

Snap election called as federal government seeks mandate to respond U.S trade war

By Sam Odrowski

A snap election has been called for April 28 by Canada's new Prime Minister Mark Carney.

Carney, 59, was named Liberal Party of Canada leader on March 9, replacing Justin Trudeau who announced on January 6 that he would resign as party leader and prime minister.

Carney took 89 per cent of the vote during the Liberal Leadership Race, with just under 152,000 party members voting.

The early election is seen by the major parties as a way of letting Canadians decide who is best equipped to respond to the ongoing trade war with the U.S.

Running in the Dufferin-Caledon riding is incumbent Conservative Kyle Seebach, NDP candidate Viktor Karklins and Liberal candidate Malalai Halimi.

Halimi is a business manager, entrepreneur and single mother of three teenagers, who resides in Orangeville.

She said she's thrilled to be running under Carney, and supports his plan "to grow our economy, make life more affordable and keep Canada strong."

"I know some of the challenges that residents are facing in Dufferin-Caledon. As a resident of Orangeville, I've seen the impacts Donald Trump's on-again-off-again tariff threats cause for our local economy. But I also know it takes experience to overcome some of the challenges we are facing today," Halimi said. "This is the most important election in our lifetime, because of the threats posed by Donald Trump. It's going to take strong, experienced leadership to protect our economy, our sovereignty, and everything we love about Canada."

Carney is an economist who served as the eighth governor of the Bank of Canada from 2008 to 2013. He also served as the 120th governor of the Bank of England from 2013 to 2020.

"Mark Carney and our Liberal team will stand up to Donald Trump and the national crisis that he poses "just like Mark Carney did while he was Governor of the Bank of Canada during the Great Recession," said Halimi.

After Carney was elected by Liberal Party of Canada members on March 9 and became prime minister, Seebach shared his thoughts with the Citizen.

"Despite [the Liberal Party] trying to make it look like Mark Carney is different than Justin Trudeau, he's advocated for the exact same policies that have stifled our per capita income over the last 10 years," he said.

From 2014 to 2024, Canada's GDP per capita growth was just 0.5 per cent, while the United States was 20.7 per cent, according to the IMF's World Economic Outlook report from October 2024.

"In 2015, there was a New York Times editorial saying Canada had the world's richest middle class, and we have now lost 20 per cent to United States over the last 10 years. Canadian workers are earning 20 per cent less than their American counterparts," said Seebach. "These are the policies Justin Trudeau bought forward and these are the policies that Mark Carney, as his economic advisor, supported."

Carney announced an end to the consumer carbon tax on March 14 in his first move as Canada's new prime minister. He remains supportive of the emissions cap on oil and gas pollution in Canada, with reduction targets spread out over several years.

Seeback said he and the Conservative Party of Canada oppose the emissions cap. He noted the Parliamentary Budget Officer (PBO) of Canada's 'Impact Assessment of the Oil and Gas Emissions Cap,' published on March 12, highlights the economic impact of the policy.

The PBO's report found the required reduction in upstream oil and gas sector production levels will lower real gross domestic product (GDP) in Canada by 0.39 per cent in 2032 and reduce nominal GDP by \$20.5 billion. The report also found that the policy reduces economy-wide employment in Canada by 40,300 jobs or full-time equivalents by 54,400 in 2032. However, it is important to note, that the PBO's report does not factor in the presumed costs related to climate change or the creation of jobs from decarbonizing the oil and gas sector.

'This [emissions cap] is so short-sighted, because the world needs Canadian oil and gas. For example, we could be selling it to Europe to get them off sending money to fund Vladimir Putin's war machine. We could be sending it into Southeast Asia to replace coal with LNG,' Seeback said. 'These are the kinds of things that are good for Canada and actually good for the environment, that the Trudeau government's been against, and Mark Carney has supported.'

Seeback told the Citizen that producing oil and gas or extracting rare earth materials in Canada is better for the environment, due to the many regulations that exist here compared to other countries.

'When Justin Trudeau and Mark Carney prevent these [energy] developments from happening in Canada, these things still happen, they just happen in other countries where the greenhouse gas emissions will be higher,' Seeback explained. 'It's in countries where the environmental standards are lower, where human rights abuses take place, and where the employment standards or how they treat employees will be way lower. At the same time, we lose out on all the taxes that would be generated from these projects.'

Seeback added, 'What the Liberal government and Mark Carney's support is cleaning up Canada's balance sheet on greenhouse gasses, but actually making the world's balance sheet worse, because other countries with worse records produce [oil, gas and rare earth minerals] instead of us. It's actually the exact opposite of what you should do if you care about the environment.'

Concerning oil and gas, Seeback said Canada should not be importing oil on the East Coast and should be energy independent.

'If we built the Energy East [pipeline], we would have all the oil we need in Canada, and we'd be refining it to sell it to other countries,' he noted. 'Over the last decade we have lost so many opportunities. Japan wanted an LNG agreement with Canada but Justin Trudeau said there's no business case. Now the United States just signed a \$1 trillion deal to supply LNG to Japan. Think of what the revenues and the jobs and the taxes we could have collected if we would have signed that deal.'

Creating energy independence would put Canada in a better position when negotiating trade with the United States, said Seeback.

'Imagine if we had built pipelines east and west before going into a negotiation with Donald Trump... we could say we'll just send our oil and gas to different places,' Seeback explained. 'Imagine if we were supplying the United States with most of their critical minerals and rare earth metals. What would our position be in negotiating? It would be so much stronger. But for a decade, we've had a government that has fought all of these things and has made our negotiating position with the United States weaker.'

Now more than ever, Seeback said things must be built within Canada to make it independent and not dependent on other countries.

Halimi said Carney and the Liberal team are best suited to stand up to Donald Trump and his tariffs.

'The Liberal team will eliminate trade barriers within Canada, expand partnerships with our international allies, and grow the strongest economy in the G7,' she said. 'That's why we also have a plan to cut taxes for the middle-class, saving families up to

\$825/year. Mark Carney and I will make life more affordable for Canadians and keep the programs that families rely on.?

Halimi added, ?While Pierre Poilievre and Kyle Seebach have vowed to cut programs like \$10-a-day child care, dental care for kids and uninsured adults, and national pharmacare, Mark Carney and I will fund the programs Dufferin-Caledon families rely on.?

The federal election will be held April 28 and the Citizen will announce the full list of local candidates with their platforms once they are all confirmed by their respective parties.