

Opinion

Picking on the poor, a poor platform

This provincial election has taken a distinct turn towards ugliness.

Personally, I find the attacks on welfare shameful. I consider it a nasty, poorly conceived kneejerk attack on what is far from Ontario's most pressing economic problem.

I'm sorry folks, but it's not the people on welfare who are bankrupting this province. But as the poorest and least organized group, they are the easiest to attack.

Why don't we hear more criticism of the bloated administrations of our health care and education systems? How about huge corporations and their non-existent tax



Viewpoint

Alan Shackleton

contributions? What about the bureaucracy of government itself, not to mention the absurd and overpaid number of politicians we have?

In our area alone we have municipal, regional, provincial, and federal politicians being paid by our tax dollars to look after our interests. Why do we have two school boards, and so many

trustees? All these organizations seem to do is build really nice administrative offices.

These are areas where we can cut, but we seem unwilling to take on the tough work needed to reach solutions. One of the reasons is because these organizations scream blue murder the moment we criticize them. And they have the resources to fight back.

However, attacking the least fortunate among us — well that just seems to be fair game.

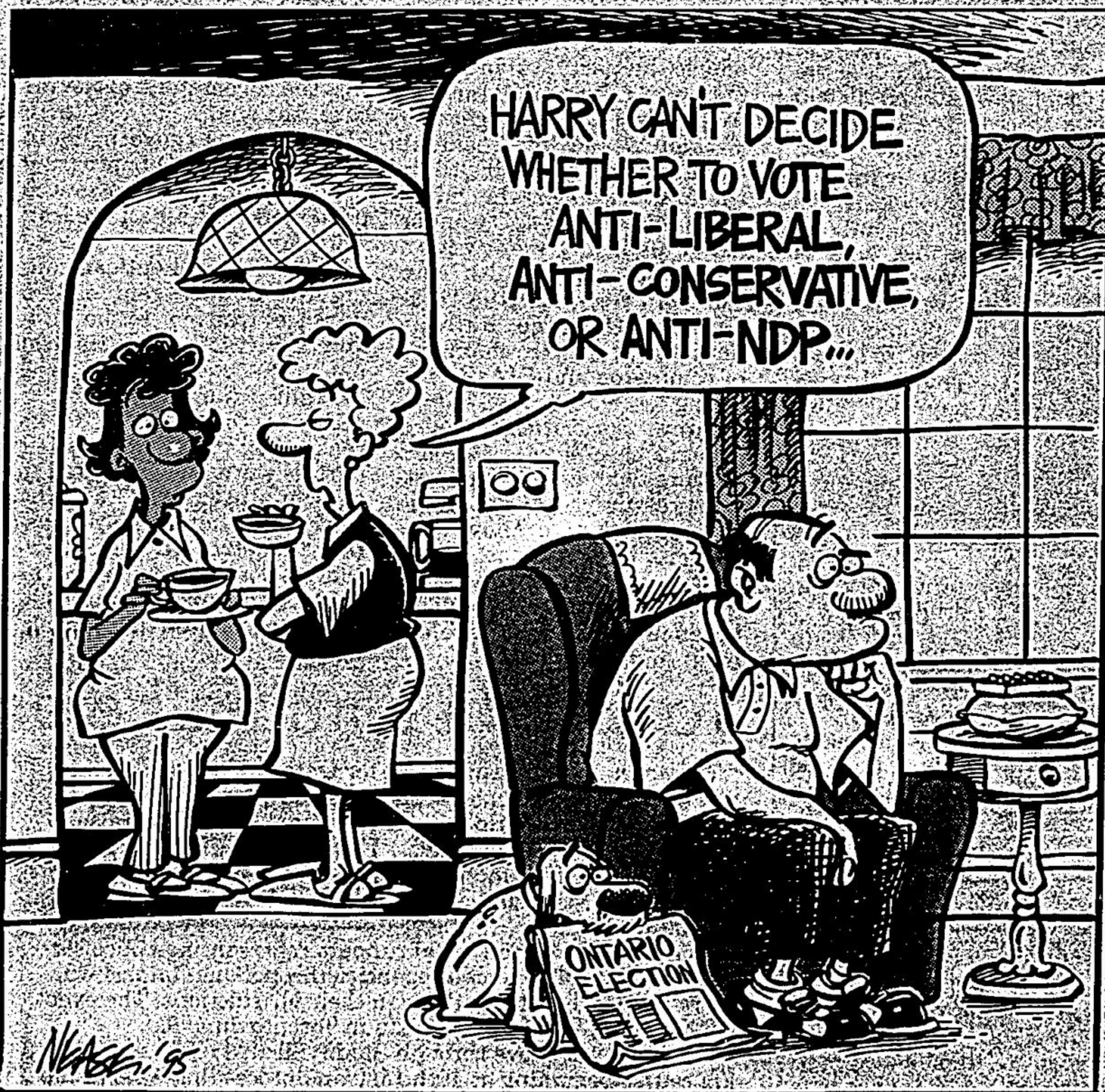
I don't like the tone of these attacks, or those making them. People in expensive suits badmouthing the poor offend me.

