

Submarine Mike - He's my man

In the tedious throes of a dispassionate, provincial election which nobody wants and nobody cares about except those pesky little hecklers who pop up, screaming and kicking every time Premier Peterson bites into another hot dog - the quintessential questions begs asking: "What makes a great politician?"

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha - okay so I tried to slip the ol' rhetorical question past you, the one that requires no answer, has no answer and since the mid-60's has no point of reference.

Rephrased: "How can we get people into positions of power who won't rip us off, sell us out and don't respond to domestic crisis by taking their families and entourage on expensive but urgent fact-finding missions to

William J. Thomas

All The World's A Circus

countries where they still eat their food with sticks?"

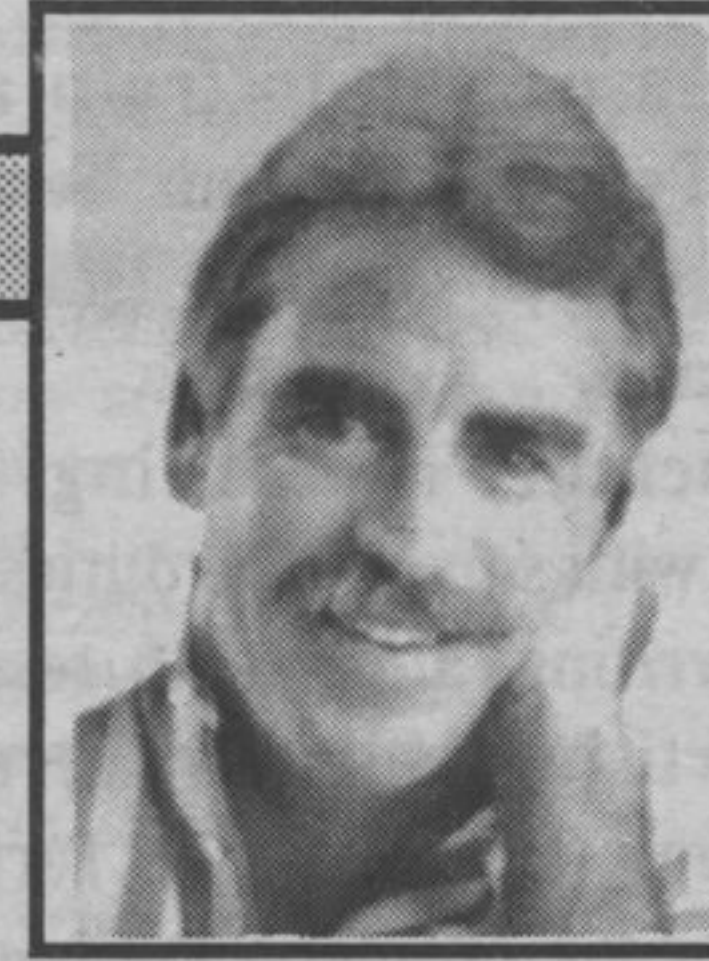
I was discussing this very issue with my buddy Alan Spenser at *Scuttlebutt's Bar & The John's Downstairs* the other day as Argentina defeated Italy on the big screen's World Cup.

That was the game in which Argentina beat Italy resulting in a clash of patriotic fans in the St. Clair area of Toronto in which newspaper reports described Italians and Argentinians hurling pieces of watermelon at each other as well as insults highlighting each other's sexual inadequacies.

Presumably the Argentinians were yelling "Hey you guys sleep with your mothers!" and the Italians were yelling back: "Yeah? Prove it!" They're not great hecklers, the Italians.

So Alan asked me what I thought of Mike and I said, like thousands and thousands of eligible voters who weren't watching soccer: "Mike who?"

And Alan said "Submarine Mike" and I said: "Oh, that Mike, the one that could wolf down four submarine sandwiches in under 12 minutes in the back seat of a car on Chippewa Street in Buffalo in front of the *Super Sub Shop*."



And Alan said "Yeah that was the one."

I hadn't thought about Mike and his buddy Pete Minogue since university days when he used to come to Welland on weekends from Western University and stay at Rick Sernasie's house because it was

too far to go home to North Bay. Besides in Ontario in those days, a submarine sandwich was just a delicious rumor far south of the border.

Once in a while I'll leaf through the latest Guinness Book of Records to see if Mike has finally been recognized as Mr. Universe Assorted or something like that, otherwise I've put him completely out of mind.

