

All aboard the gravy train

By Constance Scrafield

We're all going to be rich ? and the country's going to be broke. Man oh man, those promises and plans for the whole first day or month or pretty soon anyway ? for getting rid of what the previous government has done are wild and what a fashion this has become, hasn't it?

Rather like the child that asks one parent for something not previously discussed and agreed on and that parent says no. Then, the child, having ascended to the level of advanced childhood manipulating, goes to the other parent to ask the same thing and that parent says yes.

Chaos and conflict all round but the child only hopes for success without due consideration of the conflict caused.

We never get over that lesson. A lot of good new laws have been ditched; a lot of time wasted; a lot of faith lost by the doing and undoing of work and the very large sums of money just gone.

Never mind, we're going to be rich. Get our teeth done for free; pay with one hand and get tax rebates back with the other until the federal computers get it all wrong and no one will ever figure it out but they'll keep on paying people to pretend they can.

Of course, it depends on which gravy train your ticket is good for how rich you're going to be.

Was ever an election in such a shambles? People may actually vote this time in a desperate effort to bring some resolution to it all. At this late stage in the campaign trail, there are so many new promises, so many shifts between the others' plans that I hope someone is keeping tabs, because history must be written and the journalists are struggling, like us all, to keep up.

The letters to the editors are often as powerful and pointed as much of the writing in the body of the paper and right and wrong are nearly the same thing. What is clear is that none of them are clear about a way forward and they lie the hardest when they say they are.

The saddest thing about this chaos, indeed, chaos at all, is that the very few things that really matter, really get lost in the shuffle.

Yet and yet, I wonder. The environment, which, in this writer's opinion, is the most urgent matter, with every day another report of dying species and ships ?illegally? dumping plastic and other toxic garbage into the ocean, comes across the driveway in those papers and young men and women reckon scientists are exaggerating, as if there could be a reason why the vast majority of scientists in the world are weeping and gnashing their teeth as the oceans rise and storms tear up everything before them. What ? is there a consortium of mad scientists, nearly all of them living on this globe ? warning and warning, for what? Profit? No ? because nobody wins if it is all true.

The environment is mentioned by the I-wanna-be-prime-ministers but the so-called solutions are faery tales. They all want a new pipeline as if increasing the output of the tar sands is the way to go. Like spinning their wheels in the tar mud.

I hope every available soul in this country votes. I hope printers across the country are whirring with fresh ballots the way they were when the young and proudly First Nations went to the polls in 2015. I hope we all line up and wait our turn and show patience to the exhausted clerks and vote.

In the morning after, as the sun dawns over and over across this vast land, I hope the results are a dead heat so that nobody can actually claim to have won and Elisabeth May's dream of a truly non-partisan approach to governing comes true.

I hope the Canadian people point a national finger at them and warn them to grow up and run the country in the best possible interests of the land and its people and be the world leader that it can be, a country with little real influence until, all of a sudden, it's doing things right.

If, inevitably, there is a slight untidiness to the results and a single seat is the one that tips that balance ever so slightly, I hope the Green Party wins it so that voice is the voice that steers environmental policy while blending with the rest for reasonable consensus.

Voting is not a chess game ? not a game at all. We have war memorials and parks and roads named for the people who faced the unimaginable on battlefields in never-ending wars for the last century and more. Their loving and still sorrowing families think they died for a reason and your vote is that reason.

Whatever you think is important, whatever your ?gut? tells you what matters, go and vote. Every single vote this nation produces is important. And voting brings surprises when the numbers sing.