



The Right Fight: Bernard Lord and the Conservative Dilemma

Jacques Poitras

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In *The Right Fight: Bernard Lord and the Conservative Dilemma*, CBC reporter Jacques Poitras provides a journalist's account of how Bernard Lord rose to the top in provincial politics and why his path could lead to Ottawa. The clean sweep of Frank McKenna's Liberals in 1987 shook the foundations of the New Brunswick Progressive Conservative Party, but election night 1991 utterly shattered the Tory dream. As expected, the Liberals won a second majority, but the fervently anti-bilingualism Confederation of Regions (COR) Party formed the official Opposition. For the first time in a hundred years, the Conservatives were out in the cold, victims of vote-splitting on the right. In *The Right Fight*, Jacques Poitras reveals that, although drug and other scandals plagued Richard Hatfield's final years as premier, equally fatal was Hatfield's insistence on English-French equality within his party. It ruptured the already uneasy coalition he'd built and sent old-style Tories flocking into COR's arms. It took the unexpected arrival of Bernard Lord, young and untried, to lead a dramatic reversal in the party's fortunes. Luring COR members back into the Conservative fold while maintaining the Red Tory base so carefully cultivated by Hatfield, Lord reunited the party and won back-to-back majority governments. Because of his success, Bernard Lord was vigorously and publicly courted as a potential leader of the new federal Conservative Party by backroom movers and shakers. In this revealing look at the 25-year struggle over language in New Brunswick, Jacques Poitras shows where Bernard Lord comes from and what challenges remain before him.

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