This page was exported from - The Auroran
Export date: Fri Mar 29 15:31:07 2024 / +0000 GMT

Future voter felt "humiliated" after recent all-candidates meeting

On September 24, I attended the All-Candidates Debate at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School and stayed for its entirety.

I noticed that the Conservative candidate, Costas Menegakis, was only answering questions planted by fellow Conservatives in the audience. Mr. Menegakis' entire argument sounded nothing less than scripted. So, finally I had enough and decided I was going to ask a question to the Conservative candidate.

It felt like an eternity had passed by the time I reached the microphone. But, when my turn came, I asked Mr. Menegakis how the Conservative Party can justify sending cheques to the wealthiest 1% while the middle class continues to suffer?

Mr. Menegakis responded that he could not hear the question, which then had to be repeated five times. When he finally acknowledged that he understood the question, his only response was that my question was echoing a typical Liberal punchline.

In other words, he was completely dismissive of my question, of me as a fellow citizen, and he completely humiliated me in front of the other candidates, the question panel and the audience.

It is my belief that he treated me so disrespectfully for two simple reasons: firstly, he simply did not like the question that I was asking because it highlights serious gaps in the Conservatives' plan. And, secondly, I believe that Mr. Menegakis was mocking the fact that, as an individual with a physical impairment, I could not express my question as clearly as most other individuals.

I am just as Canadian as an able-bodied individual. However, it saddens me that the Conservative candidate views me as less than equal.

While it is true that I have volunteered for Leona Alleslev, the Liberal candidate for Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill for the past several months, I must emphasize the fact that I have never felt unwelcome in her campaign office. The Liberal team has a plan to invest in people and in a better tomorrow. They believe that every Canadian is equal no matter their abilities.

It is time for a government that will support all Canadians. Let us show Stephen Harper and his Conservative government that we have core values and we do not support running the government with fear and division.

I'm appalled at the ignorance the Conservative candidate displayed towards me. As a result, when I am indeed able to vote, I will never vote for him or his Party.

Benjamin Williamson
Aurora

(Editor's Note: The Auroran reached out to Mr. Menegakis' campaign to include a response in this week's edition. A response had not been received at press time)