



PUTTING FREEDOM FIRST! --- AND WHY WE MUST

- Robert Metz

{The following essay, with minor edits for publication in *Consent*, was originally written as a presentation to the Roots of Change Conference on Friday, March 20, 1998 at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, Ontario. (The conference, an event billed as a 'unite-the-right' effort, was reported in our June 1998 issue of *Freedom Flyer*.) In its original unedited form, this essay has already been printed in booklet form for conference attendees, and also appeared as 'Why the right should not unite' in the May 1998 issue of *Canadian Speeches*.}

INTRODUCTION:

Before I got involved with **Freedom Party** in 1984, my confusion about what and who I was, in a political sense, caused me to commit a host of political sins in the past. I know that there are those of you who may be shocked to learn that I have, in my political past, voted Liberal, Conservative, and yes, even NDP. There were times when I chose not to vote at all. Add to that my federal candidacy in the 1970s for the now defunct Libertarian Party of Canada, then add a dash of my current partial and cautious federal support for the Reform Party, and I wouldn't blame you a bit if you thought I was a thoroughly confused individual who just doesn't know what the heck he wants from his government.

But my political dilemma didn't end with my dubious choices at the polls. To make matters worse, every time I voted, I voted for a losing candidate. However, I am pleased to report that in this regard at least, my federal and provincial voting pattern has been absolutely consistent: I have never once in my life voted for a winning candidate.

To compound my losing streak, I have, provincially, since 1984 when **Freedom Party** was founded, been voting for a losing candidate each and every time I've gone to the polls since.

Most of you might think that a 100% losing streak would be enough to make me give up on politics entirely. But instead, an evaluation of my voting experience taught me something most people don't know about democracy, and today I know that my influence in the political marketplace is astronomically greater than the power of any single vote could ever possibly be, even when cast with a majority.

For me, issues of who is 'left' wing or 'right' wing are irrelevant. On a personal level, I have always made an effort to avoid thinking in terms of 'left' and 'right' wing when discussing issues with others. Unfortunately, I know that cannot avoid being labeled by others, and I have discovered this to be a political handicap rather than a strength.

WHO'S RIGHT? WHO ISN'T?

Given my background, it is in a sense ironic that I have been invited to speak at an event of this nature. I certainly understand and

empathize with the spirit that moves the "unite the right" concept; however, I find the literal consequences uniting the right quite disturbing, but not for the obvious reasons you might expect.

Unite the right? What does that mean? Who's 'right' and who isn't?

In my weekly radio broadcasts of 'Left-Right-Center' in London, I am constantly reminded by my left-wing opponent, London lawyer Jeffrey Schlemmer, that it is HE who is trying to 'conserve' the values of this nation. From his point of view, he's the 'conservative' because he's the one trying to conserve our social and government spending programs. He too, like the right-wing, believes in 'efficiency' in government. In fact, he believes that government is the most efficient way to provide health care, education, and a host of other social programs. Does that make Mr. Schlemmer left-wing or right-wing?

Is he the kind of person we're talking about in our effort to unite, not only the right, but the very country itself? My impression is that most right-wingers would answer 'No.'

On the other hand, if you view the 'right' on a more fundamental, philosophical basis, you would find among those classified as 'right-wing' the following: conservatives, Progressive Conservatives, extreme conservatives, reactionaries, fascists, libertarians, anarchists, and even possibly 'classical liberals'. This is, in fact, what most left-wingers think of when they use the term 'right-wing'.

Are these the groups that we're seeking to unite? Again, I think not. I can tell you from personal experience, that such an alliance is a metaphysical impossibility.

Just a few days ago, I was talking to my good friend and long-time **Freedom Party** member, supporter, and candidate Jim Montag. Jim is also a riding executive member of the Reform Party, and has very good relationship with Ontario's PCs as well. When I told Jim that I was going to be speaking at this event today, he reacted with astonishment.

"Why would they want you to speak at a 'unite-the-right' event?" he asked.

"What do you mean?" I innocently queried.

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To those who consent, no injustice is done

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"'Unite-the-right' is Reform and PC," he told me with a sense of certainty that indicated he knew what he was talking about. "The right won't ever do anything for Freedom Party! They want to put you out of business! The success of a unite-the-right movement would mean the death of Freedom Party!" he warned. "Where does Freedom Party fit in with 'uniting the right'?"

It certainly became clear to me that if that's what 'unite the right' means, and if I have the courage to answer Jim's question objectively, my answer has to be: **Freedom Party** doesn't fit in.

But this is not a new issue to me, and it doesn't concern me a bit. Since the founding of **Freedom Party** on Jan 1, 1984, I have been consistently confronted by well-meaning, friendly, and sympathetic people about the wisdom of founding a new political party instead of working with, say, the Progressive Conservatives.

In fact, to many right-wingers, parties like **Freedom Party** and people like me are the whole problem. I've actually been openly blamed for allowing the left-wing to get as

entrenched in this country as it has!

They look at **Freedom Party's** policies and see that we have a lot in common with other parties recognized as right-wing. For that reason, they think that we're offering the same product in the political marketplace. We 'split the vote,' so they tell us, as if somehow, mystically, our vote ever belonged to the right in the first place.

The problem is, they haven't looked close enough --- not only at **Freedom Party**, but at the party they support.

I've been in the business of political persuasion for 14 years now; if anyone had suggested to me, in 1984, when Bill Davis and his right-wing Tories were in power in Ontario, that I was 'right-wing', I probably would have fainted on the spot. Davis' Tories left a legacy in Ontario that allowed David Peterson and Bob Rae to fill his shoes as smoothly as Cinderella's foot slipped into the glass slipper --- the glass slipper of socialism.

Right-wingers? Maybe not by today's standards, but in the early eighties, there were no other choices on that side of the spectrum in Ontario. The term 'right-wing', like 'left-wing', is a concept that changes over time, and for that reason alone, it describes a

vacuum, not substance.

In practice, the term 'right-wing' is really something LEFT-wingers use to describe those who do not agree with THEM. Conversely, 'left-wing' is a term used by RIGHT-wingers to describe those who do not agree with THEM.

Trying to unite a movement around a LABEL that can mean any number of things to any given number of people is like sowing the seeds of one's own destruction, and will result only in an entrenched continuance of the status quo, certainly not change.

"But we must put aside our differences!" cry unite-the-righters. "Leave your ego at the door!"

Now, it's been my experience that whenever somebody asks me to set aside my differences or to leave my ego at the door, what they're really asking me to do is to set aside my advocacy of individual freedom --- my principles --- to pursue some sort of compromise. Even if I make it clear to them that I believe such a compromise will endanger the individual freedoms of Canadians, they still insist that by supporting them, I'll get what I want too.

They're asking me to put freedom second. Or third. Or maybe they're just asking me to forget about freedom altogether.

