



*Hey folks!*

## The PM begs for yet another chance

All Canadians should be appalled. As I write this, on the morning after Prime Minister Paul Martin's plea to the Canadian people to let him stay on for a few more months, I realise that he failed to explain why we should do this.

For the last two decades, the Canadian electorate has observed a succession of Prime Ministers, all of whom have made their predecessors look good by contrast. John Turner's short reign of patronage appointments was ended by the election of a man who became possibly the most reviled Prime Minister in Canadian history. That one was succeeded by the woman who reduced the Progressive Conservatives to two seats while opening the door to the Reform party.

### Same Old Corporate Cuts

Jean Chrétien's total of 12 years in power is widely believed to be the result of voters' fear of the Reform Party forming the government, as he basically endorsed and implemented all of Mulroney's policies. When Chrétien was finally forced out by Martin, no difference could be detected in the performance of the Liberal government. Indeed, Martin's government continued the corporate tax cuts and reductions

in social spending that have characterised every government since Trudeau's.

The lead-up to the last election, however, was instructive. Martin loyalists could be seen forcing out everyone associated with Chrétien. Incredibly, though, Martin's only major act was to implement another billion dollars in corporate tax cuts. Before the election, it was obvious that he could not explain to the Canadian people why he should be given a majority government.

NOTICE  
**Nomination Meeting**  
Thursday, 12 May, 7:30 PM  
*see details on reverse*



### Gary's message

It looks as if things will get busy very quickly. Not only are we rapidly approaching the New Democratic Party Convention, but there's election talk in the air.

Our candidate nomination meeting is May 12. It could be very hotly contested, so make sure you come out and vote. One of the main benefits of membership is your vote to decide who will represent you in the upcoming election.

We will require delegates to attend the Federal NDP Convention, to be held in Quebec City. In addition to delegates, we need to pass resolutions which will be debated at the Quebec Convention. If they are passed, they will become the policy of the New Democratic Party, possibly forming part of the party's next federal election platform. If you have an

issue, write it down. Bring it with you to the meeting. This is a perfect chance to change the direction of the party in an important way.

This is a good time to welcome the new as well as the returning executive members: we have a very special team at the helm for the year to come. Long-time activist **Abbas Syed** is the new Vice President, while new member **Jeannie Tsang** picks up secretarial duties. Returning as membership secretary is **Brian Blakely**, while **Christine Ilott** is the new membership organiser. The new Youth member is **Jeff Sweeting**.

You may have noticed that there is no treasurer. To conform with Elections Canada's rules, this position has disappeared. Instead, the executive now appoints a Financial Agent. Our unanimous choice for this was Gerry Batke BA (Econ), CMA, CIP, who was the former Federal Treasurer in the Scarborough East riding and who produces this newsletter.

It's going to be an exciting year. I hope to see everyone at the May 12 meeting to help decide how we face it.

### Corporate Tax Cuts Never Dither

Since his election, Martin's performance has been even more pitiful. With a minority government of four parties, two from the left and one from the right, he has been able to pick which direction he wanted to go. After dithering for months, he finally brought in a budget that represented – wait for it – more corporate tax cuts! This inventive move was enough to buy Stephen Harper's support.

Conservatives, as Martin has found, are treacherous allies. Once the Gomery Commission revelations started to reach the media, the Conservatives could smell blood. Nor was it long before the Bloc began to visualise the end of the Québec Liberals. Such a picture is what makes Martin's plea last night so disingenuous. Testimony in the Gomery commission will wrap up in a few months, long before the report itself is published. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister hopes not only that voter anger will subside by next year, but that voters will let him again play off fear against loathing.

### What are you voting for?

Possibly the most appalling thing is that both the Liberals and Conservatives want voters to vote for them as the lesser of two evils. We are to elect the Conservatives out of disgust for the Liberals, or the Liberals out of fear of the Conservatives.

## Martin as Manager

Paul Martin's reputation as a "good finance minister" is based on his "conquering the deficit", done by cutting social spending. He reduced employment insurance benefits by \$6 billion per year, below what the premiums were bringing in, and raided the federal Public Service Pension Plan. At the same time, he doled out billions upon billions of dollars in tax cuts for his corporate buddies.

In other words, he placed the entire burden of the deficit on the working people of Canada. **He didn't kill the deficit, he just moved it down to you and me!** Had he been able to contain it while maintaining social spending, there would be something to celebrate.

At the same time, last night's admission, "I could have been more diligent" reveals another flaw in Martin's aura. He didn't have a clear take on either the big picture or the fine details. So his abysmal performance as Prime Minister comes as no surprise. He has always been more image than substance.



During the last election, the Conservatives told Canadians that we deserve better. I agree. As New Democrats, our party has a record of honesty and competence unequalled in Canada. The NDP is the only real alternative to another round of government corruption and government-sponsored corporate tax cuts. Whether

the election comes in the summer or after Gomery's Report, we are the party presenting a positive alternative that includes implementing Canada's Kyoto commitments, ending homelessness, repairing the health care system, and restoring Canada's place as peacemakers.

*Gary Dale*

### Pickering Scarborough-East Federal NDP Riding Association

## Nomination Meeting

Thursday, 12 May 2005  
7:30 PM

- Candidate nomination
- Election of delegates to the Federal Convention
- Adoption of Convention Resolutions

### Port Union Community Centre

5450 Lawrence Avenue East  
(Lawrence Avenue, just west of Port Union,  
a short walk from the Rouge Hill GO station)

Members and non-members are welcome.  
Light refreshments will be served.

## Security Certificates hold Five Men

Readers of this newsletter who would like to help the five Muslim men being held without open trial for a total of 192 months on unspecified charges (at least one of whom is very ill) should write to members of Parliament or to Paul Martin, Paul Volpe, or Anne McLellan. The five men are about to be sent back to be tortured in their own countries. They were tried in secret and are being held on Canadian Security Certificates.

The men's names are: Mahmoud Jaballah, Mohamad Harkat, Mohammad Mahjoub, Adil Charkaoui, and Hassan Almrei. Their cases can be studied at: [www.homesnotbombs.ca](http://www.homesnotbombs.ca). Their lawyers have been refused copies of all paperwork regarding the charges and the men's families are destitute.

Recently, a group of prominent Canadian writers and activists raised \$3,600 to help the men's families. For more about this issue, see *Kafka in Canada*, by Heather Mallick, in *The Globe and Mail*, 9 April, 2005.

A fund for the son of one of the men, who wishes to attend university, needs financial help. To contribute, send a cheque to "Homes not Bombs" to box 73620, 509 St Clair Avenue West, Toronto ON M6C 1C0. On the face of the cheque, please indicate that it is for the Esperanza Fund.

It is hard to believe that Canada has its own Guantanamo-type security arrangements in which innocent people can be detained indefinitely on suspicion. Help if you can. For further information, contact:

Nancy Vichert – [viccam5@rogers.com](mailto:viccam5@rogers.com)