

# Seriously...

## You're Surprised?

# Danny...

A few days ago, Stephen Harper and what he insists on calling "Canada's New Government" came down with a pre-re-election budget that, among other things, threw money at Quebec and Ontario in an orgy of pre-emptive vote buying, made Jim Flaherty the highest spending budget minister in Canada's history in just two budgets (after years of criticizing Liberal excess and making a campaign pledge to rein in government spending), and continued multi-million dollar subsidies for the oil sands (an already profitable industry which is among the nation's biggest polluters), despite Harper's recent green 'conversion'.

Oh, and he broke a promise.

After years of promising to, "... remove non-renewable resources from the equalization formula." After putting that promise in letters, in his own party's campaign platform literature, in Hansard, and in a pamphlet mailed to the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador. AND after saying that, "There is no greater fraud than a promise not kept," he broke that promise.

And Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams seemed surprised. So much so that he took out an ad in newspapers across the country and bluntly reminded Harper and the nation of that promise and his failure to live up to his word.

But seriously, Danny, you can't be THAT surprised. After all this is a party that owes its very existence to Peter McKay's broken (and signed) promise. A party led by a man who last year broke a 'solemn' campaign promise not to tax Income Trusts. Who said during the last election campaign, "we should get back 100% of duties since we have won all softwood victories," and then handed 1 billion dollars of those duties over to George Bush and US lumber companies. 'Open Government' ... Emerson ... Fortier ... 'nuff said?

(\* Not, "a formula," or "one of several possible formulas," but "the formula," clearly referring to the entire equalization formula subject.)

This is a man who will say whatever he needs to get into power, and will do whatever it takes to stay there. In other words, a politician. And he's certainly not the first to do this (have a look at the inaugural Citizen Fink essay for just a few examples), but if you were genuinely surprised by the fact that a politician broke a clear, unequivocal campaign promise, perhaps we should share a few other shockers with you.

- Winter in Canada is cold.
- Tongues and table fans don't mix.
- If the house is haunted and the lights are out DON'T GO IN THE BASEMENT!
- Reality Shows aren't.
- Your safety is NOT the primary concern of ANY airline.
- And when a recording is telling you "Your call is important to us," it isn't.

Of course, while no doubt disappointed and outraged, we doubt that you were really THAT shocked by Harper saying one thing and doing another. Certainly we weren't, and the regularity of such behaviour amongst our "Honourable Members" is exactly why the Undecided Party represents more voters than any other political organization in Canada. (And why in the case of so many MPs, "Honourable Members" qualifies as an oxymoron.) But we applaud you for calling a spade a spade and a fraud a fraud. Since integrity clearly isn't a factor in making politicians keep their promises, perhaps the threat of public embarrassment might make them just a bit more likely to stick to their word in the future.

Hey, it couldn't hurt, right?

Meanwhile, don't forget to keep YOUR promises, Danny.



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