

OPINION

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Harper our new Christmas grinch

This year we have a new Grinch that stole Christmas. His name is Stephen Harper.

When people should be feeling kindly and considerate towards their fellow men, we have the leader of the Tory party using the national media to rant and rave against the three opposition parties in Parliament; crying that they are trying to undermine Canadian democracy. Mr. Harper seems to feel that because the majority of the House does not agree with the way his party is handling the financial crisis, he has the right to spend lots of money (taxpayers?) to tell the Canadian people that the three opposition parties, Bloc, NDP and Liberals, are trying to destroy Canada.

Now, because he doesn't get his way, Mr. Harper then picks up his marbles and closes down Parliament.

Now, we have a dictator.

Harper and his cabinet cronies have made the claim that they have the right to run this country, but they don't. They were elected by the people of Canada to provide good government. This they have failed to do. The three opposition parties recognized this and have come together to offer an alternative. The Liberals, NDP and Bloc were duly elected under our Constitution and hold more seats than the Tories. They have the right to offer an alternative solution.

Harper claims opposition politicians are

trying to strip him of power and this is undermining his version of democracy. This is a falsehood, Tory propaganda designed to convince the Canadian people he has the right to close Parliament and run the country as he sees fit. Mr. Harper, the Grinch.

JOHN ROSS
STOUFFVILLE

Councillor delivered on promise

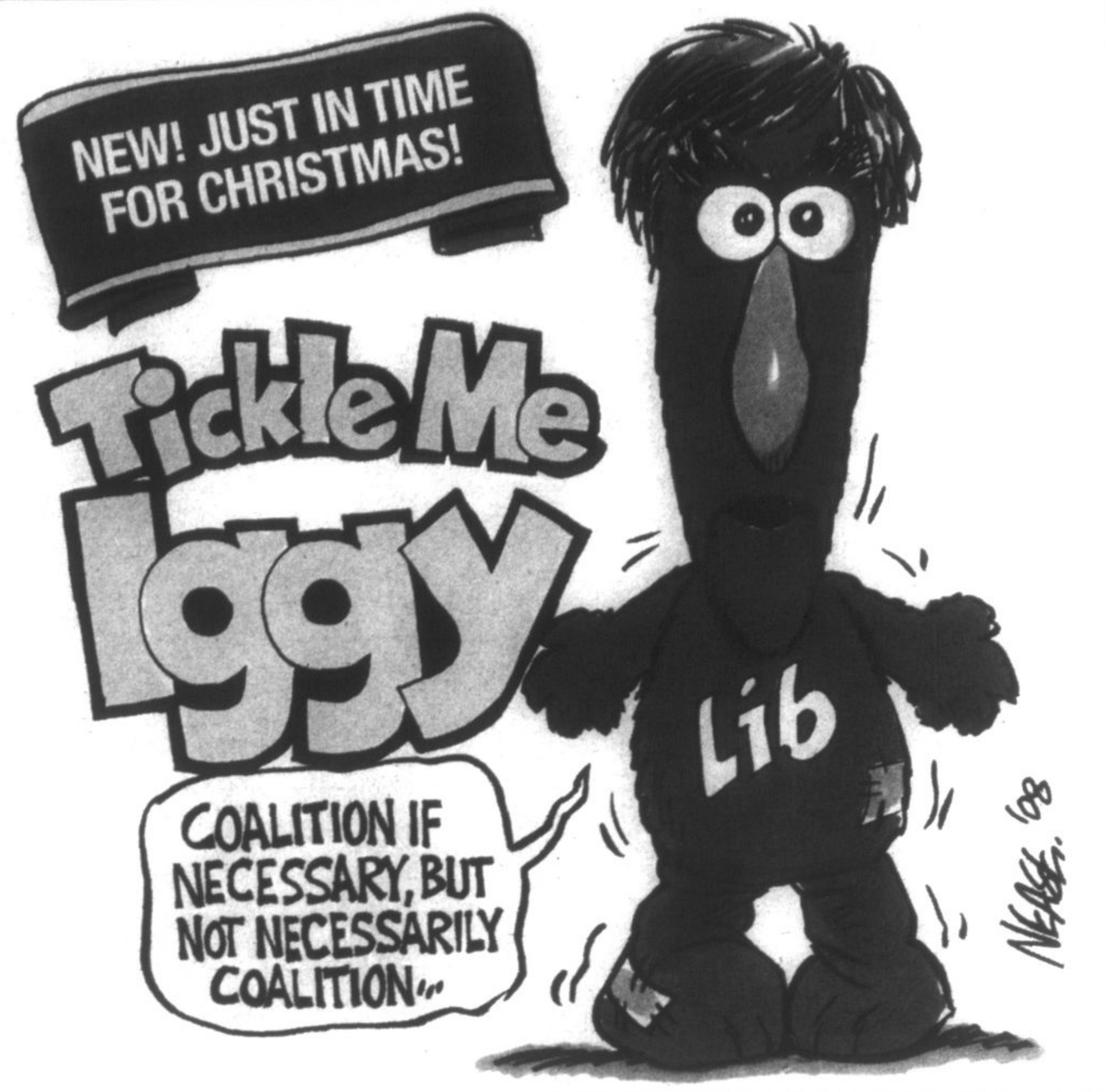
I was pleasantly surprised this week as I drove along Hoover Park Drive. I witnessed town staff changing the speed limit signs from 50 km/h to 40. This clearly demonstrates that Ward 6 has a councillor that cares about his constituents and his town. Rob Hargrave said he would champion this issue and he persevered.