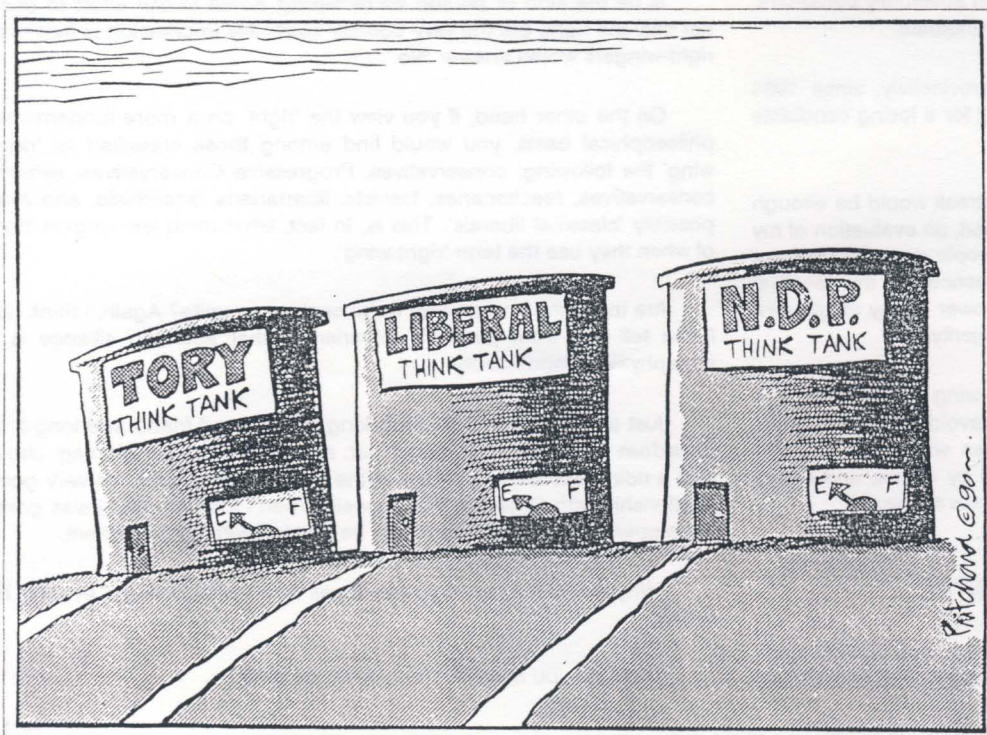
Did anyone notice that the word 'freedom' does not even appear once in the recent Calgary Framework, which is being touted as the framework of values on which this country's future vision is to be founded? Two 'right-wing' parties supported this vision of Canada.

Fact is, left-wingers and right-wingers agree more often than either would care to admit. Especially when it comes to individual freedom, or to the role of government authority in relationship to the individual.

It is essential that we put freedom first! For to do otherwise is to lose not only our freedom, but the value which we mistakenly place above it.

Politically united oppositions are predicated on an implicit acceptance of the adversarial 'winner-take-all' first-past-the-post electoral system. They are an appeal to PRO-CESS, not to PRINCIPLE --- a process of voting AGAINST, not FOR.

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"We are going to be governed whether we like it or not. We must therefore concern ourselves with politics to mitigate as far as possible the damage done by the madness of our rulers." P.E. Trudeau

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Unity is predicated on the myth of the Majority Vote, the illusion of Majority Rule.

THE ILLUSION OF MAJORITY RULE

Our election system implicitly operates on the principle that unless you vote for the winner, your vote doesn't make any difference anyway. If you vote Conservative and a Liberal wins, your vote doesn't count. Of course, you can't always know this in advance, but after the fact, it's just like throwing your vote away. Since you didn't vote for a winner, it would have made no difference to the outcome of the election if you had not voted. (That's why most people don't vote.)

To complicate matters, with three or more parties in the running, it is a fact that the winner of elections will always be the party that attracts the largest minority block of votes. As a result, THERE WILL ALWAYS BE MORE LOSERS THAN WINNERS at the end of each election. Even in a majority government, it will become increasingly probable that more than half of voters will not have voted for the government in power.

Under such circumstances, the WILL OF THE MAJORITY SIMPLY CEASES TO EXIST, even by the furthest stretch of democratic imagination.

I know many people who, for example, would like to see the ideas and policies of **Freedom Party** applied in government, but these same people are so fearful of the policies of the NDP that they're planning to vote Conservative or Liberal instead --- a party that they don't agree with in principle. Their (probably correct) assumption that these are the only two parties who stand a chance of getting elected against the NDP forces them to vote, by their own honest admission, for the 'lesser of three evils.'

But the 'lesser of three evils' is still 'evil', and the 'evil' in this case is socialism. So if that's the reason they're voting, then they're voting FOR socialism, even though they may think that's what they're voting AGAINST.

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE = LIBERAL = NDP = SOCIALISM

While it is increasingly understood that Liberals and New Democrats can readily be classified socialist, there are still a significant number of people who think that Conservatives are not. That's because they're listening to what the Conservatives are SAYING, and not paying attention to what they're DOING.

Conservatives are NOT capitalists. They are socialists in disguise --- or in severe denial. By preaching the values and virtues of capitalism while practicing the vices of socialism, they have played THE major role in discrediting freedom, and the principles on which it rests. 'Progressive Conservative' is, after all, a euphemism for 'socialist conservative,' and I see no rush to change the name of the party. Like Liberals and New Democrats, they LIKE socialism and state control, only they want to make it 'more efficient' or 'fair'. To them, this is 'common sense.'

In Ontario, all three parties are committed to the principle of 'universality' in social programs, as opposed to the proper and affordable principle of helping only those in genuine need. All three parties speak in terms of 'balancing competing interests', instead of addressing and protecting individual rights. All three parties support the disgraceful racist and sexist philosophy of "political correctness" --- and the egalitarian programs that go along with it. All three parties are committed to a state monopoly in the funding of health care and education, thereby preventing any meaningful reform to either system.

Most importantly, all three parties run on personalities, majority rule dogma, and operate on principles that are so contradictory they are bound to end in self-destruction --- fragmentation.

Ironically, this is a great formula for electoral success under a first-past-the-post

winner take all system, but it's a disaster for voters as individuals, since the process DIS-EMPOWERS them, and it's a disaster for the preservation of individual freedom as a value in Canada.

Until we have proportional representation in Canadian elections, any vote not cast for the winner will be a wasted vote, and the spirit of voluntarism will always be sacrificed to government force. That's just one reason why **Fp** advocates the **Single Transferrable Vote** as our preferred mechanism of proportional representation, and I invite you to discover more of the details of this form of electing our representatives.

For me, INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM is the only possible ideal to be achieved through politics, and it's my only motivation for action. Fighting for freedom requires a heck of a lot more than leaving your ego at the door. You have to look in the mirror, examine your motives, and discipline yourself to the principles you know to be true. This is no simple effort, or mere misplaced idealism. Compromising one's principles to cooperate with others who do not share or understand them amounts to nothing more than self-betrayal, and will sabotage your goal.

RAND'S THREE PRINCIPLES OF COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHICAL ADVANTAGE:

Philosopher-novelist Ayn Rand once outlined three basic principles of persuasion which my own personal experience in politics has demonstrated to be 100% reliable. Not once have I ever experienced an exception to these rules:

"(1) In any CONFLICT between two men (or two groups) who hold the SAME basic principles, it is the more consistent one who wins.

"(2) In any COLLABORATION between two men (or two groups) who hold DIFFERENT basic principles, it is the more evil or irrational one who wins.

"(3) When OPPOSITE basic principles are clearly and openly defined, it works to the

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"Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it wrongly, and applying unsuitable remedies." - Anonymous

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advantage of the rational side; when they are NOT clearly defined, but are hidden or evaded, it works to the advantage of the irrational side."

