

# Stouffville Tribune

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# OPINION

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Roy Green

## Some Canadians actually think they have a say

The most intriguing question of the week concerns the identity of the 37 per cent of Canadians who feel they have a say in what the federal government does.

Results of a seven-week survey of 1,278 Canadians released this week show 63 per cent felt they do not have any say over what the government does.

They said they wanted to be served by MPs who no longer simply clap, bark and vote on cue for the party line.

(Actually, clapping and barking is all most MPs are good for).

So, who are the 37 per cent who appear to be suffering from a case of contemporary insanity?

It's confusing, but I figure the number of Canadians employed by the federal government probably amounts to at least 37 per cent of the population.

So, the only people who actually think they have a say in what the federal government does probably do have a say because they are working for the federal government.

Who are the 37 per cent who appear to be suffering from a case of contemporary insanity?

And, as we all know, federal bureaucrats meander to a different drummer.

Another interesting point from the survey, conducted by the Institute for Research on Public Policy, was that 88 per cent of those surveyed feel people with money have great influence over the government.

Which leads me to conclude that the 12 per cent who said they don't believe that must be rich Canadians.

Speaking of money, the survey also said 60 per cent believe the political party that spends the most during an election is almost sure to win.

Meaning, I guess, that 40 per cent of Canadians have lost all touch with reality.

Also surprising was the relatively low number — 54 per cent — who said they see little difference between the federal parties.

Which suggests 46 per cent of Canadians can actually tell the difference between Jean Clark, Joe Chretien, Stockwell DuCeppe, Gilles Day and what's-her-name, the NDP leader.

But the most telling result from the IRPP survey is that Canadians favour the courts by a margin of two-to-one over the Legislature to have the final say when legislation passed in the House of Commons conflicts with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Even though we vote for them, there are very few of us who trust our MPs to get things right.

Now that's Canadian, eh?



## LETTERS

### Tory partisans going down in sinking ship

I read with amazement and intrigue the letter to the editor by Mr. Chrys Pelegris (Thursday, July 13) and would like to comment on several areas.

To say Jim Jones has no political experience prior to being elected MP for Markham in 1997 is absolute nonsense. Mr. Jones was an elected member of municipal council for several years before he was a Tory candidate in the 1997 federal election. This may be piffle to some in comparison to serving provincially or nationally but it is, nevertheless, still experience.

Secondly, to state that in American-style politics, members of Congress or state assemblies serve themselves instead of constituents, it must be clarified their priority is to serve constituents, not the party hierarchy, as Mr. Pelegris seems to feel is the Canadian way.

Brian Mulroney and Jean Chretien have used this method to exert their power, with the results being that backbenchers have been expelled for serving their constituents' wishes, rather than agendas influenced by unelected backroom boys.

The Alliance, like it or not, believes in a change from old-style politics, which the federal Tories are still in the business of.

To suggest a Tory will be elected in Markham in the next election isn't necessarily true. It is up to the will of the electorate to make that decision, not partisans who will go down with a sinking ship in a sea of new alternatives and facts that they refuse to recognize out of their arrogant pride.

KENT EDWARD BAXTER  
UNIONVILLE

### Put an end to Remembrance Day

Our standards regarding the observance of Remembrance Day have eroded steadily in the past four decades, but have reached a new low with the move by York Region and its unions to take this statutory holiday in conjunction with Canada Day, creating a four-day weekend.

Both the region and union have demonstrated a contempt for our intelligence in letters explaining employees are more likely to attend a ceremony organized at the workplace.

Left to their own devices, employees tend to use Remembrance Day as a day to shop.

### LETTERS POLICY

Stouffville Tribune welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The newspaper reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

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If this is what it takes to get civic staff to observe the day, (and most of the rest of us, as well), then I agree with one veteran quoted in The Economist and Sun article: We should simply legislate an end to Remembrance Day as a holiday.

Lest we forget? Apparently we already have.

STEVE GORDON  
HOLLAND LANDING

### Parents who ignore movie warnings are selfish

Re: Taking children to adult movies a form of child abuse, by Rick Vanderlinde in The Economist & Sun, July 22.

Thank you for putting into words exactly how I feel about seeing young children viewing movies that are totally inappropriate for them. Just recently, we took our children to see a family movie. I noticed the theatre had printed warnings to parents about *Scary Movie*, strongly stating it was not meant for children.

Unfortunately, and I must admit not to my surprise at all, I saw several children going into the movie. All I could think was that these poor children have really ignorant parents. I agree with you that parents who take their offspring to see movies that are not age-appropriate are selfish and, of course, their needs come before the needs of their children.

Children today do not need to be scared silly, exposed to excessive violence or material of a sexual nature.

They need to be children, but unfortunately many parents of today have difficulty allowing their kids to be just that.

Your statement, "an afternoon outing to the

movies bordered on child abuse", is an astute observation. You have done an excellent job telling these parents what you think by expressing your views in your column.

If you had the courage to tell the "caregivers" — I use this term with apprehension — what you thought, you probably would have been told to "mind your own business", although you are correct when you state that "watching over society's future is everyone's business".

I applaud you for writing such an excellent article and look forward to reading your next column.

MARLENE COOPER  
RICHMOND HILL

### Tory government's priorities mixed up

All this talk about the mouldy courthouse in Newmarket is making me sick. This, along with similar problems in our school portables, makes me wonder what our priorities are.

We allow political agendas to supersede the greater public good and are prepared to expose children to these toxins. The time has come to think about the things government is supposed to do, namely, to ensure public environments are safe.

The irony of finding mould in the courthouse and schools is we are risking the health of citizens in places where they are supposed to receive justice and education. How sad.

We are now paying the price for electing a Tory government in Ontario.

TONY GENCO  
WOODBIDGE

## Stouffville Tribune

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