

Editorial Page

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Like it or not, seat belts do save lives

During the coming month, if you get stuck with a \$53 fine for not wearing a seat belt, don't be surprised.

All Ontario police forces will be cracking down and increasing the seat belt enforcement law. While some people may consider this a nuisance, the benefits far outweigh the trouble of wearing a seat belt.

The surrounding areas may be small towns and as a result many people think there's a small chance of being involved in an accident. But considering Highway 17 runs through these towns, and the amount of traffic on the road, especially transport trucks, isn't it worth the extra second it takes to buckle up?

And it's a fact that most accidents - three out of four - happen within 40 km of home, so why take a chance?

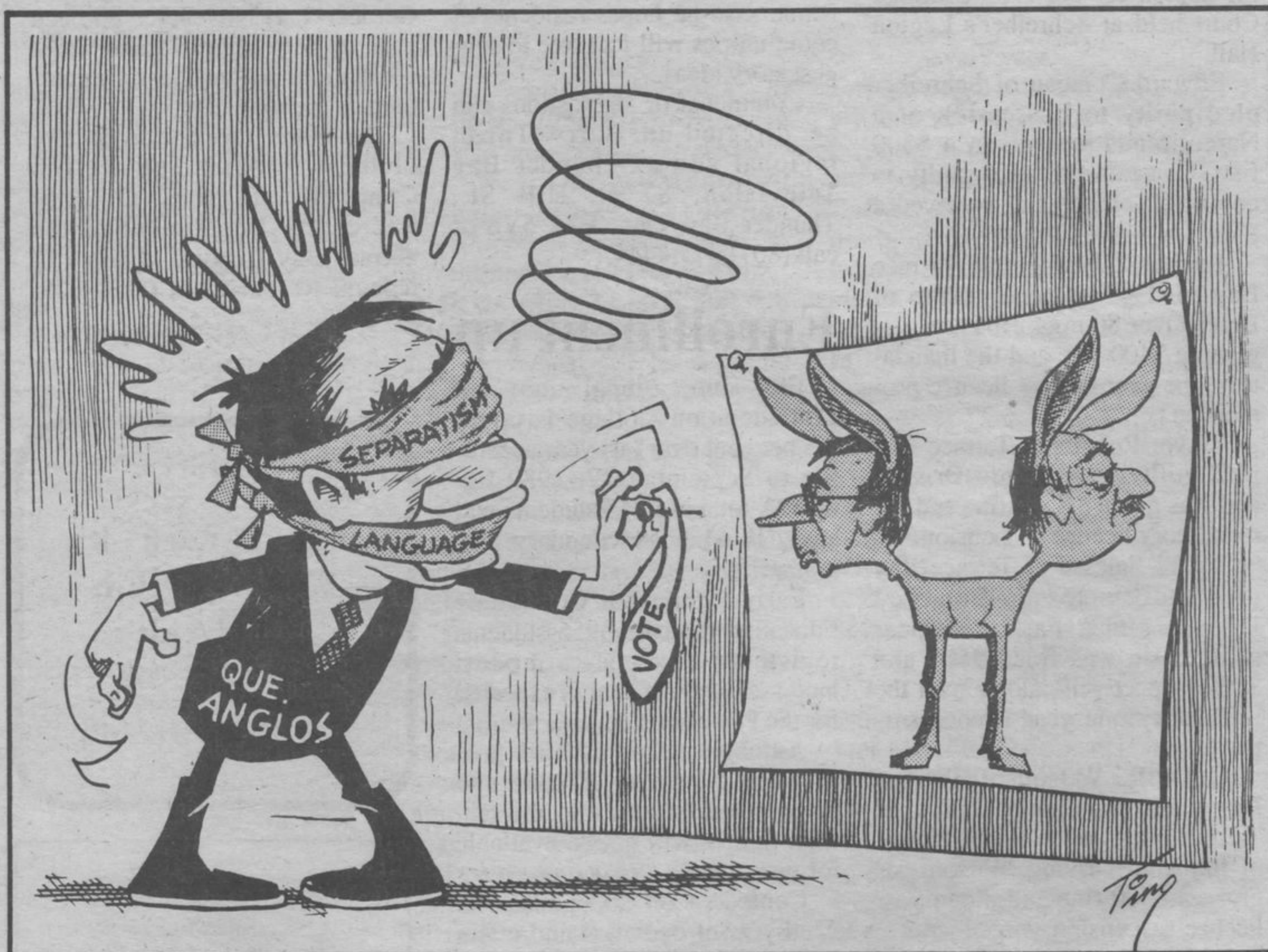
If you're going to wear your seat belt do it right. Although it may be a little bit more uncomfortable to have a snug belt across your shoulder it's a lot more uncomfortable to be laid up in the hospital with injuries that a properly worn seat belt may have prevented.

