

# Canadian Alliance debate is quick-witted and civil

By **HOWARD MOZEL**  
Special to *The Champion*

The Canadian Alliance Party itself is what will salvage this country, say its leadership contenders, not the celebrity status of whoever wins the top job.

Policies, not personalities, were front and centre at last week's Alliance debate at St. Volodymyr Cultural Centre as the five candidates for the June 24 leadership vote tackled everything from over-taxation to abortion.

Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Tony Clement was a strict moderator who kept the evening moving and enabled the quintet — Preston Manning, Stockwell Day, Dr. Keith Martin, Tom Long and John Stachow — to alternately inform and entertain the capacity crowd for more than 90 minutes.

Contrary to the national media critics who are begging the candidates to engage in a knock-down, drag-out brawl, Mr. Day promised instead to "knock out" the Chretien Liberals in the next federal election.

The June 1 debate was quick-witted and civil with the five candidates focusing on their own strengths, not their colleagues' weaknesses.

Mr. Manning said that the country needs a leader already known on the national stage and believes his seven-year "apprenticeship" in Ottawa is invaluable.

Mr. Long maintained that a



**Preston Manning**

leader should say the same things no matter where they are in Canada, not pander to individual groups. The party must be an inclusive one, he continued, and if not, the Alliance won't win and won't deserve to win.

Dr. Martin, who recently spoke in Milton, characterized himself as a "bridge builder" who can also bring people together through solution-oriented politics.

Mr. Stachow said that if individual MPs truly represent their constituents, it doesn't matter who the leader is.

Mr. Day said people have told him they expect four things from a leader: trust, respect, experience and communication with all Canadians.

The theme of inclusion was threaded all through the debate, with Mr. Long saying he's convinced there are millions more