UNITY versus CHANGE

As remarkable as it may seem, I have come to believe that 'unity' and 'change' are contradictory concepts. If anything, 'unity' efforts exist for the very purpose of preventing change from taking place. Historically, political movements to "unite" a disintegrating state have too often resulted in some form of totalitarianism, or even civil war.

So I have to ask myself: Is unity even desirable? Who says a fractious right isn't a good thing? IF THE RIGHT HAD NOT FRAGMENTED, IT WOULD NEVER HAVE CHANGED. The only viable choice right-wingers would have in Ontario would be Bill Davis' Tories! The fragmentation of the right was the very evidence that change was occurring!

To illustrate this principle of fragmentation in another arena, consider the March 6, 1998 column ('The reason why the Chinese lag behind') by Gwynne Dyer in which he applies this principle to the comparative advances of European thought and culture over that of the Chinese:

"The reason Europe forged ahead in the past 500 years while China stagnated is basically that China was united and Europe wasn't. Take the Ming emperor's decree of 1433 banning ocean voyages.

"Had some European monarch made the same decree as the Ming emperor, he simply could not have enforced it, for Europe was divided into dozens of big states and hundreds of smaller ones. Neither individuals nor their ideas could be controlled; if you annoyed the ruler of the state you lived in, you just moved to the next.

"Christopher Columbus, for example, pitched his plans for ocean exploration unsuccessfully to five different rulers before he hit the jackpot with Queen Isabella in Spain. Johannes Kepler, working on ideas about the universe that were bound to upset the defen-

ders of the status quo, just kept moving between the many German mini-states, from Tubingen to Graz to Prague to Linz to Dresden. Nobody could shut him up, and so the work got done.

"In China by contrast, it was easy to shut people up if their ideas didn't fit: there was one omnipotent emperor and literally nowhere else to go."

And therein lies the ultimate flaw, the Achilles heel, of any so-called united collective effort: the fact that one of the most fundamental purposes of any unity effort is to 'shut people up' if their 'ideas don't fit'.

There is no doubt in my mind that if I

accepted the responsibility of acting or speaking on behalf of a united right-wing, I would not be allowed to discuss or promote the issue about which I am passionate: individual freedom. FREEDOM is a word that scares the hell out of politicians of every stripe, including, unfortunately, many so-called right-wingers.

Small wonder. Today, political freedom has been morally inverted to mean its very opposite:

"Free" medicine.
"Free" education.
"Free" day care.
"Affordable" housing.
"Affordable" rental accommodations.
"Universal"

access. "Equal" access. "Fair" wages. "Equal" pay. "Guaranteed" government pensions. "Cheaper" car insurance premiums. "No" health insurance premiums. "Protection" from business competition. "Protection" from labour competition. "Protection" from being offended. "Protection" of our "culture." "Guaranteed" jobs. Government job "creation". "Affirmative" action. "Social" justice.

These are but a few of the kinds of VERY EXPENSIVE and totally unworkable "freedoms" that our politicians have been selling us to buy our votes.

In other words, freedom FROM responsibility. Collective security.

I quote again from Ayn Rand:

"Freedom, in a political context, means freedom from government coercion. It does not mean freedom from the landlord, or freedom from the employer, or freedom from the laws of nature which do not provide men with automatic prosperity. It means freedom from the coercive power of the state --- and nothing else!" (Ayn Rand, *Capitalism, The Unknown Ideal*)

Not only are politicians afraid of freedom, but the general public is as well. I draw to your attention these words of wisdom from professor John MacMurray in a 1949 lecture delivered in Kingston, Ontario:

ON THE FEAR OF FREEDOM:

"We flatter ourselves too much when we imagine that we love freedom and strive whole-heartedly towards freedom. On the contrary, there are few things that we fear so much. No doubt we find the idea of freedom most attractive, but in reality it is another matter. For to act freely is to take a decision and accept the consequences.

"The free man is the man who takes responsibility for his own life before God and his fellows. Is it any wonder that when we are faced with the challenge of freedom, our fear is usually more than a match for its attractiveness; and that we seek, for the most part, to escape the demand that it makes upon us?

"I see history, in its concrete reality, not as Man's struggle to win his freedom in a world that frustrates his efforts, but as a record of the twists and evasions by which men seek to escape from freedom in a world which thrusts it remorselessly upon them. The determination which oppresses us is not the opposite of freedom; for what is determined is that Man shall be free.

"Here then is the paradox of freedom: We are free to choose between freedom and security. This choice is not voluntary nor is it once for all. It is compulsory, and it is perpetually recurrent. It is a real choice: for we can make either freedom or security or goal.

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"There is a new name for politicians: the muddle class." - Murray Hopper

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"If we use our freedom to escape from freedom, we frustrate ourselves; if we persist in this choice we destroy ourselves. For the demand for security is the reflection of our fear, while freedom is the expression of our own reality. If we aim at security we aim at the impossible, and succeed only in multiplying the occasions of fear, and magnifying our need for security. There is no security for us except in choosing freedom.

"(Freedom) is not something that we possess, but something we may choose; not something we inherit, but something we may strive towards if we have the courage; ...and if we think to rest in the freedom we have achieved, then it begins to diminish. Only in the struggle to increase it can we hope to maintain the freedom we have already achieved." (John MacMurray, CONDITIONS OF FREEDOM, lecture delivered at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario 1949)

THE ROOTS OF CHANGE

The roots of change begin and end with philosophy. But movements that unite around a compromise must avoid any discussion of philosophy --- because they know that it would reveal their true roots --- the very thing that originally divided them.

The disintegration of any cooperative effort, including nations, is the fundamental result of differing principles at the ROOT of the philosophies of differing factions.

When it comes to nationhood, if we focus only on "unity" for unity's sake, we will never discover the only principle on which any legitimate unity can be based: INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM, INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS, INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY.

But what we see today is a group of people who want to unite around the two parties that brought us the Calgary Framework! Dianne Cunningham, who heads Ontario Speaks campaign speaks of nothing but the more efficient delivery of social(ist) services, and the division of government power between the provinces and federal government. Individuals and freedom aren't in the equation.

Politically and philosophically, most

Canadians accept the tenets of socialism; to appeal to them politically, where only numbers matter, means that you have to be just like them.

Canada is a country that most Canadians literally define by its government social programs. Most Canadians actually believe that these are the only distinguishing characteristics this country offers in the political marketplace of this globe. We proudly boast about our collective right to pillage each other for collective security.

Free health care and education programs supersede all con-

siderations, and freedom, as recently demonstrated by the Calgary Declaration and Ontario Speaks, is not even mentioned on any politician's agenda.

Is this the movement we're being asked to support?

EVEN IF SUCCESSFUL, what will we ultimately gain?

A Majority Vote? We will have won a myth, the very myth that we should be fighting against: the myth of majority rule.

Uniting the right is less an attempt to defeat the left, than it is to defeat our electoral system. In fact, the right wants to be the minority that gets past the post first, a concept totally alien to a free democracy --- and to what the right has been preaching. But if all you want to do is 'unite the right' so that you can FORCE those nasty left-wingers into line, don't expect any unity to result!

The dilemma of an ideological political party like **Freedom Party** lies in the attempt to do two competing things: change public opinion, and win public approval.

