

Opinion

Tougher legislation needed for truckers

Driven by a big truck lately? Did you step on the gas ever so slightly as you were passing it, just to get by that much quicker?

Were you thinking the whole time - "Look at the size of those wheels. What if one came loose right now?" Did you find yourself playing a game of mental highway chess - "If that wheel comes loose, I'll dodge left, then back right again to get around the truck..."?

Large trucks should not be on major freeways other than at off-times like late at night. For the most part, they hog the lane, rarely remain in the far right lane and follow too close for the speeds of their rigs.



Viewpoint

Andrew Mair

And now with flying wheels to contend with, it makes even more sense to limit their travel times.

There are some wonderful truck drivers out there, and largely, they are to be commended for their safety records.

It takes a great deal of skill and stamina to drive the long

haul, and maintain a clean driving record. However, the roads are becoming more and more congested.

As well, trucks, being enormously expensive to purchase and maintain are suffering the same difficulties plaguing airliners - they cost a fortune to fix, but far more to replace, so there are many ancient rigs on the road past their prime.

It is no wonder that the inspections which took place in the last year found so many defective vehicles.

That number is only going to rise as trucks get older and companies continue to squeeze all they can out of their rigs.

New tougher legislation does not seem to be working.

There are still hundreds of unsafe vehicles on the road today. Two more flying tire incidents in the past week only serve to bring home this point.

It has now been a year since the first tire incident occurred on the Queen Elizabeth Way, killing one person.

Since then four more people have died, several more were injured and the tires continue to fly.

What is needed is even tougher laws, serious fines, even jail if need be and again, tighter restrictions on the times a truck can be on the road.

As fleets continue to age, this problem is only going to get worse.

Happy motoring.



Mounties and CBC dismantled

Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean that they're not out to get you

Anon

There are more of them than us

Herb Caen

Ah, sweet paranoia. I'm sure it has to be the major growth industry of the nineties.

There was a time when being paranoid was a committable offense. Nowadays, it qualifies as a lifestyle. Consider: one in eight Americans think that the entire NASA space program is a hoax. That all those moon walks and Mars probes and space shuttles were performed by actors on a movie set somewhere in rural Arizona. A significant number of Americans believe that the bodies of space aliens are being kept on ice at a secret U.S. Air Force base in

Nevada. That JFK was murdered by assassins hired by his own vice president. That Elvis is alive, eating burgers and working the gas pumps at a service station in Wyoming.

Poor, gullible Americans. Just a few weeks ago we were treated to the spectacle of Pierre Salinger, once press secretary to the president, railing on about how he had proof that TWA Flight 800 was shot down by a U.S. missile.

He didn't and it wasn't. But that won't quench the flames of galloping American paranoia. The Internet is currently awash with every kind of conspiracy theory you can imagine.

Ah, those dopey, gormless Americans. Why couldn't they take a lesson from their more mature, rational neighbors to the north?

To wit: us. Canadians. We Canucks would never fall for that loopy, half-baked paranoid conspiracy stuff. We're far too sensible. Way too wise to the ways of the world. And why wouldn't we be? I mean we Canucks live in a land where:

Our official government opposition is a party whose mandate is the destruction of Canada.

Our 'National' Hockey League is composed of 26 teams. Six of which are Canadian.

Our Canadian Football League is populated almost exclusively by American players.

Our government fisheries experts have managed to completely destroy the East Coast cod stocks and all but obliterate the West Coast salmon fishery.

Not that our glorious leaders confine their depredations to fish. Those same two-faced politicians, marching lock-step with our business leaders, have, over the past several



Basic Black

Arthur Black

years, embarked on a frenzy of coast-to-coast downsizing and social program slashing. They clearly believe that the best way to make Canada healthy is to put as many people out of work just as quickly as possible. Not including themselves bien sur. This cunning economic strategy from a party of 'Liberals' who got themselves elected on a promise of "Jobs, jobs, jobs"

We Canadians are blessed to live in a land in which the last two physical structures that serve to hold our country together, to ensure that Prince Edward Islanders have something in common with North West Territorians — to make Canadians somehow different and distinct from Nebraskans or New Hamshireites — I'm talking about the railways and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation — are being systematically dismantled and gutted by politicians who were elected specifically to keep us together.

It is our dubious fate to inhabit a country in which the Royal Canadian Mounted Police — the very symbol and essence of what Canada stands for at home and abroad — has been, for the purposes of "advertising and marketing", turned over to...

The Walt Disney Corporation of Florida.

Now c'mon... What are you —

What do Canadians have to be paranoid about?

Editor's mail

Watch for one-track bias in public process

Dear Editor,

Like it or not, with each passing day this municipal area will do what most towns do...they grow!

One of the most difficult aspects of the municipal politicians' jobs is in dealing with "want to be" politicians who haven't been elected yet and who find a soap box to stand on specific to their narrow neighborhood concerns.

I encourage everyone to attend public planning sessions. Observe the dynamics of the approval process at work. Preferably, do it when the issues being discussed aren't directly related to your own backyard.

It is then you will truly see what can be the one-track bias and self-serving tactics used by some groups, and the difficulty elected representatives have with balancing these narrower interests with the needs of the whole community, the Region and more than ever the GTA. It is also a good insight into the high costs of develop-

ment and similarly the costs for new homes.

David Tonon Markham

Letter hits the mark

Dear Editor,

Hooray for Tracy-Lyn Onderisin's letter to the editor Dec. 28, 1996. Sometimes it appears that the pendulum of "political correctness" and the refusal to take responsibility for your own actions, has swung too far. She forgot to point out that in these times we are also financially liable if we allow someone else to "eat red meat".

Her comments hit the mark and she did it with the touch of humor that many of us lack nowadays!

S. Bremmers Stouffville