

EDITORIAL

What politicians have learned

It's October 27 and the country didn't disintegrate last night. The resounding No to the Charlottetown accord does not mean that we want the country to fall apart.

We have not said -- as some have suggested -- that Quebec should leave Canada, nor do we want Native right to self-government ignored.

What the referendum has done is let the political establishment know that we are not happy with the deal that was made.

The Charlottetown accord was -- for most -- an overwhelming document that presented a package of changes to Canada's constitution. A package of changes that the politicians thought we could and would accept just because they managed to agree on the changes.

At a recent community function days before the referendum, Halton-Peel MP Garth Turner commented that the whole event had been an education for the politicians.

He said that while traditionally the Canadian "fall back position" has been to the yes side, pollsters and pundits were finding Canadians were falling back on the no side.

Politicians across Canada have learned that we are tired of being told that just because they agree on something we should agree to it.

While it is a huge accomplishment to get all of the First Ministers to agree on such a complex package of changes, believing the public would agree to the changes just because the politicians did was -- at best -- foolish.

On Tuesday, most of the politicians -- save some of those in Quebec -- said it was time to put the constitutional question on the back burner for a while and concentrate on getting the economy back on its feet.

Those kinds of statements beg two very important questions: "Why was the economy being ignored during the referendum? Are our political leaders incapable of performing two tasks at the same time?"

Despite the country's rejection of this particular set of changes to the constitution, we must work to keep some of the Charlottetown objectives alive because some parts of the accord deserve a second chance.

We must work to get Native self-government in place. Canada's native peoples are in a painful state of limbo and deserve the opportunity to have self-government.

Canada's political elite -- as the TV analysts insisted on calling them -- have been told that they are out of touch with the Canadian public.

If nothing else, the referendum has united Canadians in their dislike and distrust of politicians.

We may not have a unity deal but we have certainly let our politicians know where they stand.

Pumpkin patch kids



The children of Georgetown's Moore Place Day Care enjoy a morning at Andrews' Scenic Acres last Friday. They particularly liked the pumpkin patch. Photo by Wendy Long

Family Violence My friend Ruth

By Jacie B. Palmer

During the past few years I've built up a tremendous network of supportive friends.

I've chosen carefully and wisely but, quite by accident, these friends are unacquainted with each other. They come from a wide area surrounding Halton Hills and are from varied backgrounds.

Each is unique with interesting ideas, thoughts and beliefs. Do they put me in conflict? All the time. One says yea when the other says nay! But they help me, love me and support me!

The woman who lives closest to my home is Ruth. She and I chit-chat almost every day. When I'm in trouble I run over to her place.

One day, I couldn't get hold of her on the phone and left a message. I was in a panic! She called me back as soon as she got in.

"Everyday chit-chat

I told her I had to run off to work but could I come over for a quick hug. When I arrived, she put her arms around me, told me she loved me and that everything was all right.

I'd already burst into tears and quickly told her that a married man had sent me flowers, that I'd refused them and that some individuals thought I should have accepted them.

Values and Value systems! What's not right for me is often OK for someone else. I couldn't imagine why this man thought it would be OK to send them.

I was horrified! I was in a turmoil. Ruth's hug pacified me. I got on with my day.

She called me almost every day after that until I finally grappled with what had offended me so much about the flower episode.

It was the fact that this man was a supposed "do-gooder" and not the type you expect to run around on



his wife. Stereotypical response by me, eh? Anyway, that episode profoundly affected thinking that Spring!

Ruth. She's older than me, has shared a wealth of experience with me and she loves me very much.

Oh, she'll tell me when I'm out of line but mostly she believes I'm dead on in my assessment of people and their actions. She's supportive.

One day she broke into laughter quite unexpectedly and in the middle of a serious conversation. She was thinking about some hilarious things I'd told her last year.

She said: "You know, Jacie, it was all I could do to keep a straight face when you were unloading all

Grateful

that garbage. I figured I'd better listen, though!"

Now that is all behind me and we can laugh over it all. Oh, she's said some silly things, too - but I didn't remind her of that!

I'm grateful to have her friendship and her love. I know I can call her whenever I want. I know I'm welcome at her home always.

One Sunday my son and I arrived and as she and I chatted, he watched the ball game with her

husband. They both love me.

Is this a one way relationship? Not on your life. I've listened to her soap operas, too. I've given advice. I've validated her feelings and thoughts more than once. We are sharing and growing together!

Our relationship has transformed each of us in a special way. I'm so glad I have her to talk to. We give to each other more than just our thoughts.

Sometimes it's flowers from the fruit store, bird seed, candy or whatever. I like to give her special gifts which I make. She has made my Christmases special and remembered my birthday.

On my last birthday she came over with some gold wall sconces. I told her they were the tackiest things I'd ever seen! She laughed. She knew just what I meant!

There was a time in my life when I didn't have friends I could pour my heart out to. There was a time in my life when I wouldn't have asked for help.

Today my life is much different and that change occurred because of the family violence which pervaded my life for a time. Without the bad times, I wouldn't be the person I am today and wouldn't have the valued friends who care so deeply for my well-being. Sometimes it's hard to see the light after difficult experiences. From that painful violent past I now see the gain to me as a person.

Feel free to contact Jacie in confidence by directing letters to her attention at Halton Hills This Week.

All correspondence will remain confidential. Jacie can be reached in person through the Distress Centre at 877-1211.

Leave a message and Jacie will get back to you. If you are in crisis, call the Distress Centre or 911.

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EDITOR: Scott Kline

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HALTON HILLS THIS WEEK IS INDEPENDENTLY OWNED & OPERATED.

PHONE: 873-2254

REAL ESTATE MANAGER: Kathy Toth
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Marie Shadbolt

FAX: 873-3918