

MEDIA EVENT: PC LEADER PATRICK BROWN ON LIBERAL CASH FOR ACCESS

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Date: Fri, 14 Jul 2017 11:59:23 -0400
Attachments: July 14 - PC Leader Patrick Brown on Liberal Cash For Access.doc (78.85 kB)

MEDIA EVENT: PC LEADER PATRICK BROWN ON LIBERAL CASH FOR ACCESS

July 14, 2017

Time / Location:

10 a.m. / In Front of Queen's Park

Speaker:

PC Leader Patrick Brown

Media Attendance:

Print – 4

TV - 2

Radio – 1

Media Outlets:

Smith Cross – CP; Rushowy – Star; Jeffords – Sun; Nanji– QP Briefing; Newstalk 1010; CTV Ontario; City TV

Good morning thank you for joining us here today. Gillian Smith is our candidate for University-Rosedale and I think she'll make a great MPP in a Progressive Conservative government. I also want to acknowledge MPP Gila Marteau, Gila MPP for Thornhill has been a tireless advocate for children youth and families throughout the GTA. Thank you Gila for joining us. My name is Patrick Brown and I'm running to be our next premier because life under the Liberals is harder. After 14 long years, what has that meant for Ontario families, workers and taxpayers? The reality is quite simply after 14 years Ontario families, workers and taxpayers work harder. Ontario families, workers and taxpayers pay more. Ontario families, workers and taxpayers get less. Let me repeat. Under the Liberals Ontario families work harder. Ontario families pay more. Ontario families get less.

And that has to change and only the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario will be that change because the central question facing Ontario today and in the next election is who will make it easier for your family to make ends meet and get ahead. I want to be premier of Ontario. I want to Ontario families who work hard to pay less and get ahead. Here in Toronto and across the province and that and that would be a change for the better. Today I want to talk about an important way in which we can deliver change for the better. The people of Ontario elect representatives from different parts of this incredible province and they come here to Queens Park. They expect their representatives to provide good governance. They expect them to work on behalf of Ontario families. Unfortunately here in Ontario the people of Ontario are not getting what they want. They are not getting what they deserve. Instead the people of Ontario are getting a tired old government plagued with scandal, rife with scandal and mismanagement, swimming in ethical lapses and criminal charges. It's not right. Just look at the political fundraising rules. The Wynne Liberals raise millions selling cash for access to ministers. Thanks to media reports we know that at least 10 Wynne ministers had personal fundraising targets. For example the minister of finance and the health minister had fundraising targets of five hundred thousand dollars a year. There is nothing preventing them from doing the same today. I think ministers should be busy working for the people of Ontario, not having to fill fundraising targets for the Liberal Party. We've also seen links between donations and bad public policy. You look at the government's energy policy as an example. The Wynne Liberals accepted \$1.3 million dollars in donations from the 30 mega companies they got those

renewable contracts, while the auditor general said that we overpaid by \$9.2B for renewable energy. That's not right. Not even the slightest. In December of 2016 the legislature voted unanimously to ban corporate and union donations to political parties. They voted to ban politicians from attending fundraisers and lowered individual donation limits. Our party voted unanimously for these changes. However the Wynne Liberals did not address other significant fundraising loopholes. We will in order to restore public confidence and end cash for access loopholes once and for all. I'm announcing today that if I become Premier I will introduce new measures. As Premier, I will ban political parties from setting up fundraising targets for ministers, ban ministers from fundraising off those they do business with.

Speaking in French: As Premier of Ontario, I will prevent political parties from setting fundraising targets for ministers. And I will prevent ministers from fundraising from people they do business with.

