

Being drunk is no excuse for killing on the highway

Last Thursday, a man was convicted of impaired driving in provincial court in Penetanguishene. Although it was a first offence, he was given a 90-day jail term.

The reason for the unusually stiff penalty was that the convicted man had been involved in an accident, and a 19-year-old girl who had been a passenger in his car was killed.

Sentencing on any offence is generally connected to the severity of the offence. The maximum penalty is reserved for the worst case possible, while the minimum is imposed when the infraction is a fairly minor version of the crime. For example, if a man steals 50 cents from an open drawer somewhere, he is guilty of theft under \$200. If another man steals \$199.99 from a little old lady, he is guilty of exactly the same offence. However, the sentence for the first man would probably be less severe than for the second.

In cases of impaired driving, the penalty is usually connected to the level of impairment of the convicted person. A person who had a reading of .280 usually gets a heavier sentence than a person who had a reading of .110. Both people have broken the law, but one has broken it to a greater degree than the other.

We feel that the results of an offence should not enter into the sentence handed out to the person convicted of the offence. The man who was convicted of impaired driving Thursday, should have received the same sentence as anyone else convicted of the same offence with the same breathalyzer reading.

The judge who passed the sentence has often told people who have appeared before him for impaired driving that it was only by the grace of God that they didn't kill someone. In other words the only difference between this particular impaired driver and many others was plain dumb luck, not skill, or degree of impairment, or lack of care. The degree of his crime, if one can talk of such a thing, was just the same as for anyone else who drives with the same amount of alcohol in his body.

The implication in this particular case is that driving in an impaired condition is not as serious a crime if the driver happens to be lucky as it is if he doesn't.

Having said that an impaired driver who kills someone should not be treated in a different manner than someone who does not, we feel he is guilty of a more serious crime. Anyone who voluntarily does something dangerous and stupid which directly contributes to the death of another person should be guilty of something, probably criminal negligence causing death. A person convicted of that offence should be treated very severely.

Driving while impaired is a serious offence and should be treated as such. Penalties should be severe, possibly more severe than they are now. But killing someone while driving in an impaired condition should not be considered just a worse case of impaired driving; it should be treated as a whole new crime, and anyone found guilty of it should be made to pay dearly for it.



This year's seed is next year's weed

Leave well enough alone

The whole issue of Gray Coach Lines, its imminent loss of business to Greyhound on two important routes, and the possible effects of such an occurrence on this area, is rather a hazy one.

All things being equal, we feel free enterprise is the best policy. Competition leads to efficiency, or so the theory goes, and the company most deserving of success succeeds, while less efficient companies perish. This type of system leads to better and cheaper goods and services, and generally benefits the consumer.

However, in the case of the Gray Coach problem, the situation is somewhat different. Gray Coach can be excused for being somewhat less than competitive on certain major runs, because profits from those runs must help subsidize less profitable runs in the less populated areas of the province.

Greyhound, on the other hand, can afford to offer great service, perhaps at slightly lower prices, on the well travelled routes. After all, it doesn't have to provide services to Penetanguishene, Elmvalle, Midland, Wasaga Beach or Collingwood.

The companies would be offering completely different services, yet the company

offering a province wide service, including both profitable and unprofitable routes, would be expected to compete with one which offered service only on those routes which actually pay well.

Conventional wisdom has it that one can't have one's cake and eat it too, and that seems to be exactly what the Ontario Highway Transport Board wants to do.

North Simcoe is completely without passenger rail service, and regularly scheduled air service is non-existent. If the Ontario government wants to continue to offer residents of North Simcoe, and other areas with similar problems, some sort of regularly scheduled public transit to larger centres, and we certainly hope it does, it should give serious consideration to leaving well enough alone in the bus industry.

If Gray Coach is forced to operate in a slightly less than competitive fashion in some areas in order to offer a needed service in others, it should hardly be asked to compete on the lucrative routes with Greyhound, which has no such millstone around its neck. It's rather like forcing a runner to wear 20 pound lead shoes on his feet, and then asking him to compete against another runner clad in track shoes.

Letters to the editor

ACFO expresses surprise

Mr. I.C. Harris
Supervisory Officer
99 Ferris Lane,
Barrie, Ontario.

Monsieur,
C'est avec surprise et indignation que nous avons lu votre commentaire dans le Penetanguishene Citizen du vendredi 30 septembre, 1977 au sujet des possibilités d'établir une école secondaire française dans notre région.

Il nous semble qu'un tel propos est en désaccord total avec votre position de chef au Conseil d'Éducation du comté de Simcoe chargé de la décision finale et surtout avec la position que vous occupez sur le Comité de Direction ainsi que sur le Comité

d'Évaluation Interne.

