

OPINION

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Sun-Tribune

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Why support churches,?

Re: Feb. 22 edition of The Sun-Tribune.
Well, this story was a joy to read. Nary a ripple about the lack of fluoride in our water, says columnist Jim Thomas. Has Mr. Thomas listened to any of our dentists? If he had, I'm sure he would have heard something other than the ill-informed and superstitious views he heard "50-some years ago."

Rat Poison in our water? Maybe they were demons.

The editorial reminds us to be thankful of the churches in our town. Be thankful, I suppose, for those who vote Reform or Conservative, resenting taxation and a secular sharing of resources.

Grateful, I guess, for perpetuating and institutionalizing poverty, so we can earn God's grace by serving the poor. He has created and whose pain He has clearly decided not to alleviate.

And, as we proceed through the paper, Mayor Wayne Emmerson has run out of previous administrations to blame for the terrible planning in this town.

Letter writer Dale Carter brightly points out what is happening with respect to development in Stouffville now, is the direct result of Mr. Emmerson's 1990s council's greed, myopia and intellectual deficiency.

And gosh, says Mr. Emmerson, it's darn frustrating to deal with the results of bad

planning.

I can only re-iterate, underlining its charity, Mr. Carter's statement that "To say that Mr. Emmerson is ill-equipped to deal with the challenges facing Whitchurch-Stouffville over the next four years would be a charitable understatement."

MATT DOURIS
STOUFFVILLE

Too much fluoride wrong, too

Re: Should fluoride be added to our water?, Feb. 8.

Fluoride: Is there a story here? New recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Dental Association say parents need to be aware of how much fluoride babies and young children are exposed to.

One of the more effective ways to reduce the already low fluoride levels the youngest children are getting is looking at the reconstitution of powdered or concentrated liquid formulas, experts say.

Ready-to-use infant formula has low levels of fluoride because companies generally make it with demineralized water and it is recommended by the ADA.

TONY SOUSA
STOUFFVILLE



Leaders, not people, in dark on environment

As I cross the country, I keep coming up against two myths. These myths aren't perpetuated by ordinary Canadians, but by pundits and politicians. It's when I talk to real Canadians I realize how out-of-touch these commentators really are.

Myth No. 1: Canadians aren't willing to accept the changes necessary to truly address global warming (or, as I heard someone describe it recently, global weirding since it doesn't just cause warming, but a host of other bizarre climactic changes).

In fact, wherever I go, I meet people who are already making changes or are eager to do so — if they knew where to start.

So Canadians are willing — they're just looking for real leadership to ensure everyone does their part fairly so it isn't just dumped on the average citizen.

That seems to be the biggest obstacle for the public.

People rightly want any

response to global warming to be fair. I think that was why the federal government's One Tonne Challenge never really worked out.

Why, people likely asked themselves, should I go to the bother of figuring out how to reduce my greenhouse gases by a tonne (whatever that is) when industry and government themselves don't seem to have a plan on how to reduce their emissions at all?

Good question. It's the federal government's job to make sure any national global warming plan is fair and equitable, with no sector unduly taking on an unfair burden.

But that said, sources of greenhouse gases are widely known and readily measurable, so this is relatively easy to quantify.

The key is to start making the reductions now. As former chief economist with the World Bank Sir Nicholas Stern recently said at a news conference with me, doing so is actually a sound economic investment in the future.

The costs of moving to a low-



David Suzuki

carbon economy are very low compared to dealing with a world of unchecked global warming.

This leads me to myth No. 2: the notion it's impossible to meet Kyoto.

I'm not sure how this one started, likely through an industrial lobby group, but media pundits love it and repeat it unquestioningly.

The truth is meeting Kyoto now, even after years of stalling, is still readily achievable for Canada.

To start, we can go a long way to

meeting our targets through reductions within our own country, most of which will pay for themselves through increased efficiency over a few years anyway.

As for the remainder, we can purchase international carbon credits through the Kyoto Protocol's clean development mechanism (CDM).

This was set up precisely to help countries like Canada achieve our targets in a meaningful way.

Funds from the purchase of these credits goes toward projects in developing countries that will result in a net decrease in greenhouse gas emissions.

Global warming is a problem without borders, so if Canada helps reduce heat-trapping emissions in another part of the world, the effect is the same.

A global carbon market is an effective economic tool to help solve a global problem.

Canada should embrace this market. A well-regulated market can be an extremely effective way to

help developing countries "leapfrog" technologically and go from high-carbon to low-carbon sources of energy.

If Canada truly embraces a low-carbon future and becomes a leader in renewable energy and energy-efficiency technologies, international carbon credits can also help Canada's economy. Developing countries have to buy their low-carbon technologies from somewhere. If our leaders play their cards right, that somewhere could be from Canadian businesses.

We must not forget Canada made an international promise when we signed and ratified Kyoto.

We're bound by that commitment and we can't just turn our backs on it because it's no longer convenient. Judging from my own experiences, I'd say Canadians have figured this out. It's our leaders who are still in denial.

Take the Suzuki challenge at www.davidsuzuki.org

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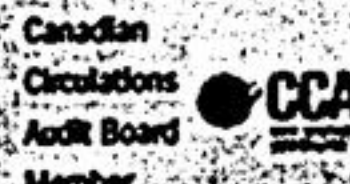
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