

DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES AND THE RULE OF LAW

I have been a Member of Parliament for twelve years. For the first several sessions I was proud to be part of an institution that shaped the way the country moved forward, that genuinely cared about social justice and the rule of law.

Our financial choices were based on the needs of the people of Canada, and the prudent use of tax dollars. We recognized that our responsibility was to all Canadians, no matter how they voted, and that our decisions must be based on more than just getting re-elected.

Then a new force came into play, and suddenly the rules changed. Since the Conservative minority government has taken over, everything has been subjected to a simple test. Is it good for the Conservative Party? If so, do it.

There is no consideration for democracy, or the peoples' needs. These are irrelevant to the overriding goal of achieving a majority by whatever means will succeed.

Our country deserves better than this.

John McKay

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THE JOHN MCKAY REPORT

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**WHERE IS
CANADA
GOING?**

**Financial
management
and political goals**



FINANCIAL MANOEUVRING

When the Harper government assumed office, Canada was in good shape. There was a \$13 billion surplus, debts and taxes were on a downward track and healthcare funding was on a sustainable basis. There were commitments to address aboriginal issues, climate change, child care and a host of other issues that had been waiting for a financially stable period to be addressed.

A SPENDING SPREE

While the money lasted, the government went on a spending spree, which included tax reductions to those who least needed them. Legislation which would have helped the families in this country during the past year's financial debacle was destroyed, ignored or allowed to die for lack of priority. Now, new issues that need attention cannot be tackled in a spirit of co-operation because of the pervasive atmosphere of distrust and partisanship which poisons the House of Commons.

THE LARGEST DEFICIT IN OUR HISTORY

We are looking at the monster of the largest deficit in our nation's history. We have \$56 to \$60 billion in this year's deficits; we



have added \$175 billion to our national debt; a few weeks ago the total debt in this country passed \$500 billion.

The notion of living within our means seems to have been forgotten, as we see stimulus cheques, with Conservative logos and signatures attached, being handed out in selected areas across the country.

UNEMPLOYMENT IS THE HIGHEST IN ELEVEN YEARS

We have not even seen results in higher employment, which is one of the benefits we had been led to expect from the stimulus program. Not so - the current unemployment rate is the highest it has been in eleven years, and is especially felt here in Ontario.

DOES STIMULUS WORK?

Whether the stimulus will have any appreciable effect on our eventual recovery has not been proven, and questions about this are not welcomed.

INFORMATION IS POWER

When Parliamentary Budget Officer Kevin Page asked the

question, "How do we know that stimulus money works?" pages of unintelligible paper were dumped on his desk. When he asked to examine the basis for program expenditures, the government (which claims to be transparent and accountable) put a Cabinet Confidentiality sticker on everything. So this servant of Parliament, perhaps the only person whose office could do a comprehensive budget analysis, must accept whatever the government says its expenditures will be, and cannot assess the success or failure of the stimulus program. He has also been subjected to a relentless smear campaign, and there have been cutbacks in his office budget.

CHOKING DEBATE

This government knows that without accurate information to bolster their debate, the opposition parties cannot succeed in efforts to question government actions.

WATCH GOVERNMENT CLOSELY
Canadians cannot afford to allow this blatant denial of their needs to go on for the sake of political expediency. The fact that the government is not hiding its true motives should arouse our concern and make people look very closely at what comes out of Ottawa as government policy.