OPINION & EDITORIALS

The CENTRAL NEWSPAPER
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Let's get real about the proposed pipeline to the B.C. coast…

If we as Canadians are ever again going to achieve greater take-home pay and a self-reliant economy, unblocking our oil and gas is one of the best ways to boost paycheques and make life in this country more affordable. More oil and gas revenues will translate into more money for schools and hospitals, help to build affordable homes and lower the cost of groceries. We need a pipeline to the Pacific to get world prices for our product, and to limit our reliance on a single market. Unfortunately, federal rules and taxes have driven production out, paycheques down and our cost of living up. The recent announcement of a new 'memorandum of understanding' does not promise a pipeline will actually be built. It promises that seven months from now, a pipeline proposal will be referred to a federal office for two further years of study. After that, Mark Carney will award B.C.'s NDP Premier the power to veto it altogether – a veto that violates the Constitution. This from a Prime Minister who promised during the last election to move with 'unimaginable speed' on major projects. The deal further proposes raising the Liberal's own Industrial Carbon Tax that will work only to drive further production out. This newspaper is cautiously optimistic to see that the Alberta Premier actually forced the Prime Minister to flip-flop on some of his other costly environmental policies that he supported until a few weeks ago. However, the memorandum does not bring a new pipeline to the Pacific; it brings higher taxes, long delays and more short-term dependence on the U.S. The Constitution gives the federal government exclusive authority to approve an interprovincial pipeline. Under Bill C-5, the Prime Minister gave himself the power to approve federal projects, including circumventing certain regulations and laws. Everything else – the endless committees, meetings, studies, paperwork, memorandums – is a distraction to delay and deflect responsibility away from his office. He promised projects with 'things previously thought impossible at speeds we haven't seen in generations.' He promised to 'build now'. Yet, it's been eight months. Still nothing but press conferences and paper shuffling. He needs to repeal the Industrial Carbon Tax to lower prices and make production and pipelines profitable. Let's unblock the trillions of dollars of private sector energy investment that has been waiting to produce more oil and gas, build profitable pipelines and ship a million barrels of oil to Asia each day at world prices. Press conferences are not enough.

Mark Carney's conflicts of interest have been exposed…

Parliamentary committee testimony has shone a bright light on the millions of dollars Prime Minister Mark Carney will receive from Brookfield as performance pay. Brookfield's Chief Operating Officer Justin Beber confirmed that 95 per cent of Brookfield-owned and operated companies are not included in Mark Carney's ethics screen. That's 1,900 other companies that will enrich the Prime Minister if they perform well. Canadians also discovered that same senior Brookfield executive flew to meet Mr. Carney in the Prime Minister's Office in Ottawa this October. Beber said he 'took the afternoon off' to lobby the Prime Minister on issues he claimed weren't Brookfield-related. But this private meeting with a Brookfield executive didn't trigger the ethics screen – the opposite of what the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff and the Clerk of the Privy Council said should happen. There appears to be a pattern of Mr. Carney granting preferential access to his Brookfield executives. In April, Brookfield subsidiary NorthRiver Midstream lobbied him directly. In May, Carney met the CEO of Brookfield Infrastructure, Sam Pollock, in Washington, DC. Mr. Sabia and Mr. Blanchard, the two individuals responsible for Prime Minister Carney's 'conflict of interest screen,' do not have the list of investments held by the Brookfield Global Transition Fund, which is directly tied to Mr. Carney's performance pay from Brookfield. They also do not know the full list of companies or businesses that have the largest impact on Mr. Carney's future Brookfield payouts. What's worse is that both Mr. Blanchard and Mr. Sabia can be fired by the Prime Minister for any reason, giving them an incentive to act in Mr. Carney's interest. That might be why Mr. Sabia told the committee that even if there is overlap between Brookfield's investments in modular housing and the government's support for modular homes, they wouldn't be subject to a conflict of interest screen – despite the decision benefiting Mr. Carney's future performance pay. Mr. Sabia already made clear in his testimony that he couldn't do his own job of managing Mr. Carney's conflicts without selling his Brookfield assets. Yet the Prime Minister is keeping his assets from Brookfield despite being able to make political decisions that affect Brookfield's success, putting personal profits ahead of Canadians' trust. All of this amounts to nothing less than a scandal of unparalleled proportions.

