

The feminine genius is needed wherever we make important decisions. The challenge today is this: to think about the specific place of women also in those places where the authority of the church is exercised.

POPE FRANCIS, IN AN INTERVIEW WITH LA CIVILTA CATTOLICA, THE JESUIT JOURNAL IN ROME, ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. HE HAS PREVIOUSLY RULED OUT WOMEN'S ORDINATION.

## Tory showdown only a sideshow

Tim Hudak is safe in his job — he just has to decide on policy



MARTIN REGG COHN

QUEEN'S PARK Tim Hudak's high noon comes in the early afternoon this Saturday, when Tory delegates debate whether to humiliate him by holding yet another review of his leadership.

But the showdown will be a sideshow.

On cue, Tories will almost certainly rally to Hudak at their London convention, rejecting any unscheduled review of their leader at what is supposed to be a convention about policy — not personalities. The real show will come after the weekend, as the opposition Progressive Conservatives try to remake themselves as a government in waiting.

For now, though, the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition has disloyalty on his mind.

Dissatisfaction over his leadership has bubbled over in London, the site of a stunning byelection defeat this summer that left locals seething. Determined to call Hudak to account, dissidents have bulldozed their way onto the convention floor despite behind-the-scenes appeals for party unity.

Dissent has also come from within his Queen's Park caucus. In the run-up to the convention, Hudak has played disciplinarian by demoting two MPPs who publicly contradicted him (a third is in the doghouse).

But for all the bad press, there will be no Tory regicide this weekend. Most MPPs and delegates believe it's pointless, at this time, to decapitate the party. They worry the minority Liberal government could call an election at any time, catching the Tories off guard if they are leaderless. Nor is there any obvious saviour waiting in the wings.

The more interesting question is what direction the Tories take once Hudak shakes off the plotting in the shadows. When it comes to policies, the PC leader is an open book.

Fourteen open books, in fact. Ever since his 2011 election defeat, and his reconfirmation as leader early last year (he won a robust 78.7 per cent support, for all the good it did him), Hudak has rolled out a series of 14 policy papers.

Dressed up as so-called White Papers, these non-binding discussion documents cover every possible topic at Queen's Park. They were written with an eye to provoking debate, grabbing headlines and eliciting donations.

One of the earliest papers, written by now-demoted labour critic Randy Hillier, is an anti-union polemic that would undermine basic labour laws requiring compulsory union dues. Another paper calls for the partial privatization of the major government-owned hydro utilities.

Hudak's open book approach marks a departure from Changebook, the faddish title of his 2011 campaign platform that was derided for its focus-tested approach — trying to be all things to all people. Changebook didn't change many minds, because people didn't know what the Tories truly had in mind for Ontario.

Now, Hudak has laid out much of his thinking in those White Papers for the party's consideration, if not necessarily adoption. He deserves credit for learning from the mistakes of his 2011 campaign by opening up the policy debate and taking some risks. Some of the ideas may be over the top, but at least he put them out there.

That said, they are unlikely to occupy centre stage when the platform is eventually cobbled together. Even this weekend, few of the most controversial proposals will be found in the 24 earnest policy resolutions to be debated by delegates in London.

Most of them are perennials, calling for enhanced trade and better health care. There are also predictable crowd-pleasers such as allowing beer and wine in grocery stores, letting municipalities block wind turbines, and lowering income taxes.

None of these convention resolutions will be binding on the leader. Nor will Hudak be bound by the White Papers as his campaign team opts for a winning formula.

But no matter what the final campaign platform looks like — whether an updated Changebook or a dialed-down Common Sense Revolution — the White Papers have already served a purpose. They are non-binding — even illuminating — but very much on the public record.

No one will be able to accuse Hudak of hiding his inner thoughts. Or harbouring any hidden right-wing agendas.

Martin Regg Cohn's writes on provincial affairs. mcohn@thestar.ca, Twitter: @reggcohn

Hudak deserves credit for learning from the mistakes of his 2011 campaign by opening up the policy debate and taking some risks.

## Big questions hover over police board

Bratina's going: Is Morelli destined for the vacant hot seat?



