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Rebel with a Clause



Rebel with a Clause

Age of dismissiveness

By ALEX G. TSAKUMIS

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When the provincial election began to bubble about a month ago, I needed to remind myself that no matter who won, neither Carole James nor Gordon Campbell were likely to notice the meaning of the results, no matter how favourable or disappointing for either: Embrace a dismissive stance before lending an ear; ignore the message - shoot the messenger.

We have entered the Age of Dismissiveness, head first and without a stitch of protective gear.

For this reason, I must tell you, with some remorse, that after listening to both Campbell and James on election night, my fears are only enlarged.

In what will be remembered as the premier's historic third victory as leader of the province, lost, will undoubtedly be the clear message from tens of thousands of supporters, who held their noses to vote for him; whose objections to the punitive nature of everything from the insufferable carbon tax to the rank obscenity that is the draconian Reconciliation Act, that he must dramatically change course or risk the destruction of this province.

Regardless of the simplistic ballot-box observations, Campbell must reverse course on the damage his government is doing to the environment, notwithstanding the green-washing as window dressing: Run of river is questionable tech; the pipeline proposal from Alberta's Tar Sands to the B.C. coast is a great concern; the coziness with the lumber barons begs redress; open-pen fish farming - the list becomes exhaustive.

In addition, the premier must find religion in something other than First Nations issues.

"Yes," to bettering their lives and to a new relationship, but, a resounding "No" to serving up special deals to the detriment of the rights of the rest of the people of this province.

Campbell has beaten James. Perhaps now he can revert to more palatable, reasonable policies.

Imagine if he'd done that this time around?! There might not have been a safe NDP seat in the province.

Then again, Carole James was lucky to get away as she did.

Her campaign advisors should be terminated with not a word of thanks.

They ran the worst provincial campaign I've ever seen. The endless and malignant negativity, rather quickly, became tiresome. And James herself should have known better.



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I know, all too well, of why Gordon Campbell hadn't earned the right to be re-elected premier, but I'm still waiting for the compelling argument as to why brave Carole could have replaced him.

James allowed Campbell to define her as wrong for the province and along with the mindlessness of tepid policy announcements on the anniversary of the winning of the Olympic bid and later on Easter weekend, she was doomed.

As well, the extraordinarily nasty advertisements of a drunk and stumbling Campbell were atrocious lapses in judgment.

To illuminate the dismal landscape: We are no further along than we were before the election. Pockets of joy for both the NDP and the Liberals will soon be drowned out by rhetoric and nonsense.

Prepare for the worst: Deep cuts and a financial rumpus of monstrous proportions.

The only silver lining is that the feckless Green Party and their unbearable leader are reduced, thankfully, to the political trash heap - where they belong.

You cannot use punishment as legislation to force your will on an electorate worried about their families. The Greens dipped further in numbers and were roundly hailed as a meager protest vote, nothing more.

And as for the political fraud that was the 'STV' movement: Good riddance.

At least the premier won't have to pretend he has no idea how a previously failed initiative reappeared on a ballot, with a loaded question attached.

But fear not the future alone: I'm here to look out for you.

Just don't shoot the messenger.

agtsakumis@gmail.com

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