Mayor Carter's tax-and-spend agenda must end now…

Mayor Dan Carter has proposed a property tax increase of 4.68% in his 2026 budget. When added to last year's hike, residents in Oshawa will have been burdened with an increase well above 12% in only two years. This should bring about an absolute mutiny among councillors who have the power to override these unfathomable increases. Amendments to the budget will no doubt come forward by those members of council who have the strength of fortitude to stand against the mayor – who, by the way, has the option to veto anything he doesn't agree with. This newspaper expects he will do just that – at least for the majority of amendments. This is, by all accounts, Dan Carter's last budget, and it will take a lot of pressure from councillors for him to accept any reduction in what has become his tax-and-spend legacy – one that he seems keen on preserving, literally at all costs. Councillor Bob Chapman is Deputy Mayor, and as such he will likely remain true to form and support Dan Carter all the way. Councillor Jim Lee spent most of his career making a living off of other people's taxes, and we doubt he has the stamina to demand any decrease. So that's three votes in favour of significant tax hikes right out of the gate. Looking at the rest of council, we see councillor John Gray as a very pragmatic person who may well decide to support any motion to reduce the tax levy increase. Councillor Tito-Dante Marimpietri has been positioning himself to be Oshawa's next mayor for some time, and we hope he chooses to oppose Dan Carter's tax hikes as a sign of things to come. Other members of council will hopefully do what is right and stop the spending madness that has enveloped City Hall, however, councillor Derek Giberson has marketed his political ideology as being very much to the Left, so it stands to reason he will be a tough sell on supporting amendments that would see major reductions in spending. What we do know is Oshawa taxpayers simply cannot be expected to pay for what Dan Carter obviously sees as his greatest contribution to the community, being a massive bureaucracy unparalleled in its ability to pick the pockets of anyone who chooses to make this community their home. Expressed as a percentage of the 2026 budget, staffing costs next year will reach 70% of all expenditures – a 10% increase in only five years. Back then, the cost of a City employee was $123,000, and next year that amount will have increased to $153,000. None of this makes sense, and none of it is sustainable. If current trends continue, wages and benefits will take almost the entire tax revenue stream and leave little for the actual physical component needed to maintain our infrastructure. We'll be watching closely as the coming days reveal just how much Oshawa taxpayers will be expected to contribute to this bureaucratic nightmare.

The CENTRAL NEWSPAPER welcomes your submissions and letters
As The CENTRAL works to provide an interesting and accurate reflection of the communities that make up Durham Region through our weekly news pages, we invite local citizens to participate in the conversation through submissions and letters to the editor.
We truly appreciate and support your efforts to make The CENTRAL your own.
Letters and submissions are welcome at newspaper@ocentral.com

Letters To The Editor:

WHAT IS ON YOUR MIND? Send letters to newspaper@ocentral.com

Dear Editor:

Did you see the recent story about the couple in Richmond Hill, Ontario, who rented out their basement on Airbnb — only to have the guests stop paying, refuse to leave, and stay in their home for months?
They've gone to Airbnb.
They've gone to the police.
They've gone to the courts.
No one can help them.
Why?
Because under the Doug Ford PCs, Ontario's Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) has collapsed into a system where even illegal occupants can stay for months or years while homeowners wait for a hearing.
In 2023, the LTB backlog exploded to over 53,000 unresolved cases — the largest in Ontario's modern history. Today, the backlog is still over 41,000 cases, with families waiting months just to be heard.
Instead of fixing the LTB, the Ford PCs shut down in-person hearing centres, botched the shift to virtual hearings, and allowed backlogs to grow to unprecedented levels.
Belinda Karahalios

