

OPINION

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Signs keep cropping up at centre

Lately, it seems the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville's engineering/planning department is installing more and more road signs at our famous Lebovic Leisure Centre in south Stouffville.

Almost every week I find new ones erected, which leads to confusion for everyone in a car or bus. In about 100 square metres, I found more than 25 signs, which makes me think the town has a surplus of them.

One sign, directing cars at the traffic circle, is contradictory to others. Three little round-about signs would have done it.

Also, the 'one-way' signs are not working at all as drivers, coming from the south or east, cannot see these. Maybe erecting a dozen or more 20 km/h signs will do.

If the town wants to adorn our leisure centre/library complex even more, then I would recommend a 'study' (a short one will do) to erect traffic lights, too.

We do have three entrances into our centre, from north, east and south. That is an opportunity to install six lights, three for incoming and three for outbound traffic.

Please review our leisure parking lots before it becomes a laughing matter.

Most visitors have a high school diploma and they visit the library for additional education; others try to pursue a healthy lifestyle. They are all using common sense. I assume they'll do when parking at the centre.

Too many signs mean nobody reads them. Drivers are paying attention to the road instead.

JACK VERHOOG
STOUFFVILLE

Seniors want street fixed, patrolled

Re: 4.9% tax hike means \$50 more per house, Feb. 13.

The Sun-Tribune reported the Rupert Avenue project between Ninth Line and West Lawn Crescent could be in jeopardy. Residents of the seniors' apartment building at 465 Rupert Ave. are very concerned.

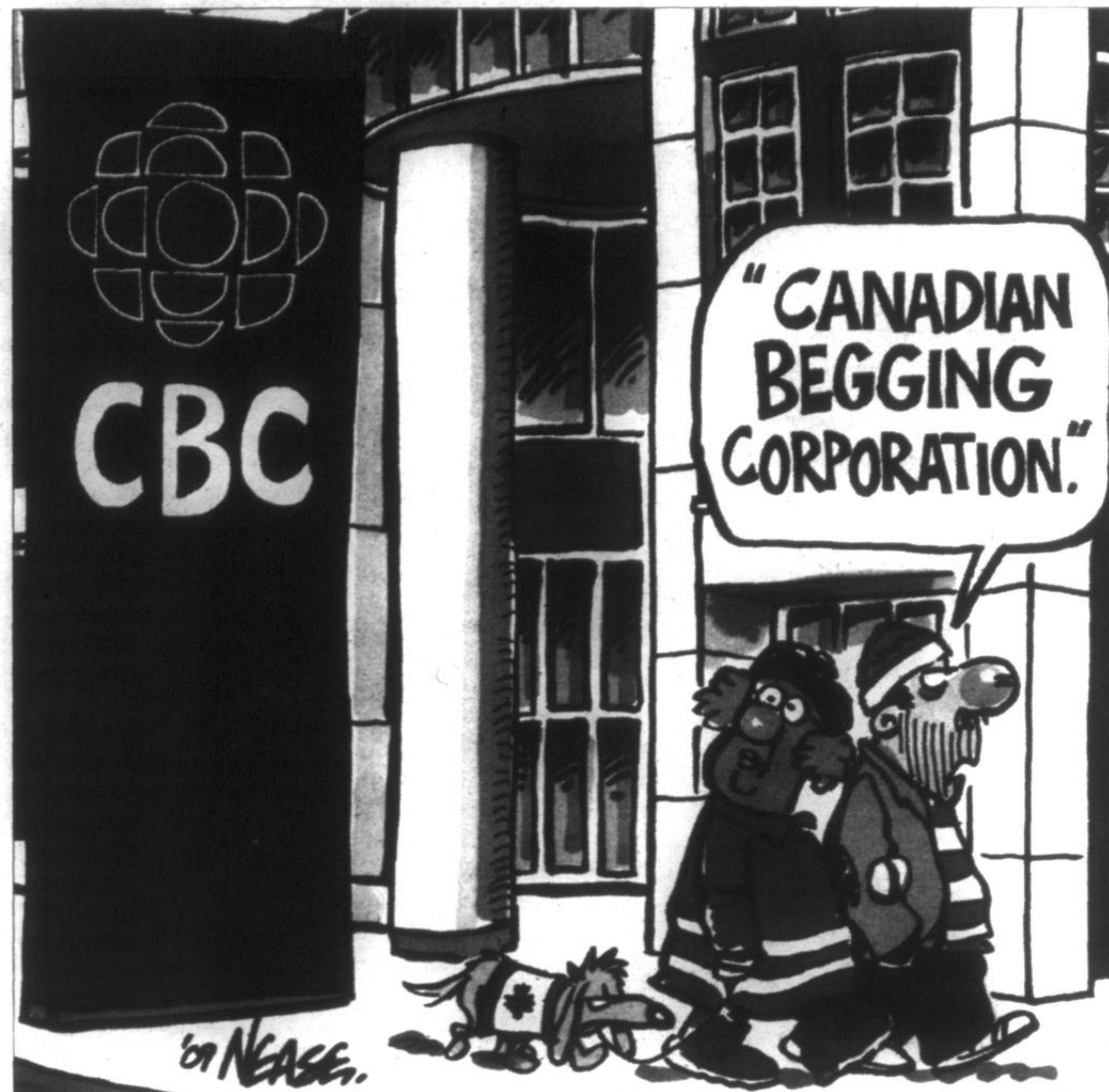
The street is in rough condition and full of pot holes. The Main Street construction caused drivers to use this route for a shortcut and many are still using it. A lot of drivers are ignoring the traffic signs, doing twice the speed limit.

