



COMMENT

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Where's your teen?

One of the Buffalo television stations used to announce that it was 11 p.m. and then ask its viewers if they knew where their children were. Some people in Milton obviously don't.

For the last several months your agent has had the illuminating opportunity to live facing Main Street downtown, and is regularly treated — as are others no doubt — to noise and behaviour well beyond any acceptable levels late at night.

Monday night of this week it was merely youths skateboarding up and down the sidewalk, noisily flipping their boards and fooling around. That's to be expected from kids; some would argue. Agreed. But not after midnight. Another group of youths was meandering about downtown at the same time.

Last Friday night young entrepreneurs started a piece of heavy equipment at a downtown construction site, according to police, and but for the intervention of an older citizen it may have merrily plowed into a vehicle or structure. Again, this was around midnight.

Not long before these episodes somebody pulled a smash and grab at a downtown jewelry store — a family business run by nice, hardworking people. That may not have been teenagers, but the law of averages points to it, since so many teens seem to wander around downtown late at night.

There are several letters in today's issue praising local teens for good things they do. We're certainly not condemning all kids, or even many kids. It is a small minority perpetrating vandalism and theft downtown on a given late evening.

So many people have gone to a great deal of trouble to make our downtown an attractive place for businesses and shoppers all day, only to have a handful of malcontents often prowling at night, trashing hard-earned property and making a nuisance of themselves. Please let's not blame the police, who can't be everywhere all the time.

Let's look to ourselves. Do you know where your teen is at midnight? Do you really know for sure? And if you don't, why not?

— Rob Kelly

Was it worth it?

In the settlement that has evolved between Milton Hydro and roughly two dozen disgruntled employees, it seems the company has maintained the upper hand — at least to the extent one side can be said to have won.

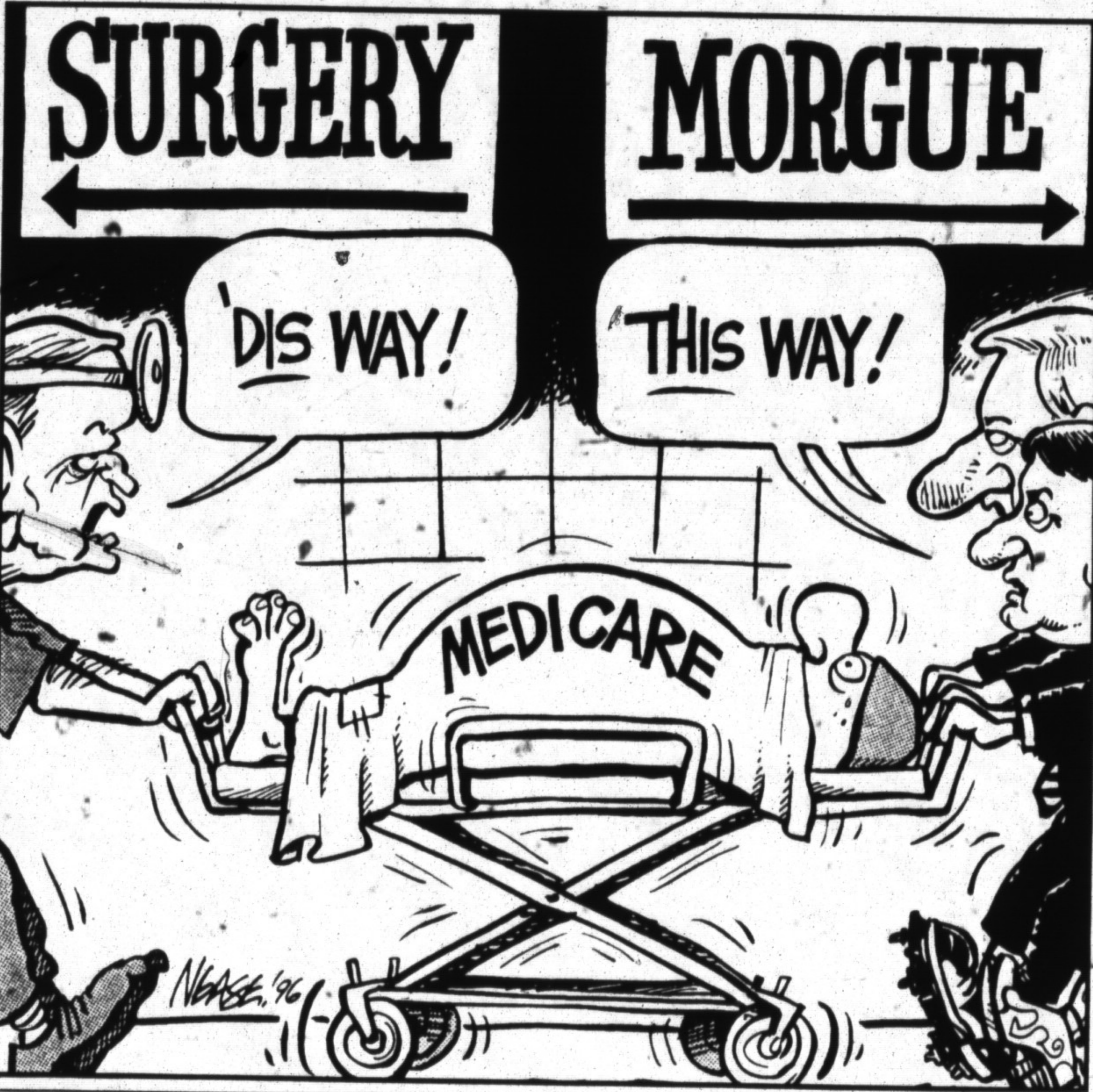
In the larger picture, morale will likely remain at low ebb among unionized local hydro employees for a long time to come. It won't be good for management nor employees. Thus it won't be good for Milton Hydro.

