September 8, 2026 TVT resident Richard Mosley letter to the Editor of Perth Courier Journal

Dear Editor,

As a Tay Valley property owner, taxpayer and voter, I was interested to read your article published in the online version of the September 9th edition of the *Journal* under the heading "Social media attack on Tay Valley boiling over".

Municipal employees and elected officials are entitled to be treated with civility and should not be subjected to harassment or threats. The Township is entitled to express concerns about such conduct, and the *Journal* is entitled to report them. But allegations made by one side of a public controversy should not be presented as established facts in a news outlet when they are clearly disputed..

The article opens by stating that Council and staff are being "verbally assaulted by angry residents making false claims about and uttering threats against municipal representatives and employees." That is not attributed to the Township. It is stated as fact by the *Journal*.

Similarly, after describing the Tay Valley Township Accountability website, the article states: "However, the content is inaccurate, biased and very negative in nature." Again, this appears to be the *Journal's* conclusion. Yet no inaccurate statement is identified, and readers are not told what investigation led to that conclusion.

Nor are we told what the reported “threats” consisted of. A threat against the safety of an employee is obviously a very serious matter. A threat to publish information, complain to an authority, commence legal proceedings or seek the dismissal of a public employee is something quite different.

More fundamentally, the article tells readers little about the substance of the controversy. Township critics have raised issues concerning municipal expenditures, litigation, access to information, governance and election administration. Their allegations may be right or wrong, and some of their language may be unnecessarily harsh. But these are matters capable of investigation against the public record.

The article does not indicate whether anyone responsible for the Accountability website was contacted for comment, whether any of its principal allegations were checked, or what evidence supports the *Journal’s* conclusion that its content is inaccurate.

This is particularly unfortunate during a municipal election campaign. Local newspapers provide an important source of independent information about municipal affairs. The Journal need not agree with the Township’s critics, nor give equal prominence to every claim they make. But readers would have been better served by an article examining this controversy rather than one largely adopting one side’s characterization of it.

Sincerely,

Richard G. Mosley

Perth Courier Journal publisher, Mr. David Leonardo's reply:

Mr. Mosley

If I had the resources of a newspaper such as the Globe & Mail the journalism in this newspaper would be up several notches. A journalist would be assigned a week to fully investigate the story - interviewing many sources - traveling to all parts of Tay Valley. There would be in-person editorial meetings which would toss back and forth the ramifications of the story. But the reality is that today's newspaper economics prohibit this. I believe your expected operation standard of a weekly newspaper is from four decades ago. But it could return to this with a huge gfit. How much money can you give us?

David Leonardo

Publisher

And my response:

Mr. Leonardo,

Thank you for your prompt reply.

I appreciate the economic difficulties facing a community newspaper, and I was not suggesting that the *Journal* should devote a week of investigative reporting or *Globe and Mail* style resources to this story.

However, if the *Journal* did not have the resources to determine whether the allegations were true, it should have attributed them to the person making them rather than stating them as facts.

It costs nothing to write “the Reeve (or Township staff) allege that residents are making false claims” rather than to state that residents are “making false claims.” The same applies to the statement that the Accountability website “is inaccurate.” If the *Journal* independently established that it is inaccurate, readers are entitled to know the basis for that conclusion. If it did not, the assertion should have been attributed to whoever made it.

That distinction between an allegation and an established fact does not require the resources of the *Globe and Mail*, nor do I think it represents a journalistic standard that became obsolete four decades ago.

I would appreciate knowing whether you intend to publish my letter or a correction.

Regards,

Richard Mosley