

# Fairness: A Core Value Explored

Leo Oja, March 8, 2024

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Fairness is a big deal for the People's Party of Canada (PPC), and it's something we should all think about more. So, let's start with some ideas from a famous thinker, John Rawls, to help us see fairness in a new light.

Rawls gave us two big questions to chew on when thinking about a fair society. Imagine these questions like a seesaw: on one side, you have our rights and freedoms, and on the other, the need to help people who've had a rough deal in life. Finding the right balance is tricky but super important.

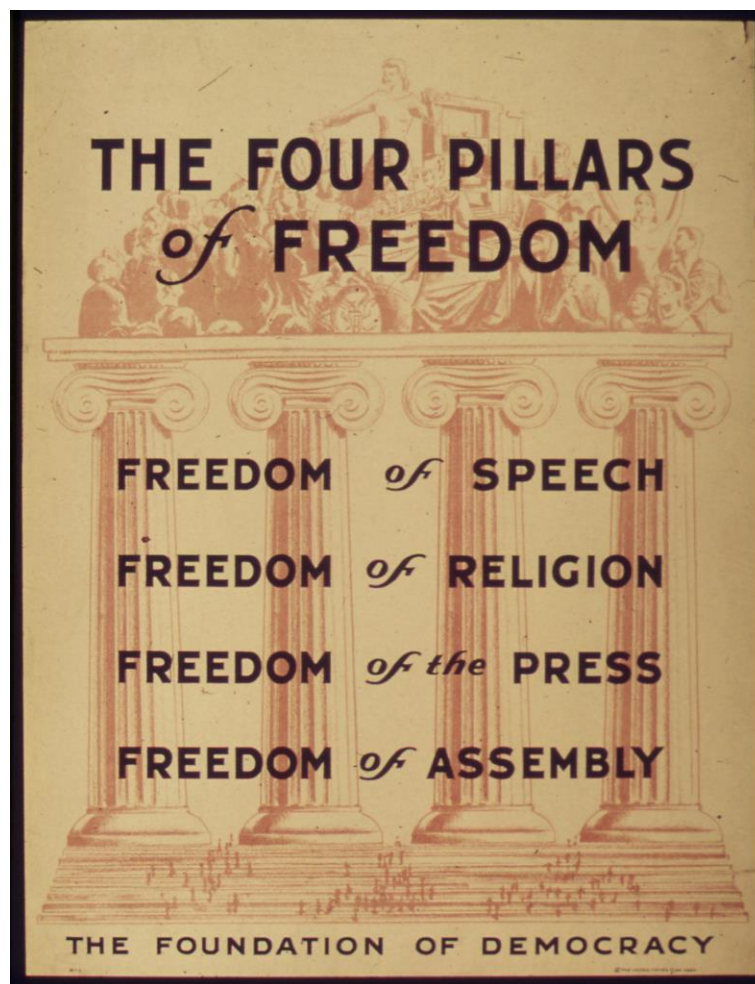
*Question 1: Is it fair to say we live in a just society if we don't all enjoy the same basic freedoms?* Consider being able to say what you think without getting into trouble or choosing to follow any religion (or not) without someone else giving you a hard time. These freedoms let us live our best lives and are something everyone should have.

Freedom of speech isn't just about saying what you want; it's the very pulse of a healthy democracy. Imagine a Canada where every voice, no matter how soft, can be heard loud and clear. This liberty allows us to express our deepest thoughts, challenge prevailing norms, and innovate without fear. It's like having an open stage where everyone gets a mic — a place where

debates, discussions, and dreams don't just live in our heads but are shared openly, enriching our collective understanding.

In the tapestry of Canadian society, freedom of religion is a vibrant thread. It ensures that whether you light candles on a Friday night, bow your head in prayer five times a day, or find peace in nature, your right to believe (or not) is protected. This freedom is about more than tolerance; it's about celebrating the diverse beliefs that coexist in our country, providing a space where all can feel valued and respected for their spiritual paths.