To be true to principle, you can't always

do both, particularly under a first-past-the-post electoral system.

We resolved our dilemma: We decided to put freedom first. Every time. No exceptions.

For the record, I'm not here for ego gratification; nor am I here just to see the left-wing politically defeated by the right. For me, that's a total non-event --- a moot point in the bigger picture of paving the way towards true individual freedom.

So does this mean that we cannot support members of the right wing? Certainly not. At the roots, we may disagree, but at the branches, we can certainly cooperate.

After all, what would happen, failing a 'unity' of the right? Would that mean that we'll be left helpless, at the whim of politicians and interest groups that simply make individual action pointless and futile?

I hope you don't believe that, because if you do, there's simply no hope for this country.

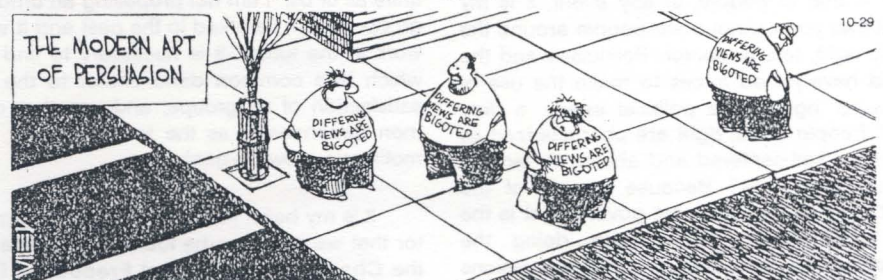
Individuals must be the source of change in this country, and individuals are the ones most capable of working together, AS INDIVIDUALS, to bring about change. It is dangerous to join any group or movement that operates on principles with which you fundamentally disagree, and I would never think to ask anyone in this room to join my group unless they felt comfortable with the basic principles that guide our actions.

In the meantime, there are many ways for individuals to cooperate in ways where conflicting principles or ideologies do not present problems. Forums such as this, and ad hoc projects are two of the best.

So why am I here today, if a united right is a non-event to me? Because I do believe in change.

The best hope for change lies in cooperation, not in unification. (END)

NON SEQUITUR - By Wiley e-mail: sequitoon@aol.com



"In a dictatorship, the people are afraid to tell the truth to the leaders. In a democracy, the leaders are afraid to tell the truth to the people." - Richard Needham

REPEAL THE CHARTER!

- Ron Leitch

{Ron Leitch is president of the **Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada (APEC)**. The following essay was originally presented as a speech to attendees at the Roots of Change Conference held at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto Ontario on March 21, 1998, a 'unite the right' event which was also attended by **Freedom Party** representatives. (See *Freedom Flyer*, June 1998 for coverage.) This speech has also been published in the May 1998 edition of Canadian Speeches, under the title 'A case for repealing the Charter of Rights'.}

Freedom, personal freedom, individual freedom, is an aspect of the quality of life. Every individual should have political freedom, freedom from political correctness; freedom from the hypocrisy of politicians, bureaucrats, and some media, freedom to do those things not specifically prohibited by law.

The achievement of personal freedom is not a declaration of independence. Personal freedom is an affirmation of the essential relatedness of one person to another, in a social order, a community of people. The exercise of personal freedom within a social order entails an acknowledgment of responsibilities.

I choose to speak to you of freedom because it is my belief that freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of speech, is under attack in this country. I cannot attend this conference without my freedom of association coming under attack. The label of right wing will attach to me whatever my personal beliefs, whatever my standards of morality, whatever compassion I may show towards my fellow citizens. I make that observation solely because the slogan for this conference is 'Unite the Right.'

The expression 'Unite the Right' is a commonplace expression today. It is used extensively in referring to the proposed uniting of the Reform and Conservative Parties. I would suggest to you that the only effective unity is that of people. In any event, it is my belief that you cannot unite people around the words right, left, or center. Politicians and the media have joined forces to make the use of the word 'right', in a political sense, a dirty word. People of the right are characterized as heartless, self-centered and above all, lacking in humanity. Why? Because people of the 'right' believe that the least government is the best government, while those doing the characterizing who are of other persuasions

look to government controls and intervention in people's affairs as a way of life.

The use of the words 'right', 'left' or 'center' may be appropriate when describing a political party, but not the Canadian people, who look on themselves as being middle of the road. It is absolutely essential, therefore, that if we want to unite the Canadian people we must stop using the word 'right' and substitute a cause. As I look over the agenda of this conference, it appears to me that everyone who is here has a cause, and therein lies the problem. There is not one group represented in this room that has an issue big

group should look closely at this Charter, examine its own dissatisfaction and the reason for being involved in a cause. In every case you will find that the objectionable government action will have its basis in some provision of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

We must take a leaf out of the book of Pierre Elliott Trudeau by gaining acceptance of our individual causes by a flanking movement rather than a frontal confrontation. Mr. Trudeau used the passage of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* as a way of entrenching official languages in the Constitution. On October 22nd, 1980, speaking in Quebec city, Mr. Trudeau said in part:

"I'll tell you something else; we also wanted to entrench language rights; unfortunately; I think it's true, that if we had done so we would have seen certain people in the country fighting the project... it was to broaden the debate that we wanted to entrench fundamental rights."

To stimulate the growth of "roots of change" we must find a cause bigger than our own individual concerns. It is my belief that the common denominator that we seek can be found in the repeal of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

enough to unite the people of Canada. Each group is so concerned with its own cause that its members have little time to devote to the cause of other groups.

If we want to stimulate the growth of "roots of change" we must find a cause bigger than our own individual concerns. We must examine the roots of our own dissatisfaction and look for the common element that can unite all of us. I am not proposing an umbrella group. It hasn't worked in the past and it won't work in the future. It is necessary to find that which is a common denominator to the dissatisfaction of all groups, and use that common denominator as the focal point for promoting your own organization.

It is my belief that the common denominator that we seek can be found in the repeal of the **Charter of Rights and Freedoms**. Each

If Trudeau can use a flanking movement successfully, why can't we? The advantage to our flanking movement would be that while there are many causes, there is only one flanking movement. Each group must go to its own people and to the Canadian people at large, with full knowledge of how the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* has adversely affected the cause for which they stand.

If you are to undertake such a venture you must understand why the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* should be repealed. I have spoken at length on this subject in another forum. Those remarks have been published in a booklet entitled **Freedom or Political Slavery**. That booklet is yours, free, for the asking. Today I can do little more than give you a broad outline.