ANDREW DRESCHEL

The Hamilton Spectator

Mayor Bob Bratina's sudden resignation from the police board raises pressing questions for a governance body dealing with a \$140-million budget and the need to find a replacement for Chief Glenn De Caire, who's bowing out at the end of next year.

Who will the board members pick to replace Bratina in the increasingly controversial role of chair and spokesperson?

Who will city council choose to fill the gap in its legislated numbers on the board created by Bratina's departure?

Complicating matters is the uncertain status of Councillor Terry Whitehead, who was suspended from the board in June pending the results of an investigation into allegations by fellow members that he violated the code of conduct.

What's happening with that investigation by the Ontario Civilian Police Commission (OCPC)?

OCPC spokesperson Ani Asik won't say whether the probe is ongoing, complete, or when an outcome is expected.

But Whitehead, who has been told by OCPC not to comment on the investigation, thinks there's a desire to show speed and efficiency.

"The sense I had was they were trying to, hopefully, wrap it up by the end of this month."

If so, the results are imminent.

OCPC investigators have three options to choose from. They can find the allegations unsubstantiated, send the matter back to the police board with a possible suggestion of remedial action, or recommend that the commission proceed to a panel hearing to determine guilt or innocence.

If the issue goes to a hearing, the most severe pen-

I would like to take a permanent position ... if it was council's wish.

LLOYD FERGUSON

alty facing Whitehead is permanent removal from the board.

Regardless what OCPC finds, it will certainly help clarify the makeup of the post-Bratina board.

Under normal conditions there are seven members — three members of council, three provincial appointees, and one city appointee. With Bratina's abdication and Whitehead's suspension, council representation is down to two — Bernie Morelli and Lloyd Ferguson, the latter chosen by council as Whitehead's temporary replacement.

If Whitehead is cleared or just given a slap on the wrist, Ferguson will probably be a leading candidate to replace Bratina since he's already learning the ropes. No question he wants to stay at the table.

"I'm very interested in staying on," Ferguson said. "I would like to take a permanent position there, if it was council's wish."

Brad Clark is also very interested. No doubt others are too. In the unlikely event Whitehead is boot-ed from the board, there won't be a problem filling a second vacancy.

Who becomes the new chair for the next few months is up to the board. According to provincial law, the board must choose a chair at the first meeting of the new year. Bratina was an exception because his predecessor, Nancy DiGregorio, stepped down in August. DiGregorio is now vice-chair.

While announcing his resignation, Bratina suggested Morelli, a longtime board member and former chair, would be a "good choice" for the new chair. Morelli hasn't ruled it out.

"This board means a great deal to me so wherever this thing is heading, I will consider doing whatever I need to do to make sure it's working."

Morelli, who has just returned from sick leave, may in fact be the logical candidate, if his health holds. Because of legal wrangling over Ferguson's temporary appointment, he and city appointee Walt Juchniewicz only took their seats in August. That makes them pretty raw.

DiGregorio recently stepped down. Irene Stayshyn seems to lean more to silence than leadership. And Madeleine Levy's appointment term expires in November. Conceivably the province might reappoint her, but the board needs to elect a chair before that.

Given the wacky past year, anything might happen, of course. But right now Morelli looks to be the person best positioned to occupy the vacant hot seat.

Andrew Dreschel's commentary appears Monday, Wednesday and Friday. adreschel@thespec.com 905-526-3495

## The price, weight of being a 'Mzungu'

When the poor come knocking, what can you do?



THOMAS FROESE

KAMPALA, UGANDA It was late and dark and it was unusual because the visitor lives hours away and I didn't expect him. But he came anyway and sat at my front door and cried and told me all about it — how thieves had come the night before.

He had been at church, he explained, at one of those all-night prayer services common in this part of Africa, when the rats did it, when they broke in and cleaned out his house. Clothing, furniture, cash I had recently given for his kids' schooling, everything gone by sunrise.

When Frank, which is not the real name of my Ugandan friend, cried, his body shook. And when he screamed "Why?!" into the night air, all I could do was go into my home and open my wallet, again, and then my closet to pull out shirts and pants and more.

My wife did the same and the kids left The Brady Bunch on the computer to gather some stuffed animals and Hot Wheels and their own clothes or whatever they could find for Frank's children.

