

# OPINION

Write us  
or FAX us  
Numbers at right

## Radical change can improve our lives

We begin 1994 with the conviction that radical changes to our country and communities are upon us.

Some doctors believe our public health care is in collapse, school boards face bankruptcy and many of the services taxpayers expect are being phased out. Indeed, taxpayers themselves are in revolt, pretending they are not contributing to collapse by going underground and evading taxes.

But times of change are times of opportunity. An eggshell must crack open before a chick hatches. Without change, we couldn't evolve.

Pushing through the overburdened bureaucratic systems in



Viewpoint

Jo Ann Stevenson

our medical and educational structures are thousands of green shoots - fresh innovative ideas, exposure of abuses, advanced technologies and most important, an enlightened public, ready to assess what is of value in our society. Assess it and protect it.

A televised comparison between the debt crisis in New Zealand and Canada points out

how similar the two nations are. The former did face bankruptcy and its public is making the sacrifices needed to climb back again.

We too will be making sacrifices. As well we'll be creating new systems that preserve what we agree is core to living in Canada.

Neither of our current techniques is working for us. Ducking taxes and voting politicians out of office for tackling the deficit is not going to take us to the good times.

New Zealand sold its airline and its postal stations for starters.

We need to work together creatively in handling our crisis.

For example, New Zealand companies which began to see their pollution as a signpost to inefficiency were able to make their business more environment friendly and more profitable at the same time. Canadian business can learn from the experience of those in the south Pacific.

In this way we'll emerge streamlined, efficient, competitive, sustaining - and humanitarian in the new years to come.

## Subliminal sex ads don't sell Zoodles

I'm sitting here with a tin can of X rated soup noodles in my hand.

The label reads "Libby's Zoodles! Noodle Animals in Tomato Sauce."

I haven't opened the can yet, but the label assures me it's chock full of slimy little pasta kangaroos, lions, zebras, gorillas and bears - the better to get the wee ones to eat their lunch, right?

Not according to a 42-year-old mother in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia. She says the Zoodles can is the grocery store equivalent of the Penthouse Centrefold. It's gross. It's perverted. It's pornographic.

The hawk-eyed Glace Bay housewife insists that when she turns the can upside down she can clearly see male genitalia descending from the elephant on the label - and also in a palm tree in the background.

I say that anybody who spends their leisure time turning cans of noodles upside down looking for genitalia in elephants and palm trees is a citizen in serious need of a hobby, but let that pass. She swears it's there. "If I want to see soft-core pornography" sniffs the housewife. "I think I can go to an adult bookstore and get it."

Easy for her to say, she's probably rich. Have you priced the merchandise at the adult bookstores lately? Outrageous! A can of Zoodles is a lot cheaper. Needless to say, as soon as I heard of the controversy, I streaked to my corner store, bought a can of the unpurgated noodles, asked to have them wrapped in plain brown paper and galloped back to my house to be corrupted.

I've been looking for the naughty bits ever since.

What we have here is not an expose of Adults Only Pasta, it's a resurgence of one of the great crazes of the late twentieth century - subliminal sex in advertising.

It all started more than 20 years ago when a professor at the University of Western Ontario by the name of Wilson Bryan Key, gained international fame. Key claimed that advertisers were secretly brainwashing us by inserting smutty pictures in their work to make us buy their products.

Key asserted that every Ritz



Basic Black

Arthur Black

cracker had the word SEX embedded on it 12 times on each side. He discerned bare-breasted maidens in the ice cubes of liquor advertisements and wrote that once at a fast food restaurant he'd felt compelled to order fried clams, even though he doesn't like them. While mopping clam juice off his chin, Key says he looked down and discovered the reason for his clam mania - his place mat showed a picture of fried clams, but if you looked really, really closely, you could see an orgy going on with images of oral sex and bestiality with a donkey.

Uh huh. Looney Tunes or not, Key's idea upset a nervous public. Subliminal advertising was banned. Sales of Ritz Crackers and fried clams enjoyed a momentary upsurge.

But only momentary. Because subliminal advertising has one annoying flaw: it doesn't work.

Our own Canadian Broadcasting Corporation proved it in an experiment back in 1958. The CBC announced that "a subliminal message" would be broadcast across the nation during a specific program. Viewers were even told to be on the alert for it! During the program, the message "telephone now" was flashed 352 times in a 30-minute period.

Nobody phoned. On the other hand, in the following weeks the CBC received thousands of letters from viewers insisting they had felt unaccountable urges to get up, go for a walk, get a bottle of beer, go to the bathroom - no one guessed the correct message.

Viewers were receptive; the message just wasn't getting through.

And that was a straightforward message. How does Mister Key or the Glace Bay housewife figure a hidden drawing of an elephant's wing-wang is going to propel me to buy Libby's Zoodles by the case?

## Merging school systems builds on strength

Dear Editor,

Mr. Hughes is absolutely right. It is long past time that our two education systems were merged, to produce one truly excellent program. The present duplication of services and bureaucracies is wasteful and inefficient. There have to be enormous savings in combining, thereby building on the strengths of both boards.

I'm not anticipating tax relief, in spite of the outrageous property taxes we all must pay, but tax increases would surely be delayed if there were only one board. I do believe that merging the two systems would allow limited resources to be used more effectively, in classrooms across the region, not supporting huge bureaucracies and office build-

## Thank you for 'sparkle'

Dear Editor,

I would like to add my appreciation to that expressed by Kathryn Wakely Clare of Markham, in Dec. 18's Weekender.

The many Christmas lights that residents have up this year is a joy to behold. Thanks to all the Markham residents who participate and add such sparkle to our community!

Heather Navarra  
Markham

## Editor's Mail

ings.

There will be tremendous resistance to such change, of course, primarily from those bureaucrats who should be trying to improve

the educational system.

Unfortunately, they are much more interested in protecting their little empires and lucrative positions.

As Mr. Hughes states, in his excellent letter, it will take leadership and guts from our elected politicians to take on the entrenched bureaucracies and effect positive change. Who has it, indeed?

Glen Morehouse  
Stouffville



## Adam

by Brian Basset

