



OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Liberals stand on GST on books shows they're flip-flopping, again

Dear Editor:

The recent revelation by Finance Minister Paul Martin to Canadians that he has no intention of removing the GST from books because he needs the revenue is the latest example of flip-flop that this Liberal government is famous for.

While in opposition, the Liberals harangued the Conservatives for imposing a tax on reading, knowledge, and literacy. Then, during the last election campaign, Liberal candidates across the country promised to axe, scrap, and abolish the GST. The prime minister himself promised in 1993 to remove the GST on books but has instead increased it.

Now, Mr. Martin's goal is not only to keep the GST but to broaden the base to items previously excluded, including books, through his scheme to harmonize the GST with provincial sales taxes.

Paul Martin's announcement comes on the heel of a Statistics Canada survey which points out that too many Canadians are limited by poor reading skills. The finance minister not only fails to recognize the social and economic advantages of a literate population, he fails to give Canadians any hope of tax relief in the future.

Mr. Martin is pleading poverty for denying Canadians the \$140 million of their money that the federal government would forego if it dropped the GST on reading materials. There are a myriad of programs and expenditures the minister could cut if he was serious about giving Canadians a tax break on books.

He could start by scrapping the \$1 billion dollar buyout offered to the Atlantic premiers in exchange for their signatures on the GST harmonization deal. The finance minister could save taxpayers \$100 million by bringing MP pensions in line with federal civil service pension plans. He could also put an end to the profligacy of Sheila Copps, who has just spent over \$143 million on flags, propaganda and TV production.

I could go on but I am sure Canadians can find other examples of substantial savings. Canadians want affordable government and they want lower taxes. They can have both if their government has the guts to set priorities in spending.

Monte Solberg, M.P.
Deputy Finance Critic
Reform Party of Canada

Thanks to a great team

Dear Editor:

The arthritis campaign was a success. Thanks to zone chairs Helen Powers, Marjorie Powys, Linda Scherer, Madeline Kershaw, Marilyn Bahman, Jim Powers, public relations workers Barney Henderson, and David Turnbull, business division representatives Betty Porter, Bev Mehlenbacher and Jessie Hamilton, coin bottles and all the team captains and canvassers in town.

Arthritis is so prevalent in our world today and your efforts have made a great contribution. Thanks to one great team.

Audrea Lear-Costigan,
Arthritis Society campaign chair
Milton

Thanks for 20 years of misery

Dear Editor:

I read, with mounting ire and incredulity, the article in Friday's paper by Brad Reaume regarding the regional planning and public works committee's decision on the location of the access road through the Cox Tract Agreement forest. What are they thinking?

The lack of compassion and consideration by the planning committee for the plight of the residents of Town Line is astonishing. Because of this ruling these people will have to live for 20 years with a constant deluge of diesel fumes, high noise levels and excessive dust as a byproduct of co-existing with a major quarrying operation. It is deplorable.

Try to imagine two-storey vehicles loaded with large pieces of

aggregate, literally the size of a cargo van, working 24 hours a day, with one vehicle every three minutes just beyond your backyard fence.

If any planning committee members had visited the site of the proposed road and made themselves familiar with the noise of the Dufferin enterprise, they would realize the predicament of Town Line residents. If it was any of the committee members' backyard they would mount the barricades, but instead they approved two decades of unnecessary hardship and degradation of quality of life for more than thirty Milton residents.

There is a much more workable solution for an access road that will ease some of the inconvenience that will befall Town Line residents.

The Cox Tract is the second choice for Dufferin Aggregates, too. An access road through the existing forest is preferable to

both Dufferin Aggregates and Town Line residents. It is more economical for Dufferin and it moves traffic away from where people live and raise their families. It is a sensible option but the planning committee instead takes the option that is the least favourable for all parties involved.

The vetoed choice of access road would have caused the loss of some trees — not many but some.

So what? The area loses many trees in a strong escarpment wind storm. The loss is insignificant. It is a minor price to pay for the wellbeing and the quality of life that will be sacrificed over 20 years.

The planning committee should seriously consult with all parties, and investigate options before proceeding.

J. Paul Jarvis
Milton

Red Cross does great job

Dear Editor:

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Red Cross, their volunteer drivers and all the men and women who generously give their time and support.

For several months of ongoing eye surgeries, I was supported by these wonderful people and wish to thank them for their kindness.

My sincerest thanks go to the Red Cross. They really do a great job.

Alma Mac Intyre
Milton

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