

Opinion

Sir Brian's settlement is "only our money"

Brian Mulroney got his apology, and the taxpayer got to pay his court costs. Only in Canada.

I'm so glad our millionaire former prime minister bravely stood up against the government and fought for the rights of the little man. Why if they were able to railroad Brian Mulroney, just imagine what might happen to the average person in a dispute with the government. But now that brave Sir Brian has cleared the way for us, justice and mercy shall prevail for all throughout the land.

Stories like this just make me feel so good about my country.



Viewpoint

Alan Shackleton

Every once in a while I get deluded and start thinking we're actually a democracy. Then something like the Airbus scandal, and Mulroney's subsequent lawsuit, comes along and I remember again that we're a banana republic. A frozen banana republic.

You may think I'm being a bit extreme here, but let's look at

the big picture. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police are investigating reports of kick-backs in the government's purchase of airplanes. Simple enough until the names of some high ranking politicians and civil servants start to crop up.

Now we have a problem, thinks the RCMP, and what are we to do about it?

Unfortunately, instead of taking a strictly legal approach, they involve the government of the day and the justice minister, a politician. At this point, I'm afraid, the RCMP has become little better than the private police force of any tinpot dictator the world over.

And as is often the case when that force's actions

embarrass the government, they then must find a fall guy. And as surely as water flows downhill, the blame for this thing does not rest upon the leaders of the force. Oh no, it ends up in the lap of an RCMP sergeant in Ottawa. I guess they couldn't find anyone driving a patrol car in Flin Flon to blame it on. Maybe next time.

As for the government, it became obvious that to have Mulroney's case go to trial would result in tremendous embarrassment. What if it was discovered that a politician interfered with the police investigation? So instead they decide to apologize and settle up the legal fees.

And why wouldn't they? After all, it's only our money.



One Canadian hero still unsung

We are not good with heroes, we Canadians...we shove them on the nearest available pedestal. We leave them up there for a while, and then we begin to throw things at them.

Peter Gzowski

Gzowski's right — Canada is very hard on its heroes. We've got a Canadian hero in our midst who's been around for as long as I can remember, and never received his due. Trouble is, he's not beautiful like Pamela Anderson Lee, nor articulate like Joni Mitchell or graceful like Karen Kain.

As a matter of fact he's middle-aged, and built like a 260-pound beer stein.

For those of you too young to remember, George Chivalo was Canada's gift to the world of heavyweight boxing. He fought anybody who ever cared to lace

on a pair of gloves, and though he wasn't the most gifted pugilist the world has ever known, nobody ever managed to knock him out — or even down. He fought 97 professional bouts and he fought the best. Floyd Paterson couldn't take him out. Muhammad Ali, in his prime, punched George till he couldn't lift his hands any more. Chivalo never backed up and never went down.

George is not fighting these days — not in boxing rings in any case. Fact is, George is going 15 rounds in the toughest fight of his life.

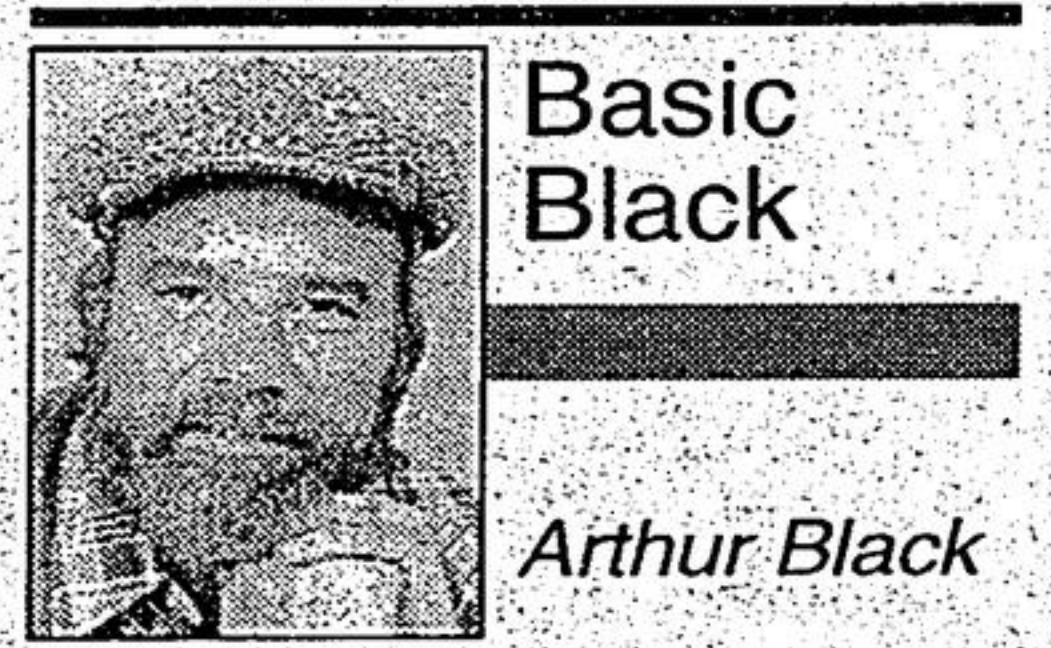
He is trying to wring some good out of the fact that his wife and three of his sons have killed themselves.

