

OPINION

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
34 Civic Ave, 3rd floor, Stouffville, ON, L4A 7Z5

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

No secret gifts from EDC

Re: Hey, Mr. Taxman, where's my million dollar refund, Bruce Annan column, April 10.

Mr. Annan may have left your readers with the wrong impression about the role of Export Development Canada in helping Bombardier Aerospace Inc. and other Canadian aerospace companies grow their international sales, the assertion EDC finances Bombardier by way of "secret gifts" is false.

EDC is an agency of the Canadian government whose purpose is to promote the export of Canadian goods and services around the globe. We do this through the provision of unique financial and risk management services that motivate Canadians to do business in foreign markets and encourage foreign buyers to "buy Canadian".

In encouraging the purchase of Bombardier aircraft, EDC provides financing to Bombardier's buyers, on all our financing. We also publish aggregate volumes of our financing and insurance business, by industry sector on a quarterly basis. This information is clearly posted at: www.edc.ca/corpinfo/disclosure/mainpage_e.htm

EDC is self-sustaining and does not rely on taxpayer-funded, annual appropriations to finance its operations.

Our loan portfolio in the aerospace sector is also performing very well with 98 per cent of clients meeting their full obligations. This has produced economic benefits for the more than 5,000 suppliers that are the backbone of the

Canadian aerospace industry. These firms are the source of thousands of high-value jobs and economic growth for Canada.

Thus, we are justifiably proud that almost every dollar we put into buyer financing for Canadian aircraft, actually does turn into a "Super Dollar".

ROSEMARIE BOYLE
VICE-PRESIDENT
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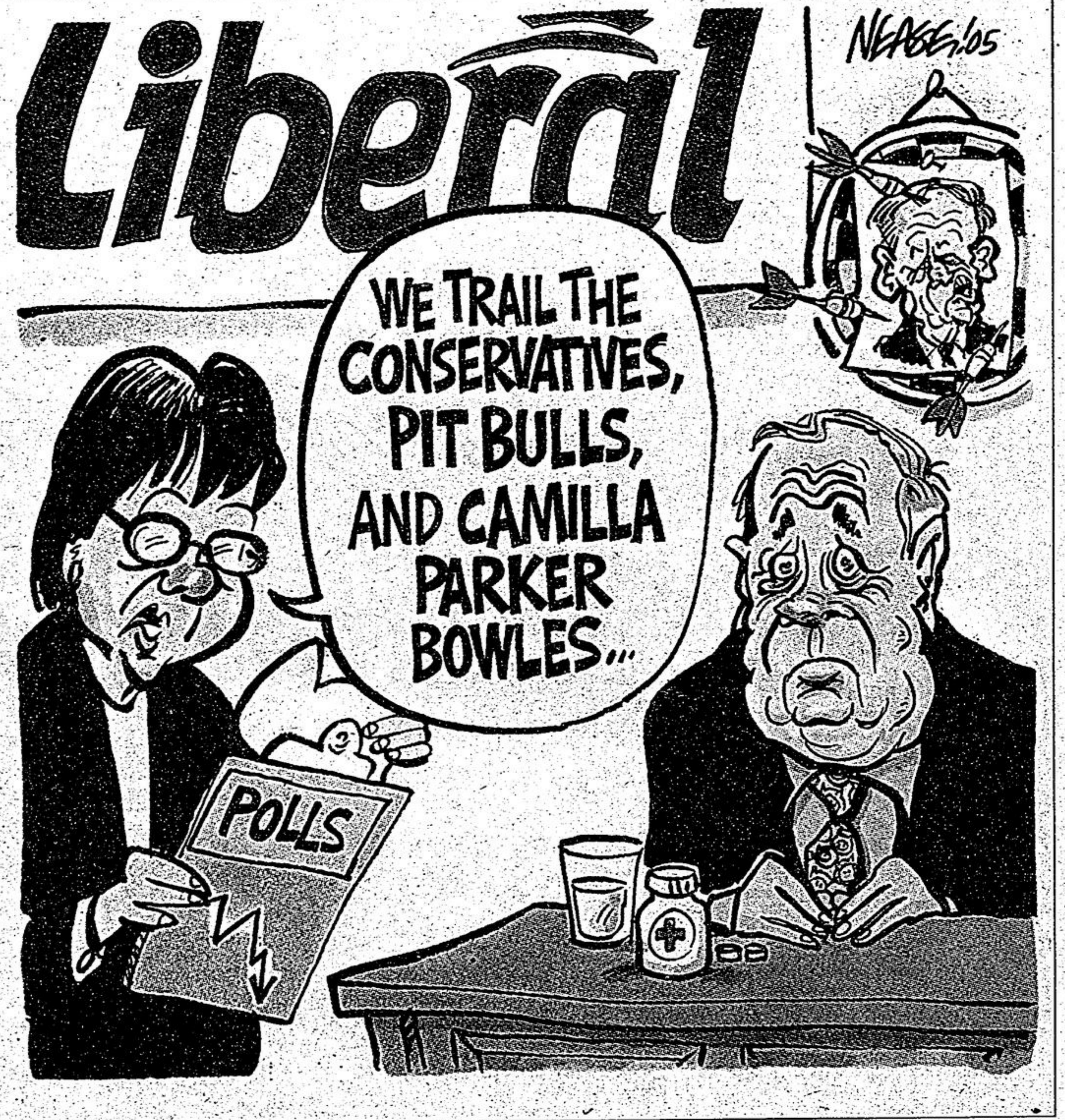
Chretien allegations no surprise

Recent testimony at the Gomery inquiry reveals allegations of even further Liberal corruption, including the deliberate siphoning of millions in taxpayer money through kickbacks to pay Liberal loyalists, campaign workers, and even relatives of former prime minister Jean Chretien.