That having been said, however, the tactical, if not strategic victory seems to belong to management. The workers, essentially in a damage control posture regarding imminent layoffs, have only seen the date of dismissal for some of their colleagues pushed back to January — cold comfort indeed. On a purely financial front, the \$1,200 signing bonus for inking a new contract does not even begin to cover the lost wages from a bitter labour dispute that dragged on 10 weeks.

In the grim reckoning that is the 1990s for public employees, it seems a new equation of restraint must evolve. Milton Hydro provided a micro-economic example of that philosophy in practice. Management stubbornly held the line, and eventually management got most of what it wanted. For the workers, it was an expensive exercise. Perhaps it was for all-concerned emotionally.

But more than anyone it is the unionized employees who must ask themselves if this was all worth it, and whether they must re-think their approach to bargaining. Perhaps not now, when emotions still rise hotly, but soon.

— R.K.



Pages of the Past

One Year Ago

From the August 30, 1995 issue

• A serious rock climbing mishap at Kelso Conservation Area had Halton Region Conservation Authority (HRCA) officials calling upon the government for an enforceable set of climbing regulations. There were no government standards for the sport, making it impossible for the HRCA to police climbing activities on its lands.

• The United Way of Milton was getting set to kick off its 1995 fundraising campaign with a revamped, two-tiered golf tournament. The action, scheduled to take place at the Executive Fairways Golf Centre in Milton, included a mini-putt contest and a barbecue lunch.

• A Milton woman was witness to a spectacular fireball that streaked through the night sky the previous week. The Bell School Line resident watched the bright light for about 10 seconds as it crossed the sky heading toward Hamilton. Similar reports came from northern Ohio and Michigan, although scientists had yet to pinpoint any meteor impact.

20 Years Ago

From the September 1, 1976 issue

• A petition calling for a halt on the sale of the old Armstrong Arena was gaining momentum as it circulated among Milton residents. Organizers counted more than 500 signatures from citizens trying to save the Brown

Street rink.

• Expansion plans at Mohawk Raceway had the Ontario Jockey Club and Halton Region officials negotiating the terms of a cost sharing program designed to improve Guelph Line. The plan proposed widening Guelph Line to four lanes from Hwy. 401 to the north entrance of the race-track. The revisions were made to accommodate the higher volume expected with the OJC's 40,000-square-foot expansion on Mohawk's grandstand.

• Milton resident Bruce Hood was getting set to referee in the upcoming Canada Cup '76. Mr. Hood was to accompany Bill Friday of Hamilton as the only professional referees in the tournament.

50 Years Ago

From the August 29, 1946 issue

• Agriculture enthusiasts from across Canada were pleased to hear that the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto was going to re-open in mid-November. The fair had closed its doors in 1938 as a result of the war, with the fair site being used as a training centre for the armed forces. The re-opening of the Royal Winter Fair coincided with the re-opening of the International in Chicago, the other of North America's great fairs.

• More than 40 servicemen and their wives were honoured with a banquet at Limehouse Memorial Hall. Reverend W. Argyle Campbell was present to say grace, propose a toast to the king and dedicate the Roll of Honour.

Pud

by Steve Nease