L'étude entreprise par le Conseil d'Éducation du comté de Simcoe nous semblait juste dans sa volonté de découvrir les besoins des francophones. Aux francophones désirant une école secondaire française, elle semblait le bon moyen de faire savoir aux autorités leur désir de voir leurs enfants recevoir une éducation dans leur langue. Maintenant, ce sentiment est remis en question. Et c'est avec regret, croyez-nous.

Bien à vous,
M. Jean Laberge, président
Aco Simcoe
par Georgette Marchildon
Vice-présidente

on the Internal committee.

The Simcoe County Board of Education was just in wanting to find out the needs of the francophones by initiating a study. To the francophones wishing a french secondary school it seemed a good way to let the authorities know their aspirations i.e. an education in the french language for their children. Now, everything will have to be reconsidered. And it's with regret.

Yours truly,
Mr. Jean Laberge, president
Aco Simcoe
by Georgette Marchildon
Vice-president

The Penetanguishene Citizen

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Possibilities endless for Canadian skin mag

by Shirley Whittington

I hear that Bob Guicione, publisher of Penthouse magazine, has been thinking about putting out a Canadian edition. (We already have a Canadian edition, but a lot of people think it's a rip-off because the raunchiest and most offensive pages have been torn out.)

But Guicione thinks that there are lots of Canadians who would enjoy having a nationally oriented copy of the wildly successful skin magazine, and he is equally sure that there are lots of Canadian writers and photo-journalists who are eager to contribute to such a Canadian edition.

Even now, he has a team of researchers wandering through our home and native land, doing a feasibility study.

I visited one of these researchers, J. Dudley Fruitwood, and asked him if he thought the prospects looked good for a Canadian Penthouse. "Oh Heavens, yes," he replied, and added that already he'd been deluged with material oriented to the land of the maple, if not the fig, leaf.

"My in-basket is simply bulging," he gushed, and he obligingly let me have a look at some of the material.

There was a fair amount of heavy stuff. This is a good thing since the men I know who

buy Penthouse swear that they do so because of the serious articles on baseball and nutrition that are sandwiched between the fleshier stuff. A well known Canadian writer had submitted "Act of God — An In-Depth look at the Canadian Fisheries Act," and underneath that bulky manuscript was "The Last Pike—a Study of Mercury Pollution in Inland Waters," by one P. Berton.

A photographer from Snowbound Manitoba had submitted a piece aimed at boot fetishists. It was a four colour spread of air-brushed snowmobile boots, lying singly or in pairs, on satin sheets.

A fashion writer from Oshawa had sent in a feature article on the clothes that turn Canadian women on—athletic jackets with numbers on the sleeves, striped blue and white pyjamas with drawstrings at the waist, and sunglasses with mirrors on the outside.

A regular feature of the US Penthouse is an advice column by that durable old tramp steamer, Xaviera Hollander. Already, there were pleas from Canadians, seeking counsel on physical matters. One particularly poignant one read: "Every time I go to the beach, I notice that a lot of the girls have little holes—kind of like dimples—in the middle of their stomachs. Does this mean the

girls are Jewish? I am wondering if these dimples are contagious, as I seem to have one too. Can I get a shot for this? Signed: Puzzled."

Penthouse readers are obsessed with making it with the opposite sex, and there was plenty of evidence in the pile of manuscripts to suggest that Canadian writers are aware of this. One article was entitled, "Seven ways to Drive Your Wife (Or Girlfriend) wild!" The ways were: Tell her her hair looks funny. Give her a tire jack for Christmas. Introduce her as your mother. Fall asleep when she's talking to you. Watch football a lot. Criticize her housekeeping. Tell her her meatloaf isn't a patch on your mother's.

Probably the most widely read and heavily controversial section of the US Penthouse is the Forum, where readers relate experiences with the opposite sex that are so bizarre that they are usually signed "Name Withheld."

A Forum contribution from Sock Harbour, New Brunswick, went as follows: My girlfriend and I had a rapturous evening last week that we would like to share with your readers. She came over and cooked me some pork hocks and cabbage. Then I went in and watched Front Page Challenge, while she cleaned up the mess in the kitchen. I have

colour TV, and this really added "zing" to the occasion. I really recommend this to other "swingers" who are looking for a "good time."

And there was another sad little piece called "A Rolling Stone Gathered My Ms." by a single father from Ottawa.

