

Comment

Timing is everything

As politicians in Ottawa position themselves for what seems to be an inevitable winter election, they should pull themselves away from party strategy sessions just long enough to ask, if they call it, will voters come?

We suspect an election campaign in full swing in December will be placed on the backburner by an electorate already caught up in arguably the busiest holiday season of the year. That could be a recipe for a dismal turnout on election day.

In a nation dogged by growing voter apathy — the percentage of eligible Canadians to cast a ballot in a federal election has steadily declined from 75 per cent in the mid-to-late '80s to a record-low turnout of 60.9 per cent 17 months ago — could an election call come at a less desirable time?

We suspect the combination of a federal election less than two years since Canadians last went to the polls, and at a time when many citizens 'cocoon' at home to avoid winter's wrath, could conspire to attract the lowest voter turnout percentage in our nation's 138-year history.

We realize that each of the major parties is positioning itself to have the greatest

chance for success on election day, but are any of them looking at the bigger picture?

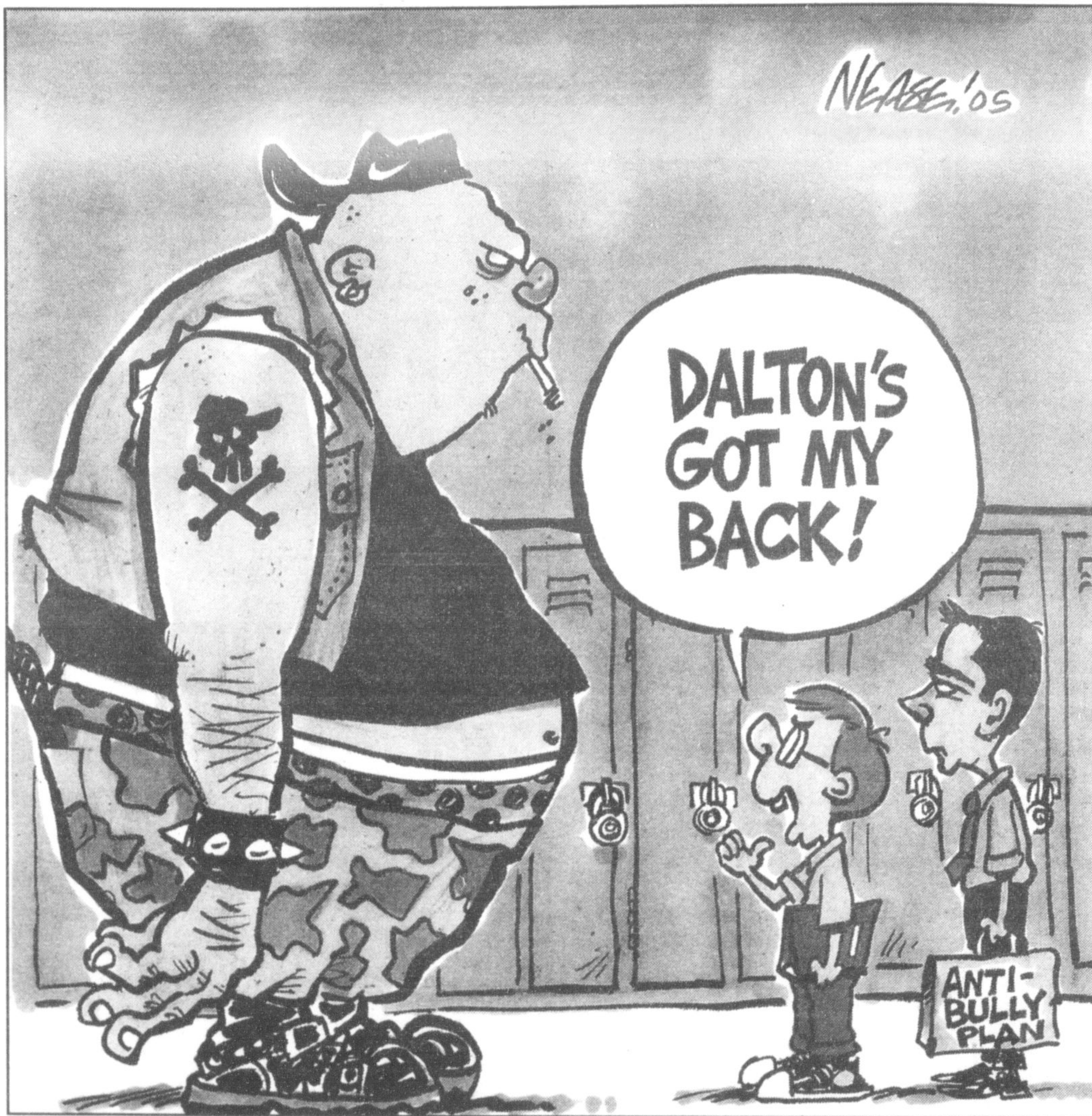
While Canada's eligible voter list grew by more than 2.5 million names between the 1993 and 2004 general elections, the number of ballots cast fell by almost 180,000.

