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Justin Trudeau takes Julian Fantino to task for attack on Charter

By Gloria Galloway
Globe and Mail Update

Montreal MP heaps scorn on quote from former top cop's autobiography in video spot supporting Liberal by-election candidate

With his Movember 'stache and soul patch, he looks like he's auditioning for the role of Zorro - or perhaps a Captain Morgan commercial - but Justin Trudeau has made an impassioned video denouncing Julian Fantino for unkind words the police-chief-turned-Conservative-candidate apparently made about the Charter of Rights.

The former high-school drama teacher puts his best inflection skills to work in this promo video [<http://www.liberal.ca/newsroom/photos-and-video/#media/video/cilb2fys9ui>] for Liberal candidate Tony Genco, who is trying to knock down Mr. Fantino as they head into the final weekend of what has been an increasingly nasty by-election race in the suburban Toronto-area riding of Vaughan.

"I was so shocked to find out what Julian Fantino thinks about the Charter," Mr. Trudeau says, his voice heavy with disapproval.

"Fantino said, and I quote 'Who has reaped the greatest benefit from the Charter of Rights and Freedoms? I would argue that, if it isn't common criminals, then it must be the Hells Angels.' We need people in Ottawa who want to protect the Charter of Rights, not tear it down. That's what's at stake in this election in Vaughan."

That, and the possibility the Liberals will be shut out of all three federal by-elections when the votes are counted on Monday. The party is bringing out its big guns this weekend to try to rip into Mr. Fantino's front-runner status.

Those big guns include Mr. Trudeau whose father, of course, entrenched the Charter in the Constitution. The younger Trudeau says he pulled the disparaging words about the document from Mr. Fantino's autobiography.

"It shouldn't surprise anyone that he's hiding through this campaign," the Montreal Liberal MP says, dripping scorn as he makes reference to the fact Mr. Fantino has missed public all-candidates debates. "But, if he can't even defend himself, how will he defend your interests?"

In fact, Mr. Fantino is willing to defend himself. "After serving for over 40 years as a police officer," he told The Globe in an email Friday afternoon, "I don't need any lectures on law and order from a novice member of the 'hug-a-thug' Ignatieff party."

Mr. Fantino was asked by Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff to run for his party in Vaughan - but Mr. Fantino turned him down [<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ottawa-notebook/michael-ignatieff-courted-julian-fantino-but-was-rebuffed/article1814660>], according to the Conservatives..

