here-law abiding. How many points?

Answer: 0 — This was a trick question to see if you have properly understood paragraph three (see above).

Note: We are having difficulty with the word handicapped versus impaired. Our department, and we suggest yours follow suit, has agreed to no longer drink vodka or any other beverage with no odour. We have decided to all drink scotch, so our citizens will know we are indeed drunk.

The department of hyphenation is doing its

## VIEW POINT

with PATRICK KELLY



utmost to ensure bias of any sort will be eliminated. Our major problem is there are too many people fitting into Example 2. The immigration department of ethnic diversity has ensured us new upward quotas are being devised to speed entry of Example 1 candidates.

We are being helped somewhat by the emigration department who are speeding up exit visas for Example 2 people who are applying for green cards.

Some usurping minister has a letter from "ordinary" Canadians who suggested we just look for people who could contribute to the betterment of Canada regardless of race, colour, creed etc. But as you know we have a department responsible for each hyphenated group and this would not fit into our plans. Besides, we've never listened to them before.

We have noticed a reduction in revenues due to the laziness and decline in the Example 2 group. The tax department will follow the lead of the hyphenation department and will allow tax deductions based on the same point system for continued department funding.

In the interest of cost savings, the same form may be used as described above. We mustn't give the impression of wasting tax payers' dollars.

In closing, for those of you concerned about loss of travel points with the expected demise of Canadian Airlines, we have worked out an arrangement with the feds whereby they'll keep them going until Christmas so you can use your credits and not lose any benefits.

## The daring pursuit of knowledge in the snowbelt

Blame it on my urgent need for instant gratification. No, I couldn't wait until next spring when a similar course might possibly be offered a few blocks from home. Instead, I had to jump in right now and complete the same course more than 100 miles from home.

Was it that same urgency that caused me to forget that I lived in Canada and that it was November, which, depending on where I travelled, might mean that I would have to deal with snow?

Don't get me wrong. I like snow, especially those snowfalls that cover everything in a beautiful white blanket. I enjoy walking in it (most of the time) and playing in it with or without my kids. But I hate driving in it.

When I was a mere youngster in my twenties, I thought nothing of zipping down from North Bay to Orillia or Toronto almost every weekend. Snow didn't stop me in those days even when I knew I could count on blustery weather along Highway 11.

So there I was at 5:30 p.m. last Friday heading north to Gravenhurst. I know now I should have left earlier. My night vision is poor so I usually avoid driving in the dark, but being the ultimate procrastinator, sunset was way behind me before I got behind the steering wheel.

It was about an hour into my trip. I was happily talking to myself when a sand truck came from the opposite direction spewing sand along the highway. Did that fellow know



## ON THE HOMEFRONT

with ESTHER CALDWELL

something I didn't?

I slowed down and peered through the windshield, taking a closer look at the highway. Yes, it was shiny. Did that mean I was skimming along on ice? I decided not to put it to the test by applying my brakes.

And then the light drizzle I had been experiencing turned into snow, getting heavier and thicker by the minute. The lines down the middle of the highway disappeared and so did the words on the signs to which the slushy snow had adhered. The only snowploughs that I encountered were going in the opposite direction — not much help to me.

I gripped the steering wheel, tensed my entire body and hoped that I would survive this ordeal. First, to be driving in the night, secondly to be caught in a blizzard, and finally to find myself in an unfamiliar setting was terrifying.

Although my course was to take place in

Bracebridge, my destination was a friend's home in Gravenhurst. Would I miss the turnoff because I couldn't see the sign?

My friend had provided me with directions on finding her street off Muskoka Road, but I had forgotten to ask her how to find Muskoka Road from the highway. As it is one of the main streets in that town, I mistakenly assumed there would be an exit for it. Maybe there was and I didn't see it because of the snow. I began to panic. I made a slippery exit off the highway and slid into town, ending up on Bethune Street.

I stopped to look at the map but my van's interior light was inadequate for my feeble eyes to read it.

I drove to The Beer Store where an employee pointed me in the right direction. Within minutes I was safe in my friend's driveway, recovering from the shock of dealing with the inclement weather.

The following morning, the town's streets were unploughed, most signs were still stuck with snow, and the packed snow on Highway 11 was icy.

Miraculously, I did reach the course in Bracebridge — and only 10 minutes late. (That's great timing for me even in good weather conditions.)

What worries me is that this course extends over two weekends. I have to prepare myself for yet another drive into the frozen north.



## Evening library account

### COUNTER POINT

with ISABEL HUNSINGER



office via modem to the library computer catalogue.

In terms of materials, we actually bought more materials in 1992 than in 1991. A five-year book collection development program has been approved by council, to bring the library's collection up to minimum standard for a community Milton's size. This project received \$65,000 funding from the capital budget, an increase of \$25,000 over 1991.

It may be this movement of this project from operating to capital budget that led to Mr. Kelly's erroneous conclusion of service cuts.

The majority of the budget goes to salaries as it does in any labour-intensive service industry. Materials do not appear on shelves by magic. Each item is selected, ordered, received, processed, entered into the computer, shelved and circulated. We have a strong commitment to public service at the library.

Staff time is also dedicated to the development and delivery of programs for children and adults. Daily storytime programs for children introduce them to reading. Clubs, contests and class visits and other special events attract school age children to the library and, by extension, to literacy. Life-long learning is encouraged through adult programs.

The reported 9.25 per cent salary increase reported in last week's column was not the increased received by staff. In keeping with all other Town staff they received a 5.5 per cent cost of living adjustment which is in line with pay equity requirements.

The increase Mr. Kelly reported included higher staffing costs for additional operating hours and to cope with the 35 per cent increase in use over the past two years. These costs caused a 3.75 per cent rise in staffing costs — not pay raises.

More than 18,000 residents have library cards (62 per cent). The library owns 65,000 items worth approximately \$1.3 million. These items circulate 33,000 times per year. If, as Mr. Kelly suggested, individuals were to purchase their own materials for approximately \$20 an item, this circulation would cost Miltonians \$6.6 million per year or \$206.25 per capita. In contrast the library spends \$1.2 million per year or \$37.50 per capita for access to magazines, newspapers, books, paperback, videos and audio cassettes.

Our price also includes trained, friendly, knowledgeable staff. Milton gets good value for tax money spent at the library. Come in and see for yourselves.

Isabel Hunsinger is the chair of the Milton Public Library Board.