



OPINION

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Tell me, where's the equity?

Unfortunately the only real growth in this country is in government services. The only reason we have inflation in 1992 is related to taxes. Almost every sector of private industry has reduced its prices, profits and growth with very few exceptions.

For the first seven months of the year, private sector employees work for the government when federal, provincial, municipal and hidden taxes are taken into account. That's 61.3 per cent for an average Canadian earning \$53,000 a year.

Governments are like the man who said of his ex-wife that she was a great housekeeper and he was a great bill payer. She kept the house and he kept the bills.

The government's answer to any problem is to throw money at it — our money. What have they fixed? When some new program is devised for the betterment of Canadians — who gets it first?

Pay equity is a good example. The definition has changed from its inception. Initially it meant equal pay for equal work and was primarily directed toward women who in many cases were being discriminated against financially in the work place.

In implementation the definition has developed into paying people (primarily women) what some government body decides their work is worth.

The major beneficiaries are public employees and the benefactor is the taxpayer. Last year pay equity was among the item that cost the municipal taxpayer 5 per cent of his or her tax bill. This year the town is "holding the line" at 1 per cent. How does that compare with our airline employee taxpayers who are being asked to take wage concessions of up to 15 per cent or borrow up to \$40,000 from their bank to buy shares in their company? Having done that there is still no guarantee of a job next year.

Where is the public sector sharing in this recession? UIC and welfare workers say their services are in greater demand and must have more money.

Are governments not major contributors to creating the demand through such vehicles as pay equity, free daycare, excessive immigration and poorly managed, indebted Crown

VIEW POINT

with PATRICK KELLY

Corporations such as Ontario Hydro and PetroCanada? Is this attacking motherhood issues? Just read the auditor general's report.

Somehow we are made to feel as if we are responsible for this mess. Sure, big business has its share of turkeys but those are the ones either government bails out or they go bankrupt.

They take a successful company and tax it until it either moves to the states or joins those already in bankruptcy.

The great benefits of this country, access to education, health care, social services, affordable housing and growing job markets have now become a burden in-cost while declining in quality.

The differences between rights and privileges have become skewed.

I don't want to hear of anyone losing his job in the private or public sector but other than paying more taxes, anything I can do is in direct opposition to some government plan.

Government leaders are bereft of new ideas, so here are four of mine:

1) No benefits should be provided public employees unless 55 per cent of private sector employees have the same benefits.

2) Cutbacks in government services should be reflected in cutbacks in management and administrative staff at an equal percentage.

3) Get rid of your Toronto apartment paid for by the taxpayer MP Noel Duignan. Join the hundreds of Miltonians who travel to Toronto and work late 12 months of the year. The traffic is lighter now because a lot of them lost their jobs.

4) Don't send me your recycled paper calendar again Mr. Duignan. Save my money — besides, ReMax gives me a better one free.

Some other ideas — fairness, equality and incentive. Could this be a whole new direction for governments?



The high price of poverty

Billy's topic at show and tell was about the dead body he and his friends found in the alley. Jennifer told about the police coming to her neighbour's house and arresting the father.

Poverty is not just an economic or a political issue, it can have devastating psychological consequences. Billy and Jennifer are under enormous stress, and the risks to their development are growing every day.

If you keep piling on harmful experiences that are associated with poverty — from violence to poor parenting — the risk to the children accumulates.

The key risk factors arising from poverty are:

- education/occupation of parents;
- number of children under 18 years of age that live in the home;
- whether the parents are living together;
- the extent of social supports;
- the number of positive and negative stressful life events;
- quality of child's interactions with the mother;
- and the results of the HOME survey, which assesses the quality of the physical environment and the child's opportunity to be stimulated.

The risk arising from living in poverty is subtle, but it grows nonetheless. For example, a study described in the *APA Monitor* (April, 1992), shows that the buildup of risk factors can dramatically influence intellectual functioning. For children living in poverty, IQ remained relatively stable with zero to two



PSYCHOLOGY IN THE '90s

with DR. ARNOLD RINCOVER

risk factors, dropping from 119 to 116, but fell dramatically with three or more of these risk factors, from 119 to 89.

