Dear Editor,

The Globe and Mail, March 28, 2003, stated, "seniors get $450-million in tax credits to reimburse them for the education portion of their property taxes." As a new senior, my immediate response surprised me. It was visceral. Why did I feel so insulted and abused – this mixture of anger, sadness and alarm?

What is so disturbing about this tax credit?
1. It's the ungenerous view of seniors embedded in this policy. Do I really want a tax credit linked to a withdrawal of my support for public education, personified in my four precious grandchildren? How dare the government make that assumption?
2. There's the transparent ploy to buy me with the condescending statement, "The government wants to reward the years of contributions made by our seniors." I say, "Balderdash!" It represents nothing more than a ploy to buy votes.
3. There are principles involved, core values embedded in our belief systems with rich historical background. This credit is a symbolic erosion of societal obligations, and public, universal education is one of those core values cherished since Ryerson established it in the mid-1800s.
4. Is this a slippery slope, a precedent others will hang their hats on when they want to withdraw support from public education?
5. It is an insult against our intelligence. We seniors have accumulated enough wisdom from life to know that as a society one of our greatest obligations is to educate our children and youth. To do otherwise is folly on many fronts.

Consider tax credits for those seniors in need, but don't disenfranchise them from their responsibility to educate the new generation.

As a volunteer in my grandchildren's school libraries, I'm alarmed about the continuing evidence of cutbacks. I do not want to add to this. I gave the $200 tax credit we received three years ago to my granddaughter's school library to buy books for the Silver Birch reading program. But random inserts of money across the province is no solution.

Each reader knows people in the ranks of senior. Discuss this with them. Get their ideas in addition to your own. Share your ideas here or on the OSLA listserv. The Liberal platform does promise a reversal of this policy but it does have to be monitored, as do all of their promises that fill us with such hope.

Sya Van Geest
Senior, grandmother, member. ▮

Dear Editor,

Thanks so much for sending the complimentary copies of the Teaching Librarian magazine to us. The candidates of the York-Durham-Simcoe Co-Op Teacher Librarianship Part I AQ course have read several articles and are thoroughly impressed with the quality and timeliness of the articles. In fact, some are using the well-written articles as starting points for their action-based research assignments.

Keep up the great work.

Linda Girardo,
St. Agnes and St. Stephen Schools
York Catholic District School Board. ▮

Dear Editor,

Wow! The article and photos are terrific! Everybody wants copies - the administrators, the kids in the photos, the Home & School, our volunteers, my family, Cliff's family, etc., etc. We're famous! Way cool! Any chance for 20 copies? We'll gladly take whatever you can send. Thank you for providing me this opportunity; it has been an exciting experience both professionally and personally. I think more of us need to tell the world about what we do, because we are providing very important programs in our libraries and media centres. We work hard and we need to remind each other and the communities we serve that our jobs are crucial to the success of all students in schools. And you just helped that happen!

Celia Nichols
Teacher-Librarian
Prince Charles Public School
London, Ontario. ▮

Do you have an opinion?

Do you disagree with an article in this issue? Do you have a reaction to discussion on the OSLA listserv? Do you have an experience worth sharing? Something we can all learn from. These are your pages. You do not always have to write an entire article to share what is important to you. Send your ideas to: <bhenley@bfree.on.ca> or <tlmail@accessola.com> We would love to hear from you. ▮