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"State business is a cruel trade; good nature is a bungler in it." - Lord Halifax

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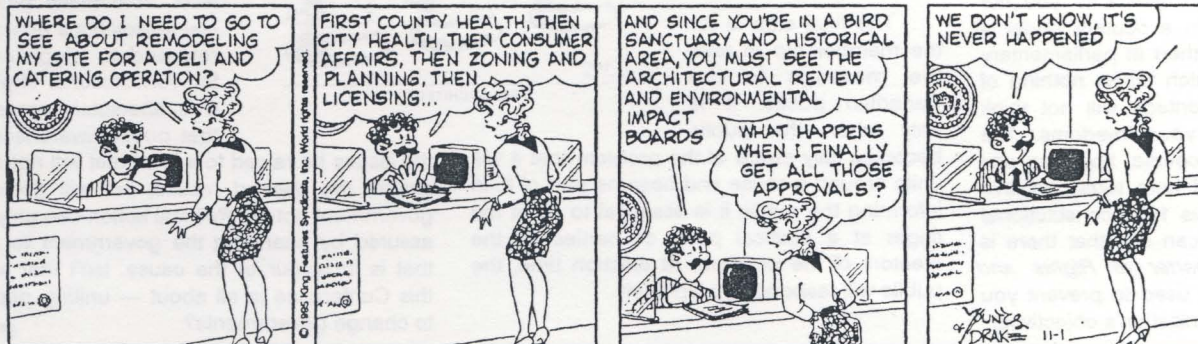
When I opened these remarks I spoke of freedom, individual freedom, personal freedom. There is probably nobody in this country who does not believe in freedom, but everyone has their own interpretation of the word. The freedom of which I speak has its roots in the heritage of the Canadian people --- a heritage which can trace itself back to Magna Carta and the fields of Runnymede in 1215. It is a heritage built around the Common Law, where all people were free to do those things that were not specifically prohibited by the law. It is a heritage in which the law was an evolutionary process springing from the grass-roots, in which judicial interpretation provided its growth.

It is a heritage in which Parliament itself was part of the evolutionary development of the Common Law, a Parliament in which the people gave limited power to the government as was required to establish peace, order and good government. The residual power remained in the people. It is a form of government where the Cabinet was responsible to Parliament, Parliament was responsible to the people, and individual members were responsible to their constituents, not a party.

The responsibility of the Court was to interpret the laws passed by Parliament. The power to overrule Parliament did not exist. That power lay with the people. Unsatisfactory laws could be repealed by changing governments as a result of an election.

Parliament was itself a court of last resort. Whenever a court decision was made which the people's representatives considered bad law, ameliorating legislation could be enacted, negating the court's decision.

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It is fundamental to our heritage that residual power rest with the people. Members of Parliament, Parliament itself, and the Cabinet as an executive branch, were required to act within the limits of the powers granted to them by the people.

There was a fundamental change in our heritage with the passing of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Canada changed from a country with an unwritten Constitution, where Parliament was government by customs and conventions, to a country with a codified Charter. Parliament ceased to be responsible to the people and became responsible to a Charter.

A majority decision by the nine appointed judges (say, 5 to 4), becomes the ultimate law of the land, with no appeal.

The Court can declare Parliament's laws *ultra vires*; the court can extend the laws passed by Parliament, that is, make the laws

applicable to situations that Parliament did not intend. Social engineering, when carried out by members of Parliament, can at least be repealed with a change in government. Social engineering carried out by the court is not subject to any appeal whatsoever.

The concept of freedom as developed under the Common Law has been fundamentally changed. Section 1 of the Charter specifically gives power to the government to restrict your rights and freedoms, subject to reasonable limits prescribed by law, as can be

demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society. To the uninitiated, that statement may sound reasonable. Who decides what is demonstrably justified? It could be the Courts, but for the most part it will be the government or some bureaucrat. What it really means is that whenever the government restricts your freedoms, with or without legislation, you are the one who must challenge that restriction in the courts. Before the Charter existed, the onus was on the government to prove that you did not have the freedom which you wished to exercise.

When a government cannot demonstrably justify a restriction of your freedoms it can use the notwithstanding clause in section 33 of the Charter. This allows the government to pass legislation nullifying any right or freedom set out in the Charter, and there is no appeal even to the courts.

If ever a piece of legislation showed contempt for the heritage of a people, Section 15 is a prime example. This section begins by declaring that every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination. This is the ultimate description of equality rights. In the exercise of

those equality rights you are prohibited from discriminating against anyone. Under subsection 2 of section 15, the government gives itself the right to discriminate against you; in so doing, it can take away your right to equal protection and benefit of the law. Under this section, the government does not have to rely on the notwithstanding clause, but need simply state that it is intended to benefit some supposedly disadvantaged persons or groups. Human rights legislation shelters under this provision.

What we would do well to remember is that there is not one freedom nor is there one right set out in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* that did not exist at Common Law before the *Charter o*.

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"Unreality is the true source of powerlessness. What we do not understand, we cannot control." - Charles Reich

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Rights and Freedoms was enacted. The fundamental difference before and after the Charter to all Canadians is that whereas before, the Charter power was in the people, springing from the grassroots with limited power being given to those who were placed in positions of authority, today control is from the top down. We have total control in the hands of Cabinet or the government or the courts. The only right that a person has today is the right to vote to elect a member of Parliament. Once a member is elected, the constituents have no power to direct his or her activity.

Democracy ends at the ballot box.

Canadians' heritage has been snuffed out. The Supreme Court of Canada, consisting of nine unelected judges, in Constitutional matters, has become a political arm of government.

The *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* does not benefit the average Canadian citizen. It does benefit special interest groups, such as criminals, immigrants, feminists, gay rights advocates, civil libertarians, aboriginal groups and visible minority groups. All of these groups are fed by tax dollars through free legal aid or the Courts Challenge program which allows the government to do its social engineering through judicial decisions. This subject has been well canvassed by Ted Morton, a University of Calgary political scientist in a speech at a conference in Ottawa sponsored by the Centre for Renewal in Public Policy (*Ottawa Citizen*, November 25, 1997).

This is the sorry state of the political and judicial life of Canadians since the coming into effect of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* in 1982. Not only does this sad state of affairs not have to continue, but it can and must be reversed.

To each of you who are present here today I would ask a question: How much longer can your freedom last? Can you not see that we are living in a country under a political dictatorship, clothed in parliamentary garb? A government which thinks nothing of destroying a nation's heritage will not think twice about removing your freedoms. The ultimate question is, of course, how can any organization represented here today achieve its goal in the face of this 1982 constitutional enactment? Surely you can see that there is some facet of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* which can be used to prevent you from achieving your organization's objectives.

It is obvious to me, and I hope to you, that the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* must be repealed. Let us always remember that the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* was not open to consultation with the public; that it was passed without a mandate or the people's consent by a Prime Minister who threatened to act unilaterally if the provinces did not agree with his proposal. We are not today living in the same climate as the early 1980s. More provinces are enacting referendum legislation. This is important because it is people to whom we must look for change, not politicians.

"Can you not see that we are living in a country under a political dictatorship, clothed in parliamentary garb?"

The starting point for any organization is its own membership. They must be made aware of how this part of the Constitution affects not only their organization, but the country as a whole. So long as the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* remains part of the Constitution there can be no national unity.

The second step is a letter-writing campaign to the editors of newspapers all across this country calling for the repeal of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and giving reasons. This step is absolutely essential in order that the public can be made aware of the problems associated with the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The letter-writing campaign should be expanded to include MPs and members of the provincial legislatures. Letter writing is an ongoing campaign. It must be continued by members writing to different newspapers to avoid the possibility of one person's name becoming too familiar to the editorial staff.

The final step is for the membership to take the message to the Canadian public. It is only when the public becomes fully aware of the problem that it will unite around a cause and become part of it. In informing the public it is essential to point the finger at a political party or parties as the creators of the problem. At election time, the public will respond appropriately.

What I am suggesting is well within the means of every organization in this room. It does not require an outlay of great sums of money, but it does require some time and effort. In addition it requires an understanding of the problem and a dedication to its solution. Unless the executive of organizations fully endorse this program and give leadership to their members it will not succeed.