In addition to intellectual functioning, poverty is known to be associated with violence, depression, hostility, poor health and hygiene, absenteeism at school (children) and work (parents), behavioural problems and mental health problems.

At the very heart of the experience of poverty is the feeling of shame, the shame of feeling like a failure, of feeling worthless, of feeling unsafe in the neighbourhood where you live. Whatever initially causes the poverty, its effects are compounded by the shame it brings.

Shame in turn generally produces one of two responses: depression or rage. Shame is thought by many researchers to be at the heart of the rage in inner city youths and the gangs that arise. It is the only thing that gives them a sense of power and control. Perhaps this is why researchers are finding "terminal thinking" to be common in poor youths — the expectation that they will be dead by the time they are 30.

Shame can also drive people away from the very conditions that might help them, such as school, because they feel stupid and incompetent.

Approximately 20 per cent of children live in poverty conditions like Billy and Jennifer, and they simply cannot be written off. Yet, how can we stop this vicious cycle?

A symposium on poverty at the University of Miami, including researchers from all across North America, tried to set some new directions. First, there was a consensus that the focus of treatment has to be communities, not individuals. For example, carrying a knife to school is adaptive in some communities. It is the social context that had to change, not just the individual.

Second, all the root causes and consequences of poverty must be dealt with, changing the fabric of the community, rather than dealing separately with school absenteeism, racism, drug use, delinquency, etc. This multi-pronged approach should include parent education; family support services; academic, social and employment development for youths; special treatment services, such as drug abuse programs; and community development, such as crime reduction, neighbourhood watch and litter campaigns.

A dog's greeting is more likely a pack performance

You see it every day. Go to someone's house and the dog barks like a maniac, leaping up and down, advancing and retreating. Interspersed with a series of short, threatening barks, are tail wags and furtive side glances, signs of waiting for reinforcements to arrive. The longer it takes for the owner to reach the door, the more agitated the performance becomes.

Generally, with temperamentally sound dogs, all this nonsense subsides when the "intruder" is shown by the "pack leader" (owner) to be welcome i.e. harmless to the well-being of the pack. Once you are inside and have shown that you are not particularly concerned about the scare tactics you've just witnessed, the dog will generally leave you alone. It may even try to invite you to play, demonstrating its submissiveness to a person welcomed into the pack.

The interesting part of all this occurs when you are preparing to take your leave. Many people are puzzled and even embarrassed when their dog, having been completely relaxed for an hour or so, suddenly launched



PETS AND YOU

with ANNE NORMAN

itself into a modified version of its opening performance.

Broken down into primitive behaviour, this reaction is quite understandable. Wolves allow no strangers into their packs, and the rank of each individual is closely guarded. Should there be trouble within the pack (too many males, for example) the lowest ranked may be driven out.

When you get up and leave a house (assuming you are not a regular visitor, in which case the dog pays no particular attention to your activities), you are essentially being "cast out" by the top ranking member, or pack leader.

Therefore, the dog barks to make sure you leave and to let the pack leader know he has the dog's full support. Shades of "Get out and stay out, we all say so!" Not entirely flattering but understandable.

Small dogs or those with a tendency to nip may get a fast pinch in before you can turn around. Even though this is little more than a dog's interpretation of "Here's your hat, what's your hurry?", it is unacceptable and the owner should be made aware of the problem.

Most situations, other than those of out and out aggressive/vicious behaviour, need to be viewed from the dog's perspective to be properly understood and analyzed. This is not always as straightforward as it seems, and you may need input from a good trainer to help you figure out the best course of action.

Dogs, generally, follow the examples set by their owners. When you enter the territory of a dog and human pack, watch the behaviours and observe the guidelines. You'll find it very interesting. And it's safer for you if you know what's happening within the pack.