



- World
- Iraq
- Canada

- Law & Order
- Politics
- Space
- Science
- Tech News
- Media News
- Weird News

- In Depth
- War on Terror
- Canadiana
- Weather

SHOP.Canoe

Canoe Google

Search input field with Go button

Powered by Google

Find it for less!

Search input field with Go button

Powered by eBay.ca

www.eBay.ca

- News Tickers
- Atlantic
- Ont/Que
- The West
- Business

- Sun Papers
- Columns
- Your View
- Today in History
- Lotteries
- Charities

Photo of the Day



Sun, April 27, 2003

Martin's Montreal announcement to kick off task he feels born to achieve

By LOUISE ELLIOTT

OTTAWA (CP) - Paul Martin will draw on two lifetimes worth of drive and determination when he launches his public campaign this weekend to replace Prime Minister Jean Chretien.

Search: All Products

Keywords: GO!

amazon.ca

The former finance minister and son of another political heavyweight will use a town-hall meeting in Montreal on Sunday to kick off the final stage of a task he and his father built their lives around: seeking the country's top job.

That glory thrice eluded Paul Martin Sr., a prominent Liberal cabinet minister. It was a wrenching failure that has driven his son, now 64, to seek the same elusive goal.

A millionaire several times over, self-made shipping czar and a prominent politician now facing the last of his working years - some would argue Martin has nothing to prove, no need to push himself through the gruelling pace necessary to maintain an iron grip on the party.

But they wouldn't understand the extent to which Martin was raised on the breath and bread of politics; how his father as a backbencher in the 1930s and 1940s doggedly travelled from Ottawa to Windsor, Ont., each weekend to canvas constituents, dragging Paul Jr. and his sister, Mary-Ann, in tow.

Martin's mother, Nell, from her deathbed in 1993, asked her son why he accepted the finance post when he had wanted industry.

Martin crafted his entire life around his future goal: becoming fluently bilingual, studying at the University of Toronto and Osgoode Hall law, then carefully avoiding political office while he amassed his fortune as head of Canada Steamship Lines.

Throughout his years with Montreal's Power Corp. and as head of CSL, Martin deliberately built key connections, notably with Power Corp. chairman Maurice Strong and CEO Paul Desmarais.

A lifetime of work has laid the foundation for the moment on Sunday when Martin takes to the hustings, one last time.

"It's fair to say he's a driven man," said Henry Jacek, a political scientist at McMaster University. "He's living out his father's and

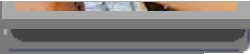


Great ideas, expert advice, step-by-step projects, chats and forums.

HOME & GARDEN

- GARDENING
- RENOVATION
- DECORATION
- HOMES

ON CANOE.CA



his mother's ambition . . . I assume that if he becomes prime minister he'll just say a prayer and look heavenward and say: 'Mom and Dad, I did it for us.' "

Martin Sr., a tireless campaigner who served as health, finance and external affairs minister, was thwarted in his 1948 leadership bid by Louis Saint-Laurent, in 1958 by Lester Pearson and in 1968 by Pierre Trudeau.

If those failures were catalysts, so was Martin's own failure at his 1990 leadership bid against Chretien.

Dogged by a testy relationship with Chretien, animosity reached a fever pitch last June when Martin was ousted from cabinet.

Since then, he has worked to retain support painstakingly built since 1990. Heavy fundraising and aggressive campaigning have left the Liberal party machinery tightly sewn up in his favour.

In February, 259 of 301 riding association presidents signed Martin's nomination papers. As many as 126 MPs - including more than 13 cabinet ministers - are backing his bid, organizers say.

Both his challengers, Deputy Prime Minister John Manley and Heritage Minister Sheila Copps, openly admit he's got a huge lead.

Industry Minister Allan Rock abandoned the race earlier this year, saying Martin was unbeatable.

Announcements over the past few weeks have begun to trickle out from ministers eager to endorse him, including Health Minister Anne McLellan, Public Works Minister Ralph Goodale and International Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew.

A slew of others have reportedly signed his nomination papers and are expected to formally back him in the days and weeks to come.

Neither Copps nor Manley has any official cabinet endorsement yet.

While the support of MPs and cabinet ministers won't guarantee a win, it's a testament to Martin's slick, aggressive campaign tactics on the ground.

"It's not that Martin can't lose - it's that it would take a major error for him to stumble," said Jeffrey Hale of the University of Lethbridge.

"It would take some howling mistake by Mr. Martin of a career-destroying level of stupidity to make the race competitive. It has to be something that would so call into question his fitness for office that it would shake the trust of large chunks of the organization."

That's not to say Martin has no challenges, Jacek notes.

For example, having so much support can actually become a liability as the campaign grinds on, he said.

"Too many people have gravitated to him because they think he's a winner, and the expectations are extremely high by all these people," he said. His inability to please everyone could lead to infighting if Martin achieves his dream.

Martin also has to guard against complacency in ridings where members have been behind him for years, said Hale.

Those places could be subject to overthrows of riding executives, such as a recent incident in the Toronto riding of Parkdale.

There, a Copps-friendly slate overthrew a Martin-led president and executive in MP Sarmite Bulte's riding, despite attempts by the Martin camp to thwart it.

But that may prove the exception rather than the rule.

Annual general meetings this weekend in the Kitchener-Centre riding of MP Karen Redman and the Bramalea-Gore-Malton riding of MP Gurbax Malhi were expected to be staid affairs, party watchers said.

Both MPs promised no turmoil on their Martin-led executives.

Jacek, for one, disputes the argument he said he's heard from Liberals that Martin should win because of his father's experience.

"That is a very odd argument, based on political ambition, not on political principles," he said.

But he adds the nature of Martin's drive is nothing new, nor is it necessarily bad for the country.

"It's no different than any other Liberal prime minister over the past 100 years," he said, adding he expects Martin to use "the power of government to essentially steer a middle course and deal pragmatically with the nation's problems."

 E-MAIL TO A FRIEND

cnews Top News

CANADA | [N.B. crab fishermen boycott industry to show anger over federal quotas](#)
WORLD | ['Worse than a nightmare' - death toll climbs following Midwest tornadoes](#)
TECH NEWS | [Ted Turner sells 60 million AOL Time Warner shares, cuts stake by half](#)

CANADA | [Man argued about getting suitcase onto Air India flights, woman tells court](#)
WORLD | [Colombian rebels execute state governor and former defence minister](#)
LAW & ORDER | [Scott Peterson appears in court; lawyer vows to prove his innocence](#)

CNEWS Poll

Will the current Middle East peace plan be successful?

Yes
 No
 Not sure
 Don't care

[The results so far](#)
[Read more](#)

POLITICS | [Attempt to recall Campbell falls short](#)
WAR ON TERROR | [Huge security drills](#)

[planned in Seattle, Chicago; Canadian partners to help](#)
WEIRD NEWS | [Motorcyclist, cow die after collision on Interstate 95 in Florida](#)

CANOE Your Internet Network ... **cnews**

Inside CANOE.CA 

[CANOE home](#) | We welcome your [feedback](#).
Copyright © 2003, CANOE, a division of [Netgraph Inc.](#) All rights reserved.