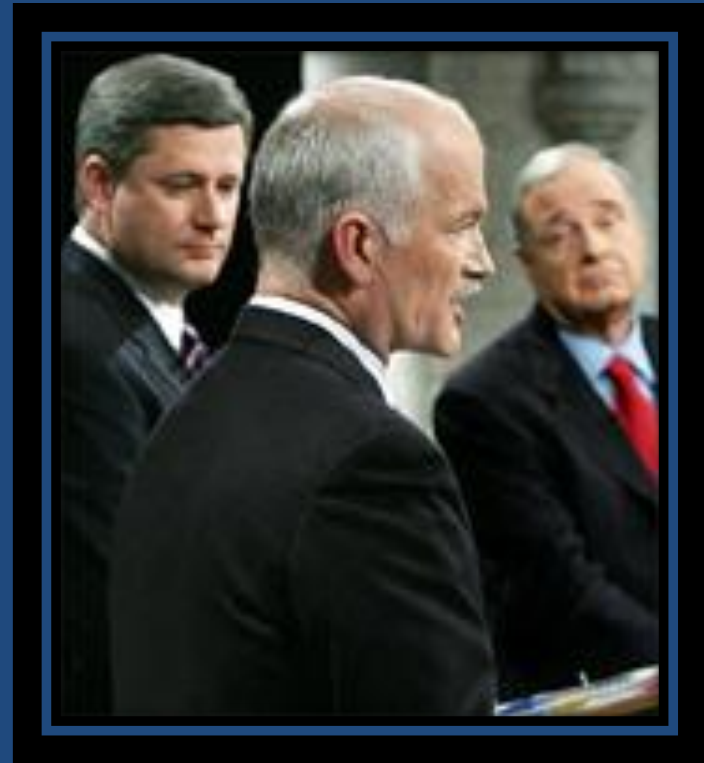


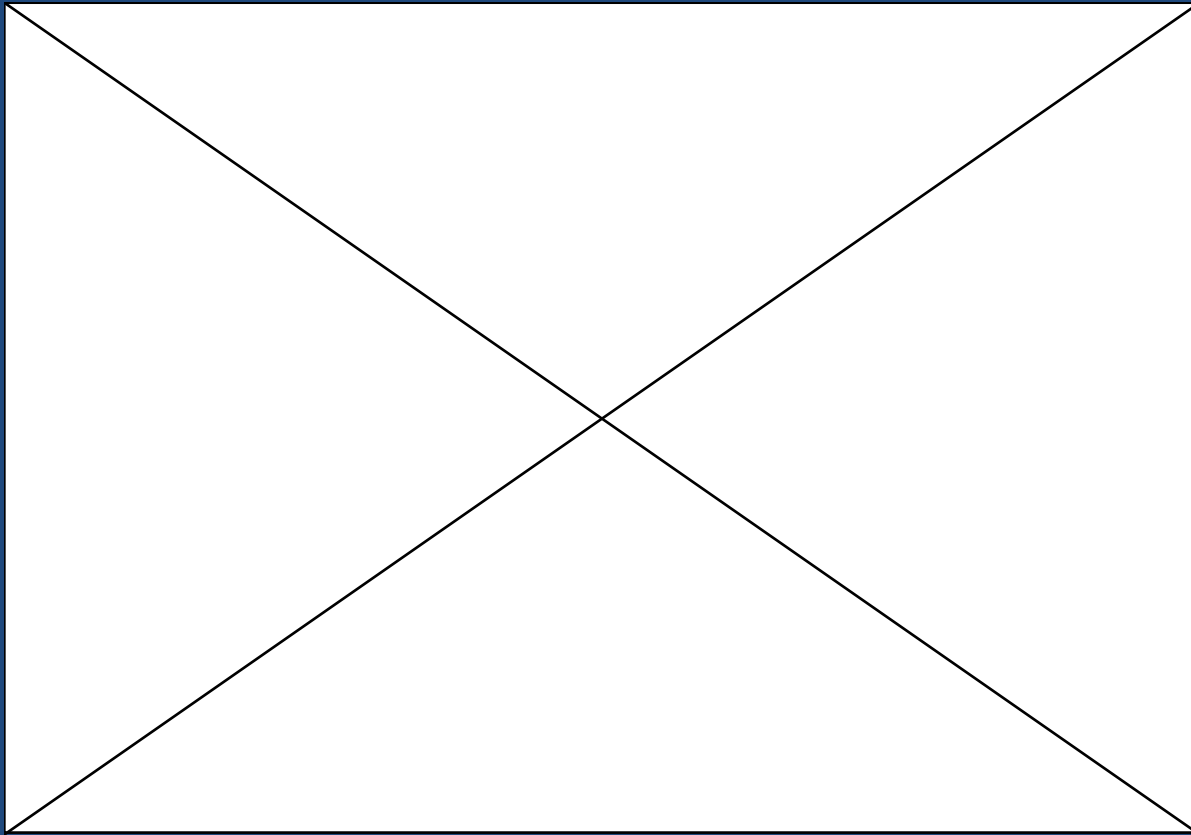
# The Power of the Vote

To ensure that politicians do represent their constituents, we have elections. All citizens 18 years of age or older are asked to vote for their representatives. Voters choose from a list of candidates.



*Stephen Harper, Jack Layton, Paul Martin; Candidates for Prime Minister in the last Federal Election*

Y Vote NB



The candidate who gets the most votes wins a “seat” in the government where he/she is expected to represent the interests of the people who elected them.



