



OPINION

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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

(905) 878-2341

Fax: 878-4943

Classified: 875-3300

Ian Oliver Publisher

Neil Oliver Associate Publisher

Rob Kelly Editor

Karen Huisman Circulation Manager

Teri Casas Office Manager

Tim Coles Production Manager

Shaun Sauve Director of Advertising

Ted Lindsay Retail Sales Manager

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Experts are never wrong, eh?

After we have spent millions of dollars in an attempt to find out what went wrong with the Canadian blood supply, the very people responsible for running the program want the results kept a secret.

They are actually suing in order to keep conceal accountability. Is it any wonder that a survey this week indicated 97 per cent of Canadians have little or no faith in the ability of the Red Cross to supply safe blood products?

Are we finally beginning to doubt our over-paid government-financed experts?

Atlantic fishermen had been saying for years that the fish stocks were declining. 'Not to worry' said the so-called government experts, until faced with empty nets. The fishermen lost their livelihood. Did the same fate befall the politicians and senior bureaucrats who ignored the issue until too late?

Our schools give graduation diplomas to students who can't read or write. Our social services network continues to produce government-dependent dysfunctional families and individuals. Our parole boards drop child molesters into unsuspecting neighborhoods.

The experts in our legal system have decided that Karla Homolka can be released for day passes on the say-so of a prison warden. No jury, no jury and not even the politically appointed parole board need be consulted.

And what are some of the weighty concerns

View Point

with PATRICK KELLY



filling the minds of our gliberal federal government? Banning soft cheeses was big on their hit list this week.

Then there is that grave problem affecting all Canadians — homosexual rights. What's next? Homosexual history month in our schools?

One liberal deep thinker has decided we should label liquor bottles with warnings. If these clowns love labels so much why not stick some on the foreheads of pedophiles and rapists enjoying early release? Just asking.

I almost forgot the other big news. Due to federal boundary realignments, Halton-Peel MP Julian Reed says he will represent us after the next election. Is he going to get these problems straightened out? Apparently not. His pet project is to grow hemp.

Way to go Julian. That's getting your priorities straight. Will we see the promise of a bold new hemp industry in the next Red Book?

Daycare bonding no cause for alarm

A recent series of studies has created a storm of controversy about the role of child care in bringing up children. The data suggest that children in daycare form more secure attachments to their child care provider than they do to their mother.

Many fear that the basic, fundamental, sacred relationship in a child's life is becoming a thing of the past and consequences, for this generation of children, will be disastrous.

Not true. The results are in fact encouraging. There should be nothing more comforting to a parent who is working than to know that their child feels safe and secure. That secure attachment to a daycare provider leads to all kinds of good things down the road for the child, and that's what is really important.

What is attachment, and is it really important? The notion of attachment was developed in the 1950's to describe how babies become bonded to their primary caregiver, usually the mother. Babies who were securely attached found mom to be a safe home base from which to explore the environment. They were more confident and assured when mom was around, and when they were upset they would seek out mom as a source of comfort.

Insecure infants also seek out their mothers when they are upset, but they are less comforted by their mother. They also are less apt to explore.



Psychology in the '90s

with DR. ARNOLD RINCOVER

Attachment is an important concept because it predicts things about the future. Securely attached infants grow up to have more confidence and higher self-esteem, according to researcher Alan Sroufe at the University of Minnesota.

They also have lower rates of mental illness, enjoy successful relationships with peers through high school, and achieve more in school.

Attachment does not effect a child's ability, rather it affects confidence, attitude, perseverance, and therefore, success and achievement.

How do we know if the attachment is secure? When a child is in distress, a common measure of attachment is how hard you have to work to comfort the child. Mothers of securely attached children calm them down quickly, often by their mere appearance.

Clearly, a secure attachment is important. If a



Harris does the right thing

In an era of government cutbacks and downsizing, debate in the Ontario Legislature these days can sometimes become ear-piercing. For the government and opposition parties to agree on anything has become almost unthinkable.

But one cut announced by the Mike Harris government on April 10 drew no opposition complaints. And it was a cut that the general public, regardless of political ideology, loudly applauded. It had to do with trimming the compensation that MPPs receive.

For years, a festering sore point with voters has been the double standard between those who govern and those who are governed. Gold-plated pension plans and hidden tax-free allowances were perks not available to the average Ontarian.

All the tough talk by past governments about the need for belt-tightening had become a joke. As taxpayers kept pulling in their stomachs, politicians were busy loosening their own belts by a few notches.

parent needs to hold down a job to help make ends meet, or simply wants to pursue a career, that parent (and the rest of society) should be very comforted if the infant can achieve a secure attachment by some other means.

Consequently, the results of a study by Dr. Carollee Howes, at UCLA, should be cause for celebration.

In a series of studies, Dr. Howes found that the attachments children form with caregivers are remarkably similar to the attachment they form with their mother.

However, secure attachment only occurred with 50 percent of caregivers, compared to 70 percent of parents.

The lower rate probably reflects the lower motivation, commitment and quality of care with caregivers, according to Dr. Howes. Consequently, the major problem is not that too many caregivers are replacing mothers in forming these secure attachments, but rather that not enough of them are.

The implication, then, is that we need to develop social policies that either allow mothers to stay home or that require a high quality of daycare.

The problem lies in the drop in secure attachments during daycare (from 70 per cent to 50 per cent), not the fact that daycare providers can replace mothers in establishing that secure attachment.

Let's Talk Taxes



with PAUL PAGNUELO

Ontario's gold-plated pension plan had an estimated value of 45 per cent of pensionable earnings. Since MPPs contributed 10 per cent to the plan, that meant the province (taxpayers) picked up the remaining 35 per cent.

The plan provided a pension of five per cent or earnings for each year of service to a maximum of 75 per cent after 15 years of service.

A pretty rich deal when compared to the 2 per cent maximum accrual rate which the public is limited to under a registered pension plan. And to rub even a little more salt into the wound, a retiring MPP could start collecting when age and service add up to 55. That meant an MPP first elected at 25 could start feeding from the pension trough at the ripe old age of 40.

Some MPPs often pleaded poverty, pointing to their annual indemnity of \$42,218. What they would fail to mention were the extras like their tax-free allowance and committee bonus, which added up to \$16,060 (\$32,120 on a taxable equivalent basis). The bottom line was that after allowing for their indemnity, tax-free allowances and bonus, benefits, pensions and severance, an MPP's total compensation package was \$93,389 or \$98,739 before Bob Rae's social contract cut.

The legislation brought in by Finance Minister Ernie Eves kills the gold-plated pension plan and puts MPPs on a straight salary of \$78,007, with benefits of \$6,958, and an annual contribution of \$3,900 to an RRSP program. And until the deficit is eliminated, expected in five years time, the question of a raise is out.

Under the new scheme, the total compensation for MPPs will be \$88,865, or 10 per cent lower than they received in 1993, and 4.8 per cent less than they're collecting today. And it's considerably below the \$110,000 benchmark which a commission of compensation experts recommended last November.

One can only hope the message registers with the country's worst offenders — our MPs on Parliament Hill.

'Let's talk taxes' is provided by the Ontario Taxpayers Federation.