

Food for thought in Ottawa

Garth Turner
MP
Halton-Peel



In just a few days, I'm back to Ottawa. It's hard to believe that the summer has melted away so quickly, or that so much has happened over the past couple of months. Let me give you a taste of what life has dished me in the past 11 weeks.

—Finance Minister Mike Wilson unveiled details of his nine per cent Goods and Services Tax, which has resulted in a national debate about the economy and taxes and the future. Wilson and his staff have been in touch with me often, and I have told them that I think some changes are needed - like lowering the rate, cutting out some exemptions and making sure consumers are protected.

By this time you should have received the 20-page guide to the new tax which I wrote. It's an attempt to explain the changes, not sell them to you - and I hope you take the time to fill in the response sheet included in that guide. Tell me what you think, so I can tell the feds.

—We held seven Town Hall meetings across this big riding of Halton-Peel, in Brookville, Acton, Burlington, Terra Cotta, Norval, Belfountain and Palgrave. It was not easy for me, standing up before crowds of people after Ottawa had announced a new tax - but I know it was the right thing to do. Personally, I learned a lot. And I thank the citizens and taxpayers who came out to talk to me.

—Still on the GST, the Halton-Peel Tax Committee has been studying the proposals that Wilson came out with, and will be making a submission to the House of Commons finance committee. This group of people is made up of accountants and small business operators from across our area,

and I very much value their advice.

The committee will be holding two public meetings on the tax changes, before it writes its report. If you'd like to get on record, then please attend - 7 p.m. Sept. 26 at the community centre in Bolton; Sept. 28 at the Cultural Centre in Georgetown. I'll be in Ottawa those nights, so chairman Colin MacKinnon will be in charge.

—I've been in the Maritimes on three occasions this summer - twice at the request of the prime minister, and this last time because Wilson asked me to go. I went through rural Nova Scotia, listening to the thoughts of people there; then to Prince Edward Island, where I learned what the planned closure of CFB Summerside would mean to the local economy. Both trips taught me a lot about how other Canadians are feeling.

Over the past three days I've been in Nova Scotia again, and New Brunswick - this time holding Atlantic versions of the Town Hall meetings we had here.

—Well, the Halton-Peel Environment Committee is up and running, and we had some great meetings over the summer. There are more than 60 people on this volunteer committee, and when we get together the air is thick with ideas.

We've broken into a number of working groups, with the clear intention of accomplishing some tangible good. It's one thing to talk about helping the environment, and another to actually do it. This time, we plan to be doers - from educational programs in schools to recycling displays in shopping malls to planting trees and drafting new legislation.

—Dorothy and I have enjoyed being at dozens of community events over the past few weeks. We've been to fall fairs, and the opening of new facilities and anniversary parties. We've been on the road from Highway 9 in the north to the QEW in the south.

The days have been full, meeting with dairy farmers and business people and school kids. Politics is hard, but it brings me into contact with so many people - and that can't help but make life fuller.

So, it's back to Ottawa now for a while. We'll be home every few days, of course, and you can always reach me through the office in Georgetown. This session of Parliament is going to be rough, as we talk about tax reform, abortion, government spending, privatizing Canada Post and a host of other issues.

As always, you know that I am not going to be just a cheerleader for government policy, but will try to fairly represent your views. I know that the feds have to get their house in order, cut the overhead and show real leadership.

This summer has taught me a great deal. It's confirmed some thoughts, reinforced others and hammered home the notion that you want Ottawa to be honest with you. I am just one MP - a new guy - and my influence is limited. But I promise to do my best.

And I thank you for the past few weeks.

Brothers march

The Little Brothers of Halton are planning a mini-protest. Some little brothers living in the Milton, Acton, Georgetown and Oakville areas have waited for a year or more for a Big Brother.

And they hope that a parade through town will give local men the message that they are needed to be Big Brothers. They will be out Saturday, Sept. 23 at 10 a.m. in Milton on the Main Street, to start the parade. They will travel to Acton's Mill Street for 11 a.m. and Georgetown's Main Street for 12 noon.

Currently the agency has 30 little brothers, some not-so-patiently awaiting an adult male friend.

Come out and see the little brothers on Saturday for more information, or call the agency at 847-7267.

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Legion auxiliary celebrates birthday

By FLO CARSWELL
Legion Auxiliary

We owe a big vote of thanks to Nadene Bradley and her committee for a very enjoyable birthday celebration. Guests of honor included our Zone Commander, Muriel Peck and her husband Roy; Mayor Russ Miller and his wife Gerry and the President of Branch 120, Hank Russell and his wife Mary. Marg Clarke, our banquet convener, and her helpers provided us with a delicious turkey dinner.

The honors and awards portion of the evening was as usual handled very capably by the chairman of that committee, Hazel Dumper. Recipients of the awards are as follows:

Life Membership, Mae Tost and Vi Hewett; Certificates of Merit, Vi King, Grace Harrison, Barbara Lorusso, Yvonne Graham, Marjorie Tutty. Past Officer Bar (Treasurer), Flo Carswell. Year Pins: 40 years of membership: Marg Martin. 25 years of membership: Bernice Ermond, Mid Brunski, Vi Coburn, Hazel Dumper. 20 years of membership: Nellie Bell, Flo Carswell, Helen Cloutier, Marg

Hodder, Win McPherson, Jean Roshier, Gair Scarborough, Elsie Swann, Audrey Weir, Flo Wilkie. 15 years of membership: Nadene Bradley, Marion Cunningham, Lillian Kirley, Yvonne Graham, Trudy Paul, Jane Terry. 10 years of membership: Marjorie Tutty, Gwenyth Thompson, Nikki Siefreid, Winnifred Lowrie.

Those who could not make it to the supper to receive their awards, could receive them at the general meeting on Thursday, Sept. 21.

There is a wedding on Saturday, Sept. 23 for which help is desperately needed. If you can be of assistance please call Liz McNeilly 877-4991 or Mary Russell 877-4952 (evenings) or let them know at the meeting that you would be willing to help.

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