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LETTERS

RBC's fossil fuel support

RBC is Canada's No. 1 fossil-fuel bank, the fifth-worst offender in the world, bankrolling coal, oil and gas to the tune of \$160 billion and counting since the signed 2016 Paris agreement. It is the main bank funding the Coastal GasLink pipeline across unceded Wet'suwet'en territory in northern B.C., which is being built without the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs permission.

On March 29, the Community-Industry Response Group, an arm of the RCMP, raided the Wet'suwet'en territory and arrested five Land Defenders. Thousands of people in over 40 towns and cities across Canada, including in Dundas, came out to support the Wet'suwet'en on April 1 ahead of RBC's shareholders meeting on April 5.

RBC had a historic opportunity at its AGM to pass resolutions that respect "free, prior and informed consent" of Indigenous people and commit to a strong divestment timetable. Instead, RBC physically blocked some leaders with passes named Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chief Na'Moks and environmental justice advocate Roishetta Ozane.

RBC shareholders rejected resolutions to respect the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous peoples and to set 2030 targets for reducing absolute greenhouse gas emissions.

Do you have RBC investments? Support the planet on Earth Day, April 22, by divesting from RBC. Tell your bank manager the reason why and move your money to a credit union.

Sue Markey, Hamilton

Fixing skilled trade shortage

Recently the education minister stated all high school students have to take a technical course starting in Grade 11. This should have been in place years ago. Many students leave Grade 12 who do not continue to college or university for a number of reasons. For the most part they have few skills to enter the workforce.

What is necessary to remedy this situation is to change the curriculum to have students take courses in trades starting in Grade 9. Now some Grade 11 students have a chance to take a co-op class. This option should be available in Grade 9. After four years, all students will be able to choose an occupation with related experience. What Ontario needs are students who go to college or university, but more importantly, have the experience to go into a skilled trade.

Roman Caruk, Hamilton

Golf courses are just fine

Here we go again. Another review to waste precious resources on something that is not broken. How much is another review going to cost in salaries? These courses are a gem for the city. I see people walking the rail trail, climbing stairs, and cycling. In the winter we see cross country skiers and kids on sleds. The place is always busy if the weather is good. Councillor Maureen Wilson should be focused on things that will truly help us move forward as a city. Does she really believe more people will use the green space that is the golf course if we're not there golfing? I don't for one second believe this was an election issue. I believe she's got a personal agenda since this is not the first time she's brought this up.

Len Celeste, Hamilton

Too many freebies

Why do we get so many freebies from charities? If money is tight charities should not be giving out grocery bags, pens, paid birthday cards and address labels by the tonne. If people are going to donate they do not need a gift.

Dan Berk, Hamilton

Unreasonable tax hike

The recent editorial trying to justify the 5.8 per cent municipal tax increase was well written, but wrong in its conclusion. There is no way to justify an increase of this magnitude. Taxpayers are struggling to keep up with inflation on all fronts and now this! Where are they supposed to get the money? Contrary to prevailing opinion, such tax increases actually exacerbate the problems of food insecurity and home affordability. Landlords will pass on the increase to renters who are already paying exorbitant rents. Homeowners hit with high mortgage rates and high house prices will now have to absorb another hit. It's no wonder there is such an unprecedented need at food banks and homelessness is on the rise. It's getting more and more expensive to live here on this unreasonable tax only makes it worse.

Nick Mischione, Hamilton

Make voting mandatory

A recent letter suggested giving people lottery tickets to bribe them into voting. Bad idea. Let's just make voting mandatory as they have in Australia to good effect.

Marilyn Dillon, Burlington

Make it mandatory II

I would just like to give an opinion about voting. I heard the by-election in Hamilton Centre saw 22 per cent of the eligible voters taking time to vote. People gave their lives so we could have such freedoms, and people who can't find 30 minutes every four years to vote are irresponsible. Maybe it's time we made it mandatory.

John Worthy, Hamilton

McMaster hunger strikers and Mac Divest got it right

University needs to divest and lose the generators

JAMES S. QUINN

No matter which way you cut it, the supply of and demand for fossil fuels is at the root of climate change. The hunger strikers protested McMaster University's intransigence on both fronts. On the supply side, McMaster dragged on with its investments in fossil fuels and is still refusing to commit to divestment with a timeline. Most recently, on the demand side, it has increased the university's direct release of GHGs (Green House Gases) by constructing four natural gas-powered generators that will save the university money thanks to "peak shaving".

Mac Divest students were frustrated with a lack of response from McMaster administration after they tried petitions, rallies, questions at town halls (blocked by webinar setup), etc. I share their frustration, as I have worked since 2014 as chair or co-chair of McMaster faculty (currently MacGreenInvest) pushing for a pledge to divest without a reasonable time frame, without success.

Divestment targets the fossil fuel corporations, particularly those identified as the top 200 extractors of fossil fuels (Carbon Underground 200). These companies share a business plan to profit while increasing global warming. We understand the devastating impacts of fossil fuels. Continuing at current rates or ramping up extraction is wrong. Investing in and profiting from this extraction is wrong.

Fossil fuel corporations knew by the 1980s that their product causes global warming. They hid the results and funded researchers who would muddy the waters on impacts of CO2 and other GHGs on global temperatures. They understand that anything left in the ground will be a stranded asset and are trying to extract and sell as much as possible. Divestment, cur-



MAC DIVEST

The site of new gas generators at McMaster University.

rently tallied at over \$40 trillion by over 15,000 institutions, takes away the social licence of these destructive corporations.