This impression that being

on welfare is like a paid vacation is nonsense. The people who think it's so easy, obviously have no concept of what it is like to live in such a way — constantly worried about money, forced to have your entire life opened up to social workers, degraded by the prospect of no work and no hope.

I'd like to think most of the people I know are above taking the bread out of a poor man's hand. Why then this hysteria towards those on welfare. What are we afraid of?

I think this election needs a better issue than picking on the poor.



Adam

by Brian Basset

UM... EXCUSE ME... IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ABOUT CELLULITE OR THE JOBS OF NURSING... IT'S JUST THAT... WELL... I KNOW...

SAY NO MORE, ADAM, WE UNDERSTAND.

I'M NOT COMPLAINING, BUT THIS ISN'T EXACTLY WHAT I HAD IN MIND



Dresscode backlash here

I make my fashion choices based on what doesn't itch. Gilda Radner

Let me declare my position on haute couture right off the top. I am not a fashion plate. My wardrobe could perhaps best be described as proto-Slobovian. I look like a walking rummage sale. My idea of formal wear is runners with the laces tied.

When it comes to Klein, I'm more Ralph than Calvin. Lately I've been happier than Rita MacNeil in an all your can eat smorgasboard.

It's the business fashion revolution. For most of the past year, there's been a kind of renaissance in business dress. Everywhere you looked the crusty, blue serge troglodytes that run the wheels of commerce in this country, were suddenly, unaccountably lightening up. Secretaries, accountants, salesmen and other office functionaries were allowed to show up for work in casual attire.

The president of IBM appeared on the front page of the Globe and Mail's Report on Business dressed in Jack Frasier slacks and a cashmere sweater.

My teller down at the local branch cashed my paycheque while wearing a t-shirt and Levis. General Motors of Canada announced that its 5,000 salaried workers would be permitted to wear jeans on Fridays, providing they each contributed a loonie to the United Way.

I was delirious. At last, after a lonely lifetime, shuffling along in droopy (but comfortable) drawers and ratty runners... vindication! The rest of the world had finally noticed that dressing up is a pain in the butt.

And in the throat and feet and everywhere else business dress conspires to throttle and enslave the human body.

Take the necktie. What kind of sadist decided that what the men



Basic Black

Arthur Black

of this world really needed was a strip of cloth knotted like a garrote around their Adam's apples for eight hours a day?

But no need to wax apoplectic about the horrible constrictions of business attire any longer, because the Tycoons of Commerce, God bless 'em have finally wised up. Or so I thought.

Turns out I was premature. The pin-striped pinheads at the top have had yet another change of heart.

The dress code backlash is underway. First sign of it was a terse directive from Mr. D.W. Munger, vice president and general director of personnel for General Motors of Canada: Basically, the memo says that jeans days for GM employees are toast.

Why? Because, claims Mister Munger, the wearing of jeans conflicts with GM's efforts to set dress standards for salespeople.

The suits in the boardroom freaked because they feared many workers were too relaxed.

Geez. Can't have that, can we?

Ah, well. I knew in my unkept heart of hearts that the liberalization of business dress was too good to last. No doubt other businesses will follow the GM lead and start placing their employees in polyester bondage once again.

Not that it affects me personally. If there's one job you don't have to dress up for, it's writing a newspaper column.

In fact, Mister Munger, if you're reading this...

I want you to know I'm naked.