When the new condo complex is built next to us, it will add hundreds of cars to traffic. When there are sporting events in the adjoining park, both sides of the street are lined with cars. Trying to get into traffic from the parking lot is dangerous business.

Many of us don't drive anymore and find it hard to navigate our shopping carts, especially during the rush hour.

I suggest sending a York Regional Police officer with a radar gun to catch speeders.

WILLIAM KUNNAS
STOUFFVILLE



A grumpy old man ponders the past

As I approach my 73rd birthday, I've been thinking about my children and grandchildren and what lies ahead for them.

We trumpet the enormous scientific advances and technological innovations of the 20th century, but is the world a better place than when I was born?

Reflecting on what we leave to our grandchildren, I have to answer with a resounding no.

Yes, things have changed a lot in my lifetime, sometimes for the better.

When I was born, there were no transoceanic phone lines, organ transplants, jet planes, satellites, television, oral contraceptives, photocopiers, CDs, computers, antibiotics or cellphones.

Today we have seasonal fruits and vegetables year-round, 24-hour TV channels, and bottled water shipped halfway around the world. And stuff!

My god, the stuff we can buy. We can choose from more than

200 brands of breakfast cereals, and last year's cellphones not only seem old-fashioned, they're designed to be thrown away.

Pills not only offer relief from the horror of erectile dysfunction, but they can now be taken daily to make us ready for action at all times. This is progress?

How quaint my childhood seems today. On hearing me talk about what we didn't have back then, children stare in amazement that anyone can remember such a primitive way of life.

"What did you do?" they ask, struggling to imagine a world without television, computers or cellphones. Yes, mine was an ancient civilization, now extinct.

It's not that I don't appreciate many of the advances.

When I was a teenager in the 1950s, I developed pneumonia and was near death when the doctor gave me a shot of penicillin. The next day, I was out of bed running around. It was truly a miracle drug.

My first portable computer in



David Suzuki

the 1980s allowed me to write and send my columns to the Globe and Mail from all over the world. And when my children went away to university in the 1990s, I could stay in touch by e-mail.

Yes, our world now provides a cornucopia of wondrous consumer goods. But at what cost?

When I was a child, back doors would open at 5:30 or 6 o'clock as parents called kids for supper. We were out playing in grassy fields, ditches or creeks. We drank from rivers and lakes and caught and

ate fish, all without worrying about what chemicals might be in them.

When I was a child, the oceans were still rich with marine life, places like the Amazon and Congo were still unexplored ecosystems and nuclear weapons and the arms race were still to come.

When I was born in 1936, just over two billion people lived on the Earth. The population has tripled since then.

Each of us now carries dozens of toxic chemicals embedded within us, cancer has become the biggest killer, and we have poisoned our air, water and soil.

The human rush to exploit resources or take over territory has devastated terrestrial and marine plants and animals.

Yes, we leave to our children and grandchildren a world of technological marvels and personal hyper-consumption, but at the expense of community, species diversity and clean air, water, and soil.

I don't remember feeling deprived or bored as a child. My friends were

neighbours and our surroundings were rich with biological treasures for us to discover and explore.

Almost all of our food was locally grown without the aid of chemicals. And growing up, we were attuned to the impact of weather and climate; we looked forward to the seasons and the changes they brought.

Have I become a grumpy old man who sees only the past as wonderful and decries the modern?

I don't think so, but I mourn the passing of a time when community and neighbours were a vital part of social and economic life, a time when nature was still rich.

I know we can't change the past, but together we can create a brighter future for our children and grandchildren.

We know where the problems lie, and science offers many solutions. Now it's time for action.

If I've learned one lesson in my 73 years, it's that everyone, including those in government and business, must pitch in if we want to change things for the better.

LETTERS POLICY

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

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