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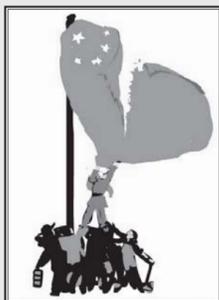
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PUZZLES
Suggested Solution

Love is blind

Presented By
See Puzzle on A2
FREE THE CHILDREN
children helping children through education

QUITTING THE CCP



Inspired by the
'Nine Commentaries,'
as of April 20, at 5:10 p.m.

93,543,841

Chinese people have announced their intentions to quit the Chinese Communist Party and its affiliated organizations on a special Web site established by The Epoch Times. Many others, unable to break through the Chinese Internet blockade, have posted their withdrawal statements on poles or buildings. Others have written them on Chinese currency. Read recent statements of Chinese quitting the Party, the latest news on the "Nine Commentaries," and more at <http://www.NineCommentaries.com>.

Conspicuously absent: Democratic reform and the election

By ROBERT ROACH

Remember when democratic reform was a big election issue in Canada? No?

Neither do I. But it should be. Our democracy is like an old car that has never been serviced. The tires are bald. The oil is like sludge. Rust has replaced most of the metal. But it is still running, so we keep ignoring the "service now" light.

Our political leaders act as if this jalopy is a mint condition 1965 Mustang. What's worse is that they are acting this way while tramping around the country randomly handing out goodies as if Canadians were children on Christmas morning.

Rome may not be on fire, but we are certainly fiddling while our democratic system deteriorates. Why, for example, are there no policy pronouncements about addressing the dangerous and undemocratic concentration of power in the hands of the prime minister that has been eroding the role of Cabinet and MPs since at least the time of Trudeau? Why are the leaders adding stress to the country's regional fault lines rather than proposing structural changes to ensure better regional representation? Why is low voter turnout not a major campaign issue? Why is the future state of federal-provincial relations not a key talking point?

The blame lies with us—the voters. As a group, our eyes glaze over when the mechanics of our democracy are discussed. It is tempting, so very tempting, to place all the blame on our political leaders, but they are just responding to what voters seem to want.

We are simply not that interested



Party leaders Stephen Harper (Conservative), Jack Layton (NDP), Michael Ignatieff (Liberal), and Gilles Duceppe (Bloc Québécois) stand ready before beginning the English televised leader's debate on April 12 at the Government Convention Centre. Robert Coach says Canada needs a democratic tune-up to keep elections relevant to apathetic voters.

MATTHEW LITTLE/THE EPOCH TIMES

Imagine ... an unelected Senate blocking the will of a future minority government.

in what goes on under the hood of our political system. Now and then we might have a conversation around the water cooler about the pros and cons of proportional representation, campaign fundraising rules or, if we have had way too much coffee, the role of the

Canadian Senate, but these democratic reform issues don't capture the imagination of most voters.

We have other stuff to worry about, like saving for retirement, raising our kids, or finding some time to have a beer on the back deck while emphatically NOT worrying about the accountability issues created by one government raising tax money and then giving it to another government to spend.

Can you imagine a party leader using their opening and closing comments at a televised debate to outline the benefits of proportional representation or Senate reform? They would be better off spending that time complimenting the other leaders on their tie choices or reading from a grocery list.

This does not mean that the "d" word is not thrown around with great gusto. Political leaders routinely claim to be the chief defenders of democracy against the anti-democratic ways of their rivals. This makes for a good show (though not as good as an episode of Dancing With The Stars), but it is mostly just convenient rhetoric.

This leads to a key question: what should elections be about? Should they focus on which party has the most or best ideas for spending programs? Should they be about a single critical issue like free trade with the U.S. was back in 1911 and 1988? Should they be about which leader is the most the prime ministerial?