Some may be surprised, but quite frankly, it is astonishing that anyone who knew the former prime minister's history would be surprised at any of this. Chretien, a lawyer no less, is the same man who, when unable to find a proper purchase and sale agreement, claimed he had used the back of a cocktail napkin to record the bill of sale for the golf course he owned.

The course was related to a hotel that received hundreds of thousands of dollars in government grants after Chretien personally lobbied the Business Development Bank of Canada.

J. SWARTZ
MARKHAM



My organs won't go with me when I leave

If you had a terminal illness and could only be saved with a transplanted organ, would you accept one? About four out of five people say yes. (And the fifth guy might change his tune if it actually happened.)

If you were in an accident and declared brain-dead, would you want your organs harvested? (If you said yes to the first question and no to this one, look in the dictionary under hypocrite.)

If you answered yes to both, have you told your family? Because whether or not you've signed your donor card, family approval is still needed after death. When asked, only about half of potential donors' families agree.

How come, I asked Dr. Frank Merkel, president and CEO of the Trillium Gift of Life Network, the agency created in 2000 to encourage and facilitate organ and tissue donation in Ontario.

"It's puzzling," he says. "My gut feel is that it's just a very difficult time to be approached, a very emotional moment when a loved one has just died.

"We know of circumstances where the



Bruce Annan

donor card has been signed (by the deceased) but when we talk to the family, they say 'no, he's suffered enough.'

Yet for the departed, the suffering is over. For the living — perhaps on a dialysis machine every day or worse — the suffering continues. Right now, more than 2,000 people in Ontario need a transplant.

In the United States, where 87,000 are waiting for an organ donation, a movement is under way that says if you wouldn't give, you shouldn't get. Members of LifeSharers sign donor cards, promising first crack at their organs to fellow members.

There's no sign of such "directed donation" arriving in Canada — but there's little sign of growing participation, either.

April 17 to 23 is National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week. Aurora's Nancy and Dale Doiges have a message for you.

The Doiges are active ambassadors for organ donation. Their 10-year-old son, Ryan, died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage in 1997. Only weeks before, Ryan had seen his dad sign his organ donor card and asked what he was doing. Ryan was so impressed with the concept that he campaigned for organ donation, asking other family members to sign their own cards as well.

The Doiges have since created Ryan's Hope, delivering an education program to 7,600 schools across Canada to raise awareness of organ donation. They also frequently give talks to groups in the area, sometimes alongside a recipient who owes her life to Ryan's generosity.

The Doiges find more receptiveness among young people than the general public. I asked them why there remains a gap between professed willingness to give and

actual donation.

"It has to be talked about more, but in our culture, death is something you don't talk about," says Nancy. "People need to be educated in advance of a death."

"It's not just good for the recipients," says Dale. "It's been therapeutic for us. Ryan was only 10 years old, but he did so much — more than I'll ever do with my life."

In fact, at least seven people received transplants thanks to Ryan, all successful.

Let's get personal. Should a 50-year-old like me bother to sign my donor card?

"We've had successful organ donors as old as 90," says Trillium's Dr. Merkel. "And tissue donors over 100 years old."

So I've downloaded (and signed) my donor card from www.giftoflife.on.ca, and talked to my wife and family.

Maybe you should have the same conversation — tonight. As the slogan goes, don't take your organs to heaven. Heaven knows, we need them down here.

Bruce Annan is a York Region writer and consultant. Bruce.annan@gmail.com

LETTERS POLICY

The Sun-Tribune welcomes your letters. Submissions must be less than 400 words and include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The Sun-Tribune reserves the right to publish or not publish and edit for clarity and space.

Letters to the Editor,
The Sun-Tribune
34 Civic Ave.
Box 154
Stouffville, ON
L4A 7Z5
jmason@yrg.com

EDITORIAL
Editor
Jim Mason
jmason@yrg.com

ADMINISTRATION
Office Manager
Vivian O'Neil
voNeil@yrg.com

PRODUCTION
Manager
Pam Nichols
pnichols@yrg.com

ADVERTISING
Classified Manager
Ann Campbell
acampbell@yrg.com

Retail Manager
Stacey Allen
sallen@yrg.com

Managing Director, New
Business & Flyer Sales
Dawn Andrews
dandrews@yrg.com

New Business Manager
Steve Kane
skane@yrg.com

Managing Director,
Real Estate
Mike Rogerson
mrogerson@yrg.com

EDITORIAL
905-640-2612
Fax: 905-640-8778

ADVERTISING
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Canadian Circulation Ontario Press Council
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Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

A York Region Newspaper Group community newspaper The Sun-Tribune, published every Thursday and Saturday, is a member of the Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Torstar Corporation. Metroland is comprised of 70 community publications across Ontario. The York Region Newspaper Group includes The Liberal, serving Richmond Hill and Thornhill, Vaughan Citizen, The Economist & Sun (Markham), The Era-Banner (Newmarket/Aurora), Stouffville Sun-Tribune, Georgina Advocate, York Region Business Times, North of the City, yorkregion.com and York Region Printing.