It will be a pleasant change to live next to a street instead of a highway. The speeds cars travel on this street are dangerous, to say the least. I was almost run off the road a couple of times for daring to drive below 50.

This speed limit change coupled with additional police intervention will surely change the face of our community. I am confident this will be a welcome change that will be appreciated by all Ward 6 residents.

Thank you again for the early Christmas gift, Mr. Hargrave

ANDREW VICKERY
STOUFFVILLE



Perpetual state of election just what economist ordered

Worried about our country's future, both economic and political?

Never fear.

I've come up with a way to stimulate our economy and solve our political problems in one fell swoop (or one swell foop, take your pick).

Consider this: the Opposition last week wanted to seize power, with the support of the Bloc Quebecois, and spend \$30 billion to stimulate the economy.

Some people think this is a good idea and point out the Opposition parties are certainly within their rights to take over if they can all agree on something for more than five minutes.

Others pointed out we just held a federal election and the Liberals lost. So did the NDP.

It's the Conservatives who should be managing, or mismanaging, the economy, they say — even if the Conservatives can't add.

As in, you can't pass a bill that undercuts the Opposition's ability to raise money, takes away public servants' right to strike and makes little mention of looming economic

problems, without having half the votes, is their point I believe.

But back to that last election, the one that saw a record low voter turnout of just 59 per cent.

What did the election cost? A tidy \$300 million. Where did the money come from? You, the person lucky enough to be paying taxes.

And where did it go? To pay people, for the most part, who printed the ballots and prepared the voters' lists and manned the polling stations. It was \$300 million pumped directly into our economy.

The election was its own little job creation package.

So, are you thinking what I'm thinking?

That's right! We simply keep holding elections, nonstop, with the Governor General's blessing, and keep pumping money into our economy.

No one ever wins outright, so we hold an election every two weeks for the next two years and *voilà!* — that's \$300 million times 100 for a nifty \$30 billion, funneled directly into Canadians' pockets.

What will this accomplish?

1. It will put thousands to work.



Bernie O'Neill

You're an out-of-work auto assembly-line worker? Get a job on another type of assembly line, the one that forms on voting day as we, yet again, cast our ballots.

But it's just not the same, you say? You miss the hum of the machinery or the smell of new car parts?

We want you to feel comfortable. So go ahead and wear your safety goggles, ear plugs and hard hat, your steel-toe boots. We don't care.

Bring along some power tools and rev them up every so often. Use a robotic arm to hand out the ballots.

Picket the community centre or grade school every once in a while

where the polling station is, just for old time's sake. Whatever makes you feel at home.

Or you're an out-of-work forestry worker? All the ballots we'll need to print might just prompt the restart of that pulp-and-paper mill.

2. It will keep the politicians busy.

Ever get the idea these gentlemen and ladies are dedicated to fighting with each other and putting each other down, rather than actually doing what's best for us, between elections?

This will put them in an almost permanent state of electioneering for the next two years, which is when they always seem to smile more, we see them in the riding and they actually almost seem interested in what we have to say.

At least they'll be knocking on doors, talking to the people and finding out what we want. (Which is usually, "Would you please get off my front step." Although most of us are too nice to say that.)

3. Voter participation will skyrocket!

Well, OK, maybe it won't skyrocket. But for those who do vote,

instead of voting once every few years, you'll be voting once every two weeks or 25 times a year. Now that's democracy in action and a lot of exercising of your franchise. Which sounds really healthy.

4. Election signs everywhere!

Orange, red, blue, green. They're colourful! Just like Christmas lights. Lots of interesting names. Reading them keeps you occupied when you're driving.

Mind you, there might be other ways to shepherd us through economic worries and other things to spend money on. But I've kind of lost faith the current crop of federal politicians will spend the money in ways that will actually improve our lives.

Keep in mind there are 30 million of us. If they just gave each one of us \$1,000 to spend as we please that might be one method of stimulating the economy with a \$30 billion cash injection, although the way the weather has been we might all take the next cheap vacation to Cuba, which stimulates somebody else's economy and would defeat the whole exercise.

But at least we'd be warm.

LETTERS POLICY

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

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