

OPINION

Voters avoid extremes

Is it true that Ontario's millions of voters abhor extremes and mistrust ideologues? Recent Ontario history would suggest as much.

The once exalted PC Party ruled over this province for 42 straight years.

Tory hegemony was driven by a silky smooth management style based on moderation and co-operation, or middle-of-the-road decision-making.

"Brampton Billy" Davis (1971-85) came to epitomize the stolid, canny, compromiser — a centre-of-the road politician. Then, after this long Tory run, and a short Liberal interruption, a shocking thing happened in 1990: Bob Rae and the New Democrats were swept to power with a massive majority.

The hated "Rae Days" came to exemplify a party in over its head, said critics. Many believe today's NDP is still mopping up the damage. Rae was replaced by Mike Harris' Common Sense Revolution, a neo-con turn to the far right, that was also shocking to some because of its extreme ideological mandate.

Ontario voters eventually rejected both 'extreme makeovers,' and in 2003, another middle-of-the-road leader, the bland Liberal leader Dalton McGuinty, gained power.

He held it for nearly a decade before handing the baton to his successor Kathleen Wynne — leaving in his wake massive scandals, including the gas plant boondoggle.

This post-Davis rollercoaster ride has left many voters in a funk. If they abhor extremes, then pick the party claiming the middle ground. Perhaps we can never return to a bygone era when elections were more civil, and voters churned out leaders like Davis whose political philosophy seemed based on compromise and co-operation.

WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to www.theifp.ca)

The road work season has begun in Halton Hills. Do you think the Town is spending enough money and time on fixing local roads?

No (63%)

Yes (37%)

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FARLEY MOWAT

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Letters to the editor

It's time to ban cigarettes

Cigarettes are proven to kill more people than using cocaine, heroin, and other illegal drugs combined. There is nothing wrong with banning something that will fundamentally kill a person.

Tobacco is the cause of death of 1 in 10 adults. Children and teenagers nowadays are using tobacco for stress-relief but eventually lose their lives to health problems in the long run.

About 40 per cent of children are regularly exposed to second-hand smoke in their homes.

The cigarette industry is a dominant, corrupting force in today's generation.

It costs the National Health Service a huge sum of money to treat people who are essentially causing harm to themselves.

People who pay taxes have to spend more money for an issue that could be prevented. Smoking is a slow killer frequently wearing down

people over time. Gum diseases, lung cancer, oral cancer, cardiovascular problems, and strokes are usually the most common illnesses caused by smoking tobacco.

The world would be a better place without cigarettes.

People could lead healthier and longer lives without tobacco; teens and young children would not get affected by second-hand smoke if cigarettes were banned.

A million lives could be altered to be better, people would not have to pay taxes for a cause that is treatable, so why not change the way we live?

Smoking tobacco takes your life away from you slowly but we have the power to cause change in order for us to lead healthier lives.

Vrinda Sanghrajka

Control your dog

With the nice weather beginning, dog-walkers are emerging in droves, enjoying the sights and smells of spring while exercising their pets.

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This is the perfect time to respectfully ask dog owners to ensure that their dogs don't urinate on other people's front lawns.

The urine from both female and male dogs burns grass and destroys sections of lawns that owners often spend hundreds of dollars on per year to keep healthy and aesthetically-pleasing.

Dogs should be encouraged to urinate (and defecate) in dog parks and on their owners' properties.

At the least, if your dog must urinate during its walk, direct it to the boulevards, thereby avoiding others' front lawns.

Your neighbours will be very appreciative.

J. Barber

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