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News Sections

- Top Stories
- Canada
- World
- Entertainment
- Sports
- Business
- Sci-Tech
- Health
- Politics
- Weather

News Programs

- CTV National News with Lloyd Robertson
- Canada AM
- W5
- Power Play
- Question Period

Features

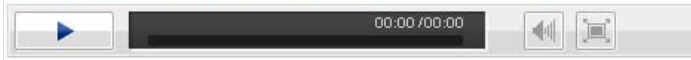
- Autos
- Consumer

Browse:

- Video
- Galleries
- MyNews

Home : Top Stories : Liberal ads call upcoming summits 'ego trip' for PM

Liberal ads call upcoming summits 'ego trip' for PM



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CTV.ca News Staff
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Photos



A construction worker puts up a three metre high steel security fence outside the Toronto Metro Convention Centre for the upcoming Toronto G20 summit in Toronto on Tuesday, June 8, 2010. (THE CANADIAN PRESS / Nathan Denette)

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The Liberal party is playing on public outrage over the estimated \$1.1 billion price tag of the upcoming G8 and G20 summits in a series of new radio ads.

The 30-second ads refer to the June 25-28 summits as an "ego trip" for Prime Minister Stephen Harper and a "billion-dollar boondoggle."

The French and English radio spots describe the so-called "fake lake" that's being built for media in the Toronto Convention Centre, at a cost of \$57,000, as "Canada's most expensive photo-op at a time of massive debt and out-of-control deficits."

The artificial lake is 10-centimetres deep, and one part of a \$1.9 million pavilion.

"When you head to the lake this summer, remember that you're paying for Harper's trip, too -- an ego trip Canada can't afford," one of the ads says.

The party also emailed its members a letter about the ad campaign, signed by Liberal public safety critic Mark Holland, which asked for donations of \$10, \$25 or \$100.

The letter also warns that the Tories could attempt to bring about an election before the auditor general releases a report about the costs of the summit later this year.

"Because of poor planning and pork-barrel politics, Stephen Harper is wasting Canadians' money on a fake lake, a dry-docked steamship, gazebos, public toilets and sidewalks that are nowhere near the G8 site -- alongside an astronomical \$900-million security bill," Holland said in a statement posted on the party's website.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty reacted to the ads by saying the majority of spending for the summits is allotted to security.

"It's our obligation if we're going to host an international meeting with the leaders of the

CTV News Video

CTV National News: Daniele Hamamdjian reports
The Liberals have rolled out new attack ads that take aim at the controversial costs involved in hosting the upcoming G20 summit. The video, featured on the Liberals' website, was made to make sure no one forgets about the artificial lake.

CTV News Channel: Peter Woolstencroft on the ad
According to a University of Waterloo political scientist, the new Liberal ad is effective in getting the idea that the G8 and G20 summit costs are a waste of money across to viewers.

CTV News Channel: Nik Nanos, Nanos Research
A pollster says there are two ways to sway Canadian voters - one is to build up your party's leader and the other way is to tear down the opponent and because it is easier

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Security Preps
Toronto police officers from the Public Order Unit demonstrate G20 security and crowd control measures.

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world attending -- representing 80 per cent of the GDP of the world -- that we have full and adequate security in our country, and that's expensive," Flaherty said.

"If Canada is going to take its place in the world, and we have a leadership role in the world then we have to pay the bills for this kind of summit."

Pollster Nik Nanos said the ads are designed to paint the billion-dollar price tag of the summits as an expression of Harper's personality, "so that every time people see anything related to the summit, they're not just thinking about the substance of what the prime minister is doing but they're thinking about the costs related to this."

"It also increases the stakes and the pressure on the prime minister," Nanos told CTV News Channel. "If the Prime Minister can come through with some type of substantive policy breakthrough then he'll be able to combat or manage this particular issue which is troublesome for the Conservatives."

With files from *The Canadian Press*

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Watch the anti-American comments start appearing with the claim that the liberation of Afghanistan from the Taliban was about plundering the country instead of helping the innocent people of Afghanistan from the brutal Taliban. Remember the Taliban's poison gas attack on the girl's school a few days ago? That is why NATO is there!

Mark

Afghans: U.S. finds mineral riches in Afghanistan