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Affairs of State

There are two points that the Conservatives have steadily repeated as they go about their business these days. The first is that they have been given a majority by Canadians to do what they said they would do — and that’s what they’re doing.

The second is that, come Hell or high water, they intend to establish a record of what they will have accomplished in the first 100 sitting days of their mandate.

Does this add up to a grand strategy? Will they be able to point to what they accomplished in the first hundred days when the next campaign rolls around? That obviously depend on how things turn out from canning the gun registry, ending the monopoly of the Wheat Board, sending more people to prison for longer stretches and the budget measures they are expected to present to bring it to a close.

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Fine state of affairs

It seems just when you think things can get any worse, they do. Those who thought the previous minority governments turned Parliament into a perversion of partisan posturing might want to pay a visit to Parliament Hill and watch the current one in action. Clearly a majority government was not the cure for what ails our governing institutions.

Andrew Coyne recently offered up an excellent [column](#) on our present predicament. Coyne is no stranger to the topic of parliamentary reform, however, he seems to have taken on new energy recently. Perhaps he is following his own advice offered in his review of the book by Mark Jarvis, Lori Turnbull and the late Peter Aucoin: *Democratizing the Constitution: Reforming Responsible Government*. In the closing sentence of his review, Coyne says: “I hope everyone who cares about the decline of Parliament reads it, but more, I hope it provokes them to do something about it.”

His latest treatise of the dismal state of Parliament may be one way he is trying to do his part.

What we learned from the G20 response to the Greek tragedy that was unfolding this month is that people who seem to fear democracy most are those whose fate rests in the hands of the masses. It leads one to speculate whether most of them wouldn’t prefer to do away with democracy altogether and would cheerfully do so if there was any other way to maintain legitimacy for governing.

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