

# Progressive Canadian hopeful big Joe Clark fan

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The other candidates are:

- Conservative Paul Calandra (incumbent)
- Liberal Lui Temelkovski
- the NDP's Janice Hagan and;
- the Green Party's Trifon Haitas

Canada has a weak democracy focused on short-term policies, which also fails to consider younger voters.

That is why Richmond Hill's John Siciliano is running for MP of Oak Ridges-Markham. He represents the Progressive Canadian party.

"Any party that wants to gain power doesn't really think about the long-term effects of our democracy," the 26-year-old said. "They just care about scoring cheap political points but they don't focus on students and what their concerns are and that's what my focus has been since the campaign began."

Mr. Siciliano also wants to get away from what he calls a two-party system. "We have to ensure that people have all the options there so they get to vote for all the parties or any party they want," he said.

Part of Mr. Siciliano's platform consists of making education affordable for everyone.

"Families are hurting right now and whenever I've gone door to door, they've been telling me that some families are taking two to three jobs just to make ends meet and we feel that since the family debt is so high, the federal government has to do something to ensure that the burden on student debt is taken care of. Student debt total in Canada has reached \$14 billion and that is a real issue."

Another issue relating to students is transit.

"People who go to college or university are always telling me that fares are too high ... (and) this entire community, especially Oak Ridges-Markham, there should be a north-south rail route," the Seneca College graduate said.

The Progressive Canadian party's prosperity Canada program also favours federal assistance for urban transportation infrastructure, including an extended Trans Canada Highway; a national energy efficiency program, which recognizes the average family needs more than a four-seater micro car, therefore, includes a feebate program operating within vehicle size categories; lower taxes - both personal and corporate; a smaller government; healthcare; slowing down the devel-

opment of subdivisions and saving greenspace.

"We basically want to be socially progressive. So we favour like a centre-right economic policy and a centrist social policy," he said.

The part-time IT help desk worker first became interested in politics about 10 years ago when he watched a leaders debate.

Mr. Siciliano became particularly enamoured with Joe Clark, who was prime minister from 1979-80.

"That's one reason why I joined the Progressive Canadian party. The Progressive Canadian party is a successor to the old Progressive Conservative party," he said.

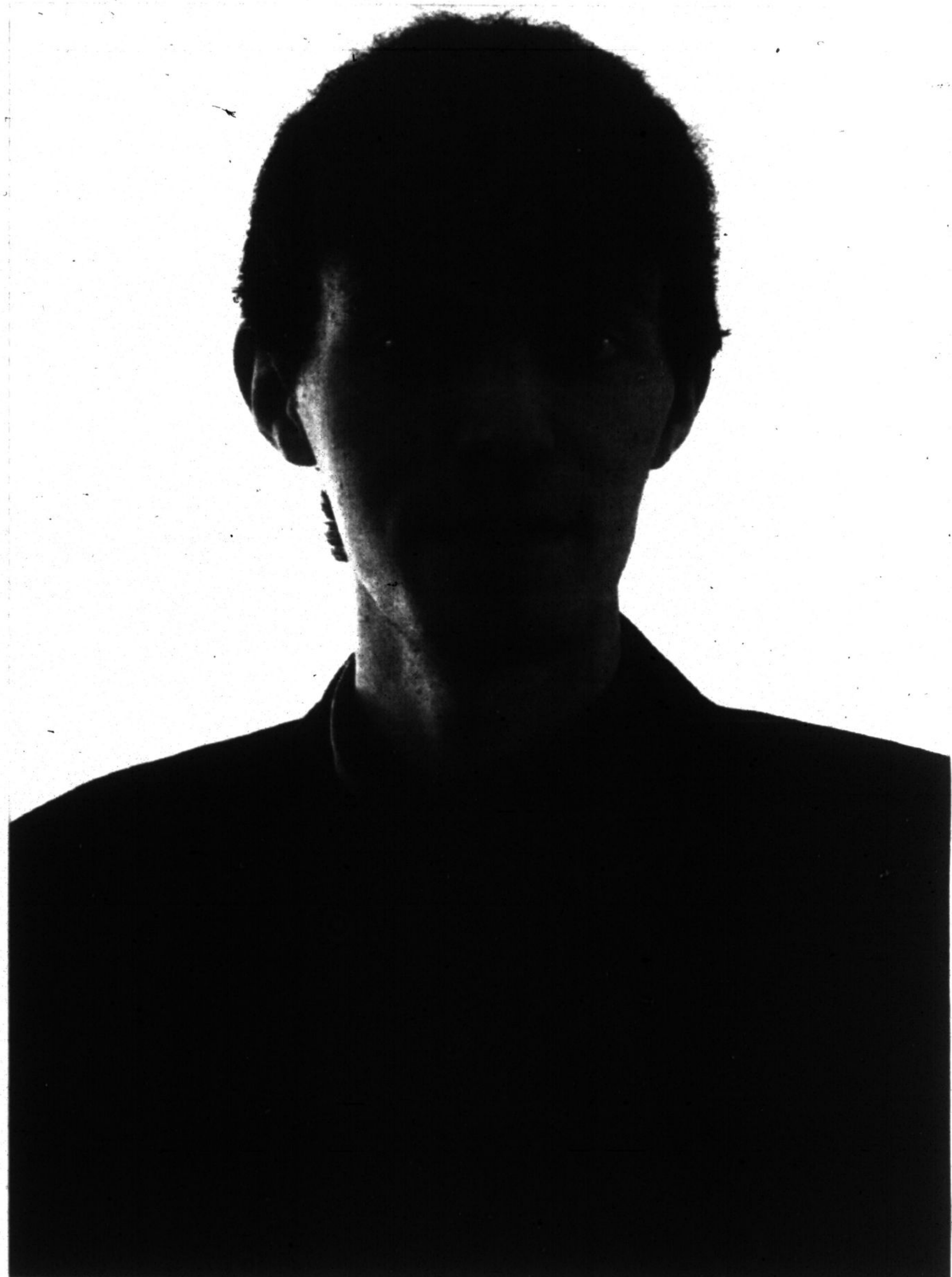
**Why Joe Clark?**  
"He was a statesman-like leader. That's the kind of thing I think Canada needs. There's really no one in federal politics actually like that," he said.

Although Mr. Siciliano is out campaigning and plans on being at next week's debates at Seneca College and Parkview Home in Stouffville, he has no illusions about his party's ability of being elected.

"We aren't really going to get in government. We're basically just going to try to get some members, obviously push the government of the day, whether it be Liberal or Conservative, to actually adopt our policies," he said.

Election day is May 2.  
Advance polls continue today and Monday from noon to 8 p.m.

For more details, go to [www.elections.ca](http://www.elections.ca)



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Richmond Hill's John Siciliano, 26, is the Progressive Canadian party candidate in Oak Ridges-Markham riding.



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