



OPINION

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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The Tories, with hesitation

It isn't often one runs across a political party that moves into power and proceeds to do pretty well exactly what they indicated in their election platform.

Yet the Progressive Conservatives have to a large extent done so.

They have attacked the provincial deficit and debt, re-organized government, health care and education, cracked down on system abuses and aggressively tackled many significant aspects of Ontario's previously onerous tax load.

For that, they have paid a heavy price among large constituencies, such as health care workers and teachers.

One must credit the Tories for sticking to their guns. What they have done should not really surprise anybody, and much of it needed to be done. When Premier Mike Harris took power, government duplication and waste was rife, and school system management was ineffective.

Ontario needed hard-nosed government, and we got it.

When one looks at Mr. Harris' rivals in this campaign, there can only be promises observed. Neither leader has been tested in the fire of provincial leadership. Neither has shown himself able to chart and maintain a responsible course.

As well, each of the opposing leaders must contend with a recent legacy of government that turned out to be less than impressive on a financial management front, to say nothing of continuity.

In this campaign, mudslinging by the three main parties has tarnished the process. Each snipes at the character and credibility of opponents. Each trots out a parade of figures selected somewhat less than objectively to vilify the other contenders.

Let us then, set those suspect figures aside. Let us dispense with the character assassination. The question left is, who has shown the ability to lead, like him or hate him? Who told the voters what he would deliver, and then did so.

Mr. Harris.

That said, Mr. Harris should begin adopting more moderate and reasonable leadership.

His party bows and crawls before the wealthy, and is fully capable of stinging blows against the less affluent. Also, they manipulate the truth as well as any party when it suits their purpose.

Two cases in point: They kowtowed to the landlord class and stuck it to renters with their so-called Tenant Protection Act, the name of which was a blatant lie. Greedy landlords stormed ahead with rental increases that would have been disallowed previously.

Their smog control legislation was a tax on the poor, who drive older cars that won't pass emission tests. Affluent Tory voters don't usually drive older cars.

In a larger sense, the Tories crow about their splendid record on job creation, incessantly, but the truth is the North American economic recovery has more to do with others than them.

The reigning Tories can be cruel, bullying, opportunistic and less than candid, but they can also be, under Mr. Harris, on occasion courageous and capable of delivering on promises.

Sprinkle in a little human kindness and compassion, and they would be a better government.

Rob Kelly

'NORMAN BATES' MCGUINTY?
WHY STOP THE MOVIE REFERENCES
THERE? HOW ABOUT...

"DIRTY HARRIS"?



"HOWARD'S END"?



If you don't know who is running, just stay home

If I had to vote for the one thing that makes me the craziest, I'd probably pick elections. Everything about them, from start to finish, is just wacky as far as I'm concerned.

It begins as soon as the election is called. Out come the signs. Blue, red and orange. Eyesores, all of them, although the Conservatives are using a much funkier blue this time around, showing why they put progressive in front of their party name.

The NDP ugly orange signs are the same ones they used in their first election, I think.

Signs are necessary, however, because it's the only time most of us know who had been representing us the previous four years or so. They'll be the ones who put "Re-Elect" by their names.

Maybe Clinton does

Politicians just don't get it, as far as I'm concerned. Well, maybe Bill Clinton does, but that's another story.

Our politicians don't understand that less is more. The less they do while in office the more likely we are to vote them back in.

The federal Liberals are a good example of that. In fact, when they promised to scrap the GST and didn't, we forgave them because doing nothing is something we can understand.

The Ontario PC's promised to do all kinds of things before the last election and then actually went ahead and did them after they won. Bad move.

Politicians make promises during their election campaigns, but even if they kept them most of us could care less. Usually they're aimed at helping special interest groups that we should care about, but don't.

It's so simple. If they want to get voted in, all they have to do is tell us they'll knock 20 cents off a litre of gas. Do that, and even the NDP would win.

Add another box

While the politicians are blabbing about what they're going to do when elected, polls are being taken to find out in advance who is going to win. Polls are basically useless, unless they start adding an undecided box to the election ballots.

Plus, they make a big deal of taking a representative sample. The problem with that is that voters aren't



On the
loose

with MURRAY TOWNSEND

made up of representative samples. A whole bunch of people mostly vote one way in a certain area, a whole bunch vote a different way in another area.

When listening to the candidates, you rarely come across one with a good sense of humour. As if to say what they're doing is no laughing matter. Beg to differ.

If a candidate did a stand-up comedy routine instead of one of those boring drawn-out speeches, people would vote for them for that reason alone. I know I would.

Fun with the media

And at some point The Canadian Champion is going to endorse a candidate. I have no idea why it's necessary for every newspaper to do this, but they do. It doesn't even make good business sense. It creates the impression that the newspaper is going to bias its coverage instead of being objective.

On election day we're told from every media outlet that we should "get out and vote." I have a problem with that. If you don't know what's going on, I think it would better if you didn't vote.

If you need prodding, you don't care enough. Stay home.

Election day coverage is laughable. It used to be interesting to watch the different races in different areas. Kind of fun to see how things were going. But, then they figured out that they had to "declare" winners, they needed a "decision desk" to do this, and the faster they could pick their winners, the better.

Then, it just got stupid. Sometimes there will be one vote separating two candidates and they'll declare a

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