

Leadership contender Bernier visits King Township

By Mark Pavilons

Picking up momentum locally, federal Conservative candidate Maxime Bernier made a stop in Nobleton Tuesday afternoon, during a tour of the area.

Bernier paid a visit to venerable landmark Nobleton Feed Mill, joined by owners Alf and Dave Budweth. Bernier was also greeted by Mayor Steve Pellegrini.

A veteran of federal politics, Bernier is considered one of the frontrunners to succeed Stephen Harper.

One of his platform planks is standing up for rural Canadians. He hopes to spur agricultural growth by eliminating the 'farm-killing carbon tax,' reducing the federal farm tax from 15% to 10% and by phasing out supply management.

Bernier also hopes to 'make every Canadian richer' by scrapping the federal carbon tax, abolishing the capital gains tax, cutting federal income tax and privatizing Canada Post.

He said ending 'corporate welfare' will save an estimated \$5 billion a year, money that can help offset the burden on small business. Bernier plans to introduce a flat tax and increase the personal exemption level.

He's been consistent in his stance on these issues and the public has responded positively.

Bernier was the first out of the gate to declare his candidacy and his campaign has had time to develop and present its platform.

He stressed he's a 'Conservative who believes in freedom' and many of his plans were the topic of discussion during his whirlwind tour Tuesday.

He stressed that in order to vote for a leader, you have to be a card-carrying Conservative and you only have until the end of the month to join. Memberships are only \$15 and you can sign up via his website, www.maximebernier.com

Bernier, referred to by some as 'Mad Max,' is known as a dependable politician who speaks his mind. A man of ideas, his belief in personal responsibility and freedom is at the heart of his political vision. In his public statements, he expresses those values and his unwavering commitment to reducing the size of government.

Bernier has a long-standing interest in business and during his career worked for several financial and banking institutions before becoming Executive Vice-President of the Montreal Economic Institute in 2005.

He was elected MP for Beauce (Quebec) in 2006, with the largest majority outside Alberta. He was appointed to Cabinet that same year as Minister of Industry.

His success in deregulating major portions of the telecommunications sector prompted the chair of the Political Science department at McGill University, Professor Richard J. Schultz, to write, 'In terms of what is perhaps the single most important component of his Industry portfolio, telecommunications, he was without challenge the best Industry Minister in 30 years.'

Bernier also served as Minister of Foreign Affairs from August 14, 2007 to May 26, 2008.

He was re-elected to represent Beauce in 2008, again receiving the largest majority of all MPs in Quebec. Re-elected in 2011, he was appointed Minister of State for Small Business and Tourism. He was re-elected a fourth time in November, 2015, receiving more than 59% of the vote.