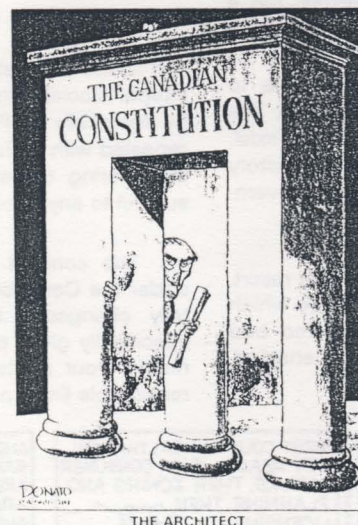
What this Conference is all about is uniting people. People can only be united when they become aware of the problems. You cannot go far wrong by reminding the people that Quebec has always said that it was left out of this constitutional change, and that Quebec might very well be happy to see the whole Constitution Act, 1982, repealed. The only thing that would be left in place would be the patriation of the Constitution, which gave Canada the sole jurisdiction for the amendment of its Constitution.

There is absolutely no assurance that the merger of political parties will bring about the required change in voting patterns. Uniting people around a cause has a greater potential for success than any other proposal put forward. The rank and file of Canadians cannot enjoy the leisure of the intelligentsia and the media, which continue to talk, talk, talk. The time for action is now. The shift in people's thinking must take place long before an election is called. It is only by starting now with a campaign of public awareness that Canadians will be prepared to change their voting pattern for the next election.

In the final analysis, the only way in which this Constitution can be changed is through political action, both at the federal and provincial level. With many provincial jurisdictions enacting referendum legislation for constitutional change it is absolutely essential that public awareness of

the issues be raised to a level that will not only ensure the desired results, but will demand government action. Political action can only be assured by changing the government to one that is in favour of the cause. Isn't that what this Conference is all about --- uniting people to change governments?

{END}



THE ARCHITECT

"Acting is as old as mankind. Politicians are actors of the first order." - Marlon Brando

PREDATOR

- Michael Gries & Dr. Walter Block

{Professor Walter Block, formerly senior economist with the Fraser Institute in Vancouver, and recently-past professor of economics at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester Massachusetts, is now chair of the Department of Economics and Finance at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway Arkansas. The following essay was co-authored with his student Michael Gries while in Worcester, and is exclusive to *Consent*.}

What exactly is an anti-dumping regulation?

Most broadly, dumping is the selling of a good in a foreign market at a lower price than one charges at home. This is a form of international price discrimination. Persistent dumping is found when a company has some sort of monopolistic power (be it from monopolistic competition or from a pure monopoly), and more than one market of consumers who cannot easily trade among themselves.

If the producer faces different marginal cost and marginal revenue lines in each market, then it pays to charge different prices in each market. If in such a case the US receives the lower price from a foreign producer, it is analogous to receiving a children's discount at a restaurant or any of the benefits of having an AARP card. This type of dumping is a benefit for the nation in the aggregate, and should not be regulated.

Sporadic dumping, in contrast, is the occasional sale of a commodity at below cost, or at a lower cost abroad than domestically, in an effort to unload an unforeseen and temporary surplus or to create consumer interest in the commodity produced. This practice finds its counterpart in the actions of a department store that periodically uses seasonal and promotional price cutting in order to maximize profits. Once again, as in the case of persistent dumping, the sporadic variety does not hurt the nation as a whole, and again there is no reason to prohibit it.

But this is not at all true in the case of predatory dumping. Here there is the temporary sale of a commodity at below cost or at a higher price domestically than abroad, in an effort to drive foreign producers out of business. Once competition is driven from the field, prices can then be raised so as to take advantage of the newly acquired monopoly power.

Fortunately, examples of predatory dump-

ing are rare, because there are many natural safeguards that severely hamper a producer's ability to effectively use dumping as a tool for capturing a market.

First, to successfully dump as a predator, a producer must drop the price of its commodity to a level where it is no longer profitable for others to stay in business. Then, this price must be held until the last producer is bankrupted. Barring some substantial advantage in production, it can be assumed that because no one else can turn a profit during this period, then neither can the predator. Further, because the price is lowered, the quantity demanded increases. Therefore, not only does the predator have to produce what the eliminated companies used to bring to the market, it has to cover the entire old production plus the increased demand --- all at a loss!

Also, for the predatory dumping to be rational, once prices are raised, long-run benefits (at a necessarily lower demand) must outweigh the short-run losses. This is not easy to attain since the cost comes first and the benefits only later. When a reasonably high interest rate is used to obtain present discounted values, the former can easily swamp the latter. Furthermore, there must be significant barriers to entry to keep new competition from once again entering the lucrative market.

All this is theoretically possible, but then again, so are flying pigs. Predatory dumping is unlikely, but economic rarities often translate into misbegotten law. The fight against 'predatory' dumping has opened a Pandora's Box of inefficient and damaging regulations.

Once it is known that government stands ready to prohibit 'predatory' dumping, all sorts of domestic producers will claim to be victimized by it. As it is difficult to distinguish between the different varieties and because the political process tends to favor local over foreign interests, the regulations come to include the 'good' dumping as well as the bad.

Consider in this regard how we should determine if dumping exists. The obvious way is to compare the average price of the product in the U.S. with the average home-market price, or with the cost of production. Unfortunately, and improperly, this is not current U.S. Commerce Department practice. Rather, Commerce compares individual U.S. sales with the average or estimated production cost of the foreign producer.

Dumping is found if any one U.S. sale falls below the average of the home-market price. Further, the very measure of the foreign market's average price is suspect. The Department of Commerce takes the average price in the foreigner's home market over the proceeding six months and if any U.S. transaction is below this average, then the producer is found guilty of dumping. Therefore, normal fluctuations in the market or in the exchange rate can lead to a charge of dumping.

Dumping can also be found if the price in the U.S. is lower than the cost of production. Commerce constructs an estimate of the foreign producer's costs and then adds 10% for overhead and 8% for profit. Even if the U.S. could accurately construct such a figure (which of course it can not), the resulting 'constructed' cost would still be biased towards a positive finding since under competitive conditions, firms tend to sell at marginal price, and make less than 8% profit.

Nevertheless, the resulting figure is then used as the benchmark. In this way, the Department of Commerce acts as both prosecutor and judge. With such a slanted decision making process, it should come as no surprise that evidence of dumping was found in 97% of the cases that came before it from 1986 to 1992. (Before an anti-dumping tariff is imposed, the 97% of cases that fail the Department of Commerce's review then get the opportunity to pass the International Trade Commission's (ITC) review, in which case there is no fine. 50% of all cases do not pass either of the reviews.) The net result is that dumping can be found even when the foreign firm's price is higher than the U.S. price. Further, to be cleared of dumping charges, a foreign producer may have to charge substantially more in the U.S. than it does at home.

Consider an example: Poland, in the past, has had to deal with the charge that they were dumping electric golf carts on the American market. However, since Poland was a communist country at the time of the accusations, hence worked with artificial prices, there was no way to assess what the true price of the carts would be in their home-market. There-

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"A free press can, of course, be good or bad. But most certainly, without freedom it will never be anything but bad." - Albert Camus

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fore, the Commerce department simply used the price of CANADIAN made golf carts sold in CANADA as a substitute. This price was then compared to what the POLISH Golf carts sold for in the U.S., and (as it should come to no surprise), 'evidence' of dumping was found.

