

Who's Speaking for Canadians?

Joe Clark and the Progressive
Conservative Caucus
are speaking for Canadians on:

- the Constitution
- the postal dispute
- VIA Rail cutbacks
- the economy and the budget
- parliamentary reform
and democracy

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Speaking for Canadians

The NDP-Liberal rejection of the Crosbie budget made way for the return of disastrous Liberal economic policies, and eliminated the opportunity to implement Progressive Conservative initiatives which would have restored confidence in the Canadian economy and helped get this country back to work.

"It was a nonsense motion, but it served the Grits. They regained power, brought high interest rates, high taxes and a recession, along with soaring energy prices and a budget that (NDP'er) Rae himself despises."

Charles Lynch,
Southam
March 3, 1982

As a result of the "nonsense motion", Canadians' needs were ignored and the PC Plan was shelved.

What you lost:

- an economic strategy which encouraged Canadians to invest in Canada.
- mortgage interest and property tax credits.
- the Small Business Development Bond.
- the energy tax credit for low-income workers.
- freedom of information legislation.
- much-needed parliamentary reform.

What the Liberals have given you:

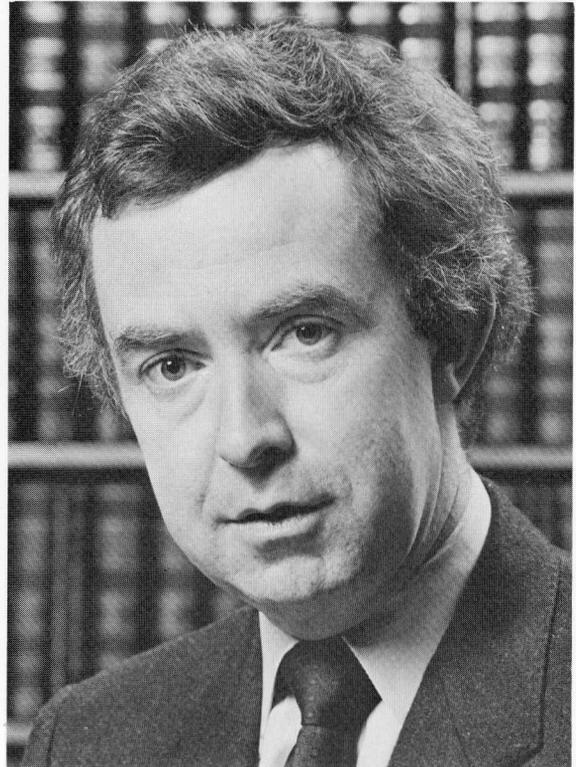
- a high interest rate policy, resulting in record-high mortgage rates and depression-level unemployment.
- a national energy policy which contributed directly to the collapse of the Al sands, Cold Lake and Alaska Pipeline megaprojects.
- a 78-cent-a-gallon increase in fuel costs.

More and more Canadians now recognize that the PC Party spoke for them.

The Constitution

"There are times when a government proposes to act against the essential interest of the Nation. At such a time, the role of the Opposition Leader is not to submit to the government, but to fight for the larger interests of Canada."

Rt. Hon. Joe Clark
October 2, 1980



"Clark has played a role of historic importance. When the constitutional package was unveiled in October, 1980, after the failure of the September federal/provincial conference to produce agreement, Clark had a very brief period in which

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to decide his course. . . . , he decided the unilateral federal course must be opposed.

That decision helped to give the provinces time for their court appeals. This in turn provided the opportunity for the historic Supreme Court of Canada decision which attached so much weight to our constitutional conventions that even a ruthlessly determined government had to give way.

Not many opposition leaders do anything of as great significance in the unfolding history of their country."

W.A. Wilson
The Financial Post
April 3, 1982

The Progressive Conservatives under Joe Clark's leadership spoke for Canadians on the Constitution and won an historic victory for cooperative federalism, in the interest of long-term social and economic stability.



Postal Dispute

In June of 1981, inside postal workers struck over contract demands. The Liberal response was described by the Toronto Star (July 5, 1981) as "a morality play staged by the Trudeau government to show Canadians the government is serious in its fight against inflation."