For a host of reasons ranging from a cynical view of the political process to a genuine disinterest in taking a political stand, registered voters are choosing not to participate on election day.

When our leaders exude a "what's best for my party" or "best for my chances to become prime minister" attitude, is it any wonder eligible voters are choosing not to choose the next government?

Preparing for a challenge to their tenuous minority government, the Liberals pulled out all the stops last week by unveiling an early Christmas present — \$9-billion in new spending promises tied directly to their winning voter confidence at the polls.

Faced with this dangling carrot approach, those who lack the desire to get involved in the democratic process aren't likely to suddenly have a change of heart — no matter when an election is called.



Our Readers Write

Damage to Halloween display shameful

Dear Editor:

It's just another sign of how our town is growing, and I'm not always sure it's for the better.

I've lived in Milton all of my life and am now raising my two boys here as well. For the past six years my husband has done a display for Halloween on the front yard of our house. It's always a very big thing for us. Halloween is my husband's Christmas.

We're close to a couple of schools and these kids walk by the house for the entire month and never touch anything. They stop, look to see what's new and then go on their way.

Recently my husband and sons started

to take everything down. This is a long process. By the end of the day they were exhausted, and my husband decided to leave the last couple of zombies up for the night.

As you can probably guess by now, the next day we were short a head on one of the zombies. It's not so much the cost, but the blatant disregard for someone else's property.

To whoever took the mask and head, you probably thought it was a great joke. Well we'll see, because my husband always said he'd do the display until someone messed with it.

Nadine Cameron
Mountainview Drive

Milton's Remembrance Day ceremonies were wonderful and did community proud

Dear Editor:

I've never been more proud to be Canadian than on November 13.

As a police officer, I marched in the Milton Remembrance Day parade and felt honoured for the privilege. Sixty years after the end of the Second World War, several proud veterans marched in memory of their fallen comrades.

I, too, marched for the fallen, but in honour of the survivors as well. They were average Canadian people from small-town Ontario who faced pain, fear and the enemy to protect the freedom enjoyed by all Canadians — both then and today.

Several hundred people gathered around the cenotaph to watch the

laying of wreaths, pray, listen to the reading of names of Milton veterans who died and to sing O Canada.

I was moved by the Salvation Army captain who addressed the crowd with gusto and heart, by the veterans who marched and by the spirit of the crowd.

Their reverence and appreciation of the sacrifices of those who fought in the wars of freedom were evident.

We tend to take freedom for granted. After all, no one has invaded Canada or threatened our safety for a long time. That wasn't so when Hitler was at his insane worst and Canadians joined the fight to stop the murders and insanity.

I wasn't alive to know that kind of fear and courage, but I can appreciate the young men and women who left jobs, spouses, children and families to risk their lives for the continuation of the way of life they knew.

As we open the doors of our country and community to immigrants from around the world, welcoming them to this great country, let us not forget we're uniquely Canadian.

Yes, I'm thankful to the thousands who fought for me and you without knowing us. Yes, I'm proud to be a Canadian from small-town Ontario.

Larry R. Masson
Milton

The Canadian Champion

Box 248, 875 Main St. E.,
Milton, Ont. L9T 3Z3

(905) 878-2341

Editorial Fax: 905-878-4943
Advertising Fax: 905-876-2364
Classified: 905-875-3300
Circulation: 905-878-5947

Ian Oliver Publisher
Neil Oliver Associate Publisher
Wendy McNab Advertising Director
Karen Smith Managing Editor
Tim Coles Production Manager
Charlene Hall Circulation Manager
Teri Casas Office Manager

The Canadian Champion, published every Tuesday and Friday at 875 Main St. E., Milton, Ont., L9T 3Z3 (Box 248), is one of the Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing Ltd. community newspapers.

Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of a typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with a reasonable allowance for signature, will not be charged for, but the balance of the advertisement will be paid for at the applicable rate. The publisher reserves the right to categorize advertisements or decline.

CCAB Audited

RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE BY
ocna Ontario Community Newspapers Association
CNA Canadian Community Newspapers Association
SNA Suburban Newspapers of America

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION IS A PROUD MEDIA SPONSOR FOR:



The Milton Canadian Champion is a Recyclable Product

Letters welcome

The Champion welcomes letters to the editor. We reserve the right to edit, revise and reject letters. Letters must be signed and the address and telephone number of the writer included. Letters can be e-mailed to miltoneid@haltonsearch.com, faxed to (905) 878-4943 or dropped off at 875 Main St. E.

Pud

by Steve Nease