Mike was nothing short of amazing. When it came to sub-eating races, Mike was like the Torpedo Terminator, the Hero of Hero Sandwiches.

Mike could be cruel, watching you struggle with the very heel of your sub and then, like Kreskin, making six inches of his capicolla

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Taking pride in one's home town

What does it take to engender pride of the place in which one resides, be it Big City, Small Town or Little Village? A whole slew of irritating by-laws on the books, or another slew of threatening notices posted every which way one turns?

A heck of a way to get us citizens to smarten up and look around and say, "Hey, what gives?" Do we really need to be so bludgeoned into taking a little civic pride in how the old burg looks on a daily basis and not just when tourists come a-flocking in?

Oh sure, it's great to plant a few civic flowers in the civic plots, mow the civic lawns, slap a bit of paint on the civic buildings for the benefit of the visiting folks with the green folding stuff. It's a little like getting out the best lace tablecloth and china service when Aunt Maude is coming for her annual summer visit and, after Auntie has gone, it's back to the old scuff and dirt and litter and who cares if the hastily patched-

Olga Landiak

Life, According to Baba

up sidewalk is rapidly becoming un-patched, and the cracks in the bathroom walls are also losing their hastily applied bit of cosmetics.

One's community is just as much a part of one's living as one's personal and private "castle." You walk or drive through it, shop in it, play sports in it, do a million and one things in it. So, if one is going to take care and pride in the appearance of one's private preserve, then what's the matter with taking pride in the public one as well. What's the matter with each and every one of us, male or female, young or old, doing his or her part NOT to litter up the place, NOT to desecrate it with nasty remarks and slogans, NOT to tear it to pieces just because it is public and not private.

For the life of me, I'll never

understand the thinking - or non-thinking as must surely be the case - which goes on in the minds of those responsible for turning public places and domains into veritable pig sties (though that's a slur against the pigs who are remarkably tidy!). Is this the way the perpetrators of offensive practices behave in their own private living space? If so, then they are to be pitied for lack of stern parental upbringing re either private or public behaviour, or else they need to be taken over a figurative knee and paddled within an inch of their lives. Young or old.

We can't always fault the young though, lord knows, they are mostly responsible for the littering and public vandalism which takes place. So-called "adults" do their share also, but I would question their "adulthood" re such piggy public behaviour.



No, we're ALL responsible for the appearance of our public living space. We're ALL responsible whether we care or don't care how this public space looks, not only in the "little-dab'll-do-ya" summer fix for the eyes of tourists only, but all year round. It just takes a little effort to walk over to a litter bin and deposit one's garbage in it, and a helluva lot of thinking before either throwing it away or out the car window. If it's winter time and the bins have gone into hibernation along with the bears, then,

for gosh sakes, is it so difficult to take one's garbage home instead of leaving it scattered about to molder into an unsightly spring mess.

Or would we prefer to have ferocious signs glaring at us from every post threatening us either with jail incarceration or a heavy fine? And would we honestly prefer to live in a city, town or village which obviously doesn't think much of itself by the lack of effort on the part of its citizens to keep the place clean, neat, and looking great in every way possible?

No pointing of the finger of accusation in any one specific direction. This, I'm sure, is a headache which applies right across our great Dominion from polluted-sea-to-polluted-sea, in ALL our public places be it down along the highways, down in our parks, or just plain downtown.

How to counteract it? Simple. With a little, no, a big, thing called "civic pride" which we should be practicing. Every day.

Barricades and broken promises

The sign, made out of an over-size bed sheet, hung on the side of the white clapboard wall of Stan's Trading Post on the Pic Mobert Reserve. In red and black letters one foot high, the sign proclaimed "THIS BARRICADE DEMONSTRATES BROKEN PROMISES". A few feet away from Stan's Trading Post, the Pic Mobert band members erected a picnic shelter with a yellow plastic tarp for a roof. Around and under the shelter children played and elders sat in semi-circles and talked quietly in Oji-Cree. Occasionally, a younger band member would throw another log on the fire - a fire which had been burning non-stop since the barricade went up three days before my visit to the reserve near White River.