So he walked away — actually I drove him to the roadside — with so many bags for his family that he couldn't carry them without the help of his buddy, a Ugandan built like an army tank, but a man stumbling along with Frank into this night, for both had consumed at least some drink earlier.

This is it. You come to Africa thinking that you might somehow change the place only to find that Africa, in fact, changes you. Because there's a rat race even here in the poorer world, where desperate people might do desperate things, even lie about night robberies to get something, anything, in this case from a so-called "Mzungu" — a rich, white person.

It's a disturbing possibility. But thinking of all the snake oil around here, and thinking of the various times you've actually bought it — remember, Uganda has no social safety nets — you realize that getting played is an unfortunate but common part of the mix in this culture.

Of course this makes you angry, maybe even fear-

ful, but then, if you're lucky, it changes you for the better, too.

Because what you learn is that life is less about the mistakes that any of us may make and more about what you do with it all after-the-fact.

Frank is in front of me as I write. This is the funny thing. He's never minded when I do this, tap away on my keyboard in front of him. By now he expects it, I suppose.

We're meeting at our usual place, in what he calls The Big Room, and I'm getting it all down so I don't forget any of it, the things he updates me on: his children, his modest job, his wife's bicycling to her garden of beans and maize, his new hopes for even a beater car in 2014.

He's relaxed and happy and, as always, grateful. "Do you remember the clothes?" he asks me. "When you gave me those clothes?"

"Yes," I say. "I remember."

He still wears my shirts, he tells me. But the best I've ever seen on him is an Oilers t-shirt he got on some dusty Kampala street without knowing anything about the City of Edmonton or even hockey on ice.

He asks about my family and Canada and then we get to what he travelled some distance for, those few hundred thousand shillings, those few hundred dollars, like usual, to help with his children's school fees.

My wife and I help as many as a dozen Ugandan children, similar to other expatriates we know, other Mzungus who also help from their back pockets at this time of year.

Frank may even phone before long to ask for more, as he often does. And I'll tell him that by simply giving more money, I'm not helping as much as he thinks.

But his stories will be good, sometimes even true, and they'll tear at my heart and make me want to all-so scream into the night and wonder about our old world and how long it will be before it's any different.

Author and journalist Thomas Froese is a Hamiltonian recently returned to Uganda where he and his family live most of the year. He is married to Dr. Jean Chamberlain Froese, who will be inducted into Hamilton's Gallery of Distinction in November for her work on maternal health in Africa. Follow Thomas's family blog at [www.dailydad.net](http://www.dailydad.net)

## SPEC BRIEFLY

Short and excerpted comments sent to [letters@thespec.com](mailto:letters@thespec.com)

### Security cameras a good idea

Security cameras in the city's affordable housing complexes would be a good idea.

It is affordable compared to incidents of murder, drug dealing and general misuse of these properties.

It would help the police crack down on crime in this area, as well as helping them to patrol more closely.

Hopefully, the other residents of this area will also feel more secure.

WILLIAM BROUWER, HAMILTON

### Cheap shot at Rob Ford

I am distressed that The Spectator printed the editorial cartoon Costa Robfordia on Sept. 17. The cartoon is mean-spirited, distasteful, and disrespectful of both the mayor of Toronto and overweight people.

(I'm neither, as I'm 5-foot-11 and 180 pounds.) Graeme MacKay has just used an unrelated news item to take a cheap shot at Rob Ford. I wish The Spectator had rejected it.

HERMAN PROPER, ANCASTER

### Why should city operate golf courses?

As a Hamilton taxpayer, I hope that I am not going to be asked to contribute tax dollars to improve the clubhouses at city-owned Chedoke and King's Forest Golf Clubs. It is bad enough that taxpayers' dollars are used to set up competi-

tion for privately owned clubs, but now are we going to be asked to contribute to set up competition to privately owned banquet facilities?

I know the recent article pointed out that the courses made profits in most of the last five years, but I question whether this is actually a fact — do these city-owned golf courses pay property taxes?

If not, then these profits are really smoke and mirrors.

There are so many reasonably priced courses around that to say the city is providing a needed economical place to golf is no longer an explanation as to why the city even owns golf courses.

How much property tax would the city derive from these lands if they were developed into housing subdivisions?

Just wondering. DENNIS MARTIN, BINBROOK