





Any one with \$1000 and 100 signatures can file nomination papers. He or she does not even have to be a member of a political party. When I first ran I took out my first Progressive Conservative membership card and my supporters raised \$200 and collected the 25 signatures necessary then.

After I won the nomination in Vancouver Centre, one of my opponents ran for another party in another riding and won the seat! He was an honorable MP who served his constituents well and no one ever mentioned his change of party affiliation!

Nor is experience necessary. The Progressive Conservative handbook for candidates posed the question: "Why do you want to run?" My answer: "Because the Tories tell me that I am an economic Joan of Arc who can help to save our country." Another question: "What experience do you have?" My answer: "None, either in politics or being burned at the stake!"

Unlike other countries, the candidate doesn't need to be rich. The most successful candidate in a

And they have a lot of fun. Once as we careened over Burrard Street bridge on the back of a flat deck truck, bands playing, blue balloons bouncing, I asked a volunteer: “ How did we ever get a license to do this?” She answered: “What license?” Many of those volunteers are here today.

Once you win you represent all your constituents, whether they voted for you or not. As their MP you learn the issues which trouble them. You share their joy and their pain. The heart of the riding is your constituency office which is open to all. The constituency assistant seeks aid for desperate people and holds the hand of the person under deportation order while he waits for officials to take him to the airport. My constituency assistant Marjorie Lewis is here today.

In Ottawa you are an Honorable Member, a law-maker. Our democracy is based on the rule of law. Under our system, it is the role of the government party to propose legislation, and the role of Her Majesty’s Loyal Opposition to oppose those laws they wish to change. That tension produces the laws that govern us, at least until the next election!

Politics is a collaborative profession. Cabinet ministers must achieve consensus on government policies, since if they can’t support them they must resign from Cabinet. That consensus, achieved despite regional, linguistic and ethnic differences binds us together as a nation.

MPs can make a difference through committee work and private members’ bills. The NDP party has yet to form a federal government, but BC NDP MPs Dawn Black and Margaret Mitchell initiated legislation that helps protect the security of women today. NDP MP Lynn McDonald was allergic to the cigarette smoke that choked the NDP caucus room. The result is the ban on smoking in federal buildings.

Senators can make a difference by advancing issues that appear marginal to society. Two BC aboriginal women, Wendy Lockhart Lundberg and her aunt Mazie Baker, brought to Senators the astounding injustice that under existing aboriginal rights, aboriginal women do not have the protection of our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. After years of Senate hearings and committee reports, Canadian courts have ordered Parliament to correct this injustice. (Mazie’s birthday today)

And the politicians whom your votes elect contribute to society as well as politics. The indomitable Flora MacDonald, Canada's first female minister of External Affairs, now in her 80's, can be found in Afghanistan, Tibet, Africa, helping local communities. Our Conservative colleague Mary Collins, former Minister of Health, helped reform health care systems in Russia, serving as head of the World Health Organization (WHO) for Russia before returning to Canada three years ago. The late NDP MP Pauline Jewett served as president of this great university. These are not patronage positions!

My critics will point out that my examples are all women. Men can and do speak for themselves. Women still tend to downplay their achievements. I am grateful to Simon Fraser University for