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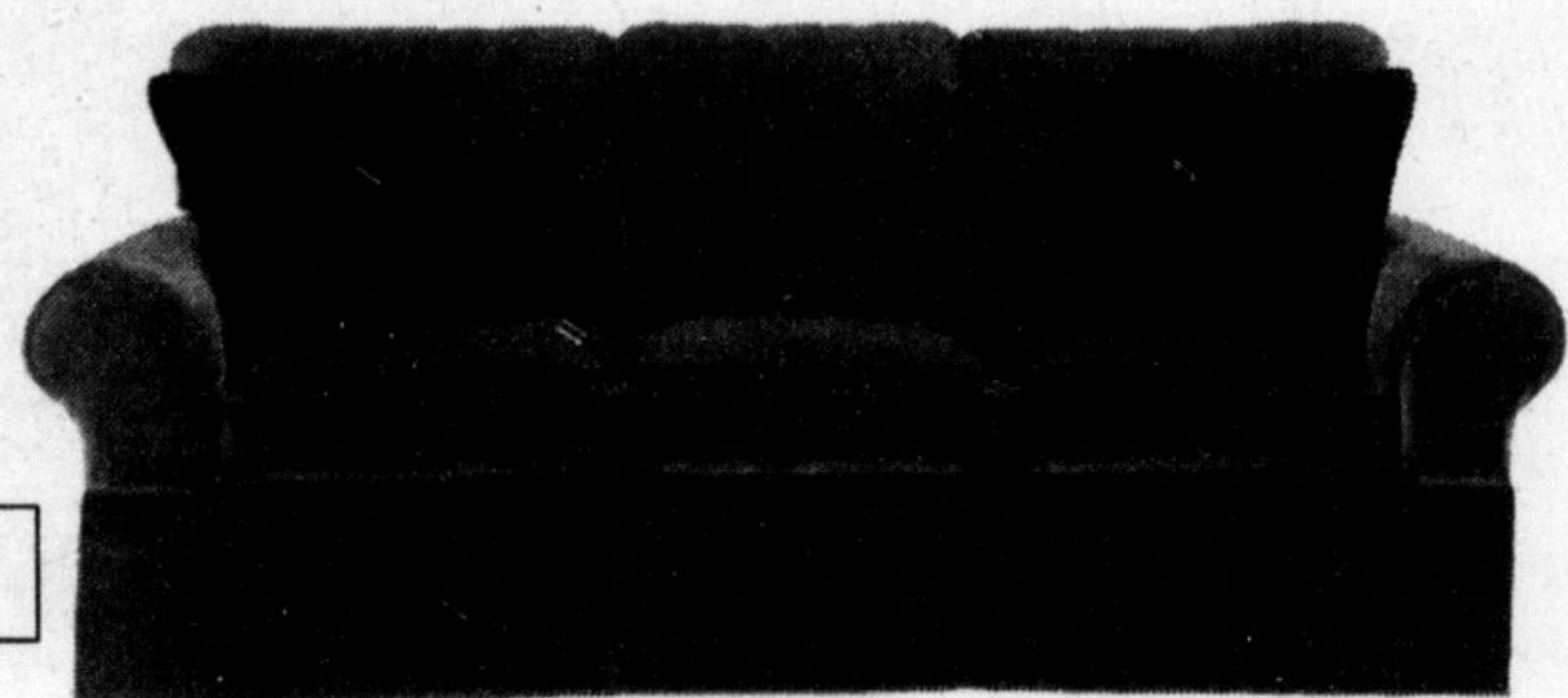
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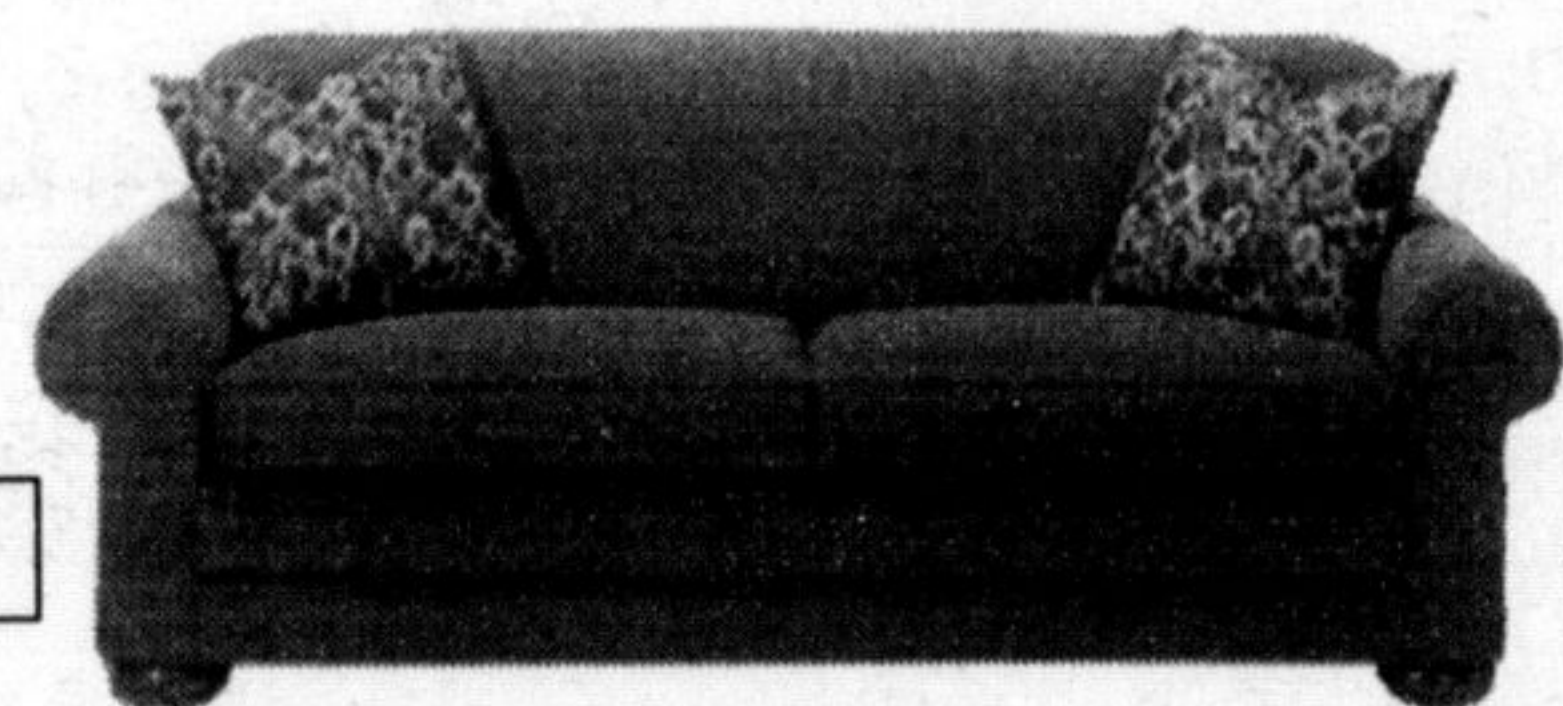
