

“There Ought to Be A Law” contest

Bradley Hachey

15 Geldart Court

(506)-832-3558

Grade 12

Address of School:

Hampton High School

PO Box 1070

34 Elizabeth Avenue

Hampton, NB E5N 8H1

Teacher: Mrs. Travis

“There Ought To Be A Law”: There Shalt Be No Garbage

I am no environmentalist by any means of the word. However, I try to do my part as a citizen of this earth to help provide a healthier, brighter future for current and future generations. If I were given the chance to draft a bill, it would be to eliminate garbage completely. Garbage should be outlawed for several reasons: due to the pollution it causes not only from its evident existence, but also from the incineration process to compact it. It has harmful, long lasting effects and requires an exponential amount of space in terms of landfills. Depositing of garbage and converting to a fully operational recycling system would do multiple things above and beyond the obvious. It would create a broad spectrum of possible job opportunities; it would decrease pollution as well as creating a more aesthetically pleasing environment. Also, composting is incorporated with recycling; composting allows for fertile and healthy earth to eventually form which people can then use to cultivate healthier, more nutritious plant life, such as fruits and vegetables. However, there are other portions of a law that also need to be examined. For instance: the consequences that will follow the proclamation date of how it will be enforced as well as a solidified and an understandable description of the law itself.

There are a multitude of reasons as to why packaging should be modified so that everything is recyclable. Some reasons are greater than others, but ultimately they all prove the point that garbage should be eliminated. A primary reason for garbage to be eliminated is the pollution that it causes due to landfills. Essentially what landfills are, are massive holes dug in the ground where all the trash can be kept. Eventually the massive hole fills up and it is leveled over with dirt and it remains there. Most of us know that garbage does not simply decompose overnight. Most of the time what people throw into their garbage are recyclables which if thrown out, takes months sometimes years to fully decompose. For example, if an aluminum can were tossed into the garbage, it would not only sit there for years rotting and decaying, but it would contaminate the earth as well. Due to its metallic contents there would be large amounts of corrosion making the land there toxic.

Creating non-fertile soil brings to light two other reasons for why garbage is harmful: the long lasting effects and the geographical space that garbage and landfills take up. One can evidently see how with the preceding example of the aluminum can, how disposing of our everyday household items in the trash as oppose to recycling them is harmful. If people continue to abuse the life of luxury without considering the consequences, there will be a terrible price to pay. With every bag of garbage that is thrown into a dump, landfills expand; the larger the expansion of dumps, the more land that becomes intoxicated. If ever there were a leak of toxic metals or harmful materials into a well system for a town, an entire town would need to find new ways of obtaining potable water.

Before discussing the specific details and consequences of this law, it is only fair to justify why recycling is not only a more environmentally friendly action, but also economically and socially the best possible path to choose. The obvious benefit to recycling is the elimination of the landfills and dumps. It will also eliminate the incineration process which releases extremely harmful chemicals into the air; even more harmful than CO₂ such as pure carbon or toxic chemicals from household items containers. With recycling we are not only cleaning up the appeal of the earth, but the air that we breathe each and every day as well. One other very critical point on an economic level: turning our entire system over to recycling would cost millions of dollars but, it would also create thousands of jobs for people in society; the environmentalist, the

average working man, and people with specialized trades. With thousands new of jobs it would rapidly decrease the poverty and unemployment rates because they would be permanent. There would be hundreds of jobs alone at the sorting lines. There would be branches of science that could tap into this as well in figuring out even more ways that recycled products can be used for. Finally, it would also create jobs in composting fields; people to tend it and refine it to the point where it becomes rich and fertile earth. With composted soil, there would be less need for chemicals and pesticides on fruits and vegetables. Organic products could be made more available and at a cheaper rate, creating a healthier dietary trend. Better compost would also help grow more plentiful and wholesome products for animals too. This would efficiently grow the necessary food for poultry, cows and pigs; if they are eating healthier, we in turn are also eating healthier.

As for the more specific details of the law, they are rather quite simple. As a brief description, it would be that, upon proclamation date, all persons are to switch over to recycling all of their products. It would work the same way as does garbage; there would be people to come pick it up at the end of your driveway once a week. There would be ads in local papers, tv stations, and radio stations to advertise this new system. People would be asked to simply put everything into garbage bags like they normally do, however to keep food waste separate. All typical recyclables would be included and trucked to a sorting facility where it could be separated, then processed, refined, and applied to create new products to be used by companies and corporations alike. The consequences for not obeying this law would not be extensive. As a first offence, it would be a fine of \$250.00. A second offence would result in a fee of \$1000.00, and a possible third offence would result in a small court case which could potentially accumulate a fee of more than \$2,000.00. As a starting point, this law would be provincial. You could not do it municipally because it would be a bad trial depending on the area. If the project works well on a provincial basis, I would push to have it put under Federal jurisdiction.

This law would easily be enforced; if items that are non-recyclable are included in with the items that are, they will be sorted and tossed into another sorting line that will be for items to be composted. Just as modern day garbage removal, the use of composting will still be in place with the green bins that everyone already has. It would be impossible to find someone who is continuously doing something like putting food waste in with recyclables and so we would have to simply rely on the goodness of people and hope that they will realize that this new system is not really affecting them save for that they would have to make a more conscious effort in avoiding putting food waste or other non-recyclable items (i.e. Styrofoam, pizza boxes, wax paper,) in with their recyclable items. Their system has not really changed; it is the work behind the scenes that this law would most greatly affect.

We hear talk of global warming all the time; it is a growing concern and a re-appearing agenda item on every countries list of issues to talk about. With this law, it will force people to start small. With all the recycled products it will allow for great scientific experimentation to produce more efficient, less harmful fuel sources. The possibilities are endless if this law were passed with what could be done behind the scenes to better this planet. It would not only see a positive environmental change, but also a political, economic and social change as well. As I have stated, I am no environmentalist but, it is my generation who need to fix these problems so that we may watch our children grow in a peaceful community. Even if this bill were put in the House of Commons to be debated, it may very well get ridiculed and rejected, but I know that I will be sure to recycle the hardcopy.