*Bernard Lord, Shawn Graham and Allison Brewer ; Liberal, Conservative and NDP leaders in the last Provincial Election.*

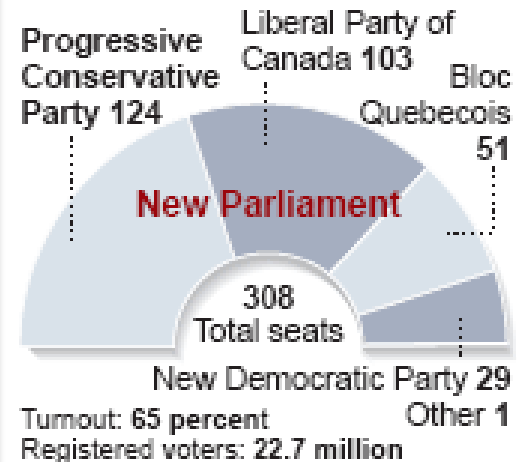
If they fail in this responsibility, they could be defeated in the next election.



In Canada, federal and provincial elections must be called no later than five years after the previous election.

## Conservatives win in Canada

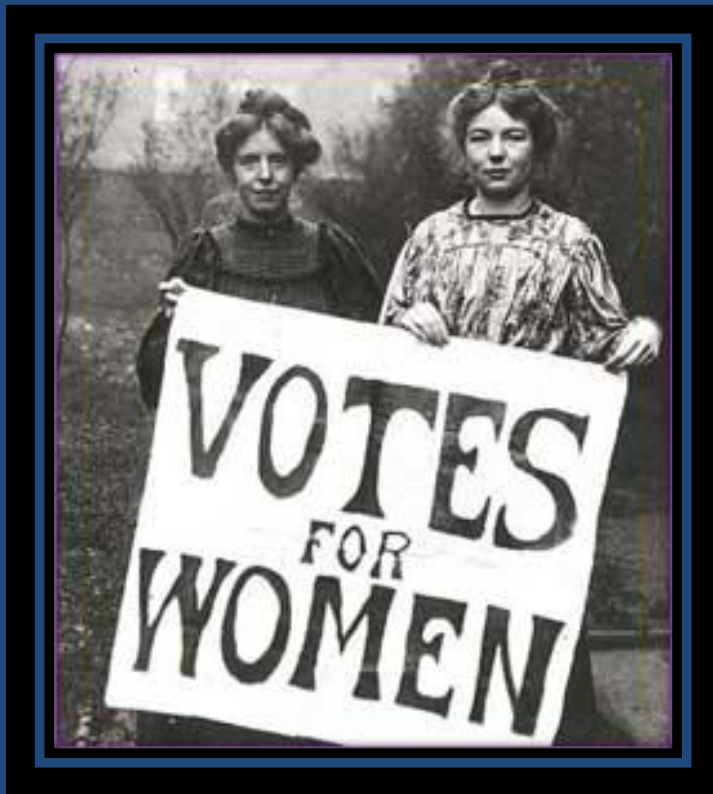
Stephen Harper's Conservative Party won national elections Monday, ending 13 years of Liberal rule. The outcome is expected to push Canada rightward on social and economic issues and bolster ties with the United States.



