

Peter Lougheed

“Taxing the resources of the province violates the spirit of Confederation.”

As persuasive in politics as he was on the football field, Premier Peter Lougheed, the “Blue-eyed Arab of Saudi Alberta” went toe-to-toe with Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau in a battle over federal/provincial resource control. Lougheed didn’t blink, and although Alberta suffered a nasty hangover from Trudeau’s National Energy Program (NEP), this province never lost jurisdiction over ownership of its resources.

Lougheed’s response to the NEP, which would tax gas and oil and give Ottawa the right to set prices, was to “turn down the taps” – reduce crude oil production to bring Ottawa to its senses. His passionate appeal to Albertans echoes to this day, “... it will be you ... who will determine whether or not you want to see more of your lives directed and controlled by Ottawa or whether you want to see a fair portion of the decision making determined by Albertans in Alberta.”

Lougheed reaffirmed Alberta’s autonomy, but also played an important role in the patriation of Canada’s Constitution and in political debates on provincial and federal jurisdictions.

His brilliant organizational ability and his charisma modelled for Albertans a new pride and character – sophisticated, urban and cultured.

A Fresh, Energetic Force in Alberta Politics

Peter Lougheed led the province through a period of tremendous growth and change.

Under his watch, Alberta’s traditional economic bedrock, agriculture and oil and gas, boomed. At the same time, their increased strengths contributed to a new diversity, and a knowledge-oriented society.



Peter Lougheed, Calgary, Alberta
Glenbow Archives NA-4476-699

Lougheed's influence was not limited to his Alberta home. He was a pivotal force in evolving provincial powers, especially relating to national and global influences. He recognized that provincial identity could add to a stronger Canada and played a key role in the patriation of Canada's Constitution. Most importantly, he continued to exert national influence with his keen sense of Canadian values – distinct from those of every other country in the world.

Lougheed's work on behalf of trade and industry, as well as his support for sports and culture are still evident today.

Born: July 26, 1928 – Died: September 13, 2012

Additional Resources

- **Alberta Champions Society**
<https://albertachampions.org/Champions/honourable-e-peter-lougheed-1928-2012/>

Our Collections

Glenbow Museum

<https://www.glenbow.org>

Glenbow Western Research Centre | Glenbow Library and Archives

<https://libguides.ucalgary.ca/glenbowlibraryandarchives>

Glenbow Library and Archives | Digital Collection

<https://digitalcollections.ucalgary.ca/asset-management/2R340826N9XM?WS=PackagePres&Flat=1>