

Claire Hoy ? Well past time for a change

And so it began. Last Friday, after years of propping up the profligate and pathetic Liberal government, NDP Leader Andrea Horwath finally discovered her spine.

?I cannot in good conscience support a government that people don't trust anymore,? she said.

That long overdue decision, coupled with Conservative Leader Tim Hudak's ongoing calls for an election, left unelected Premier Kathleen Wynne little choice but to settle on June 12 as judgment day for her dispirited Liberals.

Many New Democrats, including a slew of big-name labour leaders, including Ontario Federation of Labor boss Sid Ryan, had openly called on Horwath to support the Liberal's proposed \$130.4 billion spending orgy ? including its \$900 million tax hike ? a budget which had been designed, not in the best interests of Ontarians, but in the best interest of Wynne mollifying Horwath enough to keep her job.

It should have surprised no one that Wynne and Company were attempting to use your tax dollars to keep themselves in office. After all, that's how they won the last election when then premier Dalton McGuinty (with Wynne one of his senior ministers and deputy head of the election campaign) orchestrated the \$1.1 billion gas plant boondoggle specifically to buy support for the Liberals in the five area ridings near the plants. It worked then. Why not try it again?

Well, Horwath, who, as we've said, has been keeping this discredited gang in power ever since, finally came to the realization that a)- it was reflecting poorly on her, and b)- given the current Liberal unpopularity she'll probably never have a better chance to move her party past them on the political ladder.

The flip side of that calculation ? and the reason so many union bosses didn't want her to act ? is that an election gives the dreaded Tories, no friends of the union bosses, their best opportunity in decades to form a government.

Union bosses ? much like Wynne's Liberals ? are obviously more interested in protecting their own narrow interests than they are in giving Ontarians the democratic right to decide who they want to govern them. Keep in mind that Wynne has never been elected as premier, so it's about time the electorate had a say.

The union bosses ? as opposed to rank and file union members, who rarely vote the same way their bosses do ? claim that Hudak is ?anti-union? or ?Mike Harris lite,? a supposedly critical reference to former Tory premier Mike Harris, the man loathed by them, and much of the mainstream media, but a man who, you may recall, was given two consecutive majority governments by the voters. Hudak, not surprisingly, welcomed Horwath's belated discovery of her ?conscience,? saying, ?The big government union bosses, they've been running the province now for 10 years. They support the Liberals, the NDP, they get their way.

?But that didn't help out the million people who are out of work or are struggling in a part-time job.?

Both Hudak and Horwath, of course, say ?it's time for a change.? Hard to argue with that.

Actually, it's well past time.

In addition to the aforementioned gas plant fiasco ? and the unconscionably spending record of both McGuinty and Wynne ? all Ontarians will know that one look at their hydro bills (which skyrocketed thanks to Liberal reliance on unproven, unreliable and costly energy experiments, e.g. wind, etc.) to know that they're being terribly ripped off.

Is it really any wonder that so many companies have abandoned Ontario ? many more than have come here ? when they look at the cost of power to run their plants and compare it to any other jurisdiction? It's a built-in, made-at-home job killer, just as Wynne's proposed made-in-Ontario pension scheme and her other wild spending suggestions would be.

Now opposition political parties always say it's time for a change. Naturally, they want that change to mean their own election. Saying it, of course, doesn't always make it so.

But in this case there can be no doubt that the Liberals simply don't deserve to keep their jobs, so the electorate really should decide whether they want the Tories or the NDP to govern them.

But in politics, as in life, there are no guarantees. The Tories are clearly more fiscally responsible. The NDP have more faith in government's ability to run things. That's your choice.

Whatever you decide, however, there is no excuse for not taking a few minutes to trundle along to your local voting station and cast a ballot.

Don't be a slug. Take an interest. Get out and vote.

