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THE TRIBUNE

# Comment & Opinions

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EDITORIAL

## Encryption is simply wrong

The Ontario government has introduced what it calls "encrypted biometric technologies" to combat welfare fraud and misuse of the government systems.

Read the *Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood. Or 1984 by George Orwell. Or *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley. Then read the changes to Ontario Works Act. Science fiction has just become reality. The horrors which are endemic in these works of fiction are becoming the norm in Mike Harris' Ontario.

Encrypted biometric technology amounts to fingerprinting. It's all part of a grander scheme to have everyone on file. We feel putting a stop to welfare fraud is a good thing. Cataloguing human beings is a bad thing.

Our own government is now turning to a systematic categorizing and labeling of people.

The provincial government will likely eventually revamp its entire system so your driver's licence, health card, and a great deal of other pertinent personal information will be on a single card, with your finger print on it which can be scanned and examined by almost any government body.

Though it may sound extreme, are we far from having microchips implanted in our skulls?

We are all being reduced to a faceless, meaningless number. It's frightening, it's de-humanizing, and it's wrong.



## Life of Jean-Dominique Bauby an inspiration

Work fascinates me. I can sit and look at it for hours

Anon

It's an old bromide but a true one. There is nothing quite as delicious as having something to do, knowing you have to do it eventually, realizing that you should get started right now.

And then not doing it. I don't wish to brag, but you are reading the lazily pecked out words of an expert in Idleness. Psychologists divide mankind into Type A and Type B personalities — Type A being the up-and-at-m, go-getters who can't sit still; Type B being the more laid-back,



Arthur Black

easy-going folks who take life as it comes.

I am Type "L". For lazy. I'm so laid back total strangers come up and take my pulse. Birds check me out as a possible nesting site. Gangs of kids invite me to join their hockey games. As a goal post.

My Grade 5 report card said it all under Teachers Comments — Can do better but is

### Basic Black

lazy, it read. It's true. That's just the way I am.

And then there's Jean-Dominique Bauby. Mr. Bauby, aged 42, was pursuing a very successful career as a journalist — chief editor of *Elle* magazine in Paris — when life threw a little cross-check his way. One minute Bauby was tooling down the highway, driving his son into Paris when he began to feel... queer. He pulled to the side of the road and sent his child for help before collapsing in the back seat of his car.

Bauby emerged from a coma three weeks later. Sort of

'emerged'. The new Jean-Dominique Bauby was totally deaf, utterly mute and all but completely paralyzed. So paralyzed that all he could move was his left eyelid.

So it goes. One minute you're a hyper-energetic magazine editor surfing the wave of Life; the next you're a helpless, hospital vegetable. What would you do if you awoke one day to find yourself deaf, speechless and all but totally paralyzed? I'm not sure what I would do, but I know what Jean-Dominique Bauby did.

He wrote a book. A best seller called *Le Scaphandre et le Papillon* (The Diving Suit and The Butterfly). It's a fantasy novel about the mental voyages a man embarks on after his body is rendered immobile. Bauby wrote of driving a Maserati down a Formula One Racetrack. He imagined what it was like to land as a soldier under withering fire on Normandy Beach on D-Day. He wrote about the haunting, savory taste of a Lyonnais sausage, the bouquet of a glass of Provencal wine. He wrote about grinding up mountains as a cyclist in the grueling Tour de France race. Well, hold on a second, I hear you saying. You thought this guy was paralyzed? How does a deaf-mute quadriplegic write a book, for crying out loud. No problem for Bauby. He wrote it with the only part of his body he could write with — his left eyelid.

First, he invented a simplified alphabet in which the letters were represented by eye-blinks. Then Mr. Bauby "dictated" — i.e. blinked — the entire 137 page text to an editor friend. They worked at it three hours a day, six days a week all last summer. His friends estimate that Mr. Bauby blinked more than 200,000 times to 'write' his novel. Not content to rest on his laurels, Mr. Bauby turned his attentions to other concerns. He founded an association to help other paralyzed victims and their families.

I wish there was a happy ending to this story. I wish I could say that Jean-Dominique Bauby won the Nobel Prize for Literature and that some French medical genius discovered a miracle cure and that Mr. Bauby today can be found behind his Chief Editor's desk at *Elle*, barking out orders and negotiating with writers and photographers.

But I can't. Life's Department of Dirty Tricks wasn't quite finished with Jean-Dominique Bauby. One week after his novel was published and received wonderful reviews, Mr. Bauby got hit with a second massive stroke and died. It is tempting to hand one's head and mourn Jean-Dominique Bauby's terrible luck.

To rage against the injustice and mutter about the tragedy of it all. Except it would be wrong. There was nothing tragic about the life of Jean-Dominique Bauby. He wouldn't permit it.

He would not permit it.

He would not permit it.

## A special Father's Day message for grandpa

Dear Editor

A grandfather is a man who is loving, caring and warm. A man who gives all he has for the happiness of his family.

A grandfather tells stories of his life experiences and adventures. A person who thinks of everyone else but himself. Always thinking of his family first and putting himself last.

This is my wonderful grandfather Michael Schiralli.

My grandfather is the best.

His life revolves around his family's life, happiness and comfort. He is constantly watching out for me (us) making sure I'm okay. He's always there when I need him, no matter what. Babysitting, homework to talk or just to lend a helping hand. He is uncondi-

tionally devoted to his family in every way. Our contentment makes him happy.

He makes me happy, he makes us all happy. At 72 my nonno Mike is still young at heart and full of vigour. Ice cream is still his favourite and he can keep up with all of us.

On this special day and all the days of the year, I ask God to bless you and keep you well. Happy Grandfather's Day Nonno Mike. All my love to you, your granddaughter.

Jessica Martini  
14 years old

### LETTERS

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