

A landmark decision

All of Penetanguishene was sleeping better after the Ministry of Education's proposal to move the students of ESPSS to MSS became irrelevant. There is no question that the Supreme Court's decision to expand Le Caron has avoided a great deal of conflict. As it was, the protest promised to go on forever and the animosity between the various education groups might have escalated to regrettable proportions.

Still, the Supreme Court's decision is going to be an historic one. Right now it may appear to be yet another piece in a large puzzle or another legal statement which is no more important than all those which preceded it.

But it is not. This has to be called a landmark decision. Many people are already saying that this could mean the ultimate creation of a separate French language school board, something which is currently being tested in Ottawa Carleton.

So whether you support the decision to expand Le Caron or not, it is most important that you realise what exactly is happening. This decision will influence the course of education in Ontario for decades to come. The fact that this is the case should be recognised and then analysed.

People are often too willing to accept things because problems are seemingly solved thereby. However, often new problems are created and this certainly cannot be a long-term solution. To embrace a plan that solves today's problems only to create tomorrow's is perhaps imprudent and reckless.

Let us hope that the Supreme Court's decision solves the education problems of Penetanguishene. But let us also understand that a landmark decision is just that: an indicator of how our society is evolving. If we approve of that evolution then let us applaud. If we do not approve then let us not sink our heads into the ground and pretend that A is not A.

How long does it take?: Kaasgard

Dear Editor:

On July 5, 1984, the Pauze "clean landfill site" was given a three-year extension of its life as a dumpsite for area waste. I found that to be a violation of the health and welfare of the residents of Perkinsfield and of Tiny Township. Therefore, I committed direct action at the site (re: civil disobedience, by chaining myself to the dump's gates) which caused the closing of the landfill site for 40 minutes. In all of the years of midnight dumping and illegal toxic waste handling, I was the only person to be fined or go to jail over the Pauze landfill issue. Is this the way the environment is going to get cleaned up, by jailing people who care the most?

The object of my action was to draw attention to the problem, which would cause Andrew Brandt, the then Ontario Minister of the Environment, to reconsider the deal that gave tens of thousands of dollars to three families near the dump in return for keeping it open to pollute and poison for three more years.

Mr. Brandt would not clean up the site. The Tories were removed from their 42 year reign over Ontario May 2, 1985. At that point, we

in the Green Party and various environmental groups celebrated. We anticipated some action on cleaning up the mess, from the Liberal-NDP accord government. But as you can see, one more election later still, with an overwhelming Liberal majority, hasn't cleaned up the "clean landfill site".

It is now three years and you've just found a local for this area's waste, Environment Minister Bradley.

People here have tried. There is enthusiastic support for the local recycling program. Why not begin organic waste recycling, with compost for farmers and methane gas production. Perhaps we could run the busses in Midland and the area with virtually free fuel.

Isn't it time the dump was cleaned up and the alternatives were given real consideration as opposed to new studies to renew the dump or you can expect a special direct action visit from us in the Green Party.

Yours for a Clean Environment,
Steven Kaasgaard
Green Party Member
Tiny Township

School says thanks for covering event

Dear Editor:

Thank you very much for finding time during your busy schedule to cover our annual Thanksgiving dinner at Victoria Harbour Public School on Friday, October 9.

We know that our students and parents worked diligently towards this event and they

will enjoy reading your stories in the Midland Times in the future.

Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,
Staff and students at Victoria Harbour Public School

As I see it

by David Krayden

Individual Rights or Collective wrongs: the choice is ours

You hear a lot about rights today. It seems that everyone has rights of some kind or another. But actually, fewer and fewer people possess rights. Effectively, individuals are losing their rights while collectives are gaining rights.

But you really can't legitimately gain a right. These rights which collectives take are not rights but wrongs. Collectives are not so much claiming an inalienable inheritance as robbing the family store.

We are not talking about rights any more. We are talking about special privileges.

Liberal democracies have traditionally guaranteed the freedom and dignity of the individual; this means that you and I have a right to life, liberty and property. In other words, the state restrains itself from abusing the powers which voters have endowed upon it.

But what happens when conglomerates of individuals demand privileges which other individuals do not possess? In other words, what happens when collective rights—special rights for special—challenge the primacy of individual rights?

Chaos is the inevitable result. The ultimate end of any rights is the net effect. There is no way that collective rights can expand

without the concomitant dissipation of individual rights. There are only a certain amount of rights available.

If you expect a right to not have your home looted by hoodlums then you cannot expect an equal right to be a hoodlum. One right will cancel out another, resulting in anarchy. You both have rights so no one has rights.

The increase in collective rights can only mean the inevitable disintegration of individual rights. Technically speaking, groups do not exist. They do not think, talk or act autonomously; these responses are generated by individuals within the group hierarchy.

How do you punish a group? How can a group truly accept responsibility for its actions?

So now when a group wants a special status, you the individual will have to compensate for that special privilege. The next time some group demands that the government recognize their special status, ask yourself by whose right they do so. Ask yourself by whose right do they put a gun to your head and demand that you pay for their whims.

By whose right do the thugs and hoodlums demand that you relinquish your liberty and

understand their demands for special privileges? By whose right are your taxes raised to fulfill the lunatic desires of any collective who screams the demands of the worthless.

The fact that they claim a host of special privileges simply because we have allowed them to. There are no prisoner's rights, homosexual rights or rights for any group which wants to be treated differently from other people in society. Only individuals are protected under the law to the extent that their rights do not infringe on anyone else's rights.

I often wonder just what other group is going to demand new rights next. Naturally this group will require our money to fulfill their expectations. Just as surely, if we balk at this suggestion, we will be called Fascists, bigots, reactionaries, dinosaurs or whatever other Leftist smears are popular at the moment. We will be made to feel guilty for our legitimate rights and forced to accept the idiocy of their claims.

This is precisely why collective rights have ridden roughshod over individual rights for so long. People have been made to feel guilty for groups which cry for more. The people demanding collective rights/special

privileges do not want to compete as individuals; they don't want equality. What they want is a general recognition of their self-assumed importance. And they want you and I to pay for that acceptance.

Governments will always throw money in their direction. Governments will never comprehend that there is not a limitless pool of rights to fill the welfare cup. Someone has to pay; someone has to be made a sacrifice for group claims. You are not free when you are forced to pay for someone else's unwarranted freedom.

As soon as the state recognizes the ascendancy of the group over the individual, it will ultimately trample over all liberty in the name of the public good. Your life, liberty and property will be at the mercy of the feverish demands of rabid groups who snatch up little bits and pieces of privilege.

When that happens, the advocates of group rights will have realized their grand ambition. As the groups do battle for more "rights" our society will resemble the lunacy of competing tribes of savages. And the tribe with the biggest club will receive the greatest privilege.

Nothing could be more wrong than collective rights.

Letters

The Penetanguishene Citizen welcomes Letters to the Editor. They must be legible, signed (by hand), and carry the writer's address and telephone number for verification. Pen names are not allowed and anonymous letters will not be published. Letters published by this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinion of this newspaper, its publisher or editor.

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