

Outlook on Halton Hills

Turner's town hall talks get off to a lively start

By BRIAN MacLEOD
Herald Staff

More than 70 people - mostly Progressive Conservative supporters - thrashed out issues crucial to the country's future at Halton Peel MP Garth Turner's "town hall" meeting in Georgetown Wednesday.

Mr. Turner was told by the vocal crowd to reduce the deficit, even if it means huge cuts in spending.

But audience members also want the government to clean up the environment - possibly with the help of a new environment tax.

There were also calls to bring an end to universal family allowance, to stay clear of universal day care, to cut unemployment insurance benefits with such a buoyant economy and to scrap the "distinct society" clause for Quebec in the Meech Lake accord.

And the federal government should cancel, or at least delay, the \$8 billion submarine acquisition program until it has Canada's economic house in order, audience members said.

But it was the deficit, a favorite target of Mr. Turner's during the recent election campaign, which drew much of the attention. Audience members were angry that after four years in power finance minister Michael Wilson still plans for a government spending deficit in his budgets.

"Michael Wilson's got a stone

that bleeds," said one audience member of increasing taxes.

But Canadians have developed a "bleeding heart" syndrome when it comes to social benefits, said Mr. Turner.

"Canadians have demanded from their government more than the government can raise through taxes," he said, only to receive a chorus of groans and "no ways" from the audience.

Canada has run up a \$325 billion debt, mainly since the mid-'70s, and it costs about \$29 billion annually just to pay the interest on it, said Mr. Turner.

"We raise enough money each year to run the country (about \$100 billion), but we don't raise enough money to pay the deficit."

To reduce the deficit (the extra \$29 billion each year) the government can only raise taxes or reduce spending, said Mr. Turner. He asked audience members their preference but received no definitive response.

He blamed the origins of the deficit on former Liberal Finance Minister Allan MacEachen, who ran a deficit to counter inflation during the mid-'70s.

The deficit has grown so large because Canadians haven't been well informed about the government's finances, he said.

"I don't think that a lot of politicians (in the past) have told you the truth about the country's

finances."

Most of the money is owed to US and Japanese investors in the form of bonds, he said. The political will to help curb the deficit is present in Ottawa and throughout the nation but the government must act now, because it will be too late in a few years, he said.

"All government spending needs to be looked at. Nothing should be sacred. Nothing should be left out from under the microscope," said Mr. Turner.

He believes Canadians are ready to pay a "deficit tax" to help pay off the nation's "mortgage."

The federal government's income tax reforms shift taxation from income to consumption. "It's quite a dramatic change," he said, adding that he has written a "Citizens Guide to Sales Tax."

But it's easier to raise money through taxing people rather than corporations because business have so many loopholes they can use, he said.

The Conservatives will pay closer attention to the environment, in their coming term, said Mr. Turner. It will be expensive to clean up the environment but it may be aided by a new "eco-tax," he said.

"My sense of it is most Canadians would accept (the tax)" if the money was earmarked for cleaning up the environment, he said.

Special needs group plays waiting game

The North Halton Recreation Committee for Special Needs has applied for over \$3,000 in government funding, but won't know until April how much money the non-profitable organization will receive.

The group of disabled adults and seniors meets the first Wednesday of every month to get involved in crafts and other social activities. Town of Halton Hills Recreation and Parks Department's Supervisor of Adult Service Jeff Bitton says the group is "just waiting for budget approvals and grant approvals before we can go weekly."

"We've done our homework," he said, referring to the group's application to the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation and to the Town of Halton Hills for funding. "Now we have to play the waiting game."

But the waiting game also involves the group's fundraising ef-

orts. A Milton Bingo hall has offered proceeds from one night's bingo game in March to go to the Recreation Committee. The proceeds could reach as high as \$1,000, said Mr. Bitton.

"We have to man (the bingo). We have to provide about a dozen volunteers," he said.

A local group has offered to raffle a quilt for the committee, but this hasn't been confirmed, said Mr. Bitton.

The North Halton Recreation Committee for Special Needs will have displays at both the Acton and Georgetown fall fairs this year "to make people aware of us being around," said Mr. Bitton.

The group will meet again Feb. 8 at the Legion Hall in Acton. They will celebrate Valentine's Day with crafts, cookie decorating and possibly a dance to romantic music, said Mr. Bitton. The group will meet from 12 noon to 4 p.m.

Disposal costs rise

Disposing of household hazardous waste will cost Halton taxpayers more than \$214,000 in 1989.

The Region renewed its contract with Active Mobile Services Inc. to operate two hazardous waste depots in Halton. But the cost of running the disposal stations has risen by more than 17 per cent over 1988.

Originally, when Active were hired to dispose of Halton's household hazardous waste, the

set-up was intended to be on a trial basis, said Halton's public works commissioner Robert Moore.

But the costs for disposing the waste was higher than Active anticipated resulting in the increase, he added.

Active runs the new hazardous waste disposal depot in Milton at a cost of \$63,000.

The temporary station in Burlington, run one Saturday a month from January to December, will cost \$151,000.

No injuries in accident

An Acton man was involved in a single-car collision after he allegedly changed his mind about passing a car Saturday night, say police. A 1970 Oldsmobile was northbound on Trafalgar Road near Highway 7 when the driver attempted to pass a vehicle but

returned to the northbound lane. Police say the wheels hit an icy patch and the car went out of control and came to rest in a ditch. The car received moderate damage. Police are not pressing charges due to the wet road conditions and report no injuries in the accident.

Latest Legion winners announced



Legion Lines

J.T. Hayes
Branch 120 PRD

Car Club winners in the Georgetown Royal Canadian

Legion Branch 120 draw held Jan. 29 were Max Jack (No. 238), Pat Vattese (253), Dennis McClay (303), John Doherty (206), B. and M. Lantz (460), and Al Redmond (473).

In Friday Night Euchre action, Floss Tracey was high lady, while Helen Cranfield was second and Isobel Landry had the most lone hands. For the gentlemen, Bert Porter was high winner, while

Oliver Scragg was second. Joyce Tilson was also a winner for most lone hands.

Lucky winners in the Saturday Afternoon Meat Draw were Monica Southon, Chuck Tutty, Terry Bludd, Barb Reid, Bill Simpson, Linda Clyma, Dave Bell, Gary Alton, Bob Dunn, Doug Logan, Leona Middleton, and Emeline Pickett. The roast was won by Gary Kirk.

Entertainment in the lounge this weekend will feature Boots on Saturday, Feb. 4. There will be a Valentines Dinner and Dance in the auditorium Feb. 11.

Membership cards are now available for those who have paid their dues, including those who have paid in January. It would be appreciated if these cards were picked up.

Suspect nabbed by police

Halton Regional Police have charged a suspect in connection with a burglary and theft of over \$20,000 worth of goods from a 10th Line home Jan. 24.

Two vehicles, a 1977 Lincoln Continental and a 1983 Ford Bronco were taken from the premises. Police say one or more suspects entered the home by removing the glass from a sliding door. Once inside, they removed a microwave oven, and a color television set.

Police are connecting the break, enter and theft to the theft of a vehicle found abandoned near the crime scene. A 1987 Plymouth van stolen from Brantford Jan. 23 was found near the 10th Line home. Police say the van's licence plates were stolen from a car in Burlington.

A Hamilton man, 21, is charged with break and enter, possession of stolen property and is charged by

Brantford police with the theft of a motor vehicle.

Halton police also charged the suspect with possession of narcotics. Police say charges to other suspects could be laid pending an investigation.

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