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# Comment & Opinions

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## EDITORIAL

### Get at the roots

Getting tough on young offenders as a weapon against crime is always a popular move. But so is capital punishment. So is building prisons.

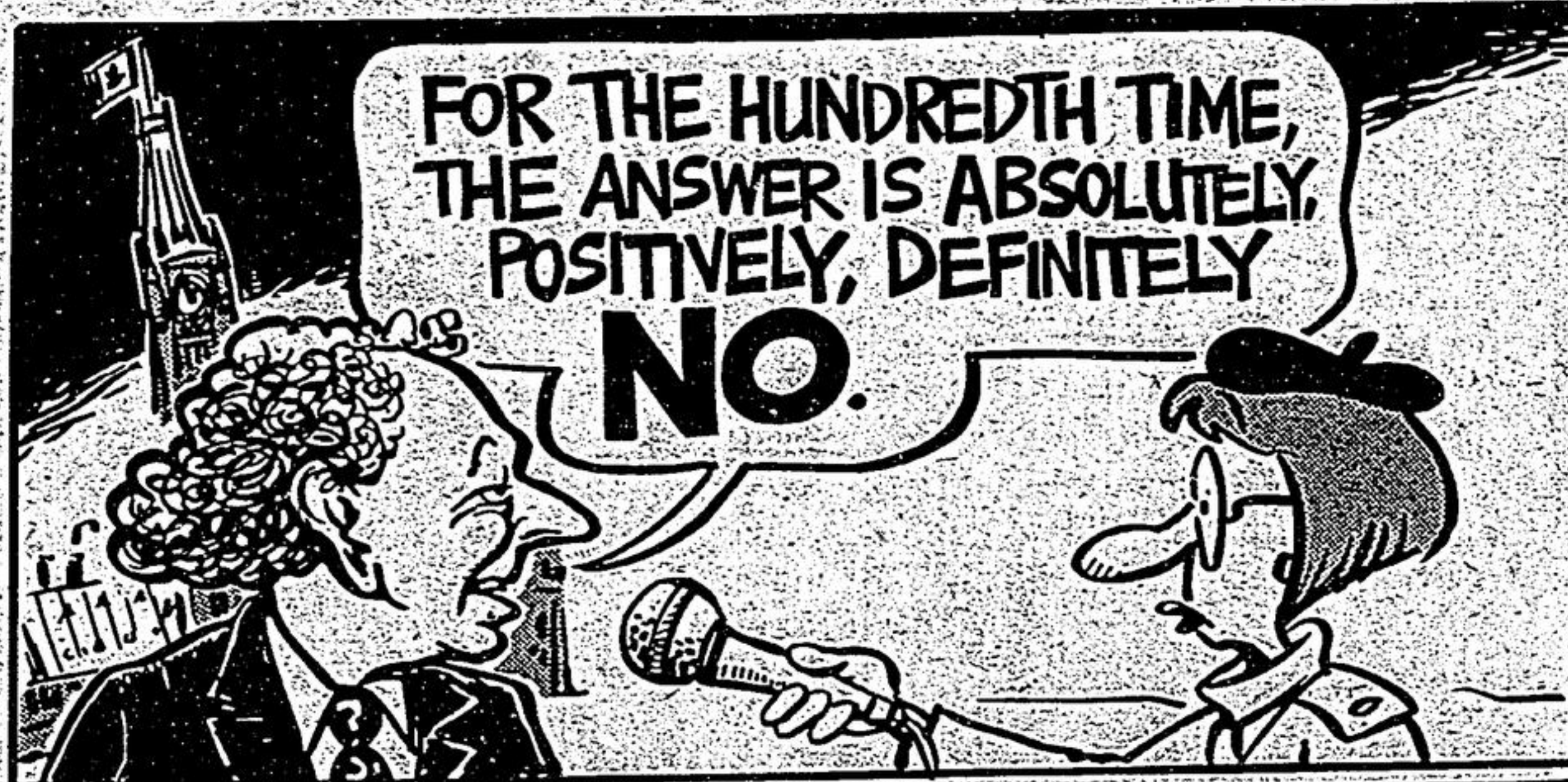
Upon closer examination, the boot camp mentality with regard to young offenders is a hazardous road to take. Changes in the powers to deal with youthful offenders by the Ontario Tories this week skirted this road, but the direction is the same.

