



Real-life scenario is here

By Lynda Nykor

A small, albeit front-page item in last week's Liberal sent me to my typewriter to dash off a letter to my favorite humorist. Dear Mr. Jack; We always hear about our "serious" writers struggling to make a definitive statement about the Canadian identity. In fact, in these parts we quite often hear about them in proportion to how many taboo words they used to do it. Well, I'd just like you to know I think you do a first-rate job of giving literary legitimacy to the Canadian character. Does it strike you as funny (strange) that a country that's supposed to be bland at the best of times, grim at the worst, is often best defined by our funny (ha, ha) artists?

Funny Canucks

I mean, there was Leacock (admittedly with a grim twist to most of his humor). And look at W. O. Mitchell. Never mind his writing — he's a funny man any time. Have you ever heard him talk about cultivating orchids naked in the bathtub. Most amusing. I once heard a very funny piece on the CBC by a man talking about Canadians in New York.

His description of these expatriates clustering in a bar to drink rye and ginger ale and adding an "ay?" to the end of every remark, had Canadians down pat.

And then there's you, Donald Jack, and your Bartholomew Bandy.

I first encountered horse-faced super-WASP Bart when I was asked to do a review of "Three Cheers For Me" for the London Free Press.

Since this was the third volume of "The Bandy Papers" I decided to read volumes one and two first.

Laugh epidemic

I laughed hysterically. My husband, intrigued, starting on volume one when I finished it, and he laughed hysterically. He took the books to work and everyone there got into the act.

For days, all over this staid government office, pin-striped civil servants were wont to give out with snickers and guffaws.

We took one to my brother in hospital. Maybe you should include a warning about danger to health with your books, because he loosened his stitches laughing hysterically.

Anyway, my reason for writing boils down to this: I can't wait any longer for another B.B. book.

I thought it might help if people (maybe we could make it a national campaign!) sent you ideas.

Then you could just keep writing and not have to stop and think of more outrageous situations for Bart to get in and out of.

And right here in Richmond Hill we've got a real-life scenario that's tailor-made for him.

Local scenario

It seems a man by the name of Frank Tucker got so mad at planes from a nearby airport he decided to do something about it.

Police received complaints about him shining a light at planes and playing a tape of machine gun fire.

Now that isn't the safest way to lodge a protest, and it probably unduly rattled the pilots.

But I can just imagine Bart's reaction!

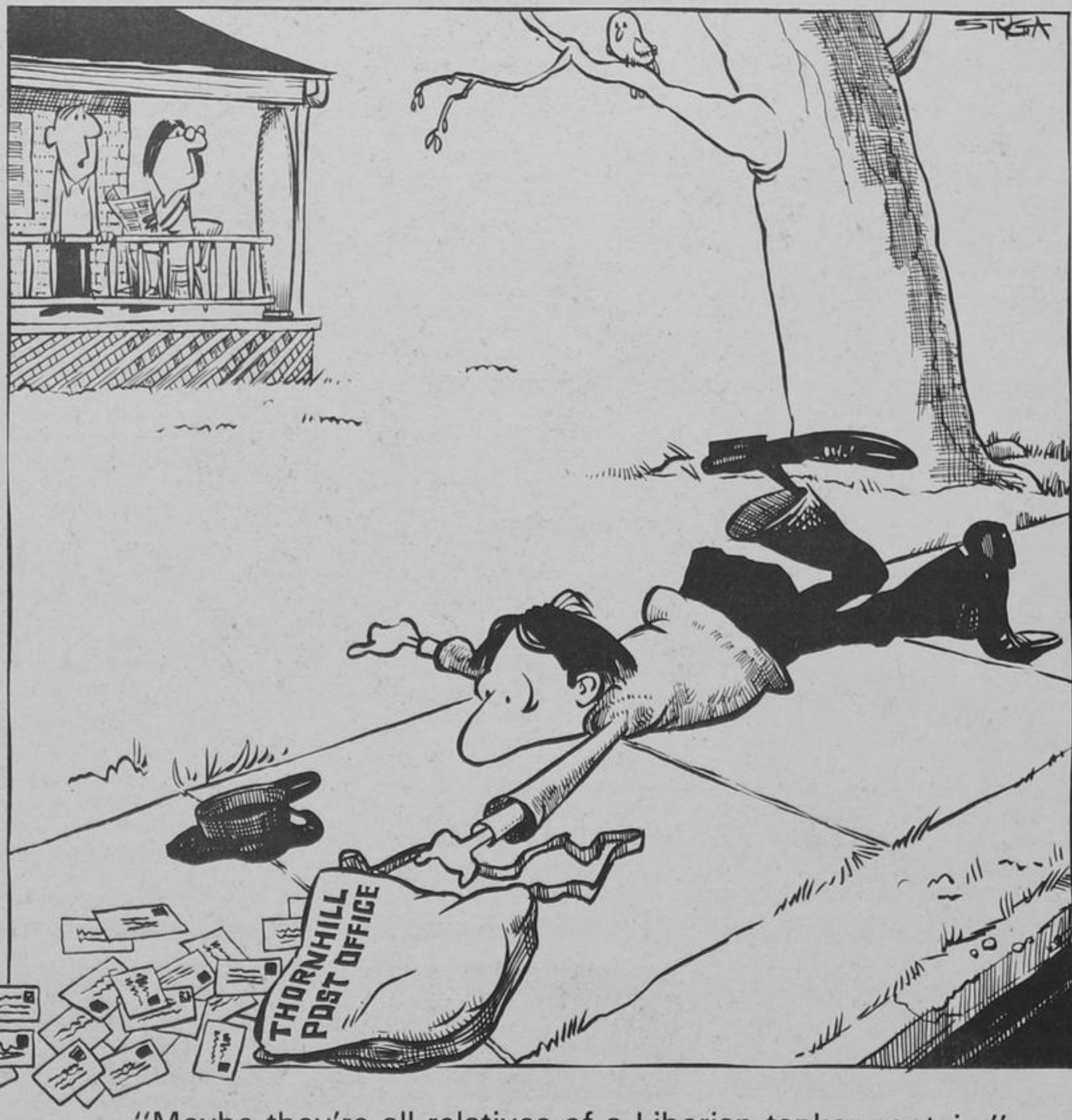
Would he end up suspended by one wing from the control tower, innocently flinging over one shoulder his fox fur neckpiece with the beady eyes and little paws?