Speaking in English: The next election will be about who will make it easier for families to make ends meet and get ahead. Every single action this liberal government has been about one thing over the last 14 years: the partisan self-interest of the Liberal Party. Is not about the people of Ontario it's about the Liberal Party of Ontario. If Kathleen Wynne had her way, they'd keep all these cash for access loopholes that still exist today. The PC party has a different approach. I will end the liberal practice of cash for access period, no excuse, no loopholes. The people of Ontario need change and we are ready as a Progressive Conservative Party to be that change, to be that change for the better. Thank you so much for being here today and before I take questions, I just wanted to raise one issue in advance and that is in regards to the news over the Sears restructuring. I just wanted to say I think it is outrageous, outrageous that you have executives giving themselves bonuses. Significant bonuses well over seven million dollars while workers that are being laid off don't get severance as I think about their families and how they're going to cope without those severances while their executives are getting these giant bonuses. That's not right and my heart goes out to those workers and I think the government should be reviewing this and looking at ways in which they can assist. And on that note I'm happy to take any of your questions.

Q. 1010:[Inaudible]

Well, you know, we're ten or eleven months away from the election campaign. And I think it's important to get out across the province, to talk to as many Ontario families as I can. So, I'm going to every corner of the province and talk about why I believe we need change for the better and asking the central question, "who will make it easier for your family to make ends meet and get ahead?"

Q. Jeffords: Do you think the Premier is going to call an early election?

No, we expect the election to be on June 7th. But it's a big province, it's important to get out there and I'm certainly not looking at taking a break this summer. I want to get out and talk to as many Ontario families as I can.

Q. Smith Cross:[Inaudible]

Well, we're going to have a policy conference in November. We're trying to get as many of our party members involved in that process as possible. We have more party members than ever before. So, it becomes a unique challenge, but we've created a process that really engages the grassroots. But these are issues that we're announcing, that I think we fought for at Queen's Park, that there is broad support in our membership for, that I'm hearing from our party membership around the province. And whether it is the hydro executive salaries that are outrageous, that the Premier has signed off on, whether it is partisan government advertising. I've given these speeches in the legislature before, but I'm making a commitment this week that these are issues that we're certainly going to address. So yesterday, when I was with the family in Limoges, just outside of Ottawa, and we're looking at some of these partisan vanity ads the Auditor General has talked about, I made a crystal-clear commitment that that would not be on. That under a Progressive Conservative Government, we'll restore the powers to the Auditor General. Outside the Hydro One offices, I said we'll use the legislative regulatory policy tools at the disposal of the government, within the purview of the powers of the Premier's office, to make sure that we don't have a Hydro One executive making \$4.5 million, when the exec in in Quebec gets paid \$400,000. So, we're announcing policies that I believe will bring change for the better to Ontario.

Q. 1010: [Inaudible] Is there no chance [Inaudible] ready to release that soon?

Well, we've actually talked a lot about the structural plan we have for hydro and I can address that for a moment. Borrowing is not a plan. Borrowing \$93 billion dollars is not a plan. So when the Liberals say they have a plan, making everyone pay more down the road, and even the Liberal cabinet documents say it will skyrocket, is not a plan. What I have said, that I want to see addressed, is we have this massive

over-generation. The most recent stats are we generated 145 terawatt hours of energy from our three main sources; water, power, natural-gas and nuclear. That's not even including all these wind-farms and solar-farms. And so we have to give energy away. And you pay on your hydro bills, because the global adjustment which pays for this, is on your bill. Sometimes it's half your bill. And so, because of these bad contracts, everyone is paying more, and they just don't get it. We do. I'm going to end the disastrous Green Energy Act. And, I don't even like calling it a Green Energy Act - they're bad contracts. As I mentioned, these thirty mega-contracts for energy we don't need, that we're giving away, they got 1.3 million dollars in donations for. They got \$1.3 million in donations for it. Kathleen Wynne's party got \$1.3 million in donations for it. No wonder she doesn't want to look at these bad contracts. I don't owe anything to Liberal insiders or donors or people that have benefitted from this overpayment. I'm going to look at these bad deals, and further, I'm going to make sure that we don't continue the practices of allowing them to go forward. They allowed 1,100 more contracts to proceed to the next stage. LRP 2 is still going full steam ahead. We have this massive over-generation and they – there's – this government seems oblivious to that. I get it. You know, last year, you spilled enough water power that we could have powered 500,000 Ontario homes. So when you talk about this massive over-generation, what it means, 500,000 homes we spilled. We wasted. We are squandering our own green energy. They signed bad contracts and we're wasting our own water power. It's offensive. It's outrageous. And we're going to clean up this mess.