Arguably, there is no single right

answer. Elections can and should be about many things. But perhaps it is time to carve out some space in this election—or the next one—to talk seriously and at length about the democratic processes and structures that we rely on to ensure the "good" government we all want. This would mean fewer ribbon cutting opportunities and it would require voters to submit themselves to some fairly dry debates, but the result would be a long overdue examination of what makes our democracy tick and what needs repair.

If we keep ignoring the "service now" light on our democratic dashboard, we are taking a huge risk. The last thing Canada needs is a political crisis caused by a sudden breakdown of our democratic system. Imagine, to cite but one example, an unelected Senate blocking the will of a future minority government.

But the real damage is more subtle and more long-term as Canadians become more apathetic, as power becomes more concentrated, as debate becomes even less substantive, as scandals become routine and as the light to the world that is Canadian democracy becomes dimmer and dimmer.

Let's not wait for a breakdown. Let's start calling for a robust debate about reforming our democratic system even if this means a hefty repair bill and some time away from other concerns.

A fair, strong, and effective government system is more than worth the cost and effort.

Robert Roach is the Director of the Canada West Foundation's The West in Canada Project.

Article courtesy of Troy Media

Society has changed, why not education?

By Dr. PETER ZSEBIK

Here's a riddle. It's very expensive and at least 100 years old. Some love it, some hate it, and some have even made a career of it. What is it?

Obviously if the title didn't give it away, the answer is public education, and this piece of living history is everywhere. In fact, public education has become so much a part of our society that we take the entire system for granted. We see public education's influence on society ranging from one's daily pilgrimage to school, to retail business sales seasons, to the tourist industry banking on school vacations. In fact, public education is so ingrained in our thinking that to even think of an alternative is almost impossible. But the question remains: Is public education as a system still as effective as it once was?

Even for educators, this last question is very difficult to answer, but one thing seems sure—public education's relationship to society is in need of change. When we look



Dr. Peter Zsebk

to the tidal wave of daily change coming from technology, the confusion of new ideas and cultures our society can now access, and the anti-social behaviour of gangs and drugs coming into the classroom, we begin to see how easily the cards become stacked against public education.

To be fair, certain ideas for change have become a hallmark for public education in the last decades, a process frequently associated with the

We must focus on developing a stronger community for each school

introduction of more technology as a solution to education's challenges. However, in many cases these changes are only cosmetic introductions of shiny tech toys to replace 'old school' practices—such as a chalk and blackboard—which we then label as progress.

Technology in education, however, doesn't teach a student how to create understanding, and it certainly doesn't contribute to a sense of community (despite the popularity of Facebook), and this factor is an issue that must not be submerged in our changing educational environment. In effect, technology is only a tool for teaching, and this should not

be lost in the glitz and glamour of computer hardware. Technology can only create short-term solutions and long-term headaches. It is important to note that there is a growing danger with our society perceiving technology as the answer to solve both our social and educational challenges.

To truly move forward in education the answer is actually quite simple: we must focus on developing a stronger community for each school. Both research and observation has shown that the most effective schools are those where the entire community is involved. One aspect that has evolved is based on the concept of the "SPACE Factor." SPACE stands for Student, Parent, Administration, Curriculum, Educator. With this idea, we can begin to create an interactive community whose bureaucracy has been flattened so that decision-making is generated by and for the whole school community. As in past eras of history, we must once more begin to focus on utilizing the strengths, talents and services of our community to make the necessary changes. This in turn will create a positive learning environment right for that school. In other words, we must

begin to make change happen using a democratic process that is special to that community.

So how do we proceed in creating this new community? Arguably we need to create a process that involves everyone. This could mean involving not only school leaders, but also local businesses to offer internships or training, NGOs that could encourage civic responsibility, or create empowered parent-teacher associations. The choice is dependent on the community. The easiest way to start this process is to create flexible community guidelines that allow each different school to find its own solutions. In other words, the slogan should be 'Community First!' Not region, not nation—community. The rest will naturally come to bear.