Would he fight back, and pelt Tucker from 500 feet with ripe plums?

I know you could do something with this tidbit that would have all of us laughing hysterically once again.

In closing, I just want to say, for all the hours of pleasure Bart has already given us — 'm'kew.

Yours truly, A devoted reader.



"Maybe they're all relatives of a Liberian tanker captain."

Top vote issue

The housing cost emergency should be the top southern York Region issue among the several important local issues to be dealt with in candidate debate here before the June 9 provincial election.

Next in importance should be the existing disastrous lack of Toronto perimeter green belt space. The candidates should show what they are going to do about this problem and also about local neighborhood green space shortages.

The candidates should clearly state their position on the question of whether or not school costs have run away on the taxpayers, as many people allege. What is to be done about wage negotiations with such organized public service groups as teachers and police?

The other major question is whether or not the long tenure of the Progressive Conservative Party in power has been good for this area,

and whether or not the PCs have maintained a high enough standard in government.

Cheap privately-owned housing is the leading issue because the housing cost crisis has been allowed to grow for more than a decade without being stopped. Action has been patchwork and tentative. The province appears mainly responsible, but hasn't provided the answer or answers.

It looks like the province's main failure has been in not stopping the municipalities from using bad and probably illegal planning tricks to prevent construction of economical housing for the middle income majority.

As the election campaign rolls into gear this week, our York North and York Centre constituency candidates should clearly answer these questions.



interpreting the news

By Larry Johnston

A cute young Thornhill high school student asked Darcy McKeough the other night if he knew how many millions of dollars per day it cost to pay the interest on the provincial debt.

"I'm glad I came," said McKeough. He launched into an explanation of how the provincial debt really was not that much. Only so many hundred dollars for each man, woman and child in the province.

With the tremendous growth the province has undergone in the last few years, no one could expect the taxpayers to pay for that growth all at once.

He wished the mortgage on his house would work out to so little.

When the York North mini-cabinet meeting was over, a man in a blue pinstripe more immaculate than McKeough's congratulated the girl on her query and asked her if she understood the answer.

The man went into a long explanation

indicating he was not the least bit satisfied.

He might have mentioned that if the government had not built so many institutions in its first 30 or more years in office, it could use some of the millions going for interest payments now to provide jobs for some of the young people who went to those institutions.

I remember

I can remember Tom Wells, now minister of education, speaking at the University of Toronto in 1966 about the important investment in the future that was involved in the education of the young.

It seems like a forlorn hope now. All they did was to delay the entry of a generation of young people into the labour force.

Back to the meeting. If John Rhodes can build houses as fast as he can deliver one liners, he will be a great success.

