

· EDITORIAL ·

# Two elections will keep voters busy in new year

It was a year to remember and a year that many of us might like to one day forget.

In 2017, much of that memorability, of course, has not much to do with us here, at least not directly. When Donald Trump took office as the 75th president of the United States of America, many of us felt a shock of familiarity: not so long ago, Toronto's mayor's office was occupied by a politician not so very different from Donald Trump. There may not have been questions about Russian involvement in Rob Ford's election in 2010, and neither did the late Ford abuse Twitter as Trump has.

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Tory mayoralty.

But smooth sailing is far from guaranteed. When 2018 dawns, we will be faced with choices on not one but two levels of government.

There will be a provincial election first, in which we decide what to do about Liberal Premier Kathleen Wynne's government - hold course on another term, or try out the Progressive Conservatives or New Democrats - then just a few months later, another municipal election.

So 2018 is going to be a year of profound choice in this town and this province, and by the end of it, possibly, profound change. It won't be a matter of watching the Americans and crossing our fingers on election night to see which way that change moves us.

In 2018, it will be up to us.

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Now, in the year that America spent reeling and divided under the Trump presidency, Toronto has regained equilibrium under three years of the relatively sedate and inclusive John



## Airports threaten neighbours' sleep

Canada's major airports, particularly the big hubs, have been growing rapidly and will continue to do so forever, it seems. Should there be limits to their growth? The Canadian hub cities are Calgary, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. But Toronto is in a league of its own, expected to reach, or exceed, 45 million passengers by the end of the year, about twice that of runner-up Vancouver with about 22 million. Montreal and Calgary are in the 16 to 17 million range.

The annual passenger growth rate in the past two years is in excess of 5 per cent, and at this rate,

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it won't take long for traffic to double. But passenger traffic is not the only thing that's going up; cargo traffic has also been steaming ahead.

Sleep deprivation has become a major concern in hub-airport communities, as some airports have gone from no night flights, save for life-threatening emergencies, to ever-increasing night flights. Not only that, daytime operations, which used to be from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., at all airports, have expanded by two hours, from 6:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. of the next day at Canada's largest hub, where the busiest 15 minutes of the day are from 6:30 to 6:45

a.m.! There are many unwanted wake-up calls during the night in hub communities.

Our hub airports will continue to grow by depriving airport communities of their sleep. This is not the just society that Pierre Elliott Trudeau championed when he was prime minister. Now, ironically, the airport that bears his name is being sued for sleep deprivation - a serious social injustice with significant health consequences. Sleep deprivation is a form of torture, and our governments are torturing hub communities by letting airport operators do as they please.

Toronto's airport

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## · LETTERS & COMMENTARY ·

communities are also making their voices heard. But will the new Prime Minister Trudeau have the intestinal fortitude of his father and fight for social justice rather than give in to lobbyists with deep pockets; or is the just society only a concept that's come and gone?

Antonio Natalizio

## Letters to the Editor



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