



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cancellation of the Liberal Party Leadership Review Vote

Toronto - Tuesday 04 June 2002

Akaash Maharaj

has released the following statement about suggestions that the Liberal Party's National Executive may be asked at its meeting this weekend to cancel the party's constitutionally mandated leadership review vote.

"Certainly, these are difficult days for the Liberal Party, but no circumstances could justify the National Executive ignoring the party's constitutional requirement to hold a leadership review, to exalt political convenience above the principle of the rule of law. To do so would be a disservice to the Prime Minister by de-legitimising his tenure, a betrayal of the party membership's right to accountability, and an outrage against basic standards of democratic decency.

"When the G8 gathers in Kananaskis later this month, Canada will lead the discussions about helping African states institutionalise democratic norms and the rule of law. I can not believe that anyone in the Liberal Party is prepared to make a hypocrite of our government in that forum by undemocratically casting aside our party's own constitutional requirement to hold a leadership review.

"A leadership review may be a painful process in the current climate, but a disavowal of our party's constitution and mechanisms for accountability would be the death of our liberal and democratic credentials. Democracy is a creed for the brave, and especially at a time of crisis, the Liberal Party can not be found wanting.

"As a member of the Liberal Party's National Executive, I will vote against any proposal to cancel or delay the leadership review vote."

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