When the issue was reopened five years later, the Commerce department used the 'constructed' value method to test for dumping. However, just as prices are artificial in communist countries, so are wages. Therefore, in an effort to construct the price of production, the Department of Commerce substituted SPANISH wage rates for the cost of labor, and an even more egregious level of dumping with a stiffer level of penalties was determined. Unfortunately, this is far from an anomaly.

The department of Commerce gave similar treatment to Chinese made manhole covers. First, Belgian, Japanese, Canadian, and French manhole covers were used to determine the 'Chinese' domestic price. This resulted in an 11% tariff. Then, the 'estimated' price method was used, with Philippine levels of wages and materials substituted to estimated costs. This resulted in a 97% tariff.

Say what you will about such a process, at least it cannot be denied that the bureaucrats are inventive.

Anti-dumping laws subject imports to special duties even if the 'dumping' has only a negligible impact on competing domestic producers. Considering the fact that anti-dumping tariffs have been levied on everything from Mexican tomatoes to Canadian potatoes, one should have serious reservations about the U.S. government's capacity to detect instances of predatory dumping.

Do Mexican tomato farmers really have the necessary capital to sell at a loss for a long enough time to put all other viable suppliers of tomatoes to the U.S. out of business? Can they meet the expanded demand at a loss? After gaining monopoly power, can they raise prices enough to cover their short-term losses? Are the barriers to entry significant enough to keep anyone else from entering the market? The obvious answer to each of these questions is a resounding no. Therefore, the law as presently constituted, and administered, succeeds only in barring low cost commodities from entering the U.S. Select U.S. companies are protected from competition. These laws do not protect the U.S. consumer, nor the nation as a whole.

{END}

MY GENERATION

- Karl A.S. Baldauf

{Karl Baldauf is Director of the Canadian Youth Rights Association and is also Ontario Chairman/National Press Secretary of the Progressive Group For Independent Business Youth. Aged 15 when the following address was presented to the Roots of Change Conference on March 21, 1998 at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, the following essay presents a perspective from Canada's unrepresented citizens, those under the legal voting age.}

The time has come for the youth of Canada to grab the reigns of its political future and steer it along the path we want to go. We, the youth of Canada, now more than ever, not only deserve the right to voice our opinions, but we demand it. We will no longer sit by and watch as our futures are spent away. We will no longer allow our future to be sold out by short sighted bureaucrats who do not concern themselves with the issues of the youth.

As the Ontario Chairman of the Progressive Group for Independent Business Youth and Director of the Canadian Youth Rights Association, I have been asked to come here today and present our concerns, opinions and alternatives concerning issues that we would like to bring to the national stage. The two areas that I will be looking at today are **voting age reforms** and the **Canada Pension Plan**.

On January 1, 1966, during the Pearson administration, one of the most controversial social programs in Canada's history took effect. On that day, the Canadian Pension Plan was founded. The first investors who started to pay premiums in 1966 and retired a few years later realized enormous profits. Their successors still profited handsomely, but today's generation --- and future generations --- will lose.

The Canadian government originally set the contribution rate at 1.8% of income, with a matching employer contribution. Then, in 1987 under the Mulroney government, things began to change. Over the next 10 years, taxpayers saw a gradual increase in Canada Pension Plan premiums. This resulted in the payment rate to almost double in 1996! The increase may seem small, yet, it still took millions of additional dollars out of taxpayers' pockets.

In order to combat the debt that the CPP has accumulated over the years and the debt the CPP will encounter in the future, Finance Minister Paul Martin announced last Fall that CPP premiums would rise to an absolutely ridiculous 9.9% over the course of the next six

years! This would make it, temporarily, one of the few things higher than the unemployment rate. In other words, citizens earning \$70,000 a year will have their premiums increased by at least one thousand dollars! This Canada Pension Plan increase constitutes the largest tax increase in Canadian history!

Perhaps if the CPP was helping a large majority of Canadian citizens I could condone these whopping premium increases. But as a recent poll points out, only 5% of Canadians use the Canada Pension Plan as their primary source of retirement income! Yes, Canadians are spending tens of billions of dollars a year for a ludicrous program that only helps one in twenty Canadian citizens. This is completely asinine; Paul Martin knows it, Paul Martin hears the cries, yet Paul Martin is so preoccupied gunning for 24 Sussex Drive that he doesn't want to do anything to annoy the mainly socialist media. Instead, he wants to make the youth, the middle class, and the upper class pay!

What's even worse, is that the Liberals are claiming to be the best friend of Canada's youth. But even with sneaky red herrings such as the Millennium Scholarship Fund, it's not convincing. Let me assure my fellow young Canadians: we may escape a few thousand dollars debt when we finish school, but at the current rate, we will not be able to escape a federal debt in the trillions of dollars! The Liberals are making themselves look good on the backs of the future of this country! It's not fair. It's not acceptable and it must not continue.

I would like to tell you a story now from a recent *Maclean's* article regarding a young 33-year-old businessman named David Crichton. As I speak, this up-town, high income entrepreneur is pondering just how much more he can stand before he applies for a U.S. work permit. You see, David knows his Canada Pension Plan premiums will rise in stages at least until the year 2003. He also

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"What's done to children, they will do to society." - Karl Menninger

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knows that Ottawa has even changed a limit on what he can save for himself in tax-free registered retirement plans.

Perhaps worst of all, Crichton knows that few younger Canadians are paying attention to such matters and this could result in catastrophe for them. As he told Mary Janigan of *Maclean's* magazine: "My mother thinks the country should take care of her. She's worked all these years and it's her turn to get something back. As romantic as that notion is, I don't feel that it's reality anymore. I am torn," he says. "I know we have to take care of them, but I am paying so much tax that I resent my country. The government uses our generation."

David's plight is similar to the plight of many Canadians today. And with him being more than twice my age, I don't dare imagine the state of the CPP when I'm in my thirties. The first baby boomers turn 65 in the year 2012. By the year 2030, when the last baby boomers will have retired, there will be 8.8 million Canadians over 65, compared with 3.7 million now. Imagine the state of Canada at that point! At present there are five working Canadians to support one person receiving CPP benefits. By 2030 there will be three supporting one. If not much changes, Canada is in serious trouble.

Martin's attempt to trap young Canadians and hold them hostage must not succeed. And so, I urge those of you in the audience to use the means that you have to expose the federal Liberals and their plot to destroy my future! Given the political uncertainty that there is out there, I would much rather have the thousands of dollars I must give to the Canada Pension Plan over the next forty years and

invest it myself. In a democratic society, we should at least have that option; alternatives must be considered.

It has always been the opinion of the Progressive Group For Independent Business Youth that the most economically sound of these avenues for change would be to privatize the Canada Pension Plan. Privatization would see the dissolving of the CPP in its current form. Instead we would see the establishment of investment funds similar to today's registered retirement savings plans.

Under the new plan we would see the unfunded liability add to the Canadian national debt. Also, the accumulated pension credit of Canadians would be converted into recognition bonds. The government would then put this money into a reserve fund allowing it to gain interest at today's rate. Upon retirement, holders of these bonds would redeem them and the pension would go into the holder's retirement account. This would allow for pensioners to get a pension based upon interest and fair market value and secure them against fluctuations in the Canadian economy.

