

Trudeau and Paul Martin rally the faithful in Brampton

By Bill Rea

Liberals in Peel Region, and throughout the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) are showing lots of enthusiasm as the current federal election campaign goes on.

That was in evidence recently, as party faithful, including more than 30 candidates, packed a Brampton convention hall to hear from Leader Justin Trudeau and former prime minister Paul Martin.

Finances and the economy took up a lot of remarks from both men, Martin having been finance minister before he was PM.

He said Liberals understand who makes the economy work, adding it's people, with good families who want to raise their children.

He also said Liberals understand that they can invest in people's needs.

The only goal the Conservatives have is to fight against their own deficit.

Martin commented that when the Conservatives came to power, the previous Liberal government had left them at surplus of \$13 billion. The national debt has increased by about \$150 billion since then.

Martin also charged the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper refuses to bring the Canada Pension Plan up to date, and has refused to work with Premier Kathleen Wynne to fill the gap.

As well, he said there can't be a strong economy without democratic institutions. Countries that don't have strong economies have government institutions that have been abused, he said.

Martin charged that Harper and the Conservatives have been attacking these institutions, like the Parliamentary Budget Office and the Privacy Commissioner.

'They're non-stop trying to undermined the Parliament of Canada,' he charged.

He also said the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) had referred to a committee of Parliament 'as a lot of useless red tape.'

'That's not my country,' Martin declared, adding the Tories are only paying attention to those who agree with them. 'They have turned their backs on every Canadian who doesn't think like they do.'

In his remarks, Trudeau said Martin reminds Canadians what real leadership is.

He also thanked the faithful for all their enthusiasm and hard work, also making sure to ask them, 'Are we ready for real change?'

Trudeau said the current election is an important one, 'and I am determined to win it.'

He also said the Conservatives are old and tired, and that they've run out of ideas He added they have no plans to make the economy grow, or to create jobs.

Trudeau added Canadians don't trust Harper.

'That's what happens when you mislead Parliament and the Canadian people,' he remarked. 'It's hard to tell whether Mr. Harper is running a campaign or just plain running.'

Trudeau said the Liberals have plans to put more money into the pockets of families. He said they will do that by cutting taxes for the middle class and increasing taxes for the top one per cent of the population. In contrast, he said NDP Leader Tom Mulcair wants to take at least \$1 billion out of the economy during a recession.

He also observed one of the reasons for the growth in the middle class in the last generation is because more women entered and stayed in the workforce. Yet both Harper and Mulcair have declined to take part in a debate on women's issues.

'We all know that Mr. Harper doesn't get it,' he remarked, 'and now we know Mr. Mulcair doesn't get it.'

'Women's issues are everyone's issues,' he added.

Trudeau said he's impressed with the strong economic leadership that's represented by his team. He also stressed the need to invest in jobs and growth, adding it will make Canada strong again, as it was before Harper.

'You need to know how to make it happen,' he said, adding Most Canadians understand it. He also said his major disagreement with Harper is over 'his lack of ambition for our country.'

Trudeau charged that Harper acts like he's the best manager of everything.

'The only real risk is going to be by sticking with the failed plan of Stephen Harper,' he said.



Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau and former prime minister Paul Martin addressed a hall full of enthusiastic supporters in Brampton recently. Photo by Bill Rea