



**Alex
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GUEST SHOT

The heat must be getting to Ottawa

I'm not sure what the average temperature was in Ottawa over the summer.

For that matter, I can't even recall a particularly searing weather report from our nation's capital. But I'm told it was hot, sometimes very hot.

That explains everything.

For months, I've been growing uneasy about how the telltale signs of a social conservative agenda that, at its extremes, threatens the current government.

The soCons have a hidden agenda. So say the Liberals, but without first telling us that part of the soCon push is coming from some of their own.

In the early simmer of June, we were treated to the attempted reopening of the grandmother of all soCon issues: Abortion.

Liberal MP Tom Wappell and Conservative MP Maurice Vellacott straddled every soapbox in sight to say how the abortion issue needed redress.

I was wondering if either of them were aware that there was a war going on in the Middle East, that terrorists were ratcheting up their plans to "eliminate Israel" and that gas prices had broken the wallets of many a working stiff.

And those were just a smattering of the day's issues. But abortion?

By and large, women seem to be doing a pretty darn good job deciding what to do with their bodies.

Then it got a little hotter.

The prime minister got into the act, albeit with only his big toe. In a mid-summer night's swing through the Ottawa River corridor, Mr. Harper told us that the best people in the country to talk child-care were parents — period.

What about those who do need a more inclusive policy though? The new

policy favours traditional families and the stay-at-home option.

But if this is at the exclusion of all other options, then what's the point? If the idea is that we are going to support traditional families over those that are not so traditional, then the pendulum has now swung way over to the other side.

Apparently in Ottawa, policy nirvana now trumps compassion.

And then we just started to boil over.

Same-sex marriage replaced abortion as the hot-button issue.

I'm told there are now more than 130 MPs solidly against same-sex marriage, if a vote were to materialize. Ah, excuse me... Earth calling the 130 ... If you are going to effectuate change, don't you think that you should have a bigger number than this?

There are so many more important issues to debate over and vote on.

Besides, just wait until the small minority of the gay and lesbian community that lobbied themselves into "marriage" decide it's time for a divorce.

That'll teach 'em.

So why is this all happening, you ask? Well, it seems to some pundits that the PM has to appeal to his base voters. Nonsense, I say.

The Conservatives can only pick up seats in rural Ontario, rural Quebec and the Maritimes.

No, it's as simple as the now-shortening day and the gentle, fragrant sniff of fall in the late night air.

There was clearly a severe shortage of sunscreen at the parliamentary convenience store.

It just had to have been the heat.

Alex Tsakumi is a local developer and entrepreneur.

Regular Tuesday columnist Bill Tieleman is away on holiday for two weeks.