

Mulvale concedes to Liberal tide and Brown

By SAL BOMMARITO
The Champion

Progressive Conservative candidate Ann Mulvale wasted little time in conceding victory to Liberal candidate Bonnie Brown in Oakville-Milton Monday night.

Ms Brown was leading handily after 180 of 261 poll results had been tabulated at roughly 9:30 p.m. A surprisingly upbeat Mrs. Mulvale strode to the podium amid a cheering crowd of about 100 campaign workers and party faithful.

"We have nothing to be ashamed of. Oakville-Milton is still a Conservative riding. Despite the national trend, despite the media, we've gotten our message out," she said.

"My commitment to the renewal of the party remains strong. Not only to renew it in Oakville-Milton but across this great land," she told her shocked supporters.

Mrs. Mulvale said the protest vote split the support for Progressive Conservatives both locally and nationally.

"We did our best against a national trend which clearly swamped us," she said.

She urged her supporters to remain committed to the party by helping in the rebuilding process.

"This riding remains committed to conservative values. There's not one person in our team that's moving one centimetre away from that."

She said she would work closely

with Ms Brown to ensure the riding is well represented in Ottawa.

"We have a role to help (Ms Brown) in what is clearly a majority government. We have to lead by example. We have to find a way to turn this into a positive and find a way to support the person who has been elected through the democratic process."

Mrs. Mulvale told reporters later that she wasn't surprised by the strong support for Reform, which she said was the deciding factor in Ms Brown's victory.

"I knew it depended on the Reform vote. If it was a two-way race we'd be victorious. It was a national phenomenon we couldn't overcome."

Despite the resounding defeat of the Conservatives across the country, Mrs. Mulvale said she remains optimistic the Liberal government will "implement (some of the policies) we've campaigned on."

She declined to say whether she'll seek federal office in the future. However, she did say "I will not seek a third term as mayor (of Oakville)."

When asked how she was holding up emotionally, she responded "I'm fine. I've been in every election, win or lose."

Riding association president Lionel Kilburn agreed with Mrs. Mulvale's assessment of the PC defeat.

"If you add up the Reform vote and the PC vote it equals what (Otto) Jelinek (former Oakville-Milton MP) got in the last election. The right wing was split."

He felt it was a sad night for the country.

"When you don't win it's sad. When you have the kind of debt (Canadians) have, and a government who is going to spend more, it's sad." However, "people get the government they want. That's democracy."

In the aftermath of the defeat, campaign co-chair Doug Brady said no one could have possibly predicted the extent of voter dissatisfaction before the election.

"We were surprised at the magnitude of the whole thing. We didn't expect that. It really determined the outcome in this riding. There's nothing we could have done or Ann



Ann Mulvale said the protest vote split the PC's traditional base allowing the Liberals to win the riding.

could have done to prevent that. "We're in shock. We're almost traumatized by the thing. The people have spoken," he said.

Despite the total collapse of the party at the national level, Mr. Brady said there's "no doubt at all we can rebuild."

"I frankly think a lot of the Liberal vote was by default. It was against the Tory government. We failed to get our message across as far as our policies go."

"There's a sense of determination among our team that we still have a message to bring to the people."

NDP tallies just 1,756 votes

Lambert says he gave it his best shot

By KAREN SMITH
The Champion

Willie Lambert says he was genuine. He gave it his best shot, and unlike many Canadians, "I got off my couch."

Left with no regrets, the New Democratic Party candidate for Oakville-Milton says there's little he would change if he ran his federal election campaign over again.

"I feel very good. I tried my best, whatever the result may be. I tried to make a difference. I tried to make things better."

The 31-year-old Oakville bus driver was placid in defeat Monday night when local riding results reinforced a message from Canadians that they want little to do with the NDP.

Liberal Bonnie Brown trekked up the middle to victory by splitting the right-leaning vote, taking 34,273 ballots. Progressive Conservative Ann Mulvale was second with 19,153, Reform's Richard Malboeuf ran third with 17,251. Mr. Lambert was a distant fourth, garnering 1,756 votes.

Voters also threw out the country's first woman prime minister and all but two of Kim Campbell's Progressive Conservatives.

A "movement" is what Mr. Lambert said he believes brought on Ms Brown's conquest and the country-wide Liberal landslide victory.

He said it was tough fighting the trend. "It doesn't matter how good you are."

His first political candidacy was a learning experience, but not entirely a positive one, he noted. One perceived trend, he said, sickened him.

"There's a hell of a lot of hate (out there)," he bluntly noted. He went on to say he saw obvious signs that Canadians currently have a great deal of intolerance for each other as well as a general "sense of animosity."

When asked if he would pay a visit to the new MP to offer his compliments, Mr. Lambert at first hesitated.

"They'll (Liberal government) be kicking the asses of people after I

congratulate them, so it doesn't make me want to congratulate them."

Soon after he reconsidered. "No, no, of course I will." He added that he "hopes they (the Liberals) will do what they say they're going to do."

A lifetime NDP supporter, Mr. Lambert said he ran in the election to make "things better for people."

"That's it in a nutshell." He was asked formally in March to consider running in Oakville-Milton.

"I feel really proud that the party gave me a chance to represent the NDP," he noted.

Mr. Lambert added that he will likely run again if given the opportunity.

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