SOURCE: AP reports

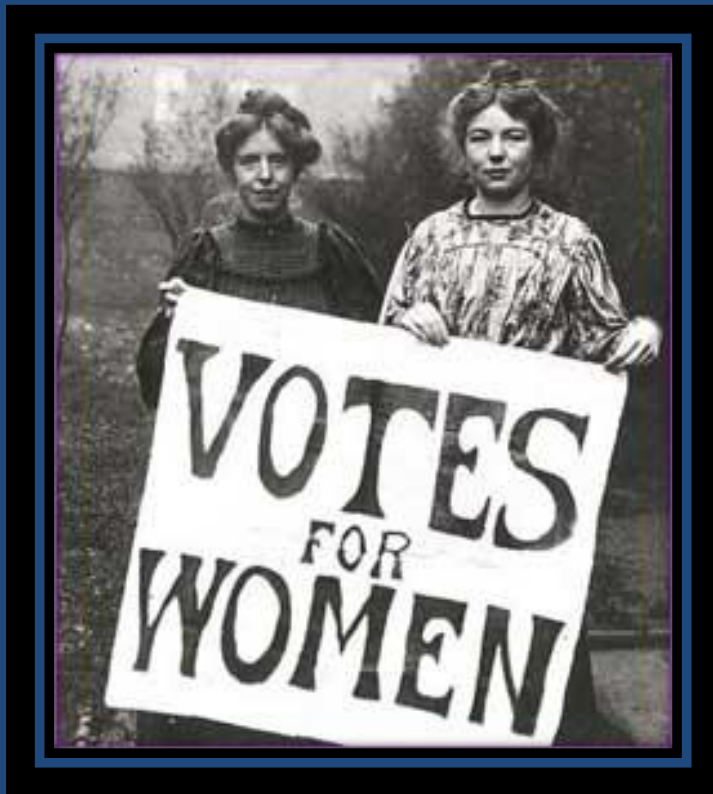
AP

# Did you know...?



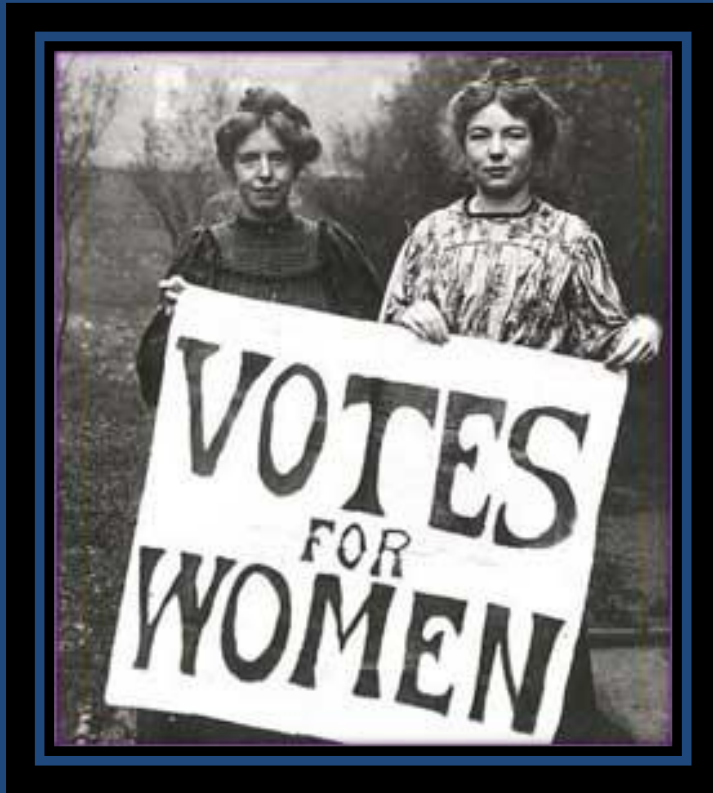
Canadians today vote by secret ballot, but this type of voting wasn't used until 1874.