Q. Smith-Cross: (inaudible) about the Alliance party of Ontario?

I think there's a number of smaller parties. My focus is just on doing what I – doing what is right and making sure that every Ontario family knows that they have a choice today and in the next election is who will make it easier for your family to make ends meet and get ahead and the Progressive Conservative Party is that change.

Q. Smith-Cross: What are you going to do about the discontent of the members of your party and ex-members of your party?

(inaudible) the surest sign of momentum for a political party is when you have so many new members joining. The fact that we have thousands of new members consistently joined; that we have the largest members that we've ever had; that we have riding associations, whether it's in Scarborough, whether it is in Brampton, that we have record membership tallies, that's exciting. And frankly whether it's in Sault Ste. Marie, whether it is in Scarborough – Rouge River, I think there's clear evidence that we have more people ready to volunteer, ready to help, that we've ever seen before, and we're a party that is energized.

Q. CTV Toronto: Do you have any reaction to the Scarborough nomination process? There's been some thought that former cabinet minister, PC cabinet minister, want the nomination quashed officially and again, (inaudible) comment about that?

So there's a – the party has set up a processes for appeal. I understand there's an appeal underway and we'll wait for those results, but once again, let me say one, the surest signs of momentum is when you have so many members coming forward, so many candidates coming forward. The fact that we have a record membership in a riding that previously had (inaudible) under 100 members. Now there is I think close to 5,000. That's exciting. And in these nominations they'll be winners and losers and it's an exciting process that can also be divisive, but we're getting great candidates. We're getting phenomenal candidates that I think will make great MPPs and I look at Gillian Smith here today. I look at our candidates around the province and it's exciting.

Q. 1010: (inaudible)

There is – there is procedures the party follows for nominations, nominations we have a party executive representative there. We've got PWC there, and then if there's an appeal, that process has to be followed. And so that process is – is underway.

Q. 1010: So you haven't certified the candidate that was (inaudible).

Well there is – the candidate was elected and now there is an appeal, so that – that process will be unfolding.

Q. Smith Cross: (inaudible) policy convention in November. If the members tell you that they don't want your carbon tax plan, will you reverse (inaudible)?

You know, my – my sense with the party membership is that we take climate change seriously, that we take – that there's no reason you can't be a proud Progressive Conservative and care about the

environment. Bill Davis created the Ministry of Environment. Frankly Brian Mulroney – Brian Mulroney negotiated the agreement with Ronald Reagan on acid rain. And the choice we have in Ontario, given the fact there is a national climate change accord, is this: you can have the Wynne government use – use carbon cap-and-trade as a \$2-billion cash grab, or you can give it back to the people, and I think if you ask (inaudible) members, ‘do you let government keep \$2 billion as a revenue grab, a cash grab, or do you give it back to the people?’ The response is going to be resounding that of course, we’re going to give it back to the people, and frankly, the fact that we’ve signed onto this theme where we have to buy \$2 billion of – \$2 billion eventually of – of green credits from jurisdictions like California under this scheme, it reminds me of the Green Energy Act and so I’m – like, I don’t get into hypotheticals, but I can tell there is broad-based support in the party on the approach that we set forward which is to give it back to the people of Ontario, and I was in Southwestern Ontario this week in Kingsville and I met with the greenhouse sector where we announced that there should be a similar exemption as there is in British Columbia and Alberta because those jobs right now are fleeing to Ohio and Michigan. And when I spoke to party members down there, they’re saying, ‘thank you for raising this issue. Thank you for bringing forward approach that balances the environment and jobs and investment. Thank you so much.

N.B.: Comments captured are not verbatim quotes

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