

# Conservatives in the pink

Last week I was in the U.S., a land of rising prosperity, falling unemployment and strong political leadership. Many Americans, shocked by the free-fall of our wretched dollar, asked me, "What is the matter up in Canada? We thought you had a conservative government?"

Well, no, I patiently explained. What passes up here for our government begins with "Progressive" and has a big C. To unenlightened Yankees, this may sound sort of conservative but it's not.

The Tories are really liberal Democrats in the U.S. and there's nothing but an icy void to the right. In fact, one of Canada's great problems is that all its parties are left or leftist; there is simply no balance from centrist or conservative forces.

That's why Canada tilts left on just about everything. The latest example was provided to me by Howard Phillips, head of the U.S.'s increasingly influential conservative caucus. Phillips sent me a news item about forthcoming Canadian aid to a group of southern African nations with his notation, "A sad commentary on a supposed 'conservative government.'"

The news item in question was about a big jamboree held last January in remote Harare, Zimbabwe. There, a high-level Canadian delegation led by Sen. Duff Roblin, seems to have promised \$120 million in aid over the next five years to such important nations as Lesotho, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia, Angola, Mozambique, Malawi and Tanzania.

According to press reports from Harare, this Canadian aid was designed to help the above nations lessen their economic dependence on South Africa. And dependent they are: Most of these countries ship 60% of their exports and imports on

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South Africa's railroads. South African technicians run many of these nation's economies, health systems and power grids. In fact, without South African technical and economic support, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Malawi would likely collapse.

But, I ask, what business does Canada have helping finance these nations to break away from South African influence? Why, at a time when our treasury is empty, our currency debauched and our economy stagnant from over-taxation, are we helping places like Lesotho? Ninety-nine percent of Canadians have never heard of Lesotho (pronounced Lesutu) or Botswana and what happens in these obscure locales is not of the remotest interest to Canada — only to the leftist ideologues making our foreign policy and spending our tax money.

Sen. Roblin, queried by me on these matters, tried to downplay reports that Canadian aid was targeted against South Africa. He maintained that our aid was to help general educational and economic projects in southern Africa. Sure, as they say in Malawi.

Our so-called Conservatives in Ottawa are spending money to oppose South Africa. I, for one, don't want my tax money wasted in such a ludicrous fashion. That Lesotho, wholly surrounded by South Africa, is dependent on its neighbor is of no more concern than that San Marino is surrounded by Italy. Or what about Poland, now totally dependent on the USSR? Is Ottawa helping Warsaw break its oil and transport dependence on the USSR? Not likely.

Now, Ottawa tells us on one hand that Canadians must "make sacrifices" to cut ruinous deficit spending. Meanwhile, the other hand — the left one, of course — is dispensing cash to the Marxist dictator of Zimbabwe. Ideology triumphs over financial imperatives and even basic common sense.

Infuriating, to say the least. Canada does not have the money to buy ammunition for its few troops, its ships rust at their moorings. Soviet aircraft and submarines daily violate our borders. Everyone laughs at our claims to Arctic sovereignty. We are called "shirkers" by our NATO allies. There is no money for defence but somehow Ottawa's mauve Mandarins find funds for Lesotho and Zimbabwe.

And there is growing diplomatic support for Marxist Angola, a virtual puppet of the Soviet Union and Cuba, and for Marxist Mozambique. Who says that Mulroney's people never make policy before reading polls? On Africa, there is a clear, strong, decisive policy. Unfortunately, it is also pro-Marxist, outrageously wrong and 100% ideologically motivated. Let's see the Tories clean up the mess created in Canada by their bumbling policies before worrying about rail transport in Lesotho.

## Punch



"Well, Angela, you may be too thin around the haunches and too heavy in the flews, but I defy anyone to do a better cheese soufflé."