

## Split must be addressed

The rift between executive members of Memphremagog Conservation Inc. should be resolved by the group's membership, instead of being ignored by its president.

Stewart Hopps, Jacques Boisvert, Gisèle Benoit and Tony Straessle have all been told by the organization's nominating committee that their services as executive members are no longer needed.

On Saturday, Jean-Paul Clermont, MCI president, asked reporters to focus on the positive aspects of their annual general meeting. He chose not to comment on the absence of Hopps, Boisvert and Straessle.

In doing so, Clermont has failed to step forward where leadership is needed. There is a split and it must be addressed.

The dispute between the two camps centers on how vocal the group should be in its advocacy: Should it quietly go about seeing to the lake's conservation, or should it make its views widely known through aggressive lobbying.

The four ousted members are for the latter strategy.

Without passing judgement on which road is best to follow, there remains only one fair thing to do: Ask members what they think.

With Hopps gone, MCI loses one of its hardest working members. As a member of the conservation group for 20 years Hopps has fought for a cleaner environment. His experience and dedication are essential to an effective environmental watchdog. All this is without mentioning that Hopps is also one of the group's founding members.

The other three are also respected environmentalists.

What message, therefore, is being sent to the public when such people are kicked out — without explanation.

A large part of the problem rests with how executives are chosen. An exercise in democracy it is not.

The responsibility rest with a handful of people on the group's nominating committee. It is these people who decided not to invite the four back.

If the rift runs as deep as it apparently does, then it is up to individuals within the group to come forward and voice their concerns. And it is up to Clermont to ensure that it is done.

Do members want an aggressive group actively lobbying, or do they prefer quiet diplomacy?

In the end, it's up to members to decide.  
DAN HAWALESHKA

## Secret report advised feds in Johnson scandal

OTTAWA (CP) — The federal government was advised in a confidential report last year that it could emerge as a "white knight" from the Ben Johnson scandal by pointing the blame at athletes and national sports organizations.

The advice came from Decima Research in a February 1989 report commissioned by Fitness and Amateur Sports.

A month after Justice Charles Dubin began public hearings into the steroids scandal that cost Johnson his gold medal at the 1988 Seoul Olympics, Decima conducted focus-group research on public attitudes.

The 54-page report, obtained by the Ottawa Citizen under Access to Information, outlines its purpose as "the development and refinement of communications strategies" for government use in the Johnson affair.

The consultants found that very few people blamed the government for the scandal in which Johnson tested positive for steroid use after winning the 100-metre dash.

Later, other Canadian Olympic athletes admitted to steroid use. Decima said most people blamed the mess either on the athletes, coaches or national sports organizations (NSOs).

"For the federal government, this sentiment... may provide an opportunity to avoid or deflect criticism or perceptions of federal government responsibility for athletes testing positive for performance-enhancing drug use," said the report.

A few people felt the government should have ensured all athletes were "clean" before the Olympics, said the report. But it added that this betrayed a lack of understanding of how sports organizations operate the testing system.

### SUPPORTS STRATEGY

"Here is further support for a strategy of directing attention or criticism more on the NSOs and away from the government."

The consultants' most explicit advice came under the heading Strategic Implications. "If fingers need pointing," said Decima, "the focus group research suggests as appropriate a posture of aiming them (directly or indirectly) at the participants involved in the events of Seoul and before them at the NSOs."

Four months after the report, Decima conducted another public-opinion poll of Canadians. The results of that poll were revealed by the Citizen a week ago.

It found only 15 per cent supported the government's life-time competition ban on Johnson, 49 per cent thought it should be limited to two years, 19 per cent said it should be four years, and 12 per cent said no action should have been taken.

The June 1989 poll also confirmed Decima's focus-group findings on who's viewed as the villain. Twenty-seven per cent blamed the national sports organizations, nine per cent fingered corporate sponsors, four per cent blamed the government, and 24 per cent blamed the lure of rich endorsement contracts.

Dubin released his report last month. Among his recommendations: a number of athletes and coaches be suspended from federal funding, subject to a right of appeal to an independent arbitrator; and the government should give sports organizations the authority to decide if Johnson can run again for Canada.

Sports Minister Marcel Danis has not formally responded to the report, saying his plan will come at the end of the summer.

## Letters

### Dispelled illusions of democracy

**Sir:**  
Due to the nature of my employment in the 1940s and early '50s, I traveled for what in those days quite extensively in Ontario, the Atlantic provinces and eastern seaboard of the U.S.

In Canada, outside of Quebec, I was forever bending the ear of anyone who would listen to tout the beauties and benefits of my home province. In the States I touted Canada and Canadianism. In other words, I was an unofficial ambassador of good will, a true Canadian and a proud Québécois.

Unfortunately, the politics and politicians of the past twenty years have dispelled any illusions I ever had of democracy, justice, rights, and fairness and leadership in this so-called, by our politicians, great democracy

that stretches from sea to sea.  
101 TO WHIT: *Je peut vivre avec ça.* I was always willing to give a hand up to anyone who couldn't do it on his own. My American friends think this law a little rude, but what do they know about civil liberties?

*L'affaire du Ministre de Tourisme* vs a sports scribe in Boston: The first act in a comedy skit.

A member of our august elected body says Jehovah Witnesses are parasites. Who can question someone who represents our society?

*L'affaire Lac Meech:* From the editorials and political cartoons I have read and viewed from Maine to Miami, Québec is portrayed as a laughing stock and cast doubt on our federal leadership.

This latest despicable act in Oka

will only serve to take us from the press of the eastern seaboard to world coverage.

