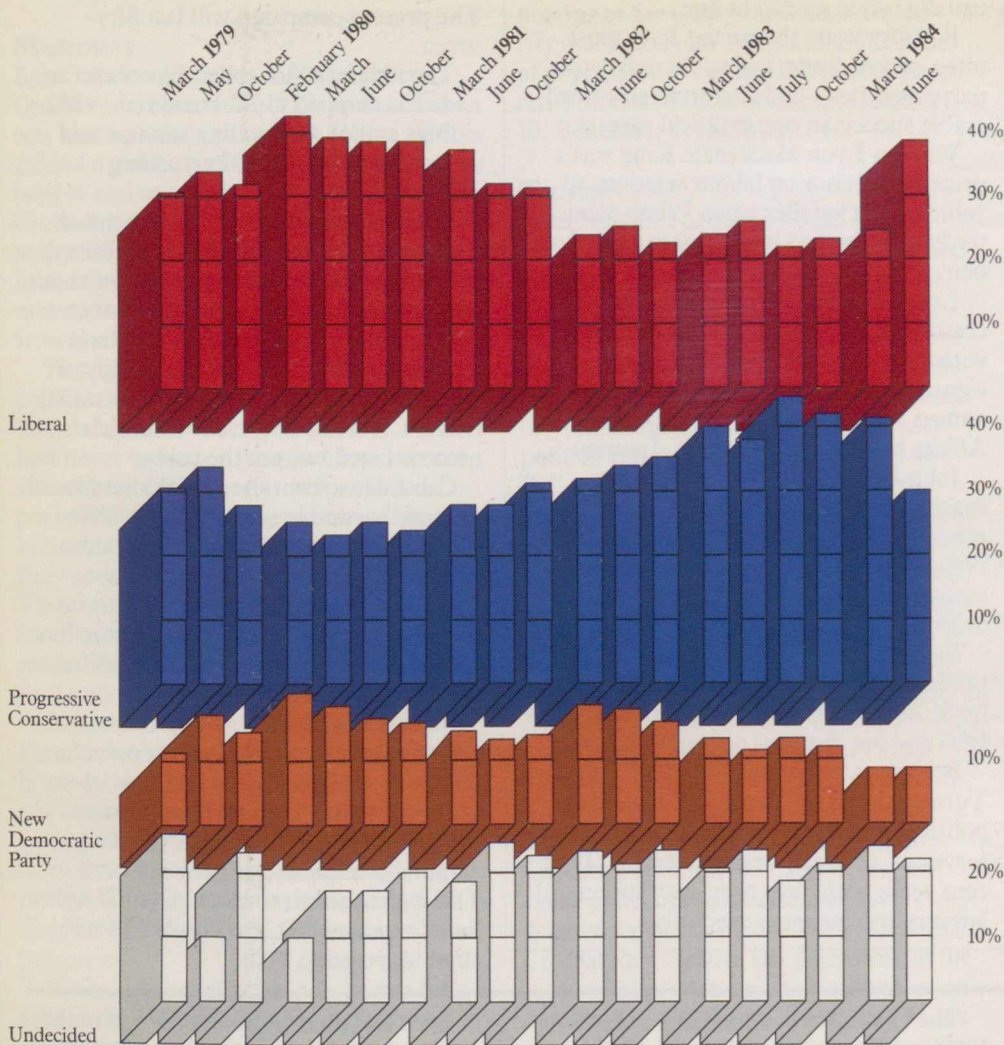


Party Preference: Ebbs and Flows



Parties' fortunes go up and down. The Gallup Poll measures Canadian voters' preferences monthly.

In May 1979, an election month, the undecided voters were making up their minds, giving the Progressive Conservatives a slight edge. In February 1980, just before the next election, the

Progressive Conservatives' percentage was sharply down, the Liberals' up. This July, the Liberals, who had elected a new leader in June, bounced back after a long, discouraging winter.

Source: Canadian Gallup Poll Limited

The Not-Too-High Costs of Campaigning

The direct costs of Canadian campaigns and elections are limited by law.

This year the government, the parties and the individual candidates will spend an estimated \$5.60 for each eligible voter, up from \$3.22 in 1980. This does not include the amounts spent by special interest groups on behalf of favoured candidates. (The Commons passed a bill last fall which would have prohibited special interest groups from such expenditures, but an Alberta judge ruled in June that the bill violated the free speech provision of the Constitutional Charter of Rights.)

A basic formula links allowed expenditures by candidates and parties to the consumer price index and is adjusted for each election.

In 1980 each candidate was allowed to spend \$1 for each of the first 15,000 voters in his riding, 50 cents for each of the next 10,000, and 25 cents for each of the remaining voters. In addition the parties were allowed to spend 30 cents for each voter in each riding where they had a candidate.

A total of \$11.5 million was spent in 1980. No party exceeded the limits. The Liberals spent \$3,800,000, the Tories \$4,361,000, the NDP \$3,100,000 and the Social Credit Party \$98,510. The total for all other parties was \$103,182.

In addition to the party expenditures, the 1,497 candidates competing for the 282 seats in Commons spent a total of about \$15 million. Tax rebates for parties and candidates were \$11,780,000. Most expenditures were for advertising and travel. Candidates and parties will be permitted to spend about 30 per cent more on advertising this year because of recent changes in the election laws.

As you may have noticed, *Canada Today/d'aujourd'hui's* new art director, Eiko Emori, has given us a new format. We hope you like it.

Cover photos: UPI, Progressive Conservative Party, New Democratic Party.

Canada Today/d'aujourd'hui

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