Dear Editor:

i am a local business owner. I just about had it enough with our municipal and regional governments. Just recently I received a notice telling me no more recycle blue box pick ups. That if I wanted to continue that I would have to hire out a third party.
As it is I can't afford to pay rent or hydro. How am I to pay for garbage pick up. Not only that they at the City are talking about 8-9% property tax.
This is insane. Have you tried calling the City. Impossible to get through anyone and when you do it is a machine and you never get them to call back. As for the region. Four days for someone to get back to me.... only to tell me that it is out of their hands and that it is a Provincial if not Federal decision.
I am so fed up. High rents, high hydro. Can't find good reliable employees. My shops is downtown. I am tired of dealing with the homeless, the drug addicts and the likes. Do we have any representation in the core. Things keep getting from bad to worst and back to bad. Now this blue box. Wonder who at the province is not getting paid out.... You got to wonder.... possibly all this recycling bull is just that garbage in order for someone at the provincial level to fill their pockets.
I am so disgusted, tired and frustrated. Thank God we have a municipal election coming soon.
Herald Bach, Oshawa.

DEI OVERREACH REMINISCENT OF THE *WORST DAYS OF RACIAL SEGREGATION*

By Roslyn Kunin

The letters DEI, which stands for diversity, equity, and inclusion, are popping up everywhere. DEI is often presented as a new magic mantra that, if fully implemented, will solve all our social problems.
Diversity is important. The racial segregation that occurred in South Africa and the southern United States are examples of how things should not be done. Keeping people with physical or mental challenges confined to their homes is a waste of valuable human resources.
An even greater misuse of human capabilities is letting sex determine what jobs and activities people are allowed to do. Younger people may not be aware of this, but others may recall a time when job ads in newspapers were divided into "Help Wanted – Men" and "Help Wanted – Women."
No one would consider hiring a woman for a "man's job" back then, even if it was something like market research. Likewise, no man would consider "woman's work." Female doctors were a rare anomaly, and male nurses were nonexistent. Though not yet perfect, our performance on diversity has definitely improved since then.
DEI stands for diversity, equity, and inclusion
Equity usually refers to an equal distribution of income. We want everyone to have a fair share of the good things that the country can offer. We do not want to see the rich getting richer while the poor get poorer.
Despite much publicity to the contrary, the situation with respect to income equality in Canada is not getting worse. Those who claim it is are looking at the wrong numbers, namely gross income before taxes and transfers. Government policies exist to improve equity, and they are having the desired results. Once taxes have been deducted from high incomes and government transfers such as child tax credits and pensions added to lower ones, we see that income distribution in Canada is not the disaster some claim.
After taxes and transfers moderate the extremes of wealth and poverty, equity becomes a more valuable goal when it refers to equality of opportunity rather than equality of results. Equality of results logically leads to equality of effort. If everyone's earnings are the same, it makes sense not to work harder or contribute more than the least productive people.
The truth of this was demonstrated in the early days of Israel when there were both kibbutzim and moshavim. Kibbutzim were fully socialist operations where everyone worked according to their abilities and all were equally rewarded. Moshavim were collective farms with shared equipment, but each family had its own plot of land and could retain their earnings. Not surprisingly, productivity on the moshavim exceeded that of the kibbutzim.

Inclusion should follow once we address equality of opportunities and diversity. However, some of the most vocal supporters of DEI are creating exclusion instead of inclusivity.
Far from promoting an environment where everyone is included regardless of gender, race, religion, or other factors, they support practices that create exclusion at a level never before seen in free societies. They have gone too far in their desire to support minority groups that have faced discrimination in the past.
For example, allowing trans women (people born male who now self-identify as female) to compete in women's sports can be problematic. Despite their inclinations and any medical transformations, such individuals still have the physical advantages that led to the separation of men's and women's sports. If trans women are allowed to compete in women's sports, no person born female may ever win a medal again. Another example takes us back to gender-discriminating help-wanted ads. In the interest of improving diversity and helping minorities, many organizations now include phrases that effectively say, "No White, Straight Male Need Apply" or even "No White, Straight Person, Male or Female, Need Apply." This excludes the vast majority of the population and is the opposite of inclusivity.