

# Days of Action proved ironic to people 'just trying to get by'

Here's how the day went for one man while disgruntled protesters attempted to surgically remove essential services from downtown Toronto all the way to the Stouffville GO Train station last Friday.

I awoke to radio reports of how the Toronto Transit Commission had thrown in the towel and decided to shut down operations, including Wheel Trans for the disabled, Red Rocket Inc.

would end up losing an estimated one and a half million dollars on the day. As I put on the coffee and darted off to the bathroom for a quick shower, I thought of how my daughter, Marissa, would miss a whole day's pay towards her university education fund. Her boss at the downtown Toronto camera store where she works had prepared for the halt in transit service by only scheduling employees living within a bike ride



From where I live

Bruce Stapley

of the workplace on that day. Marissa proved less than sympathetic to the protesters' cause due to her forced mini-layoff. Draped only in a towel, I slipped into my home office to make a few phone calls in search of information needed for several deadline sports stories for the next day's Weekender. I then returned a call to the Richmond Hill retirement home where my father resides, and agreed to pick Dad up that afternoon to take him for an X-ray related to an ongoing bout with pneumonia. Meanwhile the report on the radio said how the sympathetic Toron-

to police were making it clear they would only lay charges against people provoking those who had set it as their day's work to stop citizens from coming and going as they pleased. Irate, slogan-chanting demonstrators were by now trying to break through the barriers protecting the Toronto Stock Exchange, the same trading house which monitors transactions involving pension funds of many unionists.

Ironic, don't you think?

I completed my stories, grabbed a quick sandwich, then drove off to get my dad his X-ray, at public expense as always. I was running late for a photo shoot I had scheduled for the local high school, a situation made worse when I was forced to line up behind a trucking interest which had decided that a late weekday afternoon was a fine time to transport an oversized mobile home along Stouffville Road. All the while the radio was keeping me posted on how Toronto traffic was like a Sunday morning. More irony.

I finished my assignment, then rushed off to the grocery store with the list my wife Susan had expectantly given me a good four hours before. I ran into my mother at the check out counter. Still easily exhausted after a year of endless medical problems, she was beginning to droop so I offered to drive her home. As the commentator on the car radio outlined the list of grievances of the army of anti-government protesters, Mom didn't once complain about the two bucks per prescription she is now required to pay for the variety of drugs she is taking.

I finally arrived home. My wife Susan was doing her best to cope on her own with the never ending demands of a four year old and an infant. Claremont area resident Jeremy Brown was on the radio delivering his assessment of both the uselessness of Friday's shut down, and the extremity of the outbursts of those who would have the dissidents run over with tanks. Susan and I teamed up to complete the preparation of the dinner she had started, then sat down to eat amid the usual wailing of a four month old who senses his parents have taken time out to dine.

And I was left wondering where seething malcontents manage to find the time to waste a whole day inconveniencing people who are just trying to get by.

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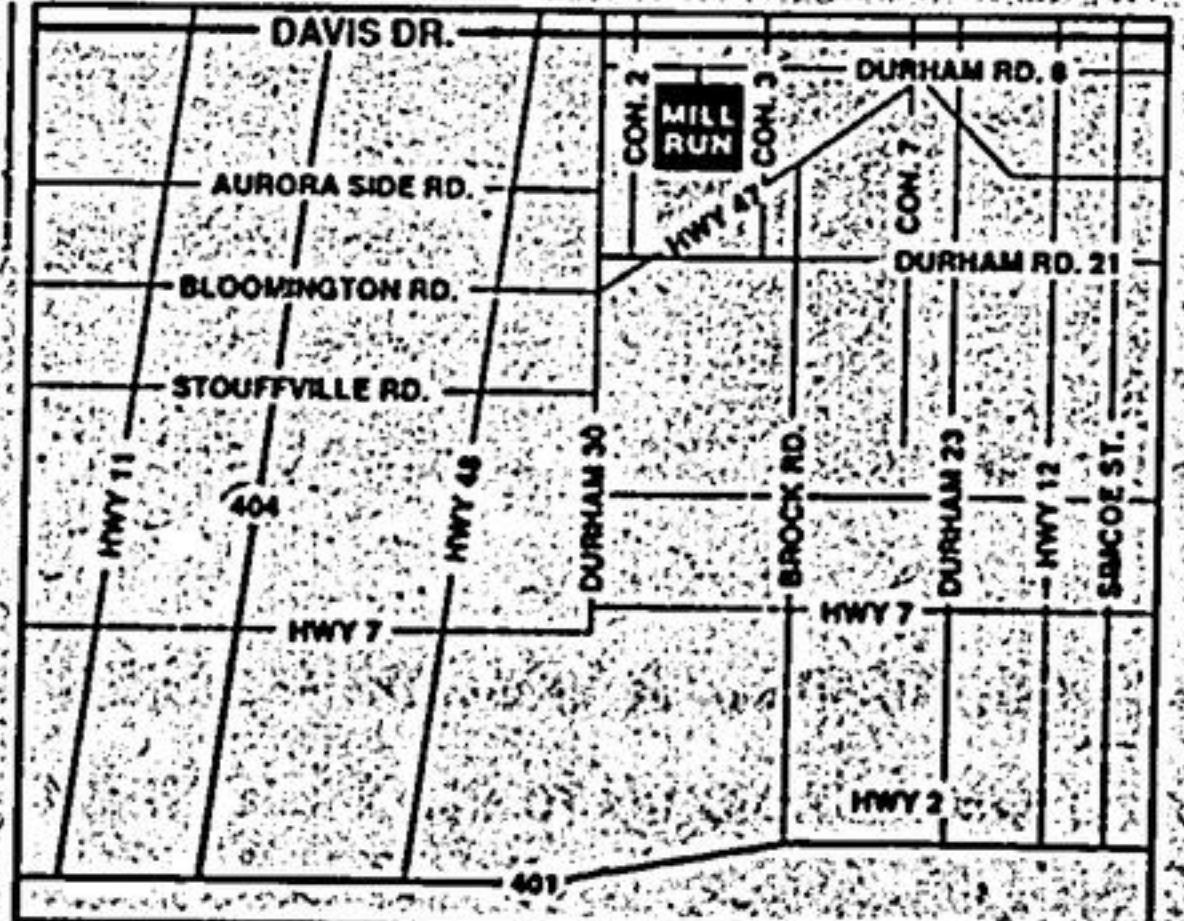
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