

Dennis L. Skulsky President and Publisher

Wayne Moriarty Managing Editor

Ros Guggi Deputy Managing Editor

Joey Thompson Editorial Pages Editor

# THE Province

Founded in 1898 • Member of the B.C. Press Council

## No need to be importing power

Throughout the 1960s, 70s and 80s B.C. Hydro was as much a mega-construction company as it was an electrical utility enjoying monopoly control over most of the province.

That was when most of B.C.'s substantial hydro-electric system — huge storage dams, massive generation plants and major transmission lines — were built to distribute low-cost electricity throughout the region. It also produced annual power surpluses that B.C. sold to the U.S., sometimes at huge profits.

But provincial government neglect for more than a decade has put B.C. Hydro in a much different position today.

It has been a net importer of electricity for several years because it can't supply enough electricity to meet the growing power demands of a provincial economy that continues to boil. Hydro's equipment is also aging and, in some cases, it's in urgent need of upgrading or replacement.

This year, B.C. will import about 10 per cent of its domestic electricity requirements from much higher-cost sources in the U.S. and, as our expansion continues, imports will only increase. This year alone we're spending an estimated \$270 million in net imports.

But instead of focusing on a fix, Hydro and Victoria have been moving at a snail's pace.

As late as last year Hydro was still trying to push through its plan to build a natural gas pipeline under Georgia Strait to feed its proposed power plant at Duke Point near Nanaimo.

Fortunately, the B.C. Utilities Commission killed the over-priced initiative and ordered the utility to find a better way. Last week, Hydro announced that a private company will build Duke Point — at significantly less cost.

Hydro and Victoria have also been painfully slow in allowing private sector power producers to build the projects we need to eliminate the generation deficit. As Duke Point illustrated, the private sector is usually more efficient.

By allowing private enterprise to build new power supplies for sale to Hydro under long-term regulated contracts, our economy will net increased taxes and a much bigger bang for the buck over importing extra power.

Because Hydro has fallen behind in maintaining and expanding its power grid, B.C. will be facing a series of rate increases to finance repairs and new plants. But a more efficiently-run, proactive B.C. Hydro along with a commitment from Victoria to fast-track elimination of the electricity deficit will go a long way towards minimizing rate hikes.

Voice mail: 604-605-2029, fax: 604-605-2099 or e-mail: provletters@png.canwest.com

## IN OTHER WORDS

### Let people use their heads

Government forces us to do many things, but it shouldn't be forcing us to wear helmets when we lace on a pair of roller-skates or scooter down the street.

Yesterday, a private member's bill amending Ontario's Highway Traffic Act won approval in principle in the legislature.

The proposed changes would make wearing helmets mandatory for skateboarders, cyclists, in-line skaters and even scooter riders. Currently the act requires the use of helmets by cyclists

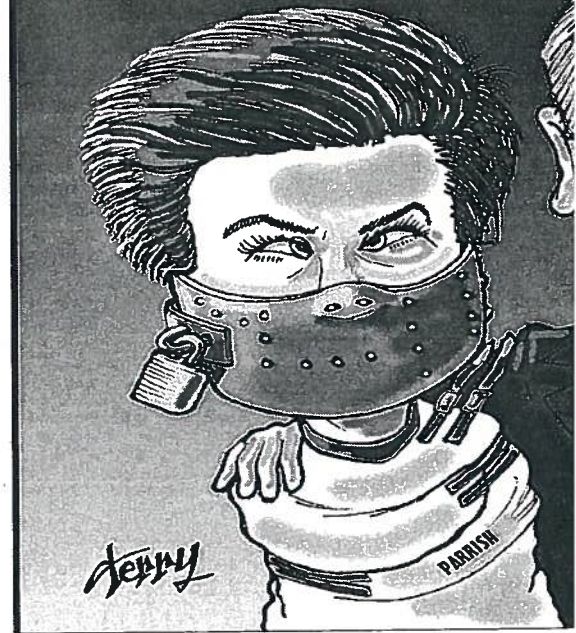
that sports participants should be encouraged to use proper safety equipment. Accidents involving brain injuries are tragic. People should be informed about the rate of accidents and the possible consequences of such accidents.

Forcing adults to wear helmets, however, on the basis of some personal experience, is a gross intrusion into the lives of citizens in the hope of creating "a culture of safety."

But life is full of risks. If Ontario citizens want to cycle or scooter down the street without a helmet, they should be free to get on board and

## TERRY'S

BELIEVE ME MR. BUSH  
WE ALL LOVE AMERICA ...  
DON'T WE CAROLYN?



## Go easy on those who

By Jennifer Cole

The Vancouver Olympic Organizing Committee has asked B.C. businesses using Olympic representation to refrain from doing so.

According to news reports, Mosi Alvand, owner of Olympic Pizza and Souvlaki in the city, and Ted Brookes, of Olympic Valley Registered Trade Services in Squamish, are two businesses that have received warning letters from VANOC.

The requests are in keeping with the committee's policy regarding brand usage: "All the names, phrases, logos and designs related to the 2010 Games, collectively referred to as the "Olympic Brand" are official trademarks owned or licensed by VANOC."

In its official policy VANOC lists the Olympic brand as including: Olympics, Olympia, Olympiad, and Olympian, use of the Olympic rings and torch insignia, and slogans such as the "Spirit of 2010".

The protection of the Olympic

## OPIN

The most identifiable symbols are of course torch, and in Vancouver bid logo "Spirit of not seem at all unnecessary VANOC protect those capitalizing of the bid.

## inbrief

Prior to the Sydney Summer Games an Australian court ordered an animal-rights activist to stop depicting the Olympic rings as chicken eggs in her protests.

Bro show use torch tion VAN first line draw A publ Prov sugg

those businesses prior to the acceptance should be left alone capitalizing on it could find themselves

It would appear notwithstanding been conciliatory out those business Olympic symbol