# Did you know...?



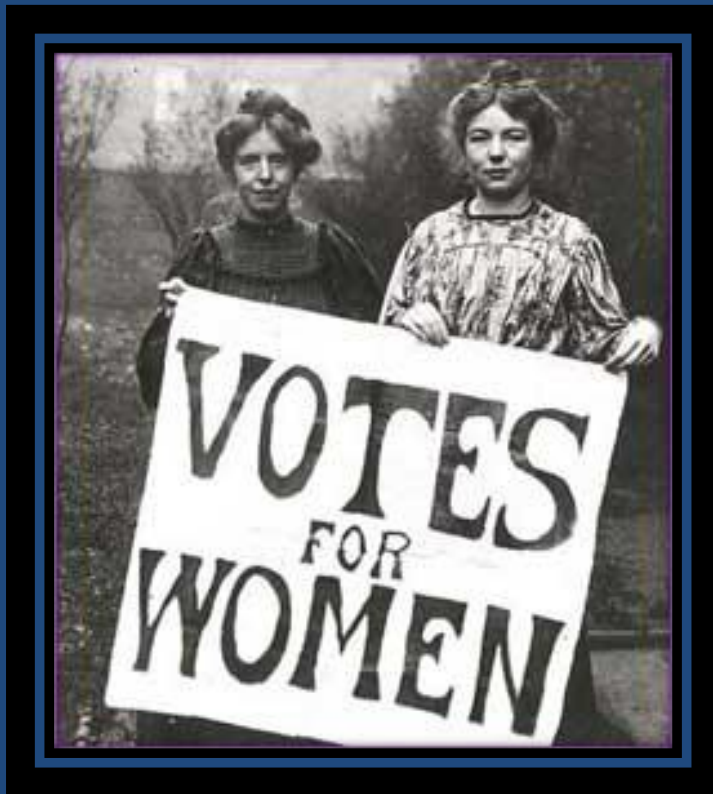
In the first Canadian election, only men who owned property and were 21 years of age or older could vote.

# Did you know...?



Each voter had to declare his vote in public and many were pressured to vote a certain way - even at the voting station!