Even the ad agencies had sent in proofs for the first Canadian Penthouse. There was a flossy layout for sexy lingerie, highlighted by a photo of a buxom lass wearing the "Referendum Bra—naughty, but exciting. It separates, with no visible means of support."

I told Fruitwood I was impressed by the Canadian input, but I wondered if it would sell.

"Listen," he said, "Our circulation figures prove that people will buy trash, as long as there's a broad in the buff on the cover. Anyway—we have an ace in the hole. An institution that will give financial support to anything, as long as it's Canadian."

"You mean..." I faltered.

"Right!" said he. "The Canada Council. That, combined with tax concessions for Canadian publications means we're laughing. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have an appointment with my hair stylist. Now there's a guy who really knows how to pull the wool over a person's eyes."

Nega-Prod: it can solve your problems today!

by Bill Smiley

Some people, like me, believe in roiling with the punches, rather than sticking out our chins to show how many we can absorb. I have found that, in general, if I avoid trouble, trouble avoids me.

If I know that some pain in the arm has been trying to get me on the phone, I also know immediately that he or she wants me to do something that I don't want to do. Therefore, I take the phone off the hook and leave it off until the pain has found some other sucker.

Another invention of mine to stay out of trouble is patented as Nega-Prod. This is short for Negative Production. The theory is simple. The more you produce, the more problems you have, whether it is children, manufactured goods or farm products.

The more children you have, the more emotional and economic problems you create for yourself. The more goods you produce, the more you have to hustle to find customers and meet payrolls. The more farm stuff you raise, whether its beef or beans, the greater your chance of being caught in a glut on the market.

Our great national railways caught on to this years ago. When they had lots of passengers, they had lots of problems. People wanted comfort, cleanliness, decent

meals, and some assurance that they would get where they were going on time. There was much more money to be made, and fewer problems, by transporting wheat and lumber and cattle.

So the railways began treating people like cattle. Passenger trains became uncomfortable and dirty. Quality of the food dropped like a stone. And they never arrived on time.

Presto. End of problems. No more passengers. So the railways were able to cut off non-paying passenger lines, get rid of all those superfluous things like station agents and telegraphers and train conductors, and concentrate on taking from one point to another things that paid their way and didn't talk back: newsprint, coal, oil, wheat.

Perhaps this is the answer for our provincial governments, which are quickly and quietly building massive mountains of debt for future taxpayers.

Perhaps they should just stop building highways, and repairing those already in existence. We'd all be sore as hell for a while, but as the roads got worse and worse, most of us would stop driving our cars. The governments would save millions of dollars now spent on highways, and they could fire two-thirds of the highway cops.

I don't quite see how the governments could use Nega-Prod to get out of the liquor

business, which certainly produces plenty of problems. The booze trade is so profitable that asking government to abandon it would be like asking a millionaire to forsake his country estate for a run-down farm.

Perhaps if they had a Free Booze Day, once a week, every week, say on a Saturday, it would solve a number of problems. It would certainly reduce the surplus population. This, in turn, would cut down, drastically, the unemployment figures.

Should the provincial governments find that Nega-Prod is all I've suggested, some of it might spill over into the federal government, usually the last to catch on to what the country really needs.

Instead of the manna and honey flowing from Ottawa in the form of baby bonuses and pensions, we might get some terse manifestos:

"People who have more than one and a half children will be sent to jail for four years. Note: separate jails."

"Persons who plan to live past 65 and claim a pension will be subject to an open season each year, from October 1 to Thanksgiving Day. Shotgun and bicycle chains only."

"All veterans of all wars may claim participation by reason of insanity, and may apply to Ottawa for immediate euthenisation."

These might seem slightly Draconian measures, but they sure would put an end to a lot of our problems and troubles. Think of what they would do for such sinful activities as sex, growing old, and hanging around the Legion Hall, playing checkers.

But we must also think of the economic benefits. With a plug put into that river of paper money flowing from Ottawa, taxes would drop, inflation would vanish and undoubtedly, separatism would wither on the vine. People would be lined up six deep at the U.S. border, trying to get across, and they would solve, in one swell foop, our unemployment difficulties.

We could go back to being hewers of water and carriers of wood, which was our manifest destiny before the politicians got into the act. Fishermen or lumberjacks, in short, which most of the rest of the world thinks we are anyway.

Nega-Prod may seem a bit lofty and abstract at first glance, but it works. I know from personal experience. Every time I try to make something, or fix something, it costs me a lot of money, and I get into a lot of trouble.

So, I have a policy of never trying to fix something or make something. It's a lot less trouble to put up signs: "Beware of falling bricks; Not responsible for slivers from picnic table." And so on.