



Parlez-moi D'HUMOUR

Alcide Borik



NOTRE MAIRE QUI ÊTES ODIEUX...

Au cours d'une longue carrière à couvrir les Conseils de Ville, que ce soit à Côte-des-Neiges, à NDG, à Ville St-Laurent, à Ville Mont-Royal, à Outremont, à Villeray, Parc Extension et j'en passe, j'ai entendu bien des prières qui demandaient au seigneur la clairvoyance des conseillers pour des décisions... éclairées. Les résultats n'ont jamais été très convaincants.

Mais c'est une tradition, qu'avant la réunion du Conseil, nos édiles ont souvent eu besoin de se regrouper une dernière fois, avant la séance pour prendre un petit alcool (ou deux), et ajuster leurs violons pour la suite stratégique des événements. Alors, Monsieur Tremblay, et pour mettre d'accord tous les maires du Québec, ils n'ont qu'à inviter les citoyens à la prière à 18h45 (que vienne qui voudra) et commencer la séance du Conseil à 19 heures, comme d'habitude. Qui sait, il y aura peut-être plus de monde que d'habitude. Voilà comment on évite les emmerdes...
...Et vive la démocratie!

J'ai donc décidé, en préambule à ma chronique, de vous offrir ma propre petite prière ; si vous êtes athée, agnostique, ou défenseur des droits de ne pas la lire, lisez-la les yeux fermés !

Notre maire qui êtes odieux, faites que Monsieur Harper arrête de couper Aux provinces de l'est pour donner à l'ouest, Et de fabriquer des budgets électoralistes Dans le but (louable) de battre les djihadistes.

Faites que M. Couillard, pour mieux nous "bâillonner", arrête de pelleter son manque à gagner dans la cour de notre belle cité,

Faites que Denis Coderre arrête de gonfler les quotas à remplir par les policiers

Avec amendes grotesques et contraventions ubuesques, (je veux dire dignes d'Ubu), Pour se constituer... des surplus! Nos policiers valent mieux que ça!

Ainsi soit-il !

Quant au Cirque du Soleil, si nous le voulons, Il faudrait faire de bien grosses folies, Car, comme le dit le vieux dicton : Laliberté n'a pas de prix! ...

Et faites plutôt que notre équipe de Hockey referme enfin le cercle... en nous vengeant d'Ottawa!

Ainsi soit-il !

Que coule en abondance, notre sirop d'érable Sur notre table... Faites que nos étudiants, les plus à la page

Dépendent leurs pulsions et leur testostérone Dans un printemps acceptable, Faites qu'enfin triomphe le vieux bon sens

Au lieu de mettre le monde à feu et à sang, Et les réunisse très vite dans une quelconque auberge Avec leurs soixante douze vierges. (les nôtres sont bien plus belles!) Qu'ils se contentent de faire la fête Au lieu d'aller jouer les coupeurs de têtes.

Ainsi soit-il.

En ce qui me concerne, n'oubliez pas, seigneur, Faites que je comprenne mon ordinateur, Et pour m'éviter de vivre un nouveau drame, Faites surtout qu'un jour, je comprenne les femmes!!!

Federal budget another blow to generational equity

The government allocates approximately \$11,000 per person age 65+, compared to around \$2,000 per person under age 45

Budget 2015 spends more on grandma's medical care and income security, while asking grandma to contribute less to paying for these benefits. It may sound like a reverent thing to do for one's elders. But it is a blow to generational equity.

The Canada Health Transfer reaches \$34 billion in 2015, up \$2 billion from the previous year. Nearly 50 cents of every healthcare dollar goes to the 15 per cent of the population age 65+. Old Age Security is also up \$2 billion, now at \$45.7 billion.

Simultaneously, the Conservative government increased the contribution limit for Tax Free Savings Accounts. TFSA's are primarily used by older, affluent citizens. Canadians age 60+ are three to five times more likely to max out their TFSA's compared to those aged 18 to 49. TFSA's then shelter the deposited investments from further taxation no matter how well investments pay off. Plus, budget 2015 cut another \$167.5 million per year in taxes for affluent seniors by changing rules governing Registered Retirement Income Funds.

This pattern might be okay if the evidence showed that our aging population had prepaid for its medical care as it has prepaid much of its Canada and Quebec public pensions.

Unfortunately, a new study about population aging, generational equity and the middle class shows it hasn't. Spending on medical care for citizens aged 65+ is up \$32 billion annually compared to 1976 (when measured as a share of our economy). But governments haven't raised any additional revenue to pay for this extra spending.

I want my 70-year-old mom and 99-year-old grandmother to have the medical care they need.

They want to pay their fair share. They know they have personal responsibility to do so. Otherwise, they leave the bills to their kids and grandchildren, or leave less in government coffers to adapt to new challenges facing their offspring.

This problem is already playing out. Total government spending on family time, cash and services along with grade school and postsecondary is down around \$15 billion annually compared to 1976. This spending is down even though twice as many young people now attend postsecondary, and the demand for family time and child care services has skyrocketed along with the proportion of young women in the workforce.

But wait. Hasn't the government been calling this the Family Tax Cut budget? Doesn't this benefit younger generations?

When we examine total federal spending

in 2015 on Elderly benefits, Employment Insurance, Children's Benefits, the Canada Health Transfer and the Canada Social Transfer, the government allocates approximately \$11,000 per person age 65+, compared to around \$2,000 per person under age 45.

The Conservative income splitting plan did little to influence this distribution. Although the goal of promoting parental time with kids is laudable, income splitting helps just 38 per cent of families with children. The maximum benefit is \$2,000/year. Only well-off one-earner couples will save the maximum. Most will save \$1,000 or less at a cost to taxpayers of \$2 billion annually.

Since few benefit from income splitting, the Prime Minister Stephen Harper also increased the universal child care benefit by \$60/month for children under 18. This change will not yet bring federal spending on income supports for families with children back to the level it was when today's aging population enjoyed the universal Family Allowance program while raising their children.

Nor does the Prime Minister's plan build child care spaces, or bring their cost down from above university tuition levels. This is a problem, because affordable child care is a major missing piece of our social policy puzzle along with the loss of parental time at home compared to the past. Both problems are now much greater for younger Canadians in their prime child rearing years since their full-time earnings are down thousands of dollars compared to 1976, while housing prices are up hundreds of thousands.

That's why younger generations need a lobby.

In anticipation of the budget, the Canadian Association of Retired Persons organized public demonstrations in support of TFSA increases and medical care spending, among other issues. Their organizing contributes to a world of politics that responds accordingly. So long as the aging population has a strong lobby, younger generations deserve one too. When younger generations don't organize, the world of politics doesn't work for all generations.

Dr. Paul Kershaw

The opinions on THIS PAGE reflect the consensus of Editorial Board.

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