

We need a ?representative system?

Bill Rea, in his column ?Strategic voting doesn't work? (April 10) lamented that a lot of people, for reasons he hasn't even tried to understand, are dumb enough not to vote.

I'll be glad to offer my version of an explanation.

A major contributing factor would certainly be our archaic, primitive first-past-the-post electoral system, which renders any vote, other than one for the ultimate winner, a lost vote and totally meaningless, except for statistics.

If neither of the two mainstream parties appeal to a voter, he knows beforehand that voting for a third or (perish the thought) a fourth candidate is a lost endeavor. So, why bother?

Don't get me wrong. I have not only been actively voting since becoming eligible in 1961, but also functioned many times as poll clerk and once as a DRO and party observer respectively.

But I do understand why people may be frustrated for lack of representation.

If we had representative government, not a single vote would be ?lost.? We may not have as many majority governments, but more coalitions which could save the taxpayers a whole lot of money that has been ?blown away? by majority governments.

Think of the federal sponsorship scandal; billion-dollar Gun Registry for naught; Provincial e-Health; Ornge (Air Ambulance); Ontario Hydro/Hydro One; the frivolous gas plant expenses, which has added decades of debt to the taxpayers of this province.

Rare is the occasion when an ?also-ran? overcomes the odds and finishes on top, such as the surprise Bob Rae got when his party won an election.

Other countries, with much less of a democratic history, have a real representative system which leaves out nobody.

Wulf Graunitz,

Palgrave