

Must-see TV

We sincerely hope voters can add another show, along with *Dancing With The Stars*, to their TV viewing lineup tonight.

Specifically, we hope residents concerned about the future of this province—and that should include everyone—will give up 90 minutes of their time to watch the Ontario election leaders' debate.

The Ontario TV Debate Consortium, consisting of CBC, CTV, Global, Sun News Network and TVO will broadcast the debate 6:30-8 p.m.

This will be the only chance to see the three main parties' leaders—Dalton McGuinty (Liberal), Tim Hudak (Progressive Conservative) and Andrea Horwath (NDP) in face-to-face action.

We hope the debate is a spirited one and voters should carefully gauge the words of each leader—particularly those of McGuinty and Hudak—who, in recent days, have made pronouncements that would indicate they believe the electorate has little or no memory.

For instance, last week in Burlington Hudak issued a statement, only hours after a news conference by the local Liberal candidate, that the redevelopment of Joseph Brant Hospital “will be a priority for a Tim Hudak government”.

Earlier, in the campaign Hudak had toured the hospital but would offer no assurance the \$312 million project would proceed if his party was elected.

After Liberal candidates in Mississauga quietly announced the scrapping of a controversial gas-powered plant Saturday, McGuinty yesterday insisted the timing of the plant cancellation is pure coincidence less than two weeks before voters head to the polls.

The plant was originally announced six years ago under the McGuinty government and site construction had already started.

Blatant vote-grabbing moves, in an election too close to call, do little to enhance the electoral process.

We can only hope the debate doesn't live up the title of a CTV show that follows at 10 p.m.: *Unforgettable*.

WEB POLL RESULTS

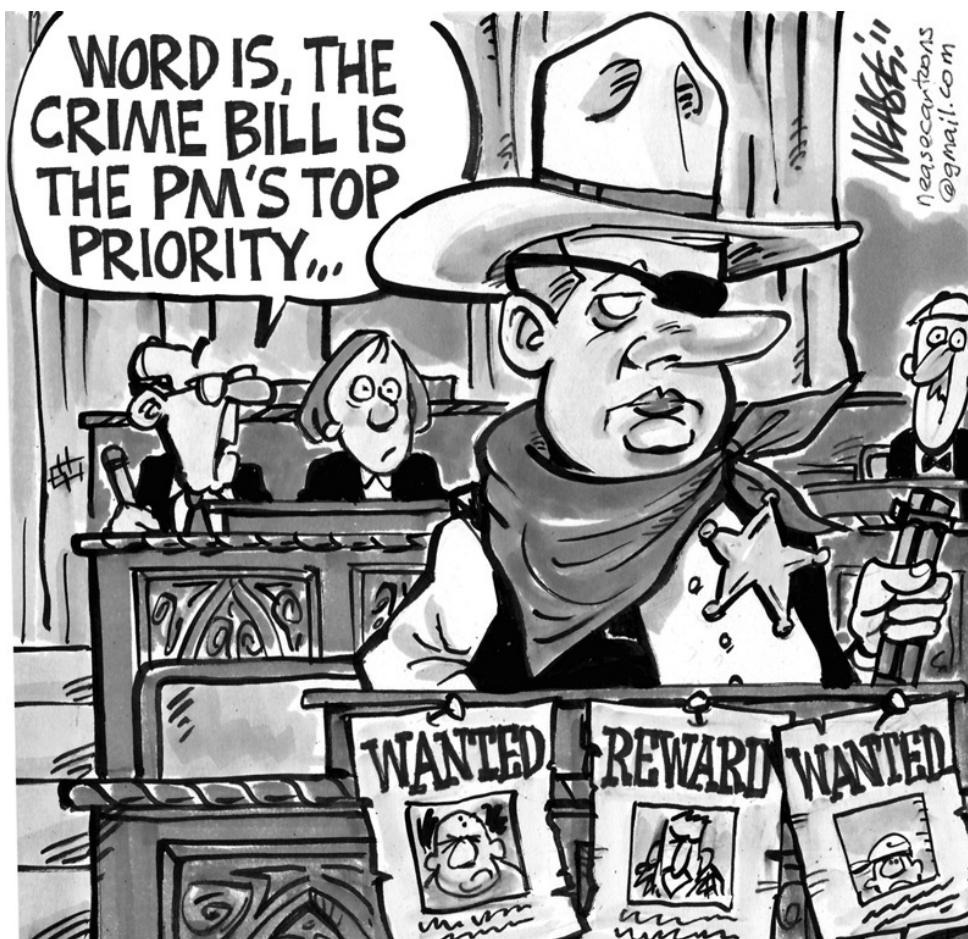
(Go to www.independentfreepress.com)

Given a choice, which would you rather watch on TV on provincial election night Oct. 6?

- Toronto-Montreal NHL game (39%)
- Election coverage (32%)
- Neither (29%)

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Letters to the editor

Councillors show hypocritical side

Dear editor,

So the mayor and some other councillors are showing their true colours by endorsing one of their own in the upcoming Provincial election.

This, on the basis of a position on uploading versus downloading which the Conservatives have not actually stated intentions.

So, we are to believe the McGuinty crowd, based on their wonderful record of lies about other tax increases.

What a bunch of hypocrites!

This same group of local councillors have recently increased our local taxes by financing hospital requirements and the record shows continual increases, year after year, for one thing or another. Next year also looks like more of the same.

So, increased taxes, due to hospital financing, which is supposed to be a Provincial responsibility, along with our health care, is not another means of McGuinty support and downloading of their responsibilities by proxy?

No wonder they are showing

support for the Liberals—they are tarred with the same devious brush.

The candidate, Moya Johnson, even claims to have helped to secure hospital funding. Didn't we all do this with letters, etc. to the government? Has she resigned her council seat whilst applying her time to getting elected or is she just trying to hold on to her council seat in case she fails?

Does McGuinty even listen to her any more than he does to the rest of us?

J. Sanders, Georgetown

Just the facts, ma'am

Dear editor,

In Monique Attinger's Sept. 12 letter, she states that Mike Harris was "able to produce three balanced budgets because of the sale of Ontario assets, including Hwy. 407 and parts of our provincial electrical system".

Since she claimed to be more interested in facts than ideology, let me point out some facts to her.

First, the sale of an asset is only a one time influx of money, which can only solve a current year deficit. It cannot produce ongoing balanced budgets.

Second, Harris did not sell our electrical system. He opened the elec-

trical market to competition, which I felt was a mistake, but nothing was sold and no revenue came into the government. And Highway 407 was also not sold, it was leased for 99 years for a price of \$4.1 billion. We still own the actual property, while the private company that runs it has to pay all the repair and construction costs.

And since Harris inherited an \$8 billion deficit from Bob Rae, there's no way the money from the 407 lease would create three balanced budgets. The major contributing factor to the balanced budgets of the Harris years was an ongoing increase in annual government tax revenue, which grew by \$16 billion (a 50% increase) because the cut in tax rates helped spur economic growth.

Finally, Ms. Attinger states that "we now struggle with...ever skyrocketing electricity costs (which were never necessary if we continued to own our electrical system)". We still own our electrical system, and the electricity rate was frozen at 4.3 cents per kWh in 2002 by Ernie Eves. It was McGuinty who removed the price freeze, and during McGuinty's regime the price of electricity has more than doubled.

To paraphrase Jack Webb from the old *Dragnet* TV show, those are the facts ma'am, just the facts.

Mike Baker, Georgetown