

# Tory pledges leadership as he rallies the troops in York

By Bill Rea

A Progressive Conservative government in Ontario would be ready to make tough decisions and keep its promises.

Party Leader John Tory made the comments June 20 when he addressed the annual York Leader's Dinner in Thornhill.

With an election a matter of months away, it's not surprising Tory's address frequently took on the tone of a pep talk for the troops.

"It seems that more people, here in York Region and around the province, are turning their attention to the state of the province," he commented, adding people he's been meeting have been

telling him they are concerned about missed opportunities in Ontario, and its declining standing.

"They know in their hearts that after four years of Dalton McGuinty, things just aren't right," he declared, adding they would certainly have received that message during that week, if after the Auditor General released his review of the government's pre-election report on the province's finances. The government was slammed in the report "for irresponsible year-end spending sprees," Tory stated, adding that is something that will stop if his party gets in.

Having met many

Ontarians of late, Tory said he's convinced they expect answers and leadership.

"People know leadership when they see it," Tory remarked. "Leaders set an example. Leaders keep their word; that's a basic concept. Leaders are not afraid to make tough decisions. Leaders have a plan. Leaders want to be measured. They want to be accountable."

Tory also observed that Ontario used to be the leader in Canada, in terms of economics, culture, politics and more. But he said it was leaders that made Ontario a leader; "Leaders who set big goals, held themselves accountable for those and

then brought Ontarians together so we could achieve those goals."

For the first time in history, there are many people in Ontario who believe their children will not be as well off as them, Tory added. "I know it's not good enough for you," he declared.

The coming election is going to be a choice about leadership, he said. "I know that Ontarians believe that leadership matters."

"Almost two weeks ago, we laid out our plan for a better Ontario," Tory declared, adding they made it clear this is a plan for government, and not just an election platform. The plan, he said, calls for balanced budgets, makes only commitments that can be met and looks to the future.

"We call our plan, 'For a better Ontario: Leadership Matters,'" he said. "Our plan is built on the premise of smart planning and real results that benefit everyone. It's not about creating divisions. It's about coming

together to create a stronger Ontario.

Tory focused on three areas of the plan.

Regarding health care, he said the system is still in poor shape, with more than one million people in

Ontario (including in excess of 130,000 children) without a family doctor.

He added that many parts of York are designated as under-serviced for family

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John Tory addressed the local party faithful June 20.



The two local Progressive Conservative candidates took part in the recent York Leader's Dinner. Oak Ridges — Markham candidate John Bannon delivered the toast, while York North MPP (and York — Simcoe candidate) Julia Munro said grace.

## Gilbank disappointed with PC platform

York — Simcoe provincial Liberal candidate John Gilbank is disappointed in the recent platform announcement by Progressive Conservative leader John Tory.

Tory recently released a policy platform, which Gilbank said would take Ontario back to the era of cuts to health care, cuts to education and backwards to budget deficits.

"Residents of York — Simcoe have lived through these cuts in the past," he commented. "The McGuinty government was elected to fix our education and health care systems and now John Tory wants to take us back to massive cuts in both. We have moved so far forward in the past few years, I don't think Ontarians want to leave all of our progress behind."

Among the more than 230 uncosted promises made in Tory's platform, Ontarians would see \$500 million taken out of our

public schools and handed over to private schools and opening medicare to private health clinics, according to a media release issued by Gilbank.

"The reality is that test scores are improving

throughout the province and we haven't had teacher strikes on McGuinty's watch," he added. "It's too bad the Tories want to dismantle all the progress that's been made on the education front."



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