

McDermid takes Milne's office as new MP settles into job

By GENE MOONEY
Herald special

The newly-elected Member of Parliament for Brampton-Georgetown, John McDermid, is taking a careful but serious approach to his new position.

His first priority was the establishment of a functional riding office, which now is open at the Bramalea City Centre.

Mr. McDermid said he and representatives of the Progressive Conservative riding association considered several locations before deciding to take over the office space used by defeated Liberal MP Ross Milne.

Although Mr. Milne was defeated as incumbent for the revised riding in the May 22 election, he has not yet totally abandoned the riding but remained to offer his successor advice in the transition period.

"Ross has been really helpful. He has given me a lot of background information about the riding and problems that arise," said Mr. McDermid.

"I am just a rookie, and don't really know the ropes while he has more or less been acting as the teacher."

The new MP said he has already started getting calls from constituents, with the first one coming in at 8:30 a.m. the day after he was elected.



JOHN McDERMID

Constituents' calls vary, he said, but the typical problem in the riding so far seems to be immigration. Unemployment problems and Canada Pension problems are also discussed by some distressed residents, he said.

People are also interested in whatever developments might be proposed for Toronto International Airport and other matters of that sort, he said. The son of a United Church minister, the 38-year-old McDermid has been a resident of Brampton for 34 years.

He and his wife, Elaine, have been married for 15 years and live on Alderway Avenue. The new MP says he has no intention of moving his home to Ottawa.

"I am fortunate that I have friends in Ottawa and will be able to stay with them until I find accommodation," he said.

He said he will wait until called to Ottawa by Prime Minister Joe Clark

before seeking accommodation. Mr. McDermid said he expects that call later this week or early next week.

It is his intention to commute between Brampton and Ottawa weekly.

Elayne McDermid is a teacher and will remain at work here.

"For 3 1/2 years, I worked with (provincial cabinet minister) Claude Bennett, and perhaps twice a week I would get home out of seven-day trips to Ottawa," said Mr. McDermid.

"At Ontario Place (his most recent employer), particularly when it was opening, I would put in a 17-hour day, seven days a week, so we have got the time elements on our side," he said. "We're used to it."

The new MP said he has often been called upon to live away from home in the past, and by keeping busy, he doesn't have time to get lonely. "I like being busy," he said.

other countries, such as Britain, he said called their election and completed them in less time than the Canadian election took.

Eight weeks for elections in Canada is a long time, "people are just sick of the campaigns in the last weeks," he says.

Mr. McDermid said he hopes to promote his proposal through the Conservative caucus, but if need be, he will introduce it as a private member's bill.

During his election campaign Mr. McDermid said he would survey riding opinions on issues and other matters concerning the area.

Included in his plans are a series of town hall meetings similar to those held in the past by Mr. Milne.

The new MP is also investigating ways of using his parliamentary newsletter to promote and solicit a flow of opinions and information back to his offices.

TWO-WAY FLOW

"That is an area that Joe Clark stresses strongly," said Mr. McDermid. "People should be able to let us know what they are thinking. It is very important that we maintain a two-way flow of communication with the constituents."

At the time of the interview, Mr. McDermid did not know when he would be called to a meeting with the new government.

A Conservative campaign promise to allow income tax reductions on mortgage rates could have significant effect on development in this community and on many homeowners. When will it be implemented?

"It will be the first budget I am positive of that," said Mr. McDermid. He speculated that the first budget of the new government will be brought down in September.

The MP-elect described his victory at the polls as a "humbling experience."

The realization "that 31,000 people out of a total of 100,000 voted for me is a humbling experience. It's my job now to justify that vote," he said.

"Whether the election was an anti-Trudeau vote or whatever, I now have to prove that I belong there in Ottawa and speak for not only those that voted for me but all the people of the riding."

For the past year Mr. McDermid was employed as manager of public relations and planning at Ontario Place. He had previously served as executive assistant to Claude Bennett.

A member of the Flower City Masonic Lodge, he also serves on the official board for St. Paul's United Church.

He has served on many other community and political organizations.

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New line for Park Toyota

An era has ended for one of Canada's oldest Toyota dealerships with the recent change over of Park Toyota at Highway Seven and Sideroad 20 to Park Lincoln Mercury Sales Ltd.

Co-owners of the dealership Paul Macdonald and Walter Dixon said change has been forced on them by the change in world economy. The decrease in the value of the Canadian dollar coupled with the rise in the value of the yen and the rise in import duties in the past couple of years has cost Toyota its competitive edge.

The change in their line won't affect their staff, Mr. Dixon said, since they'll continue to service their former Toyota customers and look after Ford at the same time. All 15 of their employees are local and have been with them for several years.

Park Motors began 20 years ago on Park Street in Glen Williams selling used cars and doing service work and body repairs. In 1965 the owners Ed and Tom Van Alphen moved to the present location at the corner of Highway Seven and Sideroad 20. They flipped a coin to see whether they'd sell Toyotas or Studebakers and signed a contract with Canadian Motor Industries in May 1965 for the cars which C.M.I. would import.

Mr. Macdonald went to the company as a sales representative in 1969, moved up to manager and finally bought out one of the partners in 1974. He has lived in the area since the early 1950s and owned a couple of businesses in Erin in the early 1960s. He, his wife and two sons live in Georgetown.

Mr. Dixon has been an area resident since 1951 and began his career in the car industry with the Dodge Brothers in 1967, selling Ford Mercury.

In 1971 he became sales manager for Park Toyota and bought out the other partner in 1976. Mr. Dixon, his wife and young daughter live in rural Halton Hills.

"Toyota is still a quality product", Mr. Dixon said, "but the difference in price means it just isn't the value for the money that it once was."

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