

Red-Blue Tories Fight It

By Keith Reynolds
Canadian University Press

OTTAWA (CUP) -- The Ottawa Civic Centre was reminiscent of the gunfight at the OK corral, February 21, as Canada's Tories lined up behind their choice of leader. While Joe Clark may have played Wyatt Earp by ending up on top, Claude Wagner, unlike the Daltons and Brian Mulroney, did not end up in the Conservative Party's Boot Hill.



BIONIC MAN

Observers had speculated the free spending of money by some of the candidates would have a big effect on the outcome of the election. One candidate, Brian Mulroney, spent enough money throughout the five-month campaign to get himself tagged as the "bionic man".

Mulroney people utilized almost every gimmick imaginable to place his name before convention delegates. They were offered Mulroney matches, Mulroney scarfs, Mulroney sports jackets and skirts along with the usual collection of badges, stickers and banners. He impressed delegates with a colour T.V. projector with a four-by-five-foot screen.

Mulroney also provided delegates, alternates, observers, media and the many freeloaders who attend all Ottawa political functions with two fine meals, including one sponsored by supposed "Westerners for Mulroney."

Not all of Mulroney's spending was helpful to him, however. Supporters of Paul Hellyer were reported to be the first to discover that Mulroney stickers, if folded the right way could be made to spell the word "Money". Hellyer was easily one of the convention's biggest spenders. He had imported expensive audio-video units for use in the hotel and at the convention centre.

Gimmicks were less popular in the Hellyer campaign but he restricted himself to the more usual badges, posters, stickers and hats.

Saturday night he held a dance attended by more than 1,000 and featuring "Liverpool", a group which does a very danceable imitation of early Beatles, and

Moe Koffman performing with the "Boss Brass".

The women hosting Hellyer's hospitality rooms were pictures of beauty and poise. Few people seemed to discover that the young women in question were there not for the politics but for the fees paid by the charm or modelling agencies which employed them for the candidates.

The most ingenious campaign was run by Flora McDonald who throughout was able to maintain an illusion that she was a poorer candidate with not much to spend.

Her free meals were restricted to a "soup kitchen" with Flora. One of those dishing out the soup was Mayor Crombie of Toronto. There were few "Flora" posters but her buttons were the most ingenious of the convention. One, which pictured her and Sir John A. McDonald in the same frame, became a collectors item far before any of the other buttons were all given out. Competition for the buttons became fierce

with some delegates and observers even stealing them off each other's coats.

MUSIC TOO

Entertainwise, Flora was no slouch either, providing John Allen Cameron followed by a good rock band in the same night.

Musically, Jim Gillies provided the conference with the "Climax Jazz Band," a group which performed often for him during the conference and Mulroney presented Ginette Reno and buses to and from the convention to hear her.

Joe Clark gave a campaign of an even lower key than Flora. He gave out rather common looking buttons and yellow scarves which also disappeared in short order, perhaps an indication of coming things.

Jack Horner, a man not expected to do well, provided a large presence at the convention. His campaign was the only one



Did It Really Matter?

By Peter O'Malley
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OTTAWA -- When you come right down to it, what difference does it make who is national leader of the Progressive Conservative Party? Canada's right-wing populist parliamentary coalition, hopelessly divided as it is, had the greatest difficulty getting elected in sufficient numbers to form a government. And when it does achieve power, the Party's lack of positive political purpose renders it incapable of doing more than reacting to the given situation and attempting to contain and forestall changes which will inevitably occur anyway.

The reason for the PCs' lack of political purpose is not hard to find. It is comprised of people who only commonality is their over-riding concern for self-advancement and their shared but obsolete conception of the "free-enterprise" system. Translated into politics their common purpose is the preservation and extension of the social conditions they see necessary for self-advancement—an unlitigated market place, absence of government regulation, few social programs (to protect "incentive"), low taxes, and the like. When these conditions are present, they call it "liberty". And to hell with the social cost of that "liberty", and to hell with the "losers" who can't make it.

It is the obsolescence of their political-economic ideal which makes the PC's the favorite of the populist right and dissenting liberals, but which also prevents them from achieving the degree of corporate support the Liberal Party enjoys. While the Tories harangue about unemployment insurance benefits and forcing people out to work, the Liberals and their powerful friends know well creating unemployment is just one of the mainstays of modern economic policy. They also know that too

uncaring attitude towards the "losers" who make up the majority of the population is political suicide. If the Tories were thrust into power tomorrow there is nothing they could do to change that, even if they were led by John A. MacDonald himself.

Consequently, the electoral weakness of the Tories combined with their inability to do more than react when they do form national governments means that their antics are, and will continue to be, largely irrelevant to the course of events which



shape this country. In little consequence, this is equally unimportant which that leader is unimportant still.

And yet, Canadians suffered through more about this process. Four-day media binges, leadership conventions, the campaign never led the significance of extent created the importance of the CPR. When campaign and the candidates, however, it only concerned very little at stake for candidates and their

Consider the absence in the campaign. What was ripped apart by a controls and the super bargaining, the big issue for the PC's was receiving unemployment benefits. Although nothing about creating employment plenty of talk about the unemployed.

What about corporate ownership, control? Nothing meaningful, nothing really candidates dealt with the general banner Socialism", which is a silly rhetorical level candidates basic avatars what is actually happening.

What was reported Diefenbaker-Stanfield-Tory split within the