The right to assemble brings Canadians from all walks of life together, be it in protest, celebration, or mourning. This right ensures that whether we stand in solidarity or seek change, our collective presence is recognized and respected. It's the embodiment of democracy in action, allowing us to express our communal values, concerns, and aspirations in the public square. Through this, we not only celebrate our diversity but unite in our common goals for a fairer society.



These freedoms are the pillars upon which our society stands, ensuring that each individual can lead a life of dignity, express their identity, and contribute to the fabric of our nation. The PPC upholds these principles, advocating for a society where government respects and protects these fundamental liberties, fostering an environment where every Canadian can thrive.

*Question 2: Can we claim our society is just if some people are stuck in poverty through no fault of their own?* This question plunges us into the complex world of social justice, asking how we can stand by a claim of fairness when some members of our community face poverty through no fault of their own. The visibility of poverty in places like Thunder Bay, with the emergence of "tent city" settlements, starkly illustrates that not everyone is benefiting equally from our society's resources. This issue forces us to confront the uncomfortable truth that, despite our advancements, we're failing to provide a safety net for all.

The essence of this question lies in recognizing the role of luck – or the lack of it – in our lives. It's a humbling reminder that anyone's fortunes can change rapidly, pushing the notion of fairness beyond abstract ideals into the realm of tangible actions. How do we ensure that those who have stumbled, not through personal failings but due to the unpredictability of life, find the support they need? This question doesn't just challenge our policies; it challenges our empathy and our willingness to act on behalf of those in need.

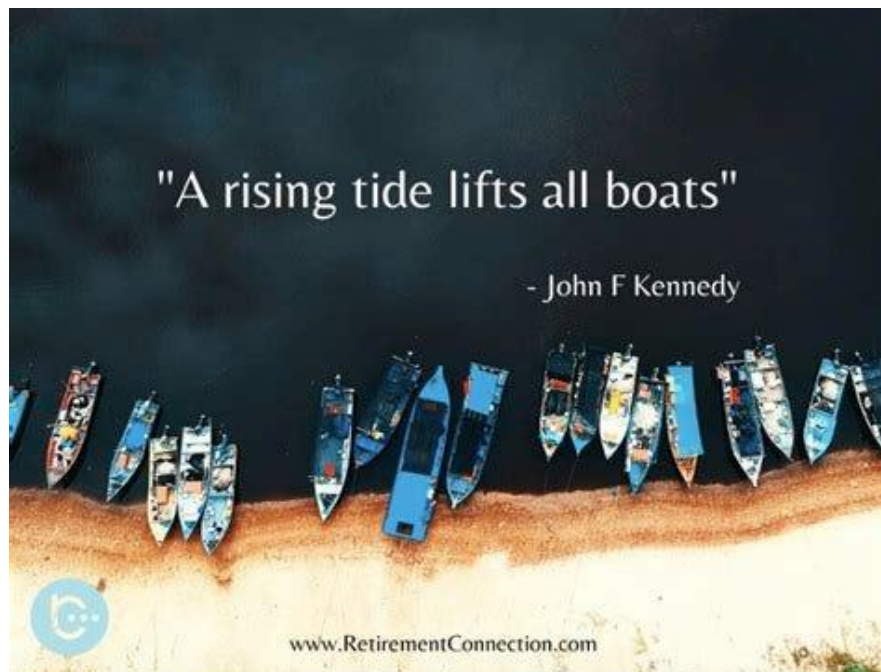
Addressing this concern requires us to look beyond simple solutions, understanding that poverty is a multifaceted issue that demands comprehensive strategies. It's about creating pathways that lead out of poverty, ensuring access to essential services, and fostering a community where no one is left to fend for themselves in the shadows of prosperity. This discussion isn't merely academic; it's a call to examine the values we cherish and how they translate into the realities of our social fabric.



