

Ottawa Journal by David Tilson MP ? A year and a half of broken promises

The current Liberal government came to power in November 2015 following the October 2015 general election.

During the 2015 campaign, the Liberal Party of Canada made many pledges to Canadians ranging from helping the middle class to limit deficit spending. It's now been just more than a year and a half since Prime Minister Trudeau and the current Liberal government took office and what do Canadians have to show for it? Broken promise after broken promise.

One of Prime Minister Trudeau's promises to Canadians during the 2015 campaign was to limit deficit spending to less than \$10 billion per year and to balance the budget by 2019. This promise was broken, as Budget 2017 puts the deficit for 2017-18 at \$28.5 billion and shows Canada running deficits into the foreseeable future. There is no plan to return to a balanced budget and rather than reining in his out-of-control spending, the Prime Minister is set to borrow billions more (\$13.3 billion over six years). This is most concerning for Canadians, especially now, given the recent announcement that the Bank of Canada has hiked its key interest rate for the first time in seven years to 0.75 per cent from 0.5 per cent. It means Prime Minister Trudeau's reckless borrowing just became more expensive for Canadians.

During the 2015 campaign and since coming to power, the Prime Minister and his Liberal government promised to help the middle class. However, the current Liberal government has failed to deliver on this promise and has made it harder for middle class Canadian families by cutting TFSA contributions by half; ending the Transit Tax Credit; ending the Family Tax Cut; ending the Child Fitness Tax Credit; ending the Children's Arts Tax Credit; ending the Textbook Tax Credit; ending the Education Tax Credit; introducing a federal carbon tax; raising beer, wine and spirit excise tax and scheduling it to keep rising ever year; adding a new tax to Uber rides; cancelling planned small business tax reductions; cancelling EI tax reductions; and increasing CPP tax payments. It is most disappointing the Prime Minister broke his promise to help the Canadian middle class and that he didn't consider how future interest rate hikes would impact Canadian families before he raised taxes on gasoline and home heating; Canadians' savings accounts; and payroll taxes for businesses.

The Prime Minister and the Liberal Party of Canada made promises about electoral and parliamentary reform. The Conservative Official Opposition successfully fought back against the current government's disrespect for democracy by standing up to ensure every Canadian had a say on their electoral system through a referendum before Prime Minister Trudeau abandoned his plans altogether and walked away from this campaign promise. The Liberal Party of Canada also made a campaign promise to reform Question Period to ensure that all members, including the Prime Minister are held to greater account. Fast forward, a year and a half later, and the Prime Minister has headed in the opposite direction of greater accountability. Not only does he want to show up for work once a week, but he wants to shut down Parliament on Fridays, to give himself and his colleagues yet another day off.

The Liberal Party of Canada promised to immediately launch a national public inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada during the 2015 election. However, a year and a half later, the inquiry has left families growing increasingly concerned due to ongoing delays and staff turnover. Even the Justice minister's father has expressed his exasperation with the inquiry.

The Prime Minister and the Liberal Party of Canada also made considerable military promises during the last election. We, the Official Opposition, are deeply concerned the current Liberal government will not be able to deliver on their promises, given their dismal record on Canada's national defence thus far. Since coming to office, the Liberal government has consistently cut the Department of National Defence's budget and made a mess of important procurement projects, including replacing Canada's fighter jets and navy vessels.

It's now July 2017 and the current Liberal government is almost halfway through its four-year mandate. The Prime Minister and the Liberal Party of Canada made many, many promises to Canadians during the last election including real change. Sadly, a year and a half later, Canadians have been left with more of the same old, same old, typical tax-and-spend Liberal government, which makes promises it doesn't keep. Some things never change. Canadians deserve better.