

⚡ HEAT WARNING IN EFFECT

## Letters and comments, June 30

Posted: **06/30/2018 4:00 AM**

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Trumpian experience unreal

Re: *'Obsessed' in a sea of red* (June 28)

There were a number of appalling, disturbing and ultimately disappointing remarks made by this Canadian studying law in the United States.

This one, in particular, deserves a critical comment: "Boycotts are annoying. I don't like boycotts. As soon as there's a boycott or protest, I'm on the other side."

Wow. With that level of insightful analysis and thoughtful counter-argument development, I hope Steven Zackery will remain, and practise law, in North Dakota in support of his hero.

One thing I can agree with him on is that the Trumpian experience seems "unreal." Unfortunately, it is all too frighteningly real.

Randall Janis

Winnipeg

Portage and Main will stay closed

Throughout the 1960s, the City of Winnipeg planning division conducted a series of citywide transport studies. Based on these large-scale studies, further planning projects were initiated, including at the corner at Portage Avenue and Main Street. Smith Carter Architectural Firm was tasked with conducting the transit forecast studies, and ultimately concluded that mixing pedestrian and vehicular traffic would no longer be viable.

In 1976, the City of Winnipeg signed an agreement with private developers to open an underground concourse linking shopping malls under the four corner properties, historically known as Portage and Main. This included a 50-year deal to permanently close the pedestrian crossings at the intersection, which street works were completed for around 1978.

A recent city-commissioned study of Portage and Main concluded it would be possible to reopen Winnipeg's most famous intersection, but not without impacts to Winnipeg Transit and private motor-vehicle traffic. Although the commission has pointed out there would be an impact on traffic at the intersection, the report failed to indicate just how significant this impact would be.

As one drives throughout this city, it's abundantly clear that during the past 39 years, there have been decidedly more vehicles on the roads, the traffic is more congested and the infrastructure to service these vehicles has remained unchanged, aside from a few inner-city expressways, which have a tendency of moving you quickly from one gridlock to the next. There are simply too many vehicles for this infrastructure to handle.

The year the intersection closed, the population of Winnipeg was 262,966. In that year, based on national averages, there were 244,295 vehicles registered within the city. This takes into account all registered vehicles, from buses to trucks, cars, motorcycles — everything. Stepping ahead to 2017, the population of the city of Winnipeg was at 825,700, with the total number of registered vehicles sitting at 766,738. That represents an increase of 522,433 vehicles vying for basically the same infrastructure. Reopening this intersection to pedestrians would have the same result as if there were a permanent construction zone at the intersection.

As each year passes, our population and registered vehicle numbers will only continue to climb, and the half-million extra vehicles will be quickly eclipsed.

Either the study took this available data into account and the political sway glossed over it, or the study fell far short of its intent. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic was deemed no

longer viable in the '60s — it most certainly isn't viable in 2018. Common sense will dictate why Portage and Main will remain closed to pedestrian traffic.

The data used to determine the logistics of the traffic within Winnipeg are based on national averages, all of which are available online from Statistics Canada, the City of Winnipeg and demographic reports developed by various government agencies.

Rod Lehmann

Winnipeg

Support for limiting abortion

*Re: Health ministers responsible for reproductive health, too (June 27)*

It is shocking to see the response to Health Minister Kelvin Goertzen, who recently attended an anti-abortion rally in Steinbach. Goertzen and his wife have suffered five miscarriages. It is no wonder they sympathize with a cause that respects the value of unborn human life.

The inflammatory rhetoric is creating serious divisions among Canadians, and impoverishes the conversation we need to be having on an issue of national import. Many Canadians refuse to be manipulated by the name-calling and shaming of ordinary citizens whose beliefs differ from that of a hardline, pro-abortion mentality.

National polling repeatedly shows Canadians are not being swayed by the rhetoric. Time and again, high percentages of Canadians say they want restrictions on abortion (72 per cent). They don't agree with second- or third-trimester abortions, and they don't want their tax dollars funding them. They certainly (92 per cent) want to see abortions for sex-selection stopped.

Sandeep Prasad, executive director of Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights, in his article attempts to balance the fact that there are differing opinions, with the fact that he demands absolute allegiance to his perspective from the health minister.

The law may allow for abortion, but that does not mean all Canadians support it. His position is rigidly undemocratic.

His assumption that abortion is a "right" and that the government absolutely must fund it, as well as access to the RU486 drug, raises the question: what of those millions of Canadians, including Canadian women, who don't agree?

In his universe, the health minister must ignore us and spend our tax dollars on a medical procedure we see as totally opposed to the health and well-being of women, families and unborn babies.

The press and pro-abortion activists do not speak for all people.

Natalie Sonnen

Executive director, LifeCanada

Chiliwack, B.C.

Part of the problem?

Re: Taking action on climate, or not (*Letters*, June 26)

Just as we can count on the sun rising tomorrow morning, *Free Press* readers can expect a rebuttal letter from Edward Katz immediately after an article on the need to combat climate change.

I can understand global-warming-denying and carbon-tax-bashing op-eds from the Fraser Institute, the Frontier Centre and the Canadian Taxpayers Federation to satisfy their corporate donations, which by the way are in effect subsidized by the taxpayer due to their charitable status, but what's in it for Katz?

However, Katz does point out an excellent statistic. If global coal usage has remained at 38 per cent since 1997, that's good news considering the industrialization of Third World countries and a population increase of 29 per cent in the last 20 years.

So Katz should not worry or be a defeatist. Rest assured, we progressives will solve the problems. But he and people of his ilk just have to get out of the way. If you deny the problem, you're part of the problem.

Dan Cecchini

Winnipeg

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