Even though your seat belt may be on, if it's not properly worn, the police can and will lay charges resulting in a \$53 fine.

And an improperly worn seat belt could cause injuries that a properly worn belt would have prevented. Make sure the shoulder strap is snug, the waist belt is worn low (down by the thighs instead of across the abdomen), and the shoulder strap is worn over and not under the arm.

Seat belts weren't invented to make people uncomfortable. They were developed to save lives. And a seat belt law wasn't enacted to impose the government's will upon the people, it was passed to help keep them alive.

So buckle up. Seat belts DO save lives.



Teacher's president confused by P.M.

Earlier this fall, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney made national headlines with a comment that Canadian education was failing to keep pace with technological needs. That prompted Jim Head, president of the 40,000-member

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, to respond on behalf of teachers across the country.

These were his comments to the prime minister.

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The News welcomes your letters to the editor. Feel free to express comments, opinions, appreciation, or debate anything of public interest. Write to:

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So we may verify authorship, please sign your letters and include your phone number.

Is modern life turning us into zombies?

Oh don't the days seem lank and long

When all goes right and nothing goes wrong

And isn't your life extremely flat

With nothing whatever to grumble at!

Thus the song and dance duet of Gilbert and Sullivan made the case against boredom in an operetta called Princess Ida a century and five years ago. They were right, of course. Life would be exceeding tedious if it was perfect, smooth and featureless as a cue ball - but that doesn't make bores or boredom any easier to stomach.

And it may be my imagination or just creeping senility, but it seems to me there are more boring things around than when I was a tadpole. The Royal Family is boring. All TV is boring. Most movies (and especially the over-hyped ones like Batman) are boring.

And then of course there's politics.

You kids in the audience will have trouble believing this, but

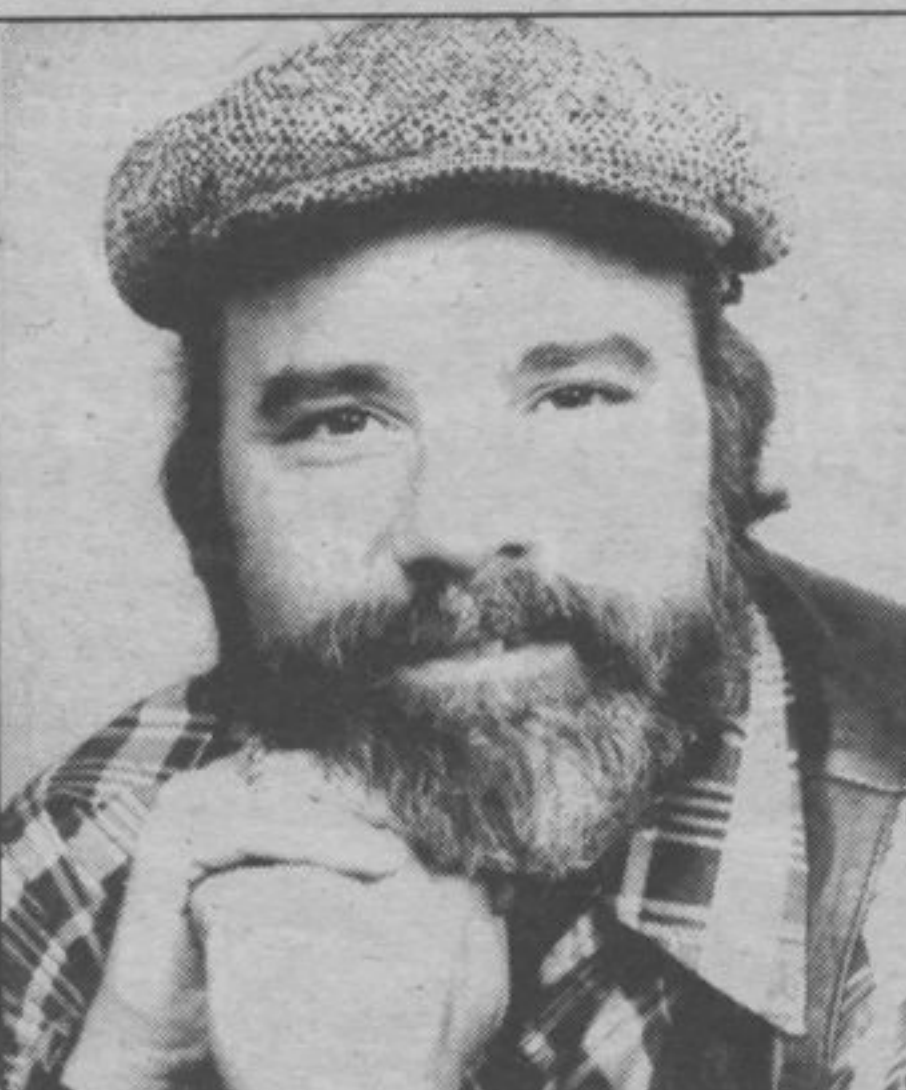
there was once such a concept as an exciting politician. They came in all stripes-- Tommy Douglas, John Diefenbaker, Stephen Lewis, Pierre Trudeau. Today? We're stuck with bloodless automatons like Joe Clark and Michael Wilson, while we listen to the dial tone drone of Mulroney and the staccato teletype delivery of John Turner. These guys transform the concept of an exciting politician into an oxymoron.

