



Ottawa, le 4 mars 2006



***Working with the new  
Conservative Government  
to ensure that culture is on  
the National agenda***

*Présentation par Alain Gourd*

**À la Conférence Nationale  
de la Conférence canadienne des Arts**





1

## Vox Populi, Vox Dei

- "Tout change..., tout est dans un flux continu" (Rousseau).
- Le milieu des arts a continuellement su s'adapter aux changements technologiques, sociétaux et gouvernementaux.
- Avantageux pour le milieu culturel, tant face au nouveau gouvernement qu'au public, d'accepter ostensiblement un changement de gouvernement normal dans une société démocratique, même s'il peut soulever des inquiétudes.
- Par ailleurs, l'arrivée d'un gouvernement conservateur est-elle automatiquement négative pour le milieu culturel?

*\* Ce n'est pas nécessairement évident*





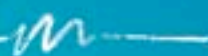
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# Previous Conservative Governments Initiatives

- **Bennet Government**
  - \* *Establishment of CBC / Radio Canada (1932)*
- **Diefenbaker Government**
  - \* *Introduction of bilingualism in the House of Commons.*
- **Clark Government**
  - \* *Appointment of John Meisel as Chair of the CRTC (1980)*
- **Mulroney Government**
  - \* *Initial period of cuts to Federal Institutions*







3

## Previous Conservative Governments Initiatives (cont'd)

- **Mulroney Government (cont'd)**
  - \* *However, subsequently:*
    - ✓ Writers Fund
    - ✓ Canadian Artist and Producers Professional Relations Tribunal
    - ✓ Film Fund
    - ✓ Music and Radio Fund (Factor / CTL:/ Music action)
    - ✓ Archives, Broadcasting, Copyright, Museum etc, legislations and policies
    - ✓ Free Trade Agreement Cultural Exemption, etc.





**4**

## **Previous Conservative Governments Initiatives (cont'd)**

- **Campbell Government**
  - \* *Creation to the Canadian Heritage Department*
- **But what about this new Conservative government?**







# 5

## Priorities of the Harper Government

Over the coming months, the Harper Government will be focused on five key priorities:

- "Cleaning up government by enacting and enforcing the Federal Accountability Act;
- Lower taxes for working Canadians; starting by reducing the GST;
- Protecting Canadian families and communities by strengthening the justice system;
- Supporting parents' child care choices through direct assistance and by creating more daycare spaces;
- Delivering the health care Canadians need, when they need it, by addressing the fiscal imbalance and establishing a patient wait times guarantee with the provinces"



6

## Priorities of the Harper Government (cont'd)

Because of its minority situation and of its determination to deliver, it seems this government will stick to its five priorities;

- Culture is not part of these priorities
- But did the new Conservative government say anything about culture?







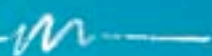
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## Conservative Party Statements about Culture

### The party platform

- “Establish a Francophone Secretariat within the Department of Canadian Heritage, Language is an integral part of culture and heritage and should form the basis of decision making for the Francophone cultural and artistic community.
- Ensure that CBC and Radio-Canada continue to perform their vital role as national public service broadcasters.
- Preserve the role for the National Film Board, the Canada Council, and other federal arts and culture agencies.
- Give Canadians increased access to international and foreign-language television and radio programming.”





8

## **Conservative Party Statements about Culture (cont'd)**

**Other documents including PM and Minister of Canadian  
Heritage Speeches**

- **Broadcasting**
  - ✓ More regulatory flexibility to private broadcasters to compete by responding primarily to the audience.
  - ✓ CRTC less involved in content regulation; greater role to the marketplace.





