

OPINION

We Canadians deserve better

In the midst of an economic crisis, such as the one we currently face, Canadians should be able to look to its elected officials in Ottawa for leadership, ideas and action.

Sadly, the current soap opera underway has revealed politicians — from both sides of the House of Commons' aisle — more intent on playing petty politics than looking out for the welfare of the constituents who elected them.

Even worse, the actions of our federal officials in their battle for power will only deepen the current economic crisis for Canadians as any sense of government stability has all but vanished. Finger pointing, a national sport in Ottawa, has reached an all-time low but it is clear there is plenty of blame to go around.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper, fresh off an election in which he gained a strengthened minority government, vowed to work more closely with Opposition parties for the betterment of all Canadians. He lied.

In his first statement on the economy since the election, Harper introduced a plan devoid of any solid economic stimulus but did include a cut to taxpayer subsidies for political parties — a move clearly designed to gut the Liberals and NDP. It was unnecessary and certainly wasn't an issue of urgent concern to Canadians.

That horrendous political miscalculation provided the impetus for the Liberals and NDP to consider forming a coalition under the pretext of having no confidence in the Tories and their plans for the economy.

Canadians, though, didn't vote for a coalition in October. Voters soundly rejected Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion, and his own party was in the process of choosing his successor — a competition already fraught with nasty in-fighting. The NDP drew less than half the popular vote of the Tories and won 106 fewer seats. To top it off, it's only with the support of a party intent on destroying the Confederation of Canada that the Liberals and NDP can wrest power from the Tories. Canadians shouldn't support this three-headed monster.

All MPs should work toward bringing forth a sound infrastructure-driven economic stimulus plan that, in co-operation with the provinces, gets people working, protects seniors, aids the manufacturing sector and boosts consumer confidence. If that requires some politicians losing face and the formation of an all-party economic strategy committee, so be it. Canadians deserve much better government than they have been getting.



Readers Write

E-mail your letters to editorial@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

Councillors' pay raise outrageous

DEAR EDITOR:

I read about the pay increase voted in by Halton regional councillors and the boost for Regional Chair Gary Carr.

In view of the fact that the federal and provincial governments have chosen not to indulge themselves with wage hikes, how do the regional councillors and Carr justify their decision to give themselves raises?

The rest of the world is trying to cut back, and factories are in fact closing in some industries. Some companies are

laying off workers and taking wage cuts.

For any individual or group — especially an elected government body — to give themselves a pay raise is outrageous.

It's hard to believe that Halton council is living in the same community as the rest of us.

Are you aware of the current economic crisis, Halton councillors?

AGOSTINO GALIOTO
MILTON

Foran Affairs

Is it a case of political disease or display? Who's to say?

She coughed. And then briefly lost her voice. She apologized: "I'm sorry, I've got the Commons cold."

Actually, what Halton MP Lisa Raitt has caught is a virus. Some would say it's nothing more than a bit of political fever. Others would say it's something far more insidious, worming its way into the previously sharp mind of the successful mother of two, causing strange symptoms: a tendency to yell out "Shame" when another human being is speaking or often launching into standing ovations for no apparent reason — embarrassing tics one would usually struggle to conceal during normal conversation.

But what ails the young entrant into Canadian politics is nothing new. For generations, men and women across this great land have been exposed to the disease upon entering the House of Commons.

And the contagion knows no bounds: blue, red, orange, or non-aligned colour — everyone picks it up.

It starts slowly, as the rookies wonder what strange phenomenon has taken possession of their colleagues during that odd time called Question Period. But soon, the rot takes root, and the novice members display the early signs of a boorish pack mentality, crying at the enemy and crying out for their leader.

Politicians call it party discipline, or more nefariously, parliamentary custom. Civilians wonder why their leaders can't act civilly.

And journalists despair, knowing as they do that previously independent-minded people like Raitt, a Conservative from Cape Breton coming from a union-leader father,

will in future be regurgitating 'talking points' in place of plain speech.



Tim Foran

Whence comes this tragic plague? Why, from those self-same journalists, for whom the politicians seem to believe they serve, according to Jeffrey Archer. As the Briton writes, that astute Irish-English Whig, Edmund Burke, "looking up at the Press Gallery of the House of Commons, said, 'Yonder sits the Fourth Estate, and they are more important than them all.'"

But nay, if it's not a disease then that troubles our local Tory, it is not this ink stained wretch. It is but the microphones and cameras that can command the calls of our howling mad elected men and women. Time then to turn off the lights and let civility return.

The Canadian Champion
Milton's Community Newspaper Since 1860

555 Industrial Dr.,
Milton, Ont. L9T 5E1

905-878-2341

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

www.miltoncanadianchampion.com

V.P. — Group Publisher

Neil Oliver

General Manager

David Harvey

Editor in Chief

Jill Davis

Managing Editor

Karen Miceli

Advertising Director

Debbi Koppejan

Production Manager

Tim Coles

Circulation Manager

Charlene Hall

Office Manager

Sandy Pare

The Canadian Champion, published every
Wednesday and Friday, is a division
of Metroland Media Group Ltd. —
President Ian Oliver.

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

SNM Suburban Newspapers of America

The Canadian Champion is a proud media sponsor for:

Halton Healthcare

Child Find ONTARIO

WELCOME WAGON LTD. SINCE 1909

Jingle Bell Fund

MILTON SANTA CLAUS PARADE

UNITED WAY OF MILTON

MILTON CANADA DAY

MILTON CANADA DAY

MCRCC

YMCA OF OAKVILLE

YMCA OF OAKVILLE

ATHENA Awards

The Oakville, Milton

The Oakville, Milton

Showcase Milton more than a Home and Leisure Show!

GALA Awards

GALA Awards

FAO POLICE ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

The Milton Canadian Champion is a Recyclable Product