The six-week strike hurt the Canadian economy and contributed to massive layoffs and wide-scale business failures and losses.

During the strike, PC Members called upon the government to reach a negotiated settlement within a reasonable period of time. They forced the government to appoint a mediator by refusing to allow Parliament to recess until some action had been taken.

The government caused a needless strike; they put on a "tough guy" act and then caved in. As former PC Postmaster General John Fraser put it:

"If you start off by saying, 'We're going to let the union hang out to dry,' you can't turn around and make concessions after so much public hardship. Where is the lesson? There is none and in the meantime thousands and thousands of Canadians — and especially small businessmen — suffered the effects of a long and protracted postal strike."

By holding firm, Progressive Conservatives spoke in defense of Canadian business and workers.



Via Rail PC Task Force

"No discussion. No debate. No dialogue. No hearings." That's how the St. John *Telegraph Journal* described Transport Minister Jean-Luc Pepin's decision to remove up to one-fifth of Canada's passenger rail services. The decision to cut rail services by Order-in-Council seriously impaired the role of the Canadian Transportation Commission as protector of the public interest in transportation services. Service reductions represent severe hardships for people in remote areas, for commuters and for the tourist industry.

Had this move gone unchallenged by the PC Task Force on Rail Passenger Services, there would have been little to prevent further large-scale service reductions.

"The recent announcement that the Progressive Conservatives will hold public hearings into the VIA Rail cutbacks is a well-intentioned action aimed at highlighting the concerns of thousands of Canadians about reduced rail services in this country. The nationwide hearings will undoubtedly give the public exactly what it wants: A chance to vent its frustrations and anger with a government that announced drastic cutbacks in rail services without public consultation."

*Toronto Star
August 6, 1981*

The Progressive Conservative Task Force, which was chaired by former Transport Minister Don Mazankowski, consulted hundreds of Canadians across Canada and spoke for the modernization and expansion of our national transportation system.



The MacEachen Budget PC Budget Task Force

The MacEachen Budget, introduced on November 12, 1981, provoked a storm of protest from Canadians from all walks of life. As with other Liberal measures, it was hatched behind closed doors and without public consultation, and seemingly without concern for its damaging effects on the livelihood of the average person. The Special PC Committee on the Budget and the Economy, headed by the Honourable Michael Wilson, conducted hearings in sixteen communities across the country. The message from those the Liberals purported to be helping was clear: The "Robin Hood Budget" was fleecing them.

The Task Force Report asked why:

- the Minister had failed to recognize the obvious signs of recession?
- the Budget attacked job creation programmes when one million Canadians were out of work?
- nothing was being done to help the thousands of Canadians who were losing their homes due to high mortgage rates?
- the Liberals penalized small personal investments: savings, life insurance, and annuities?
- low and middle income earners would bear the brunt of tax increases?



Armed with hindsight and faced with massive public outrage, Mr. MacEachen hastily introduced a Green Paper on budget procedures in which he said: *"what is important is that parliamentary processes allow for the thorough and timely consideration of budget measures."*

Said Charles Lynch, April 2, 1982:

"Thanks a lot, MacEachen! The man has been a member of successive Liberal governments whose policies have led to the complexities of which he complains, and he killed the only budget that tried to restore sanity in the public economic sector, namely the budget of John Crosbie."

"His own budget was an attempt at unilateral tax reform, engineered by tunnel-visioned mandarins in his own department, not one of whose heads has rolled. Instead, we get this Green Paper telling us they would have done better had they been able to hold public hearings and hire professionals from the private sector."

The Task Force kept the heat of public concern on the Budget, obliging the Liberals to make important changes to it. The PC Team spoke in defence of consumer interests, labour and the business community.

"Keep Fighting, Clark and Nielsen!"

The Toronto Sun
March 5, 1982

In an unprecedented procedural move, PC House Leader Erik Nielsen, Energy Critic Harvie Andre and Whip Bill Kempling, spearheaded rejection of an Omnibus Energy Bill, which combined 15 pieces of legislation, by refusing, for more than two weeks, to answer the bells which summon MPs to vote in the House.