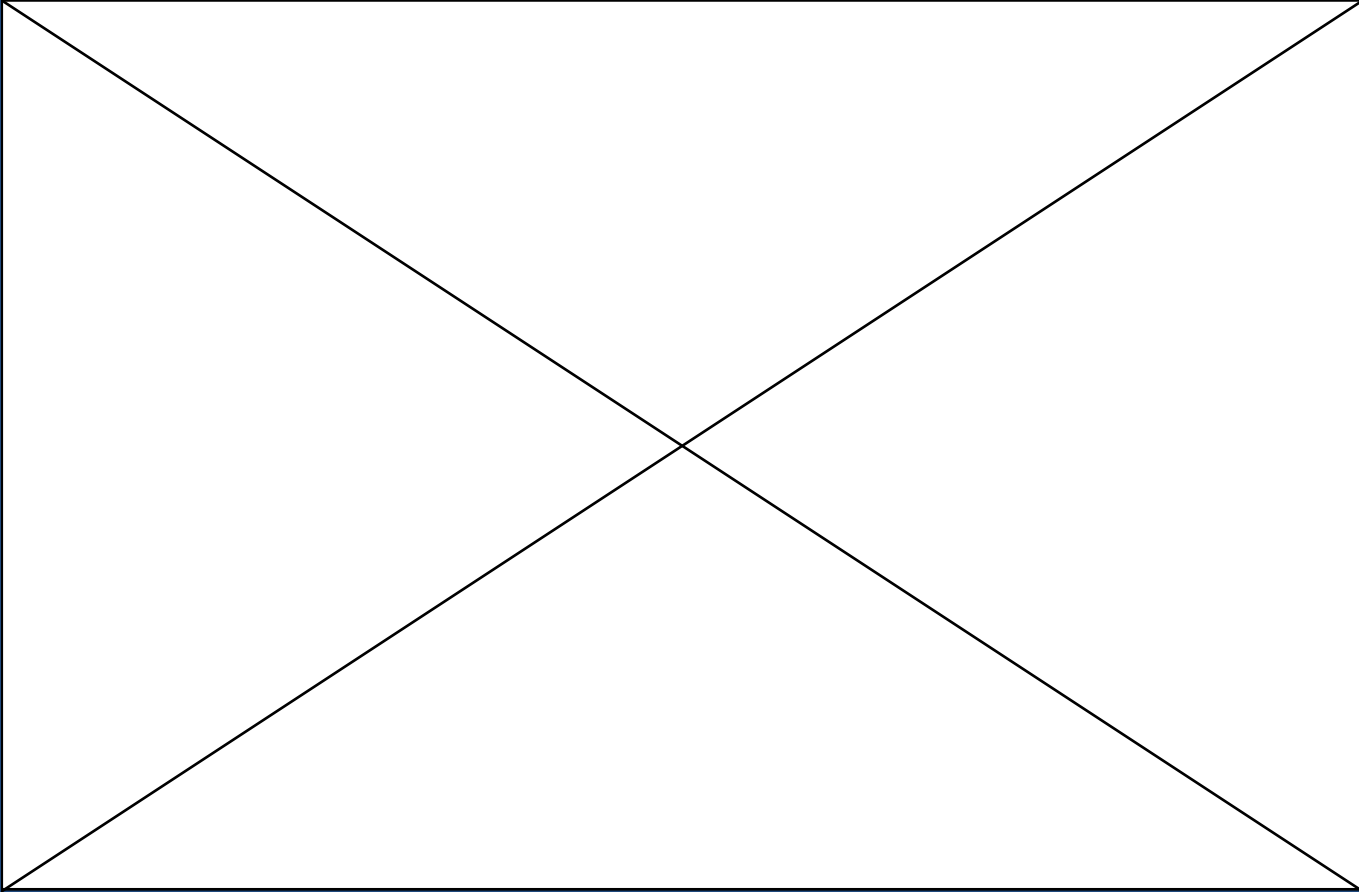
# Did you know...?



Women in Canada were not allowed to vote until 1920!