The PPC proposes that a thriving economy is the bedrock of a fair society. By advocating for a reduction in taxes and a simplification of regulations, the party believes it can unleash the potential of entrepreneurs and businesses large and small. This isn't about benefiting the few; it's about setting the stage for widespread economic growth that touches every Canadian. The idea is that when businesses flourish, they create more jobs, increase wages, and generate opportunities for everyone to climb the economic ladder. It's a vision where success in the marketplace translates to more people finding meaningful work and fewer individuals facing the despair of poverty.

The phrase, "A Hand Up, Not a Handout" might genuinely apply here. The PPC's philosophy centers on empowerment rather than dependency. This means reevaluating social welfare programs to ensure they provide a bridge to self-sufficiency rather than a permanent crutch. The party argues for targeted support that addresses the root causes of poverty, such as lack of access to education, skills training, and job opportunities. By investing in programs that equip people with the tools to succeed in the workforce, the PPC believes we can help individuals build a better future for themselves and their families, fostering a sense of dignity and personal achievement.

If there are tax dollars being spent, there needs to be a responsible approach to its collection and spending. Fiscal responsibility is a key tenet of the PPC's approach to governance. The party calls for a meticulous review of how tax dollars are spent, with a focus on eliminating waste and ensuring that government programs deliver real value for money. The goal is to redirect resources to initiatives that have a tangible impact on reducing poverty and enhancing the quality of life for the most vulnerable. This includes healthcare, education, and housing – essential services that should be accessible to all Canadians, regardless of their economic status. By prioritizing efficient and effective use of public funds, the PPC aims to build a society where government intervention is judicious, targeted, and genuinely conducive to lifting people out of poverty.



The phrase "A rising tide lifts all boats" is a metaphor that captures the idea that economic improvements benefit everyone in society. Originally used to justify economic policies aimed at boosting overall growth, the underlying concept is that when the economy expands—through measures like investment, innovation, or deregulation—the benefits will trickle down to all segments of society, regardless of their initial economic status. It suggests that as the tide of prosperity rises, it doesn't just lift the largest ships but raises even the smallest boats, symbolizing that wealth created at the top will eventually spread, enhancing the well-being of everyone in the community. What could be more fair than everyone benefiting due to a strong economy? No one loses with a strong economy in Canada.

The PPC's strategy is predicated on the belief that a strong, dynamic economy coupled with targeted, efficient social support can create a society where prosperity is not just for the privileged few, but a reachable goal for all. It's an approach that seeks to balance the need for personal freedom and responsibility with the collective obligation to support those who find themselves struggling through no fault of their own. This vision of fairness is one where economic empowerment and compassionate support work hand in hand to raise the standard of living for every Canadian.

Going back to our two questions, let's make this real. Imagine if the laws changed and suddenly, you couldn't talk freely about what you believe in. Or picture yourself in a situation where, no matter how hard you tried, you just couldn't make enough to live on. Pretty unfair, right? That's why these discussions on fairness are so crucial.

While Rawls' emphasis on fairness, equality, and supporting the disadvantaged may resonate with some socialist principles, his theory is fundamentally a philosophical framework for thinking about justice in a liberal democratic context. It seeks to find a balance between personal freedom and the distribution of economic resources, allowing for a wide range of applications across different political and economic systems. Rawls himself clarified in later works, such as "[Political Liberalism](#)," that his theory of justice was meant to provide a foundation for a stable and just society under a liberal democratic government rather than advocate for a specific economic or political ideology. The PPC supports that a healthy economy helps everyone yet can happen with a minimal government.

In conclusion, this exploration of fairness through the lens of the People's Party of Canada (PPC) and the philosophical insights of John Rawls opens a vital dialogue on how we conceive and strive for a just society. The PPC emphasises economic growth and minimal government intervention, which aligns with a vision of fostering individual freedom and prosperity.

