

# Chretien visits Acton company

By JANET BAINE  
Staff writer

Jean Chretien met at least two converted Liberals on his 15 minute stop at Acton Precision Millwrights Wednesday.

President Ted Lyons, surrounded by a bus load of national media representatives and at least a dozen members of the local media, said he's never voted Liberal before, but plans to in the coming election because "they've got the people, they've got the plan."

"I'm happy that, for the first time in your life, you're voting for us. I'm hoping it will become a good habit," Chretien told him, after asking Lyons a few questions about his company.

A welder smiled and shook Chretien's hand in front of the television cameras, but said he wasn't impressed with the man once the cameramen and Chretien had jumped back on the buses.

"He's like all politicians, out for his own good and nobody else's. I don't think he is serious enough about the deficit," Curtis West said. "I'm not going to vote Liberal, or NDP, or Conservative. I'm voting Reform."

Another welder in the company, Duane Bilton, said having Chretien visit his company will probably get him another vote, but he hasn't decided for sure.

"It's impressive seeing him in person, if he is going to stick to what he was telling us. I think I will be voting for Jean

Chretien, yes, he is the only one that shows any hope in the way he talks and shows himself to people," he said.

Chretien had a busy schedule Wednesday. He started his day visiting the Ontario Veterinary College in Guelph, went to a press conference in Kitchener, and made the brief stop at Acton Precision before heading off to the airport to catch a plane to Trois Rivieres, for a 7 p.m. engagement.

Chretien was welcomed by Halton-Peel Liberal candidate

Julian Reed, and Lyons.

Lyons told Chretien about how he started operating his company from his garage in 1987, built the Acton facility two years later, and had a hard time surviving the recession.

"We had fallen into the trap of buying into the doom and gloom of recessionary thinking. Our planning had become 'once the recession is over, we will do so-and-so. A year ago, we got mad and snapped out of it," he said. The company has grown from 12 employees to 30 and plans to continue adding staff, at a slower rate.

After a very brief tour and the explanation of the turnaround the company has made during the recession, Chretien asked Lyons three questions about his company, and said Canada needs more companies to do the same.

"Growth in Canada will come as many more institutions like yours develop," Chretien said. "There are one million small and medium businesses in Canada. If one-third of them do as much, or even not as much as yours has, we'll meet our target of 250,000 new jobs a year."

Chretien shook the hands of supporters and everyone jumped on the buses and headed back down Hwy. 25 towards the airport.

This isn't the only visit by a Liberal leader to Halton-Peel during this campaign. Premier Clyde Wells is throwing his support behind Reed, and visiting a Burlington high school with him.



Liberal leader Jean Chretien shows his support for local candidate Julian Reed.

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