

Toews just giving somebody else a chance

American humourist Franklin P. Jones once quipped that "honest criticism is hard to take, particularly from a relative, a friend, an acquaintance, or a stranger."

Which pretty well sums up the predictable reaction of various Supreme Court justices – and their myriad of judicial and media apologists – to the news that Justice Minister Vic Toews has had the audacity to say he plans changes in the way our almighty Supremes are chosen.

Like Pablov's dogs, who barked at a given command, the justices and journalists immediately broke into their chorus of complaints that Toews – who, after all, is a Conservative, and worse, a conservative – is trying to "politicize" the judiciary.

Oh please. Is there anything in our system already more politicized than the unelected, unaccountable Supremes? I think not.

So what, pray tell, does Toews actually plan to do?

While it may indeed be too horrible to contemplate for those who want the judiciary to remain as it is, i.e. a haven for small "I" and capital "L" liberals, Toews simply wants to add one more person to the judicial advisory committees responsible for vetting judicial candidates and ranking them.

Even worse, at least to his critics, the eighth member of the committee would be a federal appointee – giving federal appointees a one-vote edge on the committee – and Toews thinks police officials should be allowed a say in all of this.

This was enough – once again – to prompt Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin to attack Toews and claim – once again – that the "independence" of the judiciary is at stake.

From her perspective, alas, it probably is. Let us hope so.

McLachlin and several of her cronies have made it clear time and again that their notion of judicial independence, i.e. judicial activism, should certainly never be constrained by those mere mortals whom we elect to represent us and write the laws for us.

Oh no, judges, having been plucked out of the appropriate political/social stream and planted on a bench, suddenly are transformed into all-wise, all-knowing and completely impartial persons who surely no better than our elected people – or anybody else – what is best for us.

McLachlin, who has strongly advocated blatant judicial activism for years, once defended this by saying that our elected system of majority rule unbridled by the courts "offers no protection against the tyranny of the majority."

Apparently for her, and for those like-minded activists like her, the tyranny of a handful of appointed judges – who, unlike the politicians, are not subject to any public review at all – is far superior to that old system of electing people to represent us.

I mean really, what do politicians know? After all, they're open to playing politics. Judges, we're told, are above that sort of thing.

The really incredible thing is that judges, law associations, journalists and editorialists, routinely claim both in writing and orally that the courts, unlike our legislatures, are not politicized.

This is utter nonsense. What really irks the current office holders is that with a Tory government in place – and particularly Tories who want a little more justice in our justice system – the comfortable arrangement between Liberal appointees and liberal appointees might be upset.

In the later stages of his term as attorney-general, for example, Liberal Irwin Cotler's judicial appointments included his former executive assistant and policy advisor, his former chief of staff, a former legal counsel to the Ontario Liberal Party, the wife of a close personal friend of his, a senior Alberta Liberal fund-raiser, and a former New Brunswick Liberal minister of finance.

It goes on. But you get the point.

The real story here isn't fear that the court will be "politicized," but that the Tories will give somebody else a chance who isn't part of the cosy little federal Liberal (and liberal) cabal which now runs roughshod over both our democratic system and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, in order to shape our society in their own ideological image.

In Christian theology, we have the concept of "grace," a way of describing a person's experience with new insights upon their public acceptance of the belief that Jesus Christ is their Lord and Savior.

Whatever your view of that concept, it kind of serves as a model for what McLachlin and her like-minded judicial activists see as happening to those appointed to the bench.

They may have garnered their appointment in return for their political loyalties and/or ideological bent, but suddenly, upon their appointments, any political thoughts they have had in the past are miraculously wiped from their minds and all they seek is truth, justice and the Canadian way.

And if the majority of citizens don't see it their way – and even if our elected representatives pointedly vote for something entirely different – none of that matters.

It's amazing how many people still buy into this nonsense. Happily, Toews isn't among them.



National Affairs

Claire Hoy

No time to rest on laurels

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She vowed to continue to work for her constituents to the best of her abilities and she also asked voters to hold her accountable. Well liked and approachable, her style seems to suit Bolton voters well. Her rather quick ascent in politics, from obscurity, shows just how the democratic system works in this country. She will need to be a bit more aggressive in what promises to be a challenging term at the region. There's uncertainty about the future of Peel itself, and Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion's intentions in what is sure to be her "last stand."

