



LOOK WHO'S BACKING PAUL MARTIN



For-profit health care. Two-tier services. Big business making big bucks from taxpayers.

With policies like these, it's not hard to see who's backing Paul Martin.

Corporations are eager to cash in on a Martin majority. Five more years of Liberal rule will lock in privatization schemes, trade deals and tax cuts for Martin's business backers, changing this country forever – and for the worse.

But CUPE members have other ideas – better ideas. Like investing in public services that improve the quality of life of all Canadians.

In this election, let's vote for the things that matter to us most. Let's vote for public services.

The P3 PM Paul Martin's gift to his business backers: Privatization

"The sewer, water, all that stuff can be P3ed. Why does government have to run a sewage system? Why does a public entity have to own a hospital?"

Who said that? Ralph Klein? Jean Charest? Gordon Campbell? No, it was the point-person for public private partnerships (P3s) in the Paul Martin government,

MP John McKay. And his questions reveal Martin's true agenda for Canada's public services.

Martin talks a good line when it comes to public services but his record and his vision show his true colours.

As finance minister, Martin slashed funding for health care, social supports, post-secondary education and a wide range of public services. And he failed to deliver on promises to fund child care, affordable housing and needed investments in water, transit and other public infrastructure. As prime minister, he continues to starve public services.

Having created the crisis, Martin now offers private enterprise as the solution.

But that will just lead to higher costs and new user fees – and new staff, most of them paid meager wages, replacing dedicated workers with years of experience.

And what makes it worse are the trade deals and investments rules – that the Liberals endorse – that lock in privatization.

We all lose under that model: patients, parents, students, taxpayers, workers, local businesses. In fact, the only people who come out ahead are Martin's corporate cronies, including multinationals that put their profits above everything else.

There is an alternative. In this election, it's time to vote for public services.

Martin's business backers want P3s to pick the public pocket

If you thought there were problems in how the federal government administered the sponsorship program, prepare yourself for the next attack on the public purse.

Paul Martin and his government are pushing so-called public private partnerships or P3s, the latest scheme to privatize public services.

Hold on to your wallets. If the Liberals and their corporate cronies could cream off \$100 million from a \$250 million sponsorship budget, imagine the riches to be made from the billions to be invested in vital public infrastructure over the next few years.

The experience with P3s in Canada and around the world shows they're bad news for citizens and taxpayers. P3s inflate costs, reduce services and make it impossible to hold anyone to account.

There's a clear choice.

We can continue down the road to privatization or we can say no, it's time to reinvest in our future and rebuild strong communities. It's time to vote for public services.

Whether we look at the sorry history of P3 schools in Nova Scotia, the skyrocketing tolls along Ontario's highway 407 or the looming nightmare of P3 hospitals, we see the same pattern.

- Construction costs rise because it costs the private sector much more to borrow and because corporations are in it to make money.
- Corners are cut to boost profits, raising health and safety concerns.
- User fees increase, making it hard for women, seniors and working families to use the services.
- Decent jobs that pay a living wage are replaced by low-wage, casual labour as funding for front-line services is diverted to overhead and profits.
- Buck-passing skyrockets, as does the risk of corruption.
- Deals are secret, which means that when all the lawyers have spoken, the public is left holding the bag and the private sector is left to pocket its profits.
- International trade and investment agreements can lock in bad P3s.

And let's be clear here. The big money to be made from P3s is not destined for small business or local economies. It's huge global corporations – Vivendi, Sodexo, Suez, Carillion – that stand to pocket the enormous gains, confident they can walk away from the deal – and from Canada – when it suits them.

For them, Martin's P3 plan is a license to print money.

Let's send Paul Martin and his big business backers a message they'll never forget.



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Canadians want public services in public hands

A recent poll by Ipsos-Reid shows an overwhelming majority – 84 per cent – of Canadians want their public services delivered by public sector workers, rather than by corporations.

Canadians are equally skeptical of P3s. When asked whether Canada should rebuild its public infrastructure – hospitals, schools, highways and water systems – through direct public investment or through P3s, 75 per cent say keep it public.



Privatization hits women, minorities hardest

Women especially oppose Martin's privatization agenda. And that's not surprising. When public services are privatized, women are hit with a triple whammy – losing services, jobs and wages.

Young workers, new Canadians, Aboriginal communities, poor families – they're hit the hardest by privatization and they have the most to lose if Martin's business backers win.



We need public delivery, not just public funding, for health care

When Paul Martin talks about “transformative change” in health care, look out.

Under his watch we've seen the growth of for-profit clinics in BC, private MRIs in Nova Scotia, corporate home care in Ontario and P3 hospitals across the country.

Martin paints himself as Medicare's saviour when in fact he's undercut it at every turn – by not paying the federal government's fair share while allowing provinces to privatize.

It isn't the cost of bedside nurses or the people who make sure operating rooms are sterilized that is driving up health care costs. It's the growing pressure from for-profit providers.

And it's not by turning to the private sector that we'll get new hospital beds on-stream to cut waiting lists. On the contrary, for Canadians concerned about access and waiting lists, P3 hospitals are disastrous.

We don't need more promises. What we need is a real commitment of stable funding – 25 per cent of total health care spending – with guarantees that federal funds won't be diverted to big business.

Without a guarantee of public delivery, more federal spending just feeds the corporations' bottom line. It does nothing to ensure patients and families get the care and support they need.

This election, let's vote for public delivery of health care.

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