

Prime Minister sweeps through Halifax



Photo by M. Cohn

by Martin Cohn

Prime Minister Joe Clark's 1980 election campaign swept through Nova Scotia this week, with a hectic one-day visit on Tuesday.

At a morning press conference in Halifax, Clark rejected Opposition Leader Pierre Trudeau's recent demands for consultation on possible Canadian responses to the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. Trudeau had said that a caretaker government "can do only housekeeping things... (and) can't make policy statements or binding commitments of any value."

But Clark told reporters that he is not bound by precedent to consult with the Leader of the Opposition on international relations. "I find it curious that he is indicating that I, as Prime Minister, do not have rights that he exercised as Prime Minister after his government was defeated on the budget in 1974."

Clark cited the caretaker Trudeau government's decisions to cut off nuclear sales to India, and to recognize the government of Laos, in 1974.

"There was never any consultation with any party in opposition. He is now, I gather, proposing a standard for me, to which he did not adhere when he was in exactly similar situations in 1974."

The Clark government is considering various cultural and economic measures against the Soviet Union as an expression of Canadian displeasure over the invasion of

Afghanistan.

While Clark did not rule out consultation with Trudeau, he has promised to inform Premier Peckford of Newfoundland before announcing any moves against the Soviet Union.

Peckford has expressed concern about the adverse effects on Newfoundland's economy if Soviet landing rights at Gander airport or fishing rights for Soviet trawlers are revoked.

Clark started his day in Halifax with a half-hour meeting with Premier John Buchanan. Later, he met with Sydney Steel Corporation (Sysco.) president R.B. Cameron and Elmer Mackay, minister for Regional Economic Expansion.

Clark said afterward that the meeting was "a back-grounding," in which "no undertakings were asked, and none were given."

Speaking to a luncheon audience at the Halifax Board of Trade, Clark said his government would transfer jurisdiction for offshore resources to the provinces. "The jurisdiction that Alberta enjoys over its resources will now be extended to the same degree... to provinces whose resources lie offshore," such as Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. "We are a nation made fortunate by the Lord in the strengths and the resources we have here in Canada," he said.

Clark also attacked deficit financing under Liberal gov-

ernments. "The 1970s were a decade of deficits," he said. "A nation, like a family cannot continue to spend forever what it does not have."

The Prime Minister took credit for recent declines in Separatist support in Quebec, noting that this coincided with the Conservative accession to power. His government has made progress to "end the climate of perpetual conflict between Ottawa and the provinces," he said.

Referring to Conservative plans to distribute shares of Petro Canada to all Canadians, Clark said: "We think that there is a difference between state ownership and citizen ownership."

He did not elaborate on what he thinks the difference is.

Clark said his government supports higher domestic oil prices, with an ultimate ceiling of 85% of OPEC or U.S. price levels.

The Prime Minister said that 300 million dollars has been earmarked to offset energy and conversion costs in Atlantic Canada. The money would come out of anticipated revenues of "6 billion dollars from the Clark government's proposed energy tax in the producing industry."

After taping a television interview with ATV, Clark and his entourage departed for Port Hawkesbury to attend a Conservative nomination meeting for the riding of Cape Breton Highlands-Canso.

Campaigning in Halifax Tuesday; Clark said "there is a difference between state ownership and citizen ownership."

He did not elaborate.

Student enumeration important issue

by John MacLeod

The February 18 election will be the first election in which there won't be door-to-door enumeration. The voters' list will be based on those for the May 22 election. This does not mean that if you were under age or living elsewhere you can't vote. It just means that the onus is on you to make sure you are on the list.

Mary Cooley, the Chief Returning Officer for the riding of Halifax, says her office will do everything they can to get people on the voters' list. She will even go to Sable Island if the seven voters there request it.

Students in particular will have to make an effort to get on the voters' list as the residences and Fenwick were empty when the last lists were made.

If you do not receive, by January 15, a card saying you are on the voters' list you still have until February 5 to get on the list.

Cooley says she will send revising agents to Dalhousie to add people to the list. This will not be a door-to-door enumeration but they will be available, probably in the S.U.B. lobby, to add people to the list.

Another method of getting on the list is to attend a sitting of the revision agents which will be held at seven advertised locations in Halifax from

January 24 to February 4.

If you want to see the electoral workings in detail you can drop in to Cooley's office, on the second floor of the Lord Nelson Arcade, and an electoral officer will add you to the list.

The final method of getting your name on the list is to get a relative or your employer to do it for you.


If a student is on the list in their home town, but isn't planning to go home to vote, they can get enumerated in Halifax or have a friend vote for them by proxy in their home town.

"Proxy voting," said Cooley, "is a nuisance. But if they want to vote, and there is no other way, we'll do it."

To vote by proxy a student must get a form from Cooley's office and go visit the University's Registrar. There the Registrar will certify that they are a student. Then the student must return the form to Cooley's office who will mail the necessary papers to the person that the student designates as their proxy.

However the bottom line is that you can't vote unless you are on the list, and you can't be sure you're on the list unless you make the effort to find out. If you're not on the list there are lots of people, either in Cooley's office or in the political parties, who will help you get on the list.

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