

# Local MP wants holidays to commemorate two of Canada's foremost leaders

**MIKE ADLER**  
Staff Reporter

Sir John A. Macdonald? Far more Canadian children would know who fast-food clown Ronald McDonald is, says Oak Ridges MP Bryon Wilfert. The local Liberal MP wants new national holidays to raise the profile of Macdonald, Canada's first prime minister, and of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, another of our greatest leaders. Wilfert, who represents Stouffville and

Markham's north end, introduced private member's bills in Parliament last week to create a Sir John A. Macdonald Day every Jan. 11, and a Sir Wilfrid Laurier Day on Nov. 20. The holidays, on the birthdays of these men, would be non-statutory, the MP said.

"I think we have to appreciate our past," Wilfert said Thursday, after his Laurier bill, C-369, was drawn from a pool of private bills for examination by committee.

Macdonald, an ingenious, hard-drinking and only occasionally crooked Conservative, led the country from 1867 to 1874, and from 1878 to 1891.

Laurier, our first French-speaking prime minister, worked to unify Canada and kept the Liberals in power from 1896 to 1911.

Knowing who Laurier and Macdonald were will provide a better understanding and grounding for young Canadians," Wilfert said.

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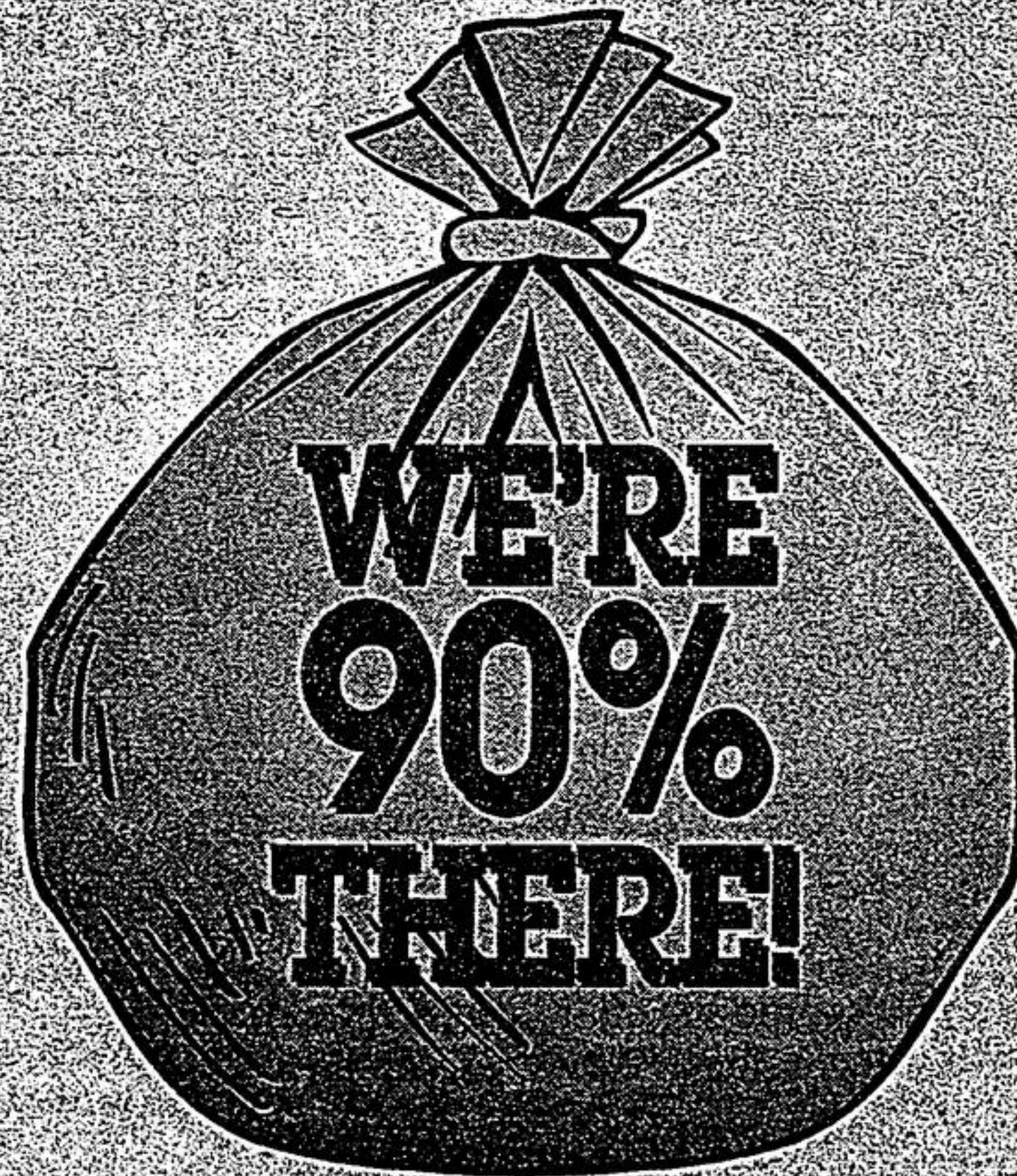
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