I could go on and on but that would just be well, boring. Besides, I don't have to. Alan Caruba has already done it for me.

Caruba is a 51-year-old New Jersey bachelor who also happens to be founder and chief executive of The Boring Institute. The enterprise is dedicated to pinpointing, exposing and then harpooning the deadly features of modern life that Caruba says are turning us all into zombies.

Each year Caruba loads his elephant gun and goes hunting the not-nearly-elusive-enough elements of tedium around us.

In March, he announces his Most Boring Films of The Year Awards. In September, his Institute gives the world it's Fearless Forecasts of TV Flops and in December it's the grand finale--Most Boring Celebrities of the Year-- Hollywood hams,



Arthur Black

Wall Street Wannabes and talk show couch lizards who have received what Caruba calls "massive media over exposure".

Oh yes, and the Boring Institute has set aside an entire month for those dog days of summer when nothing happens

and everyone's too hot to care. July is officially Anti-Boredom Month on the Boring Institute calendar.

That's the thing about Caruba -- he doesn't just whine and sneer about boredom, he frets about it as well. "Boredom is epidemic" he says, and he's deeply concerned that it's having profound effects on young people whose lives, Caruba says, are being warped by boredom.

Caruba spends all his spare time on the lookout for celebrities who have overstayed their welcome. Past winners? Doctor Ruth Westheimer won the uncoveted Most Boring Celebrity Award a few years back. This year the dishonour went to the ubiquitous Bill Cosby. As for the movies, Eddie Murphy's sewer-mouthed celluloid efforts won him the Boring Institutes Most Boring Film Awards.

You don't have to be a tedious human to make it in Carubas Hall of Infamy; he pillories inanimate objects too. Self-help books are in there. So is any on-the-spot news hankie-

twister about the Exxon Valdez.

But there's one inanimate object that's conspicuously absent. It's a large, placid piece of real estate directly to the north of The Institute's New Jersey headquarters.

Canada. How come Canada isn't mentioned? Heck, the British and American press never tire of telling us how bland and unexciting Canada is. Are we so boring that the Boring Institute hasn't noticed us? Nope. Caruba likes Canada. In fact he goes so far as to praise -- hold on to your earmuffs, folks -- Toronto. "An exciting city" he told me over the phone.

Oh dear. Alan Caruba has a blind spot. It's a wonderful selfless thing that Caruba's doing, but it's not worth squat if it lacks integrity.

I've got it.

I know just what to send Alan Caruba to make him see the unexciting truth about Toronto.

A pair of tickets to the next Leaf home game.