

Delude ourselves if we believe election promises

To the Editor,

Sub: recent elections

The triumph of mayor-elect, Mr. Bonnette is one of the more pleasant surprises democracy is able to deliver. And it's a great shot in the arm for long-suffering Actonites, as a resident of the Galactic Fringe finally gets a chance to sit in the big chair. If nothing else all the contenders, who having sat through decades' worth of council meetings actually want to preside over them, should be heartily congratulated.

Three things can usually happen at meetings, four of them bad. The political process has an unfortunate propensity for adopting ideas already rusty, for generating reams of paper to grow dusty.... Well, if Mayor Bonnette and Council can take back away from the planning department, that might be a good start.

But in the interim the actions of the electorate in both this and the recent Provincial Election deserve careful scrutiny. Despite four candidates for mayor and the number of hot-button issues on the table, only 34 % turned out. Even the insipid Provincial vote, at a less-than-lukewarm 55 % province-wide, outgunned our local effort. These numbers are not harbingers of good health for the enterprise we call society.

Premier-elect McGuinty, while showing some real class by not responding to the nasty jibes of his disorganized main opponent, wasn't quite so dis-

cerning in his choice of remarks at VE (Victory over Eves) afterwards; and there is a direct relation to the numbers cited. "The people have chosen," he more or less asserted, "hope over fear..." and so on about a brighter future for all. The odd media outlet, with breathtakingly inapt phraseology, called the event "a landslide victory" for the Liberal Party.

There must have been some Golden Age when Messianic political language carried more weight if the speaker had actually saved the world, or at a bare minimum, risen from the dead. Winston Churchill, while under fierce siege from the revisionists at the moment, was unquestionably The One for his generation. Now about the 55 % turnout for last month's sorry affair - 46 % of them voted for a Liberal Candidate. That works out to 25 % or one in four at the most who directly wanted Mr. McGuinty; failing that they either just liked their local Liberal or just detested the status quo and saw the Liberal's as the only realistic alternative. This is no landslide; not even a soggy beach castle. The world has not been made safer for democracy' the people living in darkness have not seen a great light.

It's doubtful the people who abstained from one or both elections were cowering in fear at home watching for the advent of a thousand point of light. And as to the Liberals'

150 page promise book, edited to a succinct two-page newspaper inset: it had folks in our house years away from voting age snickering and snorting. So much for Civics Class.

Mr. McGuinty is, for instance, thoroughly convinced that public service is the only way essentials such as education, medicine and energy can be delivered with honesty, integrity and fairness. But at best, experience teaches us it's an ugly saw-off. The Premier is not too young to have heard of Jane Stewart, Maurice Strong, George Radwanski, Dash Domi, Jean Drapeau, Walkerton, Pickering Airport, the National energy Program. Even so, like most sharing his

convictions the Premier believes creating more agencies, commissions, etc. will ensure the ubiquitous "system" works properly. This will take - surprise - just a little bit more money. The taxpayers get to pay more for another buffer zone between the rulers and accountability.

One thing I remember Grade Nine History - The Magna Carta and No Taxation Without Representation. The usual outcome however, is proliferation of taxes accompanied by the pretence of representation. No wonder Dr. Seuss is still one of the world's wealthiest Men - like Abel, being dead he still speaks.

Fortunately for him, public opinion usually works on a

three-week memory cycle. So most of us won't be too disappointed or upset when his government fails to save us to the uttermost from SARS and other imported diseases, forest fires, private MRI clinics, overpriced electricity, underpriced electricity, and private schools. Not to mention the disaster left by the previous government, which means as always "a slight change from our original play. We'll be content enough if we don't get the finger, the forked tongue and the fiduciary sloth we've become more accustomed to right up to the recent assembly at the ACC.

But seriously: no government, and no electorate, can change

human nature, which is the real heart of the matter, not political parties or systems. Leaders delude themselves if they believe their extravagant promises; we delude ourselves if we believe them or expect too much. And as for we the electorate, our turnout simply affirms the proclivity of governments to tell us what we want. We haven't chosen 'hope over' fear. We've chosen fate.

Genghis Khan was a violent despot, but he made simple promises and kept them (at least in the movie): "Serve me or die. You have one minute to decide."

Yours truly,
Charles Tysoe

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It's Now Official
The Christmas season has begun. Santa Claus recently visited Acton, for the annual Santa Claus Parade. This is the time of year when the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season kicks into high gear. I know you will be busy, planning and shopping for all those Christmas goodies.

This is also the time of the year when we are easily distracted and sometimes forget to take normal safety precautions. Do not let a moment's inattention, ruin your Christmas season. Please remember, thieves don't take a holiday. The following tips should be followed year round, but especially in the hectic holiday season.


AUTOMOBILE SAFETY
Park in a well-lighted area. So you can see and be seen. Keep all the car doors locked. "Lock it or Lose it". Upon returning to the car, have your car key in hand, so you can quickly and easily open the car. Place all parcels out of sight, preferably in the trunk. If your vehicle doesn't have a trunk, cover the parcels with a blanket. If you see someone lurking around your car or the parking lot, do not confront them, go to a safe location and call the police with a location a description of the suspect.

HOME SECURITY
This time of year, it gets dark much earlier in the evening. Thieves will use the cover of darkness to commit their crime. Therefore it's a good idea to leave some exterior lights on, especially those lights above doors and windows. Timers can be used to activate interior lights. Leave a radio or television on. When you are leaving home, even if only for a few minutes, take the time to secure all doors and windows. Check to be sure the garage door is locked too.

If you are going to be away for a few days, arrange for someone to shovel your driveway and sidewalk. Have a neighbour park their car in your driveway. Ask a friend to pickup your mail and to gather all those flyers and papers that accumulate this time of year. You want to give the impression that someone is staying at your home.
Don't let the "Grinch" ruin your Christmas season.

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Uncle Joes Furniture Superstore has instructed Dan Bailey to sell this superb collection of new furniture and accessories at a "no reserve" auction. Approximately 10 three piece sofa sets from traditional to contemporary to designer looks, from 100 % leather to the highest grade fabric on the market.
Gorgeous dining room suites, some with matching buffets, hutches and sideboards, some in solid wood and in wood veneer; cherry, walnut, mahogany, pine, and maple finishes. Elegant bedroom outfits- Stunning Queen-sized pine look with marble finish, serpentine front, Fabulous 8 piece Louis Philippe cherry finish queen sleigh bed suite. 8 piece queen size country oak cannonball suite. All bedrooms include headboard, footboard, rails, women's dresser, mirror, man's chest and 2 night stands. Huge assortment of coffee, end and sofa tables, bar stools, jam cupboards, carved mahogany plant stands, gifts, entertainment units, lamps, drop front desk. Huge assortment of electronics and home theatre, DVD players, walkmans, microwaves, cordless phones, small kitchen appliances, all under warranty. Many framed pieces of art, signed and numbered "group of seven" and other local artists. Oak bow-front curio cabinet, unique elephant glass-topped table, CD racks. Top quality mattresses and box spring sets, ranging from the most economical to the highest quality pocket coil pillow top sets on the market. Tiffany lamps, Satsuma vases, Limoges, sign boards, Murano clowns. Many more items, too numerous to list. This is a fabulous sale, the best you've ever seen... You can't afford to miss it! This sale is subject to additions and deletions.
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