

No Holds Barred: My life in Politics
by: John Crosbie (with Geoffrey Stevens)

“...When pestered by reporters in Ottawa about what programs we would cut to reduce the deficit if we were elected, I said I had no intention of telling them. “If we told you what we were going to do, you would never elect us,” I said. That statement added to my notoriety. It may not have been politically helpful, but it was entirely truthful. No political party ever says in detail what they will do about government overspending, because the truth will cost them the support of voters.

The public, I’m convinced, don’t want their politicians to tell them what they’re really going to do. They’ve heard all the talk about deficits and spending cutbacks. They know that, when the election is over, there are going to be cuts. They know that whoever is elected will have no choice. But they don’t want politicians telling them there will be cuts, making them face the issues, and forcing them to participate and to take responsibility for what will happen. They want the politicians to take all the responsibility. They want us to deceive them. Then, when we get elected and have to make cutbacks a few months later, the public can feel free to be outraged, to denounce deceitful politicians, and to claim we lied to them and cheated them.

The public doesn’t want, won’t accept, and will not support honest, forthright, and truthful politicians...”

[Pages 304-5](#)

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