## We're a nation of masochists

changed in the last 100 years. nature but poor by policy." Things have not anada, to repeat the absolutely dead-on words of a 19th-century British observer, is "rich by

works, alas, do. And horrified attention, thanks to last week's budget.

For Canada, it was the fiscal version of Dieppe. After them hardly merit the attention of an adult mind, their less politicians is a mystery to me. Though most of with some of the western world's most inept and feck-Why this vast, wealthy nation continues to afflict itself

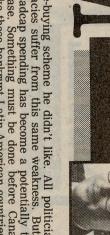
The mountain labored and produced a mouse. A very tiny, little timid squeaky mouse of a PC government weeks of tom-tom beating about how the government the mixed, but appropriate, metaphor). with as much political backbone as a sea slug (excuse result was yet another major letdown and a huge fiasco. was going to get tough with the monster deficit, the

snip here, a snip there. sacred cow, health, were not done. All we saw was made in vote-buying social programs, including that national masochism. Deep cuts that should have been streets. But not here, where being scalped and beaten by meaningfully cut. Taxes are going up—outrageously. In many other nations, there would have been rioting in the the rapacious government has become a form of All the smoke and mirrors aside, spending was not

annual deficit (meaning that Ottawa spends \$30 billion more than it takes in from taxes) and government spending that is simply out of control. able nations. So we are left with a \$30 billion-plus their Canadian dollars for currencies of more reli-Smart money traders read the budget and dumped

Brian Mulroney, like his Liberal predecessors, never





Canada, madcap spending has become a potentially terminal disease. Something must be done before Canada in democracies suffer from this same weakness. But in met a vote-buying scheme he didn't like. All politicians

becomes like those bankrupt Latin American countries. I work 155 days a year to pay my taxes. For this, I get politicians who can't balance a budget, a post office that is the worst in the civilized world, and a military too puny to win a battle with an East Los Angeles gang. left-wing lesbians here in Canada. And the joy of seeing my tax money continue to flow to such worthy causes as socialist Tanzania or groups of

politicians to run a shoeshine stand. Politicians who do such a frightfully lousy job must be fired. takes stellar incompetence. I wouldn't hire any of our To run such a rich country as Canada into the ground

which three factions, leftish, left and leftist, compete for in Canada. We have long been a one-party system three factions have proven themselves eminently incapadeficit spending and ever bigger government. And influence and patronage money. All are dedicated to Our problem, of course, is that there is no opposition

ble of governing Canada.

Something must be done, quickly. The International

Monetary Fund has issued a stern warning to Canada. We are facing financial disaster and a slide into Third World status unless we bring moral order and legacy that Pierre Trudeau and Brian Mulroney have left Canadians. responsibility to our slimy finances. Such is the proud fiscal

Put government spending under an outside agency, like the IMF. Somebody has to have the guts to say NO to Prairie farmers, Newfie fishermen or daycare advo-Swiss, Japanese or West Germans, all of whom run their excellent systems with little or no deficit and paltry in cates. Put the government under financial control of the

nance of a balanced budget and fiscal honesty. Political need a conservative party whose basic tenet is mainteflation—and still have ample social programs.

Or, more realistically, turn to a new political party, as eaders who will tell demanding voters that there are no this column has long been advocating. We desperately

would implement five unpopular but necessary policies. Polk. When he ran in 1845, Polk said that if elected he free lunches. We need men like former U.S. President James

isn't him. We're stuck with credulous voters who really become an enemy, not a friend. pals in Ottawa. If you fish for cod, live in Quebec or attend feminist jump-ups you probably do get something believe they're getting something for nothing from their unpopular in the process, and then stepped down. eering would not sway him from his path. Polk accom-plished everything he had planned, becoming quite for nothing. But for the unhappy rest of us who do not He refused to consider a second term so that election-Canada needs a James K. Polk. But Brian Mulroney political parties have