The plan to provide young offenders with less video game time and more spent in the books is highly commendable. So is the plan to make the days in such facilities more productive. The principles of sound body, sound mind make for sound citizens.

However, emphasis must be placed on social skills as well. Rehabilitation for young criminals should not include simply spending time behind barbed wire, nor should it be so harsh as to harden the perpetrators beyond compatibility.

They should be learning job skills, the value of education and the contribution they can make to society.

And even if the tougher measures work, and they become model citizens, upon release their situations are often conducive to forcing a return to deviancy. The government should be targeting the social problems which result in wayward youths in the first place. By not controlling spiralling unemployment, poverty, addiction, abuse, and irresponsible parenting and by cutting the programs that are mandated to deal with these problems, the government is merely covering the miasma of youth crime.



## Is it wise to accept developers' contributions?

Dear Editor,  
As Mike Watson's campaign manager during last fall's municipal election, I was more than surprised at some statements made in recent stories published in the local press. One in particular about Mayor (Wayne Emmerson) defending contributions to his campaign from developers.

I think it is important to make it clear to your readers that campaign contributions made to Watson's campaign - the record shows \$5,796 - were made by family members and people who stand to have no financial gain from development in the town of Stouffville. It was a policy set by Watson

himself. Offers did come during the election period, but were turned down based on this policy.

Also, office staff were all volunteers (including myself) and did not receive any payment for their work.

Election signs, pamphlets, mail drop, pamphlet distribution via newspaper and newspaper ads were the expenses incurred.

It also is important to point out that Watson contributed \$2,289 of his own money and his wife \$1,857 towards this campaign. It says a lot about his commitment to this community.

In one story published by the

### LETTERS

local press, Emmerson says, "I didn't take anything from developers last time (the 1994 election) because I didn't know them." Maybe not in 1994, but I would like to point out that the record shows he did in 1991. Among his campaign contributors that year: Gino Testa Investment Builder \$750, Gino Testa \$600, Lebovic Enterprises \$500, Fairgate Heights \$750, Frank Mauro \$500, Richard C Wannop \$175.

We are also left under the impression that Emmerson only

accepted a donation from Schickedanz Bros Ltd in last fall's election and from no other developer. I would like to point out that the list published shows Emmerson accepted donations from other developers including: Lebovic Enterprises \$500, Thickwood Phase Three Inc. \$500, Riki Zappone of Savoia Developments Ltd. of Toronto \$750. For a complete list see *The Tribune*, Thursday, Feb. 12 issue.

While it is quite legal for a political candidate to accept campaign contributions from developers, it begs the question... is it wise?

Jeanne Major  
Stouffville

## Spanking as punishment not acceptable: reader

Dear Editor,

Although I share the concerns expressed in your editorial about undisciplined and disrespectful children, (March 5) I am most distressed and disappointed with the simplistic and violent solution suggested.

Spanking is not the way to raise self-disciplined and responsible young people. Hitting another human being is never acceptable.

Appropriate behaviour can be taught through discipline, that focuses on respect and most importantly, is consistent. If a child knows that yelling and whining will not be given in to, that every time he treats someone disrespectfully he will have to apologize, that every time he breaks something he will have

to help repair or repay, that every time he hurts another he will have to make amends, then he can truly learn how to be a responsible member of the community.

Books by authors such as Barbara Coloroso and Adele Faber are sources of strategies and support for the challenges of family life. Wouldn't it be wonderful if parenting courses were as popular as prenatal courses?

Let us not raise a generation of people who will behave if they are threatened or given material rewards for good behaviour, but rather one that consists of caring, responsible and self-disciplined members of society.

Kathryn Wakely Clare

## Toon says it all

Dear Editor,

Your Saturday cartoon hit the nail on the head. What an ingenious way of taking Charest out of the federal scene. Asking Charest to change parties and to move to provincial politics is like asking Brian Tobin or Glen Clark to leave their post to take over the leadership of the Federal PC's.

A guilt trip is being laid on Charest - "He is the only leader that can save Canada." Give me a break. Is the country so far gone that we have to ask a person to give up his principles and his integrity under the disguise of Unity? Charest has proven that he can play a major role in the unity issue as a leader of a national party and will continue to do so (and don't give me this talk of the PC as a fifth party. The PC's captured as many votes as Reform did in the last election).

Charest can best serve the country by staying where he is - continuing to rebuild the conservatives as the only national alternative to the Liberals.

Ben Seto

## STOUFFVILLE TRIBUNE

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