Heroin did the boys in. They just couldn't handle the pressure of being the offspring of Canada's toughest man. They took drugs. They OD'd. They died. And insurmountable grief over their deaths claimed his wife Lynne. I knew Mrs. Chivalo slightly. We worked at the same plant nursery north of Toronto for a couple of summers. Lynne Chivalo was feisty, funny and as strong a person as I've come across.

So George is left. And what he does these days instead of sucking on a bottle or turning into a miserable recluse — what he does is go around to schools and talk to auditoriums full of kids to try and convince them to stay away from drugs.

It is not an easy thing for George Chivalo. He is a man of action, not a man of words. He breaks into a sweat every time he has to haul his 260 pounds up onto those auditorium stages and face a room full of blank faces that have never heard of George Chivalo.

But that's not the tough part. That comes when he has to talk



Basic Black

Arthur Black

about his boys.

He tells the school kids about the vomiting, the screaming, the rushing to hospitals in the middle of the night.

He tells them about the son who wanted to study Russian literature, the other son who wanted to be a game warden. And how they both wound up dead on the floor with needles stuck in their arms.

He tells this tale to any high school that will have him. He has spoken at high schools in Ontario, in Alberta and in British Columbia. Chivalo tells the students that the little decisions they make now will affect the rest of their lives.

He tells them that drug addiction does not happen overnight. He tells them that as young people, they simply do not know enough about the horrors of drug addiction.

The high school kids do not smirk, whisper or nudge. They listen in total silence.

And when it's over, there is not a single kid in that audience that will ever again regard heroin as glamorous or sexy.

As for George Chivalo, he just does what he's done all his life. He absorbs the pain, sits on his stool, waits for the bell and the next round, the next high school audience.

Then he goes out there, wades in, chin up, and does it all again.

No Canadian champions? We've got at least one I know of.

Ottawa? You were looking for someone to pin an Order of Canada on?

Editor's mail

Time off doesn't compensate for stress

Dear Editor,

It is obvious from S. Kelly's derogatory letter that he feels great contempt for the teaching profession. It is most unfortunate that anyone should deride another person for their chosen career.

However, if he believes that teaching is such an easy task and offers such great holidays, then I suggest he try to enter the profession.

Any teacher-candidate will require a three year university degree with a B+ or A average and numerous teaching experiences, particularly with children. They must have extreme patience and be able to explain concepts to students as young as four years of age.

In addition, they must be willing to sacrifice most of their day between September and June, using most evenings and weekends to assess student work and prepare for upcoming lessons.

While the time off seems attractive, any potential teacher should be aware that courses to upgrade skills and knowledge will have to be taken in the summer, particularly if they wish to improve their salary since less-educated teachers receive substantially less pay — a fact usually hidden by the ridiculous assertion that all teachers make \$65,000.

Finally, S. Kelly should be aware that about 20 per cent of new teachers quit the profession within the first five years. For a large number of individuals the time off does not compensate for the stress of an extremely high-pressured career.

Anyone depending on the time off will not likely make it through their first year — I know I personally considered quitting four or five times in that first year.

Steve Bull
Stouffville