

ONE NEW TORY MP DOESN'T MAKE A GOVERNMENT

If you're waiting for the trickle of one Liberal MP abandoning her party to turn into a raging flood of defectors, don't hold your breath.

It won't happen.

Leona Alleslev's decision to cross over to the Conservatives the day Parliament resumed last week was perfectly timed to stir up the most political drama, grab the most attention and cause maximum embarrassment to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

And judging by the ecstatic welcome she received from Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer, you'd think Moses had just led the Children of Israel out of the wilderness and to the edge of the Promised Land. Except this prophet was completely on her own.

She's the perfect poster girl for what Scheer calls Canadians' "misplaced trust" in the Liberals. Just as Alleslev woke up to the unpleasant reality of her one-time party, so, too, will other Liberal supporters - or so Scheer hopes. Because the Liberals still lead in the polls.

Playing up Alleslev's defection may appeal to the Tories even more because they've just lost a high-profile MP of their own - Maxime Bernier. He stormed out of their ranks to start a whole new conservative political movement that could make life tricky for Scheer in the next election.

But for anyone wondering if Ottawa's tectonic plates just lurched to the right, there's less here than meets the eye.

Allleslev may not have been following an unerring political compass as much as sniffing which way the wind's blowing in her own Toronto-area riding of Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill.

The provincial version of that riding voted solidly Progressive Conservative in June's Ontario election and is now a happy part of Ford Nation.

Allleslev knows she won her riding by a fairly narrow margin in the 2015 federal election. If she values the life of an MP, her chances of keeping it might be better if she's a Conservative, too.

Other questions about her motives will arise, given her accolades for Trudeau and the Liberals just weeks before she turned around and trashed them.

How strange, then, that just a few weeks later she met with Scheer to discuss the terms of her defection. And how odd that she left the Liberals denouncing their failures in foreign, defence and fiscal policies - none of which had changed much since she waved the Liberal banner in the 2015 election.

Perhaps Alleslev's choice of a new political dancing partner merely shows the difference between being Liberal and Conservative is less than voters generally think and that pragmatism trumps party lines.

What's certain is that Scheer's biggest challenge today isn't persuading more Liberals to cross the floor but keeping any restive Conservative MPs and voters from cosying up to Maxime Bernier and his new party.

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CHAMPION TRACKS



Chautems family photo

Abby and Robert Chautems visit the Cape Bonavista lighthouse in Newfoundland with a copy of their favourite community newspaper. Going away? Pack a copy of the Champion in your suitcase, snap a creative photo and email your Champion Tracks submission to cohara@metroland.com. Please include everyone's name and destination information.

DOWNSIZING? HAVE A PLAN B

BE REALISTIC ABOUT
IT ALL FITTING INTO
YOUR NEW SPACE,
WRITES ILOTT



STEPHEN
ILOTT
Column

You are committed. It's time. The old homestead is just too big and filled with costly time stealing maintenance. And all those stairs make your knees creak. It's time to downsize to a condo or maybe shift to an all-out retirement residential.

With the help of a good home organizer to fill in the gaps friends and family don't have time for, including donations, you and your realtor can get things to tickety-boo P.D.Q.

Fast forward to moving day, everything you can't live without is ready to go. That includes the furniture you've pegged as essential. With floor plans in hand you stand back and relin-

quish to the clockwork der-
vish of movers. Here is
where too many home-
owners run into an elev-
enth-hour problem; they
haven't got a plan "B" to
cover a very big "what if."

What is the biggest "what
if" that happens most often?
I put the question to a smart
mover I know named Velin
Kose of All-Rite movers in
Oakville. His answer, "they
don't have a plan 'B' in case
something doesn't fit." That
seems like an obvious thing
to consider, but too many
people only measure space
and not access or how big
things really look in a space
once they get it there.

Imagine, you are at the
new digs watching the mov-
ers wrestle some oversized
antique thing into an eleva-
tor and then attempt to an-
gle it through a tight door-
way and into an even tighter
ill-considered corridor. Of-
ten the sheer numbers of
pieces that looked good on a
paper floor plans cram
walking space so tight that
you bark your knees every
time you turn around. King-
sized beds overwhelm the

10-foot-by-10-foot master
bedroom and the nine-by-11-
foot rug overlaps the living
room making it look like a
swirling Japanese wave
painting.

Think ahead. Have a
plan B that has a backup
storage area or arrange-
ment with the mover to
store items short term just
in case something has to go
back on the truck. You
won't regret it.

Let's bring a little thera-
py to your home.

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YOUR OPINIONS

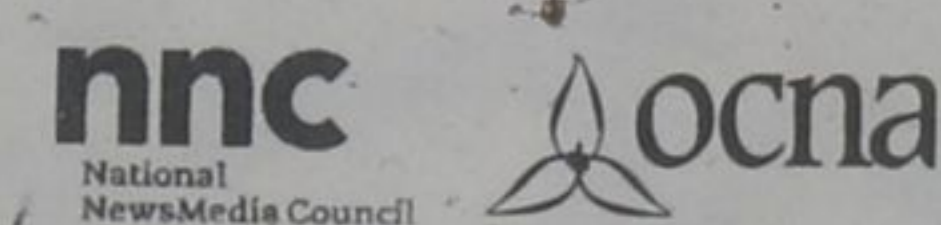
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