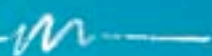
9

## Conservative Party Statements about Culture (cont'd)

- **Arts and Culture**
  - ✓ Support long term growth
  - ✓ But not necessarily always subsidies, particularly short term, and when it is, mostly when valued by Canadians;
  - ✓ Support spaces for CanCon on screens, television, galleries and stages
  - ✓ Focus on new technologies (Internet, I-Pods, etc.) and the choices they foster
  - ✓ Encourage private sector investment in Arts;
  - ✓ Review of Copyright Act;







**10**

## **Conservative Party Statements about Culture (cont'd)**

**Some of these changes may be difficult to implement  
in a minority government environment;**

**Therefore, the Arts community approach has to be  
very targeted:**

- **Explain again and again the importance  
of arts and culture**
- **In the short term, focus on financial issues**





**11**

## **Explain again the Importance of Arts and Culture**

**Every interest group will make a similar presentation**

**Key ministers knowledge will be uneven**

- **Very large portfolios**

**Societal and identity dimensions**

- **But also job creation, economic impact, etc.**

**Comprehensive and factual presentations**

- **Overview and basic datas**
- **Top key issues**
- **Both long and short term**





12

## **In the Short Term Focus on Financial Issues**

This is a minority government which has to manage the political environment carefully

Therefore, outside their five priorities and what their platform says about culture (and even there), it may be difficult to expect major new legislations, policies and programs in an area which is not at entry at the top of the agenda

A minority government with still a budgetary surplus may be more open to discuss financial issues

There is a \$ 22.5 B budget review

However, the *Arts milieu* approaches have to adjust to the realities, sensitivities and priorities of the new government





13

## Considerations Relative to Arts and Culture Financial Issues

Accountability, transparency and financial reporting

- *Appointment of the new Clerk*

Good business plans with realistic costs covering operations as well as infrastructure

Regional cultural development

Mid and longer term horizon

Équilibre entre les cultures anglophone et francophone







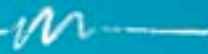
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## Considerations Relative to Arts and Culture Financial Issues (cont'd)

Understanding the process

**Example: \$300 M over 3 years to the Canada Council**

- Briefing of the new minister
- Operations Committee
- Social Development Committee
- Cabinet ratification
- Budget



**15**

## **Considerations Relative to Arts and Culture Financial Issues (cont'd)**

**Monitor carefully key indicators and intervene judiciously**

- April 4 Speech from the Throne
- Budget

**Importance of the public service**

- Supports more rigorous management
- Appropriate preparatory work

**However, the political process will be paramount**







**16**

## **The Political Matrix**

### **Ministers**

- Canadian Heritage Minister Bev Oda is an asset
- Other important Heritage Canada ministers
  - ✓ **Ministre de la Francophonie et des langues officielles (et de la coopération internationale): Josée Verner**
  - ✓ **Minister for the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics (and of International Trade and the Pacific Gateway): David Emerson**





**17**

## **The Political Matrix (cont'd)**

### **Other critical Ministers**

- **Ministre des transports, de l'infrastructure et des collectivités (avec responsabilité politique pour le Québec) : Lawrence Cannon**
- **Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunity Agency: Peter MacKay**
- **Minister of Finance (and politically responsible for Ontario): Jim Flaherty**
- **Ministre des Travaux public et Services gouvernementaux (avec responsabilité politique pour Montréal): Michael Fortier**





**18**

## **The Political Matrix (cont'd)**

### **Ministers' political staff**

- Gradually appointed

### **Develop new political networks**

### **Importance of opposition parties in a minority government environment**

- Particularly opposition critics







19

## Conclusion: Be Focussed

Previous Conservative governments showed support for culture

For this government, (like some previous liberal governments) culture is not at the top of the agenda

But there are considerations which may protect culture against major cuts and foster financial investments

- Désir d'aller chercher des sièges additionnels au Québec (et ailleurs) où l'appui à la culture est important
- Les surplus budgétaires sont en réduction mais toujours existants
- Un gouvernement minoritaire est sensible au point de vue des faiseurs d'opinion et des parties d'opposition



20

## **Conclusion: Be Focussed (cont'd)**

**Cependant, l'argumentaire doit être présenté maintenant**

- S'ajuster à l'importance accrue de l'imputabilité et de la transparence et aider la et les ministres de Patrimoine Canada à aider la culture
- Se concentrer sur quelques priorités nationales plutôt que présenter une longue liste de mesures diverses