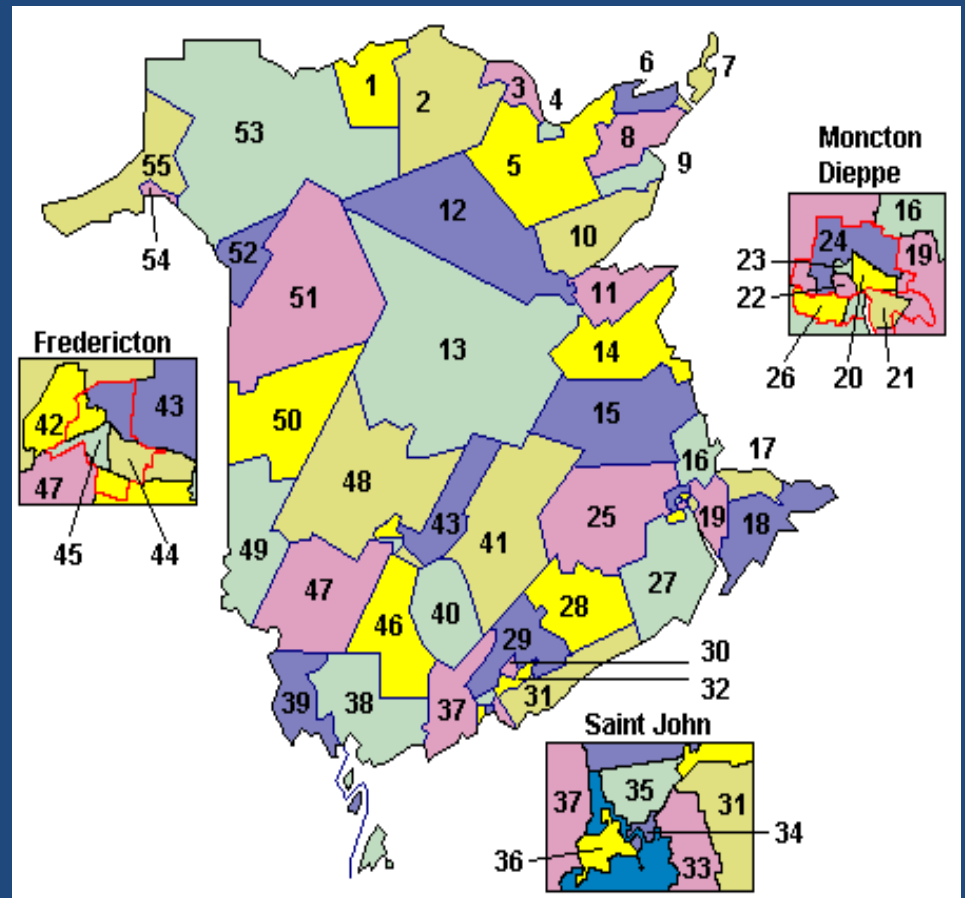
# Mr. Bean Votes



# Representative Democracy

The politicians who work at all three levels of government represent the people who elected them to their positions.

Canada (and each province) is divided into political areas called ridings or constituencies.



The voters in each riding elect one person to represent them at each of the various levels of government.

These people make decisions in government based upon the wishes and needs of their constituents (the people who live in their riding).

# The Party System

We can get some idea of what a candidate supports by considering the party to which they belong.

A political party is a group formed by individuals who have similar views on public issues.



In the Atlantic region, the Liberals, Conservatives, and the New Democrats have been the most influential.



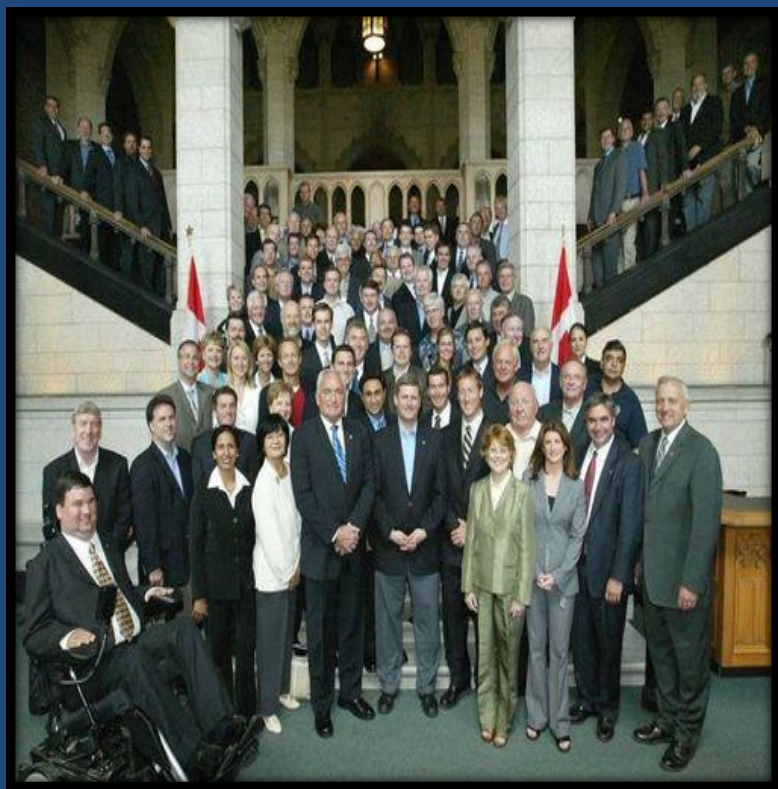
In May of 2008 the Green Party was formally established in New Brunswick.



The party with the most successful candidates (seats) forms the government. The other parties make up the opposition.



Photo: Library of Parliament / Roy Grogan



All members vote on new proposals, which are called bills. Once passed, bills are called acts and become law.

The MP's of each party meet regularly as a group, or caucus.

*Conservative Party of Canada Caucus*