New on the scene as Bolton's area councillor is Jason Payne, successful in his second attempt (he ran for area councillor in Wards 3/4 in 2003). The fact he staged two campaigns shows his desire to serve. His lack of experience shouldn't be held against him - many neophytes have risen to great heights. We would suggest he works closely with Groves and staff to learn the ropes as quickly as he can.

He said he was disappointed in the low voter turnout. New recreation facilities for Bolton is high on his list of priorities, but he may find such a huge undertaking to be fraught with political and financial limitations.

But Groves says there are private investors waiting to come to the table. They've offered to build and operate such a facility to provide the needed service at reasonable rates. It's worth pursuing.

Voters chose to return Valerie Arnold-Judge as trustee on the Peel District School Board, despite some tough competition, and heated exchanges, with nearest rival Stan Cameron. It seems voters preferred Arnold-Judge's experience, wisdom and dedication for doing a job few really wanted in recent years. Our lone voice at the board needs our support and we hope Arnold-Judge keeps our flame burning bright. It would be nice if more people (parents) took an interest in board undertakings, considering the impact it has on our children.

Frank Di Cosola, acclaimed as trustee on the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, has no easy task before him, as the province oversees the board's budget process, virtually stripping it of its powers, at least temporarily. There could be some very bleak prospects on the horizon, but it's a reality other boards face and it's a signal

that something needs to be done to preserve the grass roots contact the boards have with their students and parents.

No one should breathe easier now that the election is over. The work is just beginning.

For the roughly \$525,000 our councillors earn annual-

ly (combined), we should be demanding a lot for our money.

Our hope is that those who were quite vocal during the campaign don't simply vanish into the woodwork or shy away from public debates. We need those strong community voices as much as we need strong councillors.

Call or e-mail your representative. Pay a visit to a Caledon council meeting. Get involved!

Just as you exercised your democratic privilege Nov. 13, now is the time to flex those constituent muscles. Be part of the vision and part of the solution!

MP, Editor

Our Readers Write

Viola lauds Citizen coverage

I would like to thank the Caledon Citizen very much for its coverage of the municipal election. Your unbiased reporting of debates and election activities was very much appreciated. You prove, on a weekly basis, that there is only one Caledon newspaper that actually reports the news rather than opinionated editorials.

While I won't get the opportunity to rep-

resent my constituents for the next four years I will continue to work towards improving Caledon, and I know Richard Whitehead will work hard for us as well. Thank you to the 1,080 people who believed in me, and to Mark, Aileen, and the Caledon Citizen staff for helping get my message out.

Thank you.

Tony Viola

Allan Thompson says thanks

As one of my first duties as the newly-elected regional councillor for Ward 2, I wanted to extend the heartfelt thanks of myself, my family and our entire campaign team to the residents of Ward 2 who entrusted me with their support and confidence and who helped me secure victory in our municipal election.

Congratulations also to all of the other successful councillors who will be joining me around the council chamber table.

It isn't easy to step forward, take a position and be willing to let your name stand on a ballot seeking election and credit must certainly be given to all of the people who bravely stepped forward as candidates in this election and to their campaign teams for their hard work.

Moving forward, I am tremendously passionate and excited by the community in which I was raised and where I am raising my family, and I am anxious to channel that enthusiasm into projects and commitments that will benefit both Ward 2 and the Town of Caledon communities at large.

Thank you for placing your trust in me.

Allan Thompson

Interesting Random Facts

- * More than 600 residents of Paris are hospitalized each year for slipping on dog poop.
- * On average, we lose four eyelashes every day.



David Tilson, M.P.

presents:

SENIORS INFORMATION EXPO

Friday, December 01, 2006

2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

**Caledon Seniors' Centre
7 Rotarian Way Bolton, ON**

- **Tax Information for Seniors** - what you should know
- **Income Securities** - sorting through the confusion
- **Elder Abuse** - how to protect yourself
- **The Senior Driver** - keeping you safe and on the road

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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Please come and join us to learn about what's available to assist you!