And to add insult to injury, a public statement by our premier said, in effect, — we are one society with one set of laws for everyone. This, in the wake of many convictions of Québec federal officials caught with their hands in the public till right up to their elbows, sentenced with what amounts to a lec-

ture. We are one society with one set of rules. *D'être pur laine n'est pas assez pur.* A person would have to be 100 per cent nylon to believe this.

The same rhetoric from our Minister of Security, a man I went to school with, I am ashamed of ever being associated with him for even that short length of time in my life.

J.D. LYNN  
R.R. 1 Cookshire

### A good wise man

**Dear Editor,**  
Vale Perkins is only a building or two, and it certainly does not look like it was erected in the last century or so, — but nevertheless, this is where my friend, and friend of everyone, Howard Jewett lived.

He passed away recently, and I for one miss him terribly. He was a good wise man, and the kindest person one would ever hope to meet.

I could write thousands of words about this man, his anecdotes, his home spun philosophy, but that is not the point of this. We should all remember Howard Jewett, and his actions, because if we did, even for a brief moment, our world would be a much better place.

Sincerely,  
R.K. STEIN,  
Mansenville

**Editor:**  
I don't think you were very fair in assigning Scott Verity Stevenson to ride the mighty Massawippi and Tomifobia Rail Road putt-putt.

Instead of relishing the rhythm of the rails, the imagined soot in the face, the long slow pull up the valley, the inviting vista from the high mountain pass and the thrill of the descent along the roaring gorge — instead of all that, he spends most of his time

**Re: "West Bolton swim program keeps head above water"**

**Dear Sir,**  
In your July 12 edition of the supplement "Brome Country news", I was pleased to see the swim program given an important profile. The group of volunteers concerned works to keep the program alive and renders an important service to the community.

However, as councillor of the Town of Brome Lake responsible for social programs, it seems there has been a

### Not very fair

complaining about the noise. When he finds something to praise, what is it? Bits of flora and fauna in the ditch:

We scared up blue herons, ducks and many other birds. Stopping to inhale the sweetness of a pine forest, we found tracks of three deer... In the motionless air of the Tomifobia river valley, beaver dams and huts dominated the ponds.

### Considerable oversight

considerable oversight in making no mention at all of the supporting role the Town of Brome Lake (TBL) has played. The chief administrator, Mrs. Nancy Dixon, is a West Bolton resident. As are several of the volunteers, but many of the others are from the TBL. TBL annually contributes a minimum of \$3,000 (\$6,000 this year) to finance the program which takes place at Douglass Beach in the TBL. TBL has provided for the purchase, construction and/or maintenance of

January and February. No more black-outs; just...brown-outs? Anyone for golf?

Yours truly  
JASON KR PAN  
Georgeville

The bucolic images are supposed to make us nostalgic for steam locomotion? This is supposed to persuade us that we liked the Industrial Revolution so much we want summer reruns? I'll bet those granolas over at Sentier Massawippi fell off their two-wheelers laughing!

V. MARTYN SADLER  
Sherbrooke

the picnic areas, rafts and wharfs used by the swim program. Photocopies for the program are made at the TBL office. Registration takes place at the TBL Fire Hall. And there's surely more...

The Town of Brome Lake actively supports the swim program and credit should be given where credit is due.

MICHAEL CALUORI  
Councillor for Social Programs  
Town of Brome Lake



## Keegstra's teachings resulted in family's confusion, grief

CALGARY (CP) — The Andrew family has left Eckville, but they haven't forgotten what happened in the small central Alberta farming community.

Four of the five Andrew children were students of Jim Keegstra, convicted five years ago Friday of promoting hatred against Jews in classes at Eckville high school.

The Keegstra affair "opened my eyes," said Blair Andrew, 23, who is studying to become an oilfield technician. "I don't take anything for granted anymore. I find out things for myself."

Keegstra's teachings and high-profile, three-month trial resulted in confusion, grief and split relationships, family members say. But the affair also had some positive effects.

"Some of his teachings were off the

wall, but Keegstra made you think for yourself after you left school, even though he may not have intended that," said Blair's twin brother, Brad. "Now we've formed our own opinions."

Three of the four now live in the Red Deer area of central Alberta and one is in Rocky Mountain House.

The twins said they met many Jews since leaving school and recognized the baselessness of Keegstra's anti-Semitic teachings.

"I've found more anti-Semitism in the province than I thought there would be," said Blair, who testified at the trial.

### 'GUTTER RATS'

"We have to start defending ourselves from hate-mongers," said Blair, whose school notes were riddled with Keegstra's references to

Jews as "gutter rats" and "rich intellectual playboys."

In 1988, the Alberta Court of Appeal set aside Keegstra's conviction, ruling the law was inconsistent with the guarantee of freedom of expression. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada, which has reserved its decision until an undetermined date.

The twins' mother, Margaret, complained to school officials about Keegstra's teaching — at the time he was attacking Catholics — as early as 1975.

"I was raised that you never questioned teachers or priests or doctors; they were educated and knew everything," said Margaret, who later became Eckville's first woman mayor in 1986. "This was a hard lesson for me."

Margaret, who has moved with her husband to Brooks in southern Alberta, said the Keegstra controversy "brought our family closer together" as others turned against them for rocking the boat.

Parent Susan Hareus prefers to look at the positive effects of the affair.

Hareus, a parent whose complaints led to Keegstra being fired from his teaching job in 1982, said the students have become more aware of racism — "and the multicultural fabric that keeps this country together."

Keegstra, 56, said he would not go back to teaching if given the chance. "The system is perverted," he said in a telephone interview from the garage in Eckville where he works as a mechanic. "They're telling the students lies."