During town halls, representatives of the McMaster administration claimed they would focus on decarbonizing on reducing release of GHGs on campus and in their investments. Faculty and students support this approach, but insist that divestment must also happen. Divestment and decarbonizing are not mutually exclusive!

Since 2014, McMaster has implied that it was divesting without any public statement on that front. Here we are nine years later, still invested. McMaster University has failed on the supply side.

What about the demand side? There have been some good changes on campus. However, McMaster bought a gas-fired electricity plant. Natural gas in Ontario is mostly fracked fossil-gas from Pennsylvania. That gas is fraught with CO2 emissions when burned, as well as methane releases associated with fracking and transportation. Methane is over 25 times more impactful on climate change than CO2 unit for unit.

There are clear alternatives to "peak shaving" that would allow the university to sell or mothball the gas-fired generators.

The first is energy conservation on the days of peak energy usage. Peak hours occur on about 25 days in the summer after 3 pm. We already know how to work from home, so on those days, the university could announce an energy conservation day. Essential rooms would be spared to avoid ruining experiments, etc. while shutting off air conditioning elsewhere.

The second would be battery storage where batteries would be topped up during low use periods and would be available for peak shaving when needed. McMaster Admin says, "maybe later."

So, why has the university failed on both counts, supply (divestment), and demand (fracked gas generators)? I think civil rights activist Clara Luper nailed it back in the 1950s and '60s when she was credited with pointing out that "money doesn't talk, it screams." McMaster as a university has a choice. Change its motto to "Brighter World with GHGs" and kiss environmentally conscious potential students and alumni donations goodbye or get it right by pledging and divesting by 2025 and selling or mothballing the generators.

JAMES S. QUINN IS A PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGY AT MCMASTER UNIVERSITY AND CHAIR OF MACGREENINVEST.

Even the Lord of Lies has his limits



THOMAS FROESE
OPINION

Lately I've been thinking a lot about running for president of the United States. I told the family. Everyone got quiet and looked at each other. Then my boy said, "You've got this, Paps. I'd vote for you." That's all I needed to hear. I'm off. I'm running. I know the way. Follow me!

I realize that I might be a dark horse in this race. I'm not Democrat. I'm not Republican. I'm not even American. It's OK. I'll lie. I'll be Machiavelli. I'll lead the new Machiavelli Party. It can be created.

If you paid attention in high school history (thank you Mr. Ashley) you'll remember Machiavelli, the 16th-century Italian diplomat who wrote about how to lie and cheat your way to the top in politics. Let them taste the tip of your sword. Be the cunning fox. The ravenous lion.

It's not rocket science. Not in our post-truth culture where the truth is that people don't care for truth. They only care for success. This is Machiavelli. His political treatise, "The Prince," will be our guide.

We'll get lawyers who lie big. Because there is no lie if it's not a big lie. Besides, what if there is no truth? What if there are just different perspectives? Just different points of view? You know? No, really. This is how you want your lawyers, your and your kingdom, to think.

Then your backside is covered when you go to foreign nations for

dirty on your political opponents. It's covered when you cook the books. When you hunt for extra votes. When you encourage insurrection. When, speaking of your backside, you get sued for sexual assault, or when you hide hush money payments.

Good liars help you follow the ungodly rule to "Do unto others as you expect they'll do to you." And this, really, is why I'm running for president. So, people, send money. Lots of it. Let me work with you. Here's your hat. Together we'll make life great again.

I should say also that I'm now the perfect age to be president, because whatever age I am is the perfect age. And I'm in perfect health. Which is why I support psychiatric evaluations of my opponents. I know other liars are out there. They're trying. They always have.

Bush lied about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Clinton lied about not having sex with Monica Lewinsky. Nixon lied about Watergate. Johnson lied about pretty much everything. How far back do we go? "I can't tell a lie, Pa," is what little George Washington said, confessing he split his father's cherry tree with a hatchet. Except he didn't. It's just a fable. Another lie.

No, there's nothing new under the sun. Machiavelli didn't wake up one day and come up with this himself. Old Beelzebub knows. Watch the eyes. Get the poker face. Be the serpent.

Abraham Lincoln, funny enough, had a poker face. Honest Abe, Republican, America's 16th president, a lawyer no less, so hopelessly truthful that during civil war he



SANTI DI TITO

Machiavelli, who was eventually tortured, jailed and banished from political life, would never have taken on Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Froese writes.

saved the nation — 620,000 deaths later — from destroying itself. Lincoln's beautifully odd and honest face raises an entirely different set of issues.

There's nothing more to say about this, except that 158 years ago today, April 15, 1865, Lincoln died. The previous day, Good Friday that year, he was shot in the head. An honest president assassinated on that sort of day? What are the odds? One in 365, I suppose. Do you know what I mean?

Even the Lord of the Lies has his limits. Even Machiavelli, who was eventually tortured, jailed and banished from political life, would never take on Lincoln. "Do I not destroy my enemies when I make them my friends?" That's Lincoln. Gosh. It's like sunlight to a vampire. Like deadly water on that wicked witch, "I'm melting! Melting!"

This is it. If anyone bothers to stare them down, eventually even the most monstrous bullies will fall. They'll crash and burn. Just saying. Let's be aware.

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