The program of pension plan privatization has already been enacted by the Chilean government. After only a decade and a half this system has shown remarkable advantages over the previous, pay as you go system. These advantages include giving the workers greater control over their future, paying a larger amount of benefits to the workers, and increasing the peoples' confidence in the pension plan. A privatized pension plan has proven, time and time again, to have more advantages than a pay a you go system.

The youth of Canada must act quickly and decisively to urge the federal Liberals to privatize the Canada Pension Plan and secure the pensions over future generations. This is critical to Canada's economic well being as we move into the next century. Privatizing the Canada Pension Plan holds many advantages over our current sys-

tem. To ignore these in favor of an out-modeled, decaying system is sheer lunacy. If you disregard the future you may as well kiss our chances of balancing the debt in anyone's lifetime away! If the government truly cares about giving Canadians a secure retirement and if the government is determined to do what is best for the future of this country --- as opposed to themselves --- then the government must realize immediately that privatizing the Canada Pension Plan is the only option!

Canada has always prided itself on the assumption that every citizen has an equal opportunity to change its political landscape. It has always assumed that if we are unhappy

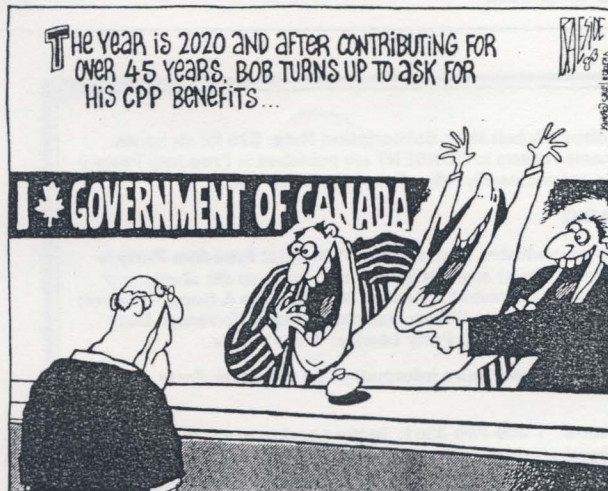
with something, we only need to raise our voices; after all, one voice is just as loud as another; isn't that the point of a democracy? But, as many Canadians are beginning to notice, our cur-

rent system is flawed. A large portion of citizens in this country are being oppressed, at least politically, and do not have the tools or the right to practice the same democratic rights as other citizens! Who are these Canadians? Ironically, they are the very victims of such catastrophes as the Canada Pension Plan and the seven hundred billion dollar federal debt. Yes, the victims are of the very future of this country: Canadians that are sixteen and seventeen.

How are they being politically oppressed? By being denied the most basic democratic right: the right to vote in an election or referendum.

A few months ago, the Progressive Group For Independent Business Youth published a detailed report on why Canadian citizens who are sixteen and seventeen deserve the right to vote. This report was sent to every Member of Parliament and Senator in Canada, regardless of party. From the responses that we received, we found that a majority of MPs thought that the voting age should be lowered to sixteen, and, as one Reform MP put it, "Sixteen years is long enough to be taxed without representation."

Unfortunately, of all the replies we received, we did not receive a response from Minister of Youth, Ethel Blondin-Andrew. This is a perfect example of why youths deserve the same democratic rights as other Canadians. Currently, elected officials don't feel that they must represent our opinions since we didn't



ADRIAN RAESIDE, Victoria Times Colonist

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"Blessed are the young, for they shall inherit the national debt." - Herbert Hoover

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vote for them. This has gone on for too long; we have been ignored for too long! There must be democracy for all Canadians who can make mature decisions!

An American group with over five million participating students called 'Kid Voting' further proves that the voting age must be lowered. On the basis of extensive research and testing, it has determined that when youth are allowed to vote, the voter turnout rate is five percent higher than that of the voter turnout rate of their adult counterparts. The most important part of Kid Voting is that it works because the youth are educated in the democratic process.

The democratic process is already taught to Canadian citizens in the high school curriculum and carried on in such extracurricular activities as Model Parliament and Model United Nations Debating. So, you see, Canadian students are already one step ahead of our American counterparts.

Even the highest law of the land, the Canadian Constitution, states that we deserve the right to vote. In Part One, sub-section three, of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, it states, "Every citizen of Canada has the right to vote in an election of the House of Commons or of a legislative assembly." According to this charter, if one does not have the right to vote, the reason is that he is not a Canadian citizen. There are over two and a half million high school students in Canada who could not vote in the 1997 federal election. These students sing 'O Canada' every morning; these students learn that Canada has the resources to become the

greatest country in the world; these students learn about the great historical movements that shaped this country. Yet, according to this Charter, these students, these youths, these people, are not Canadian citizens! According to this charter I am not a Canadian citizen! I'm sorry, but I would much rather ignore Trudeau's Charter of Wrongs and adhere to Diefenbaker's Canadian Bill of Rights, which states:

"I am a Canadian, Free to speak without fear, Free to worship in my own way, Free to stand for what I believe right, Free to oppose

"If you are in favour of toughening up the Young Offenders Act, as we are, you must be in favour of lowering the voting age because you have recognized the fact that sixteen and seventeen year olds are adults. If we are adults when it comes to criminal justice, we are adults when it comes to voting!"

what I believe wrong, Or, free to choose those who shall govern my country. This heritage of freedom I pledge to uphold, For myself and all mankind."

So far, I believe I've been able to establish that voting is a basic democratic right that all Canadians should enjoy. Maybe I've over-emphasized that statement. Currently, criminals incarcerated in the prisons of Canada are allowed to vote. In 1997, Paul Bernardo and Clifford Olson found their names on voting lists and were allowed to vote for a Member of Parliament! These individuals, among many, had brutally beaten, raped and murdered innocent children; and yet they had the right to vote while the youths of Canada are denied this right! Law abiding citizens aged sixteen and seventeen are being ignored while monsters with an obvious disregard for the laws that govern Canada are being allowed to choose

the individuals that shape these laws! This obvious flaw in the system must be addressed immediately!

Before I go on, let me state that the Progressive Group For Independent Business Youth is strictly against the Young Offenders Act as it stands and we would be in complete support of toughening it up. I think it's obvious to everyone except socialists and pink Liberals that sixteen and seventeen year olds must be tried in an adult court if they commit a crime. By that point in time, they can make mature and adult-like decisions. Mind you, they are not just adults when it suits the governments needs. If you are in favour of toughening up the Young Offenders Act, as we are, you must be in favour of lowering the voting age because you have recognized the fact that sixteen and seventeen year olds are adults. There must not be a double

standard. If we are children when it comes to voting, then we are children when it comes to criminal justice. But, if we are adults when it comes to criminal justice, we are adults when it comes to voting!

In conclusion, if groups such as the Progressive Group For Independent Business and their youth wing do not use our tools to pull away the curtain on the hypocrisy that currently controls Parliament Hill; if we do not deny this status quo approach to appeasing the mainly socialist media; and, if we do not give all citizens the tools needed to build a proper democracy, then no one group will pay more for the many mistakes made by this generation than my generation. We are many and we have many opinions, but if they are not taken into consideration then this country doesn't have a prayer. We are the future Canada.

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