

CANADIANS USE THEIR VOTE TO CLOSE THE MAGNA CARTA LOOPHOLE

University of Ottawa, Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy, VP, Sahir Khan, was on the CBC Ontario Today show when I called up to ask about the lack of transparency in the Canadian banking system;

PFEFFER: *“Tony Crawford, why is the economy salient to you?”*

CRAWFORD: *“Well it’s more the monetary policy. I want to know how accountants claim that’s there’s transparency when there’s a different accounting system between the private and public sector.”*

KHAN: *“So, when you see the public account of the government of Canada you can be pretty confident that whether it’s a Liberal, Conservative, or NDP government that those are the books as they are stated and fairly representative of the fiscal position of government. The difference is pretty subtle and probably not material to change your opinion one way or the other.”*

PFEFFER: *“Are you decided?”*

CRAWFORD: *“I’m undecided and I’m looking for somebody who will close this loophole.”*

CBC invited politicians to Ontario Today including MP Anita Anand who I called about a Private Members Bill to close the tax loophole;

CRAWFORD: *“I’m undecided; I really have lost a lot of faith in the political system which seems to ignore people like me. And I have been in touch with Anita Anand to crack down on tax fraud that favors the rich. And I’ve written her several times to table a Private Members Bill to amend bank law as directed by the courts to address this issue, which is so financially unfair.”*

PFEFFER: *“What is your question? Go ahead.”*

CRAWFORD: *“Well my question is when will she table the Private Members Bill that I’ve asked her to debate the inequity of the financial system?”*

PFEFFER: *“Before we go to Anita, I just want to... you know there was an evaluation of the platform by the former, the institute that is run now by the former PDO, Kevin Page... and found for instance the NDP option for this might be problematic in terms of actually getting, you know... after a while the ultra rich find ways of around making sure they are not paying those taxes. And, so the NDP platform was given a lower grade for that aspect of their rev-enue line. So, I’m just wondering what your thoughts are about how to appropriately do that. Do you think the NDP has the correct way to do it, since it has been criticized?”*

CRAWFORD: *“Well I believe from a system point of view that if you had transparency, which was driven by a bank transaction control number you would be able to follow the money. And, that’s the issue that’s the problem. And that’s the problem I’ve discussed with Anita Anand on several times, and I’ve written a book for her so that she understands where I’m coming from as a person who is challenged by the banking system, which seems to favor the rich. And the tax-system, which seems to give all the tax credits, which are not reported in the budget in favor of helping the rich get the welfare from the state when it should be going to people more deserving.”*

PFEFFER: *“Okay, Anita Anand, it is an attractive part of the NDP platform, what are your thoughts for Tony, who seems to be an undecided voter.”*

ANAND: *“Well first of all, Tony, hello, I would love to come and chat with you on your doorstep as I’m chatting with a number of Oakvillians at the current time. So maybe you could send me sep-arately how I can come and visit you so we could have a longer conversation here in Oakville. But, let me just say as a minister I can’t table a Private Members Bill. But, what I can do is to work towards some of the goals that you have just emphasized in your comments. And in particular, a reelected Liberal government will raise corporate income taxes on the largest most profitable bank and insurance companies who earn more than \$1 billion per year, and introduce a temporary Canada recovery dividend that these companies would pay in recognition of the fact that they’ve re-covered faster, recovered stronger than many other industries. Furthermore we would create a minimum tax rule so that everyone who earns enough to qualify for the top bracket pays at least 15% per year that’s the tax rate paid by people earning less than \$49,000 removing their ability to artificially pay no tax through excessive use of deductions and credits. Those are the type of things that are in our platform at the current time. And so I would say in terms of our objectives that we are consistent, how we get there is the issue in terms of my bringing forward a Private Members Bill, but hope-fully... that we can have a longer conversation about my basic agreement with you, some of these points that you are raising.”*

It was not the first time MPs refused to talk to me, except by chance on live television. I had written requesting a Private Members Bill in 2005, but I didn’t know the government would do nothing until I heard my MP Bonnie Brown say as much on television in 2006;

CRAWFORD: *“If a government knew of a sleazy bank practice that tricks people into debt with tied loans based on third parties representing other peoples’ signatures to link secret debts with retirement investment plans, would a government side with the banks to allow profiteering to continue, or would a government expose it and do something to protect people from a debt crisis?”*

BROWN: *“Thank you very much... I too am aware of Tony and his case. He has brought it to my attention. I have received all the papers that he has about his case and I have taken them to the Finance Department. And I believe they ended up in the office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions. The an-swer we got back over that was that nothing could be done.”*