Thousands of letters, phone calls and telegrams flooded into the Leader's and the MPs' offices with messages of support and calls to oust the Liberals.

Editorial headlines reflected the Nation's mood:

Bells ring, questions mount.

Star Phoenix, Saskatoon
March 6, 1982

Good for the Tories

"Quite clearly it is the Conservatives who are representing the people on this issue, and doing so responsibly."

The Edmonton Sun
March 9, 1982



The Conservatives are right

"The Conservatives very correctly identify the omnibus energy bill as a flagrant example of Liberal arrogance, ramming a whole package of varied legislation down the throats of Parliament and people with the assurance that the Liberal majority in the Commons will have the last word."

*The Windsor Star
March 9, 1982*

Election call

"The ringing bells and the Tory blockade of Parliament are far more than a tactic to embarrass government. It is the people registering dissatisfaction and disaffection with what increasingly is the most dictatorial and incompetent government in our history."

*The Toronto Sun
March 10, 1982*

Why the Bells Ring

"Canada prides itself on its representative, responsible, parliamentary form of government. But how can Parliament be responsible to the people if a majority Government can force through legislation without giving Parliament, let alone the people, time to assess it? Particularly when it is legislation that could set a precedent for government by Cabinet rather than by Parliament."

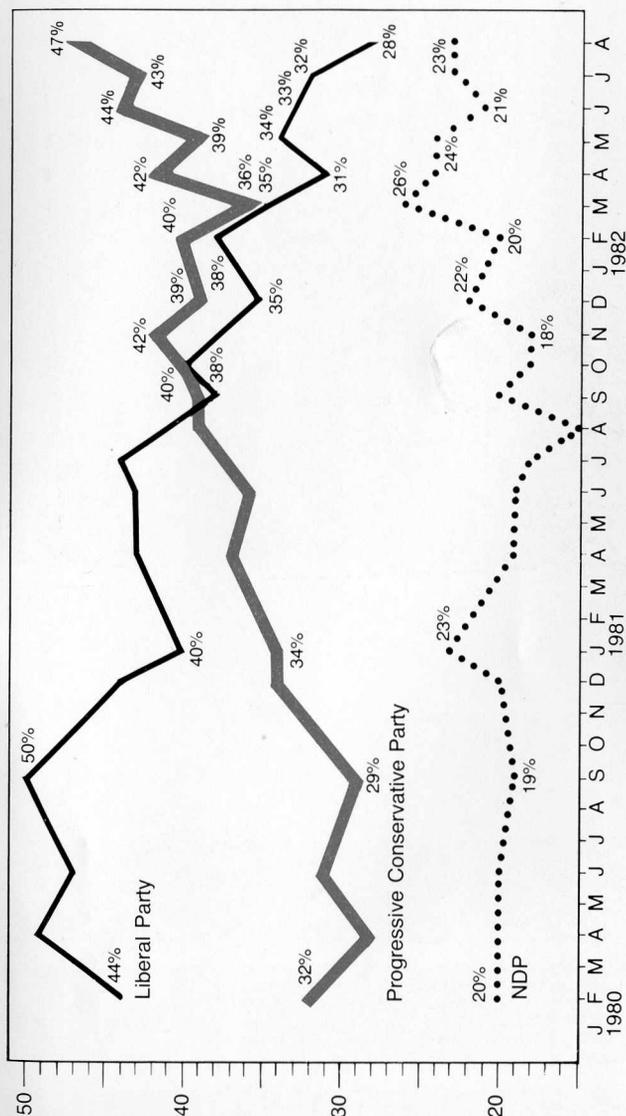
"Let the bells ring! They ring for Canadians' rights to self-government."

*Globe and Mail
March 9, 1982*

When the Liberals relented in their attempt to steamroll Parliament and reluctantly agreed to split Bill C-94, PC Members returned to House. Upon returning, Joe Clark demanded the introduction of major parliamentary reforms aimed at eliminating further Liberal abuse of democratic process.

A PC Majority

The steady rise in the polls of the Party, since the 1980 election, clearly demonstrates voter dissatisfaction with the Liberals on one hand, and voter shift to a Progressive Conservative majority on the other hand.



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The Progressive Conservative
Party of Canada