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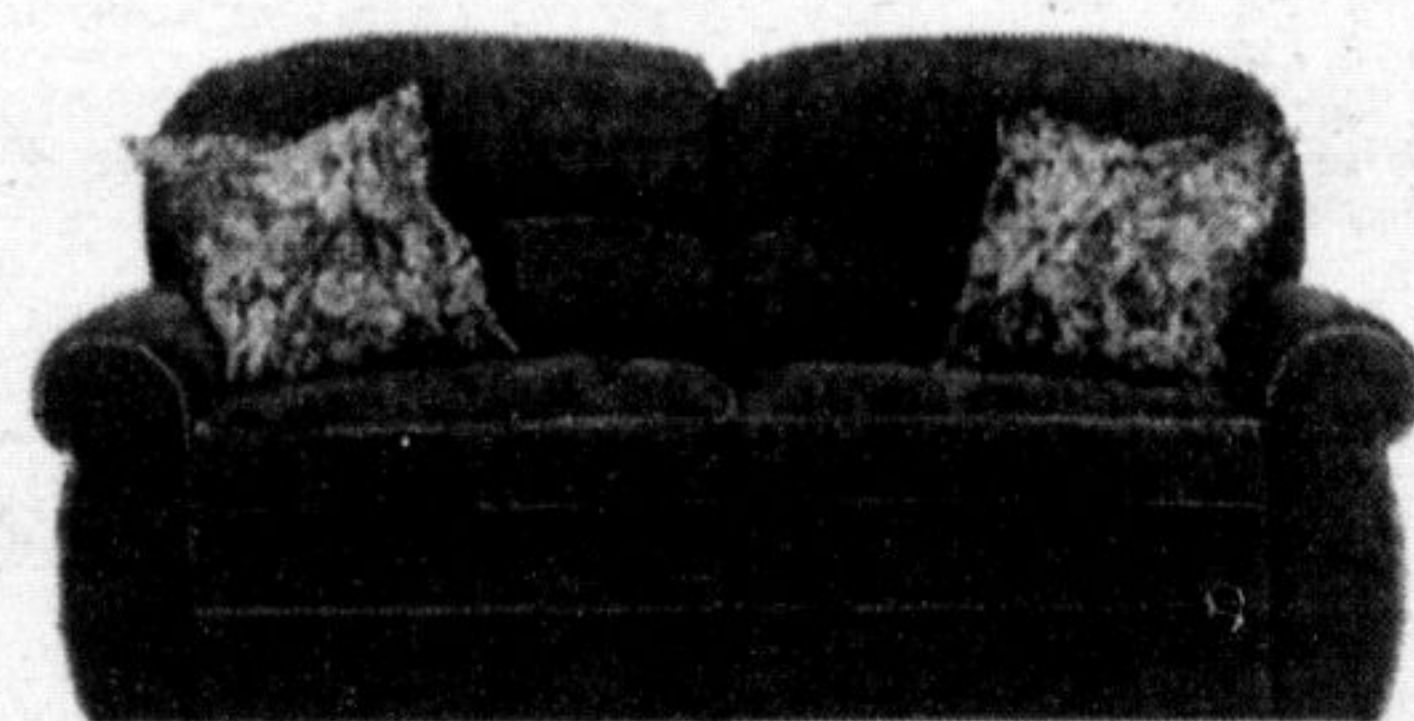
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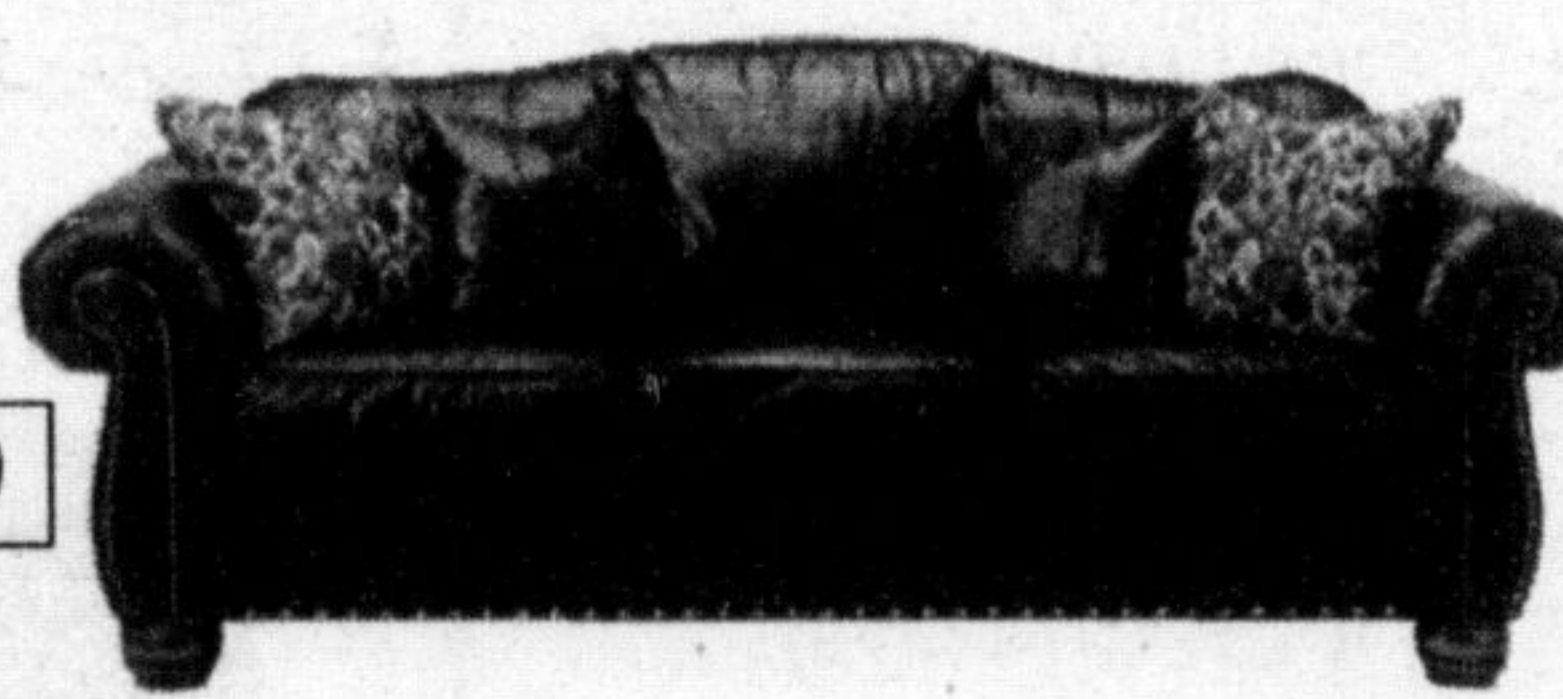
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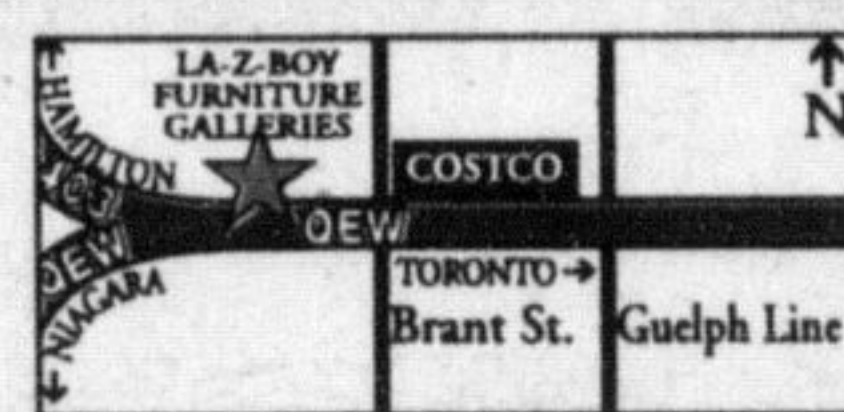


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