This is the change needed for the twenty-first century. It is not meant to take anything away from our original purpose, but rather to shift the educational paradigm to a community orientation that is in keeping with the needs of today's learner.

Dr. Peter Zsebk is author of the recently published "Education of the Twenty-First Century: Building a Capacity for Change."

The 'Nine Commentaries' is the book that is disintegrating the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and changing China. This award-winning Epoch Times editorial series discloses the true history and nature of the CCP. Now it is serialized here.

Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party

Commentary Five

On the Collusion of Jiang Zemin and the Chinese Communist Party to Persecute Falun Gong (cont.)

Before the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the embodiment of an evil specter, could begin to crack down on Falun Gong, it needed the right person to initiate the mechanisms for suppression. How the head of CCP handled the issue was crucial.

As an individual, the CCP's head could possess both goodness and evil—two opposite aspects of human nature. If he chose to follow his good side, then he could temporarily restrain an eruption of the vile Party nature; otherwise, the evil

nature of the CCP would manifest fully.

During the pro-democracy student movement in 1989, Zhao Ziyang, then general secretary of the CCP Central Committee, had no intention of suppressing the students. It was the eight party elders controlling the CCP who insisted on suppressing the students.

Deng Xiaoping said at that time, "[We would] kill 200,000 people in exchange for 20 years of stability." The so-called "20 years of stability" actually meant 20 years of rule by the CCP. This idea conformed to the Party's fundamental goal of being a dictatorship, so it was accepted by the CCP.

Regarding the Falun Gong issue, out of the seven members of the Politburo Standing Committee of the CCP Central Committee, Jiang Zemin was the only one who insisted on the suppression. The excuse Jiang provided was that it was related to "the survival of the Party and the country."

This touched the most sensitive

Within the Politburo Standing Committee of the CCP Central Committee, only Jiang Zemin insisted on persecuting Falun Gong.

nerve of the CCP and provoked the Party's tendency toward struggle. Jiang Zemin's attempt to maintain his personal power and the CCP's attempt to maintain dictatorship by a single party were highly unified on this point.

On the evening of July 19, 1999, Jiang Zemin chaired a conference of the CCP's highest-ranking officials. He overrode the law with his political power, personally "unified"

the understanding of all members present, and personally decided to launch a massive crackdown on Falun Gong.

He banned Falun Gong in the name of the Chinese regime and deceived the public. The CCP, China's regime, and the violent mechanisms employed by the Party were used to their full extent in an overwhelming persecution of millions of innocent Falun Gong practitioners.

If the general secretary of the CCP at that time had been someone other than Jiang Zemin, the persecution of Falun Gong would not have taken place. In that respect, we can say that the CCP used Jiang Zemin.

On the other hand, if the CCP had not incurred so many bloody debts with its unscrupulous, immoral, and savage nature, it would not have considered Falun Gong to be a threat.

Without the CCP's complete and pervasive control over every part of society, Jiang Zemin's intention to suppress Falun Gong would not have gained organization, financing, and

propaganda; or the support of diplomats, personnel, and equipment; or the support of prisons, police, the National Security Department, and army; or the so-called "support" from the circles of religion, science and technology, democratic parties, workers' unions, youth corps committees, women's associations, and so on. In this respect, we can say that Jiang Zemin used the CCP.

IV. HOW JIANG ZEMIN USES THE CCP TO PERSECUTE FALUN GONG

By taking advantage of the CCP's organizational principle that the entire membership of the Party must be subordinated to the Central Committee, Jiang Zemin exploited the state machinery controlled by the CCP to serve the objective of persecuting Falun Gong. The CCP-controlled apparatus includes the army, the media, public security personnel, the police, paramilitary police, state security forces, judicial system, the National People's Congress, diplomatic personnel, as well as sham religious groups.

Letters to the Editor



Please send letters to the editor to letters_ca@epochtimes.com. Include address and a daytime phone number. We reserve the right to edit all letters.