A few feet away from the yellow picnic shelter, under the shadow of CP Rail communications tower, a tangled pile of logs, a pile of railway ties, a rusty rail and a junked refrigerator blocked three railway lines - the main line, and two sidings. The Pic Mobert Indians halted east-west rail traffic on the CP line three days after



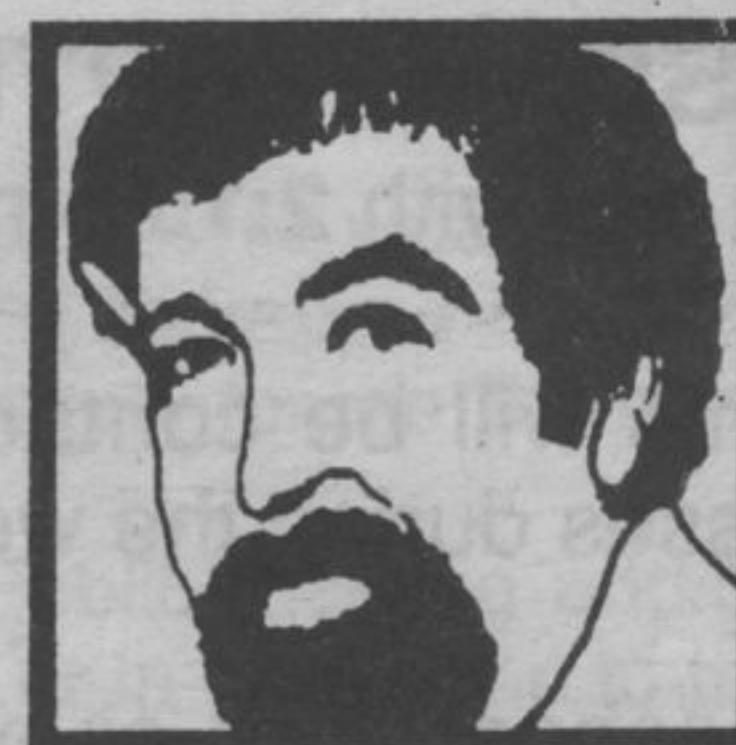
the Long Lake band, 300 kilometres to the north, had blocked the CN line near Longlac.

An elder familiar with both situations provided the best explanation I've heard for why this was happening. "For years," she said, "we've been quietly saying yes. When the government asked to build a rail line through the reserve, we said yes. When the government asked to build a highway through the reserve, we said yes. Then Elijah Harper in Manitoba said no. That made us decide it was time for us to say no too."

The barricades at Longlac and Pic Mobert both proclaimed support for the Mohawk barriers in Quebec at Kanasatake (commonly known as Oka) and in

NORTHERN INSIGHTS

by Larry Sanders



Kahnawake, a suburb of Montreal. But the tone of the stand-offs in northern Ontario was very different. There were no guns. No one wore a mask. The police were hardly visible. In Longlac, one patrol car sat parked several hundred feet away. In Pic Mobert, there were no police near the barricade at all. In both situations, police assembled a force of 60 officers miles away from the reserve ready to move in once the court issued injunctions to the railways to clear the tracks. But the police in Ontario seemed to be doing everything possible to avoid violence, or even any arrests. Both sides seemed to have an unstated policy of dealing with civil disobedience with tolerance and flexibility, rather than

rage and armed force.

The Chief of Pic Mobert, James Kwissiw, stressed the peaceful character of the protest. The band fire truck had been set up across one lane of the gravel road leading off the trans-Canada highway into the reserve. Everyone entering was asked their name, and to state their business. Chief Kwissiw said that was done because "we don't want no bloodshed, like at Oka. We want to be cautious, and make sure there are no radicals coming in, and causing trouble."

As the rail blockades continued, CN and CP rail were forced to detour freight trains through the United States. One thousand railway workers between Winnipeg and Capreol suddenly

found themselves not working. Railway workers are paid by the mile, not the hour. So when the trains stopped running though northern Ontario, their paycheques stopped. Non-native people in communities along the rail line who might have been sympathetic to the natives' land claims were in an awkward position. Ottawa's refusal to negotiate with Long Lake or Pic Mobert was putting them out of work.

Frustrated, the railway workers in Schreiber decided to stage their own blockade. For three hours, fifty of them used trucks, cars and sawhorses to block Highway 17 at Rongie Lake, just east of Schreiber. Just like the native barricades, this protest went out of its way to be peaceful. The OPP were notified ahead of time. Railroaders showed up for the demonstration sober, armed only with yellow leaflets and signs, not guns or clubs. The police responded in kind - threatening to press criminal charges with words and pieces of paper, not guns, clubs, arrests and paddy wagons.

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