

# Northern Insights

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4% return on this investment - not a high enough return to make it worthwhile for a private investor, but better than most public investments receive.

But McNiven's question was really addressed to all of us. It's a question we all have to have to face, and it raises several spin-off questions. If we want a decent, environmentally-friendly transportation system, how much are we prepared to pay for it? Do we want the government to manage it, or the private sector? If the private sector owns and runs it, how do we assure it meets public policy objectives?

The presentations to the Royal Commission in Thunder Bay didn't answer those questions. For the most part, the submissions rehashed the problems of the present, without much vision of the

future. After sitting through the hearing, I came to the conclusion we need our own Royal Commission, or something like it, focused on northern Ontario.

If northwestern Ontario is going to be part of the 21st Century, then we need to be part of rational systems that can move people around properly, not just paper, telephone calls and computer data. We have a proud history, as northerners, of finding innovative ways to break new ground on transportation. Native people taught the voyageurs how to paddle canoes. Northern engineers figured out how to build the trans-Canada highway and the CPR around Lake Superior, despite massive rocky obstacles. Every day, northerners routinely travel long distances over wintry roads and think nothing of it, just to attend meetings.

Why not mobilize all that experience into one big gathering, and write our own transportation vision statement? Any number of organizations - Lakehead University, Quetico Centre, or regional groups like the Northwestern Ontario Economic Development Network, could pull together such a gathering. Until we get our *Star Trek* beaming devices, we need a rational passenger transportation plan.

# Mainstream Canada

## Making the ends justify the means

by Terry O'Shaughnessy

The question of whether the ends justify the means is an essential ingredient of just about any political position but is of particular significance given the controversial parliamentary battle waged by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and the Senate over the proposed Goods and Services Tax.

It is to be hoped that the prime minister at least asked himself this question when, in Machiavellian fashion, he used unprecedented powers to appoint extra Senators to the Liberal-dominated Upper House and gave the Tories a majority. When considering the end - that the lucrative GST would finally pass into law and take effect, as originally planned, on January 1, 1991 - no doubt Mulroney was willing to go to any lengths to ensure passage of the legislation. But forcing that passage by embarking on a spree of Senate appointments in order to tip the balance in favor of pro-GST votes made those means politically expensive indeed.

Many Canadians would argue that neither the means nor the end were justified. The frustrating fact of the matter is that the GST debate should never have reached this boiling point.

For more than a year, the public outcry over the tax did not move the federal government to address the many flaws and inequities of the GST. Responding in kind, the Senate opted to go for an outright kill of the legislation instead of making recommendations to amend the legislation, thus guaranteeing the current paralyzing impasse in parliament.

Catherine Swift, Vice-President of Research and Chief Economist of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, says that the Senate could have played a more effective role and delayed implementation of the GST.

"Canadians agree that sales tax reform is a necessity," says Swift, "But the current GST is not the answer. The GST layers the federal sales tax over the provincial sales tax creating all kinds of administrative difficulties for small business and confusion for consumers. In their haste to get their hands on the revenues, the federal government wouldn't wait to harmonize the tax with the provinces and it was this unwillingness to make the tax more workable - and their entrenched position on the January 1, 1991 implementation date - which did much to create the stand-off with the Senate."

Swift quickly points out that the Senate should have adopted a different approach.

"The senate had a role to play in making constructive suggestions and amendments to the unworkable aspects of the GST legislation. They could have asked the government to delay implementation in order to allow the provinces to harmonize the tax. Instead, the Senators entrenched their position to the point where we see the shameful spectacle of the Tories swamping the Senate and the Senate missing an opportunity to make a harmful tax fairer and less of a burden for consumers and scores of small business owners."

What the hardline positions of both have done is to create yet another crisis to exhaust a country still reeling from a summer of Meech Lake, Oka, and potential war in the Persian gulf. The regrettable fact is that it wasn't even necessary.

# All the World's a Circus

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began, "there was a mama bear and a papa bear. But they weren't really bears, they were a mama and a papa - plural - that is, *The Mamas & The Papas*."

The lullaby I sang went like this: "*McGwinn & McGwire just are getting' higher. In L.A. you know where that's at. And no one's gettin' fat 'cept Mama Cass*".

"My generation feared that the Mamas & The Papas would severely hurt themselves because they did so much drugs the Colombian drug cartel put a watts line in their house," I said.

"*McGwinn and McGwire couldn't get much higher. But that's what they were aiming at. And no one's gettin' fat 'cept Mama Cass*" I sang.

"The Mamas & The Papas did so much drugs that if they'd have brought Davie Crosby into the group they would have been required to list themselves on the New York Stock Exchange as a pharmaceutical research and development corporation" I said.

"*McGwinn and McGwire are just a catching' fire. In L.A. you know where that's at. And everybody's gettin' fat, 'cept Mama Cass*" I sang.

And at this point Malcolm cocked his head in that wonderfully inquisitive way that only cats do as if to say: "So what are you saying Uncle Bill - are drugs bad?" (Malcolm's going through a parental identity crisis and I'm so far ignoring the Uncle Bill stuff).

"Well not necessarily, Malcolm," I said, "Mama Michelle Phillips and Papa John Phillips lived to write best-selling books about the tandem loads of drugs they did back in the 60s. They made millions."

"Well then what's the point Uncle Bill?" he asked.

"The point is Malcolm," I said patiently. "Mama Cass choked on a chicken bone and died in her bed."

"Just say no to chicken bones," I concluded in a fatherly tone.

"*Dope and good vibrations. and our imaginations - Can't go on indefinitely. And California Dreamin' is becomin' a reality,*" I sang.

Malcolm stared at me for the longest time before I realized he was sound asleep with his eyes open.

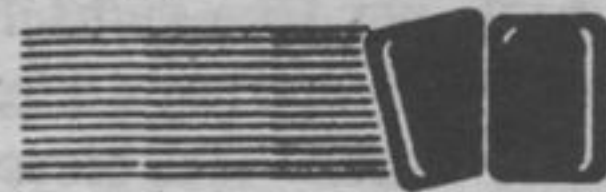
But you know, I think it worked.

Last night I had chicken and this morning the bones are still in the garbage. Of course this afternoon I caught the little bugger with his paw in the medicine chest.

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Apple Day in Terrace Bay  
October 20th

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October 26th 8:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.  
Schreiber Rec Complex

tickets \$5.00 per person in advance  
ticket sales Oct. 19th 7 - 9 pm  
\$10.00 at the door

No person under 19 years of age admitted

Music By: Shuffle & Shake

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|--------------------|-----|----------|
| Costume Prizes     | 1st | \$500.00 |
|                    | 2nd | \$400.00 |
|                    | 3rd | \$300.00 |
| Honourable Mention |     | \$200.00 |
| Door Prize         |     | \$100.00 |

**Grand March at 10 p.m.**  
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John and Lola Este are happy to announce the arrival of Elisha Ann. Born on September 26, weighing 7 lbs. 12 oz. she is an adorable sister for Jillian.

Thanks to nurses Cheryl, Christina and Claire, Peter and Dr. Woldnik for their professional care and support.