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Alleslev crosses floor to Conservatives



By Brock Weir

Canadians can't accept the status quo, according to Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MP Leona Alleslev, who crossed the floor on Monday to join the Conservative caucus.

In a press conference on Monday afternoon, Ms. Alleslev, who was elected as a Liberal in Aurora's south riding in 2015, narrowly defeating former Conservative MP Costas Menegakis in the race, said she made her decision out of ?deep concern? for the country, but would continue to focus on serving her constituents.

?Today, I stood in the House deeply concerned for the future of our country,? said Ms. Alleslev at the press conference, with Conservative leader Andrew Scheer at her side. ?I asked the question, ?Am I doing everything I can to serve my country and work for real change for Canadians?' The answer is ?no.' The citizens of my riding and all Canadians need a government that delivers foundational change for things that matter.?

Ms. Alleslev, who has now been appointed as the Conservative Party's Shadow Secretary for Global Security, said she had voiced her concerns to the Liberal caucus, but these concerns were ignored.

?The world has changed dramatically in the last three years and we find ourselves in a time of unprecedented global instability,? she continued. ?We're seeing fundamental shifts in the global economy while trade relationships, international agreements, and defence structures are under threat. Canada faces a perfect storm of serious challenges at home and abroad. This is not a strong economy and our country needs strong leadership. We must recognize that foreign policy, trade, defence and our economy all depend on each other and cannot be viewed separately.

?To have a strong economy and a strong country, we need strong federal leadership to rebuild our nation's foundations: tax reform, employment reform, a comprehensive foreign policy, and a modernized military to reassure our allies and defend Canada's interests at home and abroad. My attempts to raise my concerns with this government were met with silence and, as I said in the house, the Government must be challenged openly and for me to publicly criticize the government as a Liberal would undermine the government, [and] according to my code of conduct, be dishonourable. After careful and deliberate consideration, I announce today that I am withdrawing from the Government benches to take my seat among my conservative colleagues under the strong leadership of Andrew Scheer.

?Andrew and his team have a firm grasp of the urgent issues we face as Canadians and the resolve to confront them. I am proud to align myself with that. I will continue to honour my oath and serve the constituents of Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill by focusing on the challenges facing our nation. We, as Canadians, cannot accept the status quo. Our country is at stake.?