

Federal Election: does “honesty in Politics’ have an impact on the debate about “To Whip or Not to Whip

Posted by Joan Russow

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By Joan Russow

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On September 4, 2015, on the CBC program 'the 180', was the following description of the interview with Duff Conacher from Ottawa advocacy group, Democracy Watch. When I heard his description of what constitutes "honesty in Politics", I assumed that he is advocating the importance of elected representatives' abiding by their principles, policy and platform.

Was this honesty in politics?

When it is difficult to support a political Party is when elected members of the party take positions in opposition to its core values, and policy espoused in its platform . From 1997 to 2000, I was the leader of the Canadian Green Party which was presumed to share, with international Greens, common values, one of which was non-violence and common policy against Trade agreements. Yet in 1999, when the Greens formed part of government in

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Germany, they supported the bombing of Yugoslavia. At meetings among Canadian, Mexican and US Greens, there was a common policy opposing NAFTA; yet in the 2000 election, the Mexican Greens formed a coalition government with the right wing PRI and supported NAFTA. Now in Canada the Green Party is willing to ignore its platform with its Green MP Bruce Hyer who left the NDP because he was against gun control; the Green Party platform does support gun control. Also he voted in favour of the bombing of Syria, which also would be considered to be inconsistency with a core principle of the Green Party

I agree with the proposal that Duff Conacher has made and believe that it is related to refusing to whip

(The full interview is available in a pod cast from CBC Radio. The following is a summary from the "the

"The following portions have been edited for length.)

First of all, during elections there would be a penalty and a complaints system for

violations of promises made. In between elections, there would be a complaint process

and penalty for people who are misleaders, instead of leaders -- that would apply to

everyone in politics: not just government and government officials, but also

the opposition, political staff, etcetera. And also a system to allow for switching

of parties between elections, but only for reasons that are justifiable, such as if the

party that someone is elected under violates all of their promises and therefore

has essentially abandoned the platform that the person ran on, but not for career

ambitions, to try and get in with a better party. honesty

requirements on all sorts of Canadian employees are

required to be honest and judges find if they're dishonest

decisions as to whether you've been dishonest or not and that's

**what we think should happen, as well -- have an ethics commiss
o
ther specialized court... And then the penalty we p
a significant fine. If you mislead voters, break a promise and if
for an unjustifiable reason between elections then you would be
and run in a by-election.
(<http://www.cbc.ca/radio/-1.3253030/opinion-punish-politicians-f>**

The issue of "Whipping the Whip" was raised during the last B.C. election interview with former NDP, Liber

One of the reasons citizens become cynical about Party politics is when political parties espouse princip

I attended the Victoria screening of Sean Holman's film, "Whipped the Secret World of Party Discipline.

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. The film addressed the issue of control by the leader of the Party and Party discipline.

It is incumbent upon each candidate in an election to know the party principles, policy and platform, and

When a candidate runs in the election there is the assumption that the candidate supports the Party principles

When a candidate is elected there is also an assumption that when there is a vote that the elected MLA

After the screening, I had reservations about the non-conditional support for free votes and absolute opposition

For example, one of the founding principles of the Green Party internationally was non-violence. I had to

Another example was when the German Greens as part of a coalition government, supported the NATO

Other international Green Party leaders supported the German Greens ‘position because the coalition government

Following the film there was a panel comprised of a former Liberal MLA cabinet minister George Abbott,

In the current Federal Election, the Green Party, in its platform, is in support of gun control but was prepared

When, I was the leader of the Green Party of Canada, it was understood that if elected, a Green Party

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