

# New national sales tax has people "steamed up"

**Garth Turner**  
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I guess by now everybody knows Michael Wilson delivered his long-awaited paper on the Goods and Services Tax a few days ago. The reaction has been just about as a lot of folks suspected. Everybody hates taxes, so they're steamed up about any plan to overhaul the whole damn system.

Right now, you'll get no pitch from me on how this is the greatest event in modern history. Instead my job is to listen, and to explain - not to sell. To that end, this is what I'm going to do:

-First, as I mentioned here last week, I have seven Town Hall meetings planned for across the riding over the next few weeks. If you want to yell at me for Wilson's plan, well, I'll be there to be yelled at. The last thing I will do is hide - and it was no mistake I arranged these meetings for after the tax paper. It's not fun for me, but it's right.

-I have read the whole technical paper, and everything else related to the tax reform proposal, and now am writing a guide to it. In everyday language, I want to explain exactly what the feds plan to do and, more importantly, why

they want to do it. A copy of this will be sent to every house in the riding - because I want you to understand, and then respond to me.

-That response - whether it's good or bad - will be put in my report to Wilson. The man knows there are areas of this tax reform which I would change. Now I want him to know exactly what you would suggest be done differently. So, I hope you take the time to read the guide, then let me know.

-The Halton-Peel tax committee, which met with Wilson here several weeks ago, is now studying the technical paper and preparing its own report. This committee is made up of taxpayers and small business people from Bolton and Burlington and Georgetown. Later this year its report will be presented to the House of Commons Finance Committee, as it conducts hearings into the sales tax.

-Finally, tax is only one side of the federal money picture. The other side is spending. Maybe if the government spent less, it could tax less. Maybe there are many areas where real, meaningful cuts could be made. This is something I promise you I'll be working at.

In Ottawa, I chair the House of Commons committee which oversees government operations. There are 28 federal agencies and departments reporting to this committee, and together they spend billions of dollars. This fall, after Parliament resumes, it's my intention to have the committee start a review of government spending - so we can identify areas where the government can start swinging a big axe.

Listen, I've got no illusions. The new tax is unpopular. Wilson knows that, and has talked about what a hard political sell he faces.

I also know that the opposition parties will attack relentlessly. There is a time for partisanship and for anger and we'll see lots of that in the coming weeks. For a relatively new politician like myself - especially for a guy who led tax revolts in the past - these are not easy days.

But I hope somewhere between the black and the white, between the media reports of furious taxpayers and the suits at the finance department, that we find some common ground. It the GST is no good, then what are the alternatives. Is the status quo - with an outdated, unfair and leaky tax system with loopholes for the rich and big business - is that an option.

If not, what should change. There are a stunning 22,000 exemptions to the existing federal sales tax. We tax our exports more than imports - so something's got to happen. Right now, 48 other countries have the kind of tax in place which Wilson is proposing here. Some of them, I know, have also gone through this similarly wrenching national debates.

The important thing to remember is that this country belongs to all of us, and we all want the best for it. Ottawa isn't perfect - I know that now more than ever. The politicians don't always know everything or make the best decisions. But they are always accountable to the people.

I will do all I can over the coming months to be accountable to you. In return, I ask for your help and input, suggestions and comments - so that our voice matter on Parliament Hill.

Several dozen people turned out last Thursday night for the first formal meeting of the Halton-Peel Environment Committee. It was a great night, as we discussed projects we can embark on and ways of raising community awareness of environmental concerns.

My real thanks to all those who took the time to come, and who will be working with me on drafting legislation for introduction into the House of Commons. There's a real wealth of talent here in the community and this committee holds great promise.

We're meeting next on the evening of Wednesday, Aug. 30. If you'd like to be involved, please give the office a call. The number is toll-free: 1-800-668-4322.

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**Norval News**

By KAY WILSON  
Herald Special

**25th anniversary**

Congratulations to John and Ria Wilson of Indian River, formerly of R. R. Norval, on their 25th wedding anniversary. The evening was held at the Norwood Curling Club on August 12. Their son Rod of Brampton, daughter Leanne and her husband Bill McConnell and granddaughter Sadie of Markdale assisted with a family dinner reception for 125 people followed by a sing-song and dance.

Attending were members of their bridal party Betty Fieton, Teeswater; Aveline Waters, Hamilton; and Jean Wilson, Georgetown; ushers Herb Van Arkell, Cheltenham; and Tom Hunter, Orangeville. Unable to be present were Maid of Honor, Joan Best, Glen Williams; and best man, Pual May of Rockwood. Soloist Ruth Lyons and her husband Clark Lyons of Norval and toastmaster Gerald Pebesma and his wife Jan of Brampton attended as did, John and Ria's parents Mrs. Rick Van Arkell of Brampton and Spencer and Kay Wilson of Norval.

Many family members were there from the Van Arkell, Wilson and Hyatt families, neighbours, former Halton Junior Farmers, Brampton Musical Society and members of the Eastern Limousine Association and Plowmans Association, all enjoyed the party.

**Anniversary party**

Norman and Ethel (Hyatt) Somerville of Sudbury, visited with their son Bob and his wife Janet Somerville of Mississauga and all motored on to the 25th anniversary party for John and Ria Wilson at the Norwood Curling Club. The Somerville's dropped in on Spencer and Kay Wilson enroute down to their son, Bob's home.

**Sympathy to Bells**

Sincere sympathy is extended to the family of Dalton Bell of Conn, Ont. formerly of the Tenth Line, Norval R. R. 1, who passed away in the Princess Margaret Hospital, Toronto on Aug. 2, 1989. He leaves his wife Eva, four sons and two daughters, Frank, John, Carl and Sam, Mary Jane and Sandra. Funeral service was from the Gooding Funeral Home, Arthur, on Aug. 5, 1989. Cremation followed.

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