He called Margaret Scrivener Margaret Birch by mistake. "Well I could have said Margaret Trudeau," Laughter. "What makes you think she isn't here," that one nearly brought down the house.

Clear winner

A reporter bet the first question would be on the Blue Jays and beer. He was the one clear winner of the evening. "Why don't you enforce the law on people who smuggle booze into the ball park?"

Consumer and commercial affairs minister Sydney Handleman was ready for the pitch.

The law was being enforced; over 200 arrests had been made for drinking offences at Blue Jay games.

There was actually a count being made of empty beer cans left behind by the crowd. There were 20 after a game attended by 21,000, not bad the minister thought.

(Baseball has a well-earned reputation for attracting trivia freaks. The government has clearly outdone itself to welcome the major leagues to Ontario.)

The rest of the answers left half the audience dissatisfied and half bored. A transplanted northerner asked Leo Bernier to explain what the new ministry of northern affairs would do.

Was it significant that while Bernier was answering, McKeough was talking to someone else?

The ministers were asked to stand up to signify their loyalty for the free enterprise system and all 14 of them did.

None of them could provide satisfactory answers to a supporter of the Annsorveldt School in Holland Marsh.

He wanted to know why public money should not be provided for private schools. People like himself didn't believe in what the public schools taught but had to support them anyway.

Another man couldn't think of a

better example of free enterprise than a private school.

Vaughan interchange

Jim Snow, minister of transportation and communication, couldn't satisfy former Vaughan councillor Jack Gilbert on why the government would not build a \$10 million interchange at Highway 7 and Islington Avenue. The meeting broke up. The ministers who had marched in behind a piper, fizzled out. The crowd went to the bar or went home, ignoring the model of the new \$10 million courthouse the province is building in Newmarket.

Except for McKeough who was surrounded by people at the front for almost another hour, including Regional Chairman Garfield Wright.

The only bit I managed to overhear was McKeough saying he did know where the Woodbridge Legion was.

There is a man who knows what in the province are its truly significant institutions.



parliament hill

By MP Sinclair Stevens (PC—York Simcoe)

It has been said justice delayed is justice denied.

Nowhere is that more evident than with our tariff board in Ottawa.

The board is structured to hear appeals from customs and excise rulings made by the department of national revenue. It is to conduct studies, enquiries, and to report on the customs' tariff structure as directed by the minister of finance.

Friday, tariff board officials appeared before the parliamentary standing committee on finance, trade and economic affairs. Their testimony reminded you of something out of Dickens.

It appears, for example, that on Oct. 22, 1971, Edgar J. Benson, then minister of finance, requested the board to report on the tariff position affecting pleasure boat manufacturers in Canada.

Two finance ministers later, the report was tabled in the spring of 1976.

Retired or dead?

In the meantime, some board members had retired, others had died, and undoubtedly many in the small boat industry had been forced out of business.

On March 2 this year, a reference to the tariff board of particular interest to the market gardeners in our area — especially in the Holland Marsh — as it dealt with the fresh fruit and vegetable industry in Canada, was reported upon.

Hearing this and as the report was available 29 days before the last budget, I asked the chairman of the board, Miss P. A. McDougall, if she had checked to see if any of their board's recommendations had been followed by the minister of finance in his budget of March 31.

Miss McDougall replied that no, the minister had not received a copy of the

report by the time he brought in his budget.

29-day messenger

I said I knew the messenger service was not too speedy in Ottawa, but I felt 29 days should be ample time for the minister to have picked up his copy of the board's report on this important industry.

Miss McDougall said the time delay was due to the fact the report could not be printed quickly.

Consequently, it was not available for circulation until April.

So if the board's report on the fruit and vegetable industry was not available in time to be dealt with in the March 31 budget, we then asked if the board's pleasure boat recommendations had been followed in either Mr. Macdonald's budget of May, 1976 or in his current budget.

Miss McDougall said curtly, "No".

Years for report

A report requested many years ago on computers and data processing in Canada is now to be tabled this week.

I spoke to a senior representative of one of Canada's larger multi-national computer companies Friday and told him it was anticipated the report would be coming down within a few days.

He said, "Is that right? You know I had forgotten that matter. It must be over five years since I testified in

Ottawa." "Many of the people are dead now I guess, who were involved at the time and certainly there is little similarity to our problems today compared to our problems then", he said.

Ludicrous process

In a fast moving industry such as the computer field, it is ludicrous to have such a slow moving, ponderous review process as we have in the tariff board.

