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Export date: Sat Oct 31 9:21:04 2026 / +0000 GMT

I didn?t vote for this!

by BRIAN LOCKHART

The thing about democracy is that you are able to vote for the person you want to represent you in municipal, provincial, and federal government.

At the municipal level, you are voting for a person you hope will do a good job of making sure your area of town is taken care of when it comes to potholes and having the streets plowed. You also hope they will listen to your voice when the city or town makes major decisions about spending your tax dollars on things like parks and infrastructure.

At the provincial level, you enter the world of party politics where decisions could have a major impact on your life.

Things like healthcare, new highways, and government spending become very important, and these decisions have a major impact on the provincial economy and, thus, your quality of life and standard of living.

At the federal level, the stakes are huge.

The federal government controls the national economy, trade with other countries, foreign relations, and whether or not your son will be drafted into the military during some kind of international crisis.

?Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others,? is a quote attributed to former UK Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

I agree with that statement. I believe the parliamentary system of government is the best form of government currently in use on the planet.

Parliamentary government allows debate and does not place absolute power in the hands of a single person. The resignation of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in January 2026 is a good example of parliamentary government in action.

The republican system used in the US is not bad, and may come in second place, but the US is not a true republic. It's a democracy.

The mechanics of that statement are a whole other column.

The one failure of parliamentary governments is that you don't have the ability to vote directly for the prime minister.

However, if you did vote directly for the PM, the system wouldn't work as it does. How can you elect one person as the PM if his party only holds a minority in Ottawa?

Most people, it seems, favour one political party. Although based on election results, many people do change their vote over the years.

It is likely you vote for a particular party based on its ideology ? sort of ? and the campaign promises about what they hope to achieve over the next four years if elected.

Recently, several Conservative MPs have switched teams, moving from the Conservative caucus to the Liberals.

Some political analysts see this as an attempt by the Carney government to lure Conservatives across the floor to ultimately secure a majority in parliament without an election.

For a sitting MP to switch parties AFTER an election is a betrayal of their constituents who voted for them based on their party affiliation.

It's no different than paying a paving company to do your driveway, then having them change their mind after completing half of the job ? while keeping all the money.

An MP who abandons a party after an election should be required to resign immediately, as they no longer represent the voters who elected them.

I'm not sure what kind of reaction took place in the ridings of the three MPs who changed teams. There doesn't seem to be much news on that; however, I'm pretty sure those who voted for a Conservative member aren't happy about seeing their vote reduced to a meaningless X on a worthless piece of paper.

If someone enters the election as a member of a political party, then they are obligated to carry through with the policies of the party for which they were elected.

If, for any reason, they have changed their mind or have reservations about the party that nominated them to run in that riding, the honourable thing to do is resign ? not change teams.

There are no legal boundaries to an MP crossing the floor; they can switch parties at any time.

With the Carney government so close to a majority, they will only need a couple more MPs to make the switch to control the House.

This, of course, raises the question: Did the Carney government approach these defecting MPs and make them a lucrative offer?

It doesn't seem very logical that a person would go to all the trouble of seeking a nomination, running an election campaign, speaking to, and making promises to their constituents to gain their trust and vote, then suddenly wake up one morning and think it's a good idea to cross the floor.

At the very least, there should be an immediate by-election and let the voters decide.