Currently, the main problem with the computer industry is that on average there is a 10 per cent tariff on computer equipment, yet there is no computer manufacturing in Canada to be protected.

The net result is Canadian users pay more for their equipment compared to their counterparts in other countries which in turn contributes to our lack of competitiveness when we deal in the international market place.

It is strange the tariff board could not have arrived at a decision on this matter years ago, rather than to allow the matter to drift with resultant indecision for those active in the field.

Fast on one thing

The tariff board does seem to be sharp in one thing however, and that is they know how to ask for a wage and salary hike.

This year they are requesting an increase of approximately 30 per cent

over last year, although the size of their authorized staff is not anticipated to increase.

Over-all, their 1978 estimate for expenditures is up 35 per cent. The total expense to be borne by the taxpayers of Canada for their staff of 39, including secretaries, office boys

and what have you, will be over \$35,000 "per" employee in the current fiscal year.

That is certainly rich for a body that takes years to complete its reports and which reports anyway, when completed, are ignored by the minister of finance.

Letters

Thornhill terror?

Dear editor:

When my car was damaged in a vandalism spree the night of April 1, I assumed the culprits would never be caught.

Yet, within three weeks York Regional Police made arrests.

I was astounded when someone came up to me the day after the arrests were publicized and said, "You know, my son knew who did it, but didn't want to report the vandalism for fear of getting involved."

What could I say? I feel sure a lot of people knew the names of these vandals but didn't want to get involved.

It makes me angry even though I understand it in a way. The word informer "is" unpleasant.

Yet fear of this term might have allowed the people who wrecked my car to walk around free. I resent that.



yesterdays

by mary dawson

Hill believe it or not

In the Lions' edition of The Liberal published on April 6, 1939, Wick Trench, a member of the Trench carriage works family, who spent his life in the municipality, asked:

Do you know?

That our village once contained two flourishing carriage factories, one of which stood on the front of what is Mr. T. Taylor's lawn (Marshall Funeral Home) and was owned by the Wright Brothers. It was managed for years by Ashford Wright.

The other stood at Yonge Street and Lorne Avenue. It was founded and conducted by William Trench (the writer's father) who was succeeded by Thomas Trench (the writer's brother).

The latter, who served several years as the village's reeve, converted the

carriage works buildings into stores and apartments, when motor vehicles made the wagons and carriages obsolete.

2 mill ponds

That there used to be two mill ponds west of the village. The one on Vaughan Road supplied power to a saw mill which later became a foundry and a cider mill.

The other (which still exists) on Mill Street, furnished power to a fanning mill factory. This stood about where the pumping station now is (the parks building on the south side of Mill Street).

A sash and door factory and saw mill stood at the western end of Richmond Street.

That the Anglican Church is the oldest church building in the village.

That a frame Presbyterian Church (the first in the settlement) stood immediately behind the present brick edifice.

That the first Methodist Church stood on the property now occupied by Brathwaite's Hardware (Plumbing Mart).

That a frame Catholic Church stood on Mill Street.

That the United and Presbyterian Churches and the steeple on the Anglican Church were all erected in 1880.

That the old fairgrounds comprising two acres of land, lay along Arnold Street from the western limits of the

public school grounds, and that the first skating rink stood on the eastern end of it.

That the village post office, a frame building, whose need of a coat of paint was hidden by a luxurious growth of Virginia creeper, stood about halfway between the present McConaghy school and the Greenholme apartments. Matthew Teffy was for years the postmaster and the village clerk.

That the school population (public and high) was housed at one time in four separate buildings, which stood in a row from east to west on the present McConaghy school site. The frame building, second one back, was once a grammar school.

The old high school, destroyed by fire, cost \$2,700. This was paid out of

taxes in one year, bringing the village levy to 19 mills. The next year, the mill rate dropped to six mills.

1853 Hill band

That the Richmond Hill Village Band was organized in 1853. Each person taking out an instrument had to sign an agreement to return it in good condition or pay its value. Alex Hume, the village's second clerk-treasurer, was bandmaster for 15 years.

That a public library was organized in Richmond Hill as a joint stock company in 1852. The librarian was paid one pound 10 shillings annually. The stock of books numbered 367. Library service has been continuous in the Hill since that time.

letters...

Letters to the editor are welcome and should be addressed to The Editor, The Liberal, PO Box 390, Richmond Hill, Ont., L4C 4Y6. The writer's full name and address must be included, and telephone number if it is unlisted. Unsigned letters cannot be considered for publication. The Liberal reserves the right to edit all contributions.