Turner to fight for property owner's rights

Last week I told you about my changes - resigning as a committee chairman in Ottawa so I can better represent middle-class concerns in Ottawa. It seemed only logical to me, after learning how this system of politics works for the past two years.

Half way through my time as an MP i wanted to come back to the reasons I ever ran for office - fairer taxes, housing affordability, breaks for families, and care for both the economy and the environment.

I went back to Ottawa last week, and you'd think I had done something unprecendented in Canadian history. Calls from reporters lit up my office phones. I ended up on national TV explaining why the resignation took place. Some media interpreted what I'd done a some kind of protest against the government. And I kept getting asked, "but why are you really doing this?"

The real reason is too simple to be interesting: For years I was a critic of politicians, and now I am one. I'd like to be a bridge between government and average people. I'd like to put the middle class back on the national agenda - right up there with Lucien Bouchard and the Mohawk Warriors.

Parliament has resumed sitting, and by coincidence, this is the week in Ontario when people in the real estate industry celebrate the fact home ownership and private property are so important to us.

But did you know there is no constitutional guarantee in Canada about owning property? There's no law saying a government can't come along and take your house away.

For the last eight years, it's been that way - ever since the Constitution was brought back to Canada in 1982. Before that the Canadian Bill of Rights (which Diefenbacher established in 1960) said this: "It is hereby recognized and declared that in Canada there has existed and shall continue to exist...the right of the individual to life, liberty, security of the person and enjoyment of property and the right not to be deprived thereof except by due process of law."

But that right to own property was dumped from the Charter of Rights which we got when the Constitution came back - mostly because, at the time, the NDP ob-

jected to it.

So now, according to constitutional expert Peter Hogg, the Charter "affords no guarantee of compensation or even of a fair procedure for the taking of property by government. It means that the Charter affords no guarantee of fair treatment by courts, tribunals or officials with power over the purely economic interests of individuals."

And I object to that.

EAGLE offers scenic walk

Want to enjoy the fall colors? Come joine EAGLE (Ecology Awareness Group Landscape and Environment) on a scenic walk on Niagara Escarpment lands Sunday, Oct. 14, 1990 at 2 p.m.

EAGLE will be leaving from the Acton quarry lookout, heading down the Third Line, and joing the Bruce Trail to eventually complete the walk through a "sensitive" area threatened by quarries.

Guides will point out the historical significance of the area. Donations and pledges are welcome and all proceeds will go the EAGLE in the group's effort to protect the Niagara Escarpment as a unique natural area recognized world wide as a "Biosphere Reserve."

A bring your own barbecue will be held at the thome of Mr. and Mrs. Gori. Coffee and barbecues will be awaiting your arrival.

Details and pledge sheets can be obtained by phoning 877-7473 or 853-4915.

NB: Layered clothing and comfortable footwear is recommended. Garth
Turner
MP
Halton-Peel
PROGRESSIVE
CONSERVATIVE

To me, it should be a right thate any Canadian can own property and have some protection that government won't take it away. The Americans have this constitutional guarantee, and we should too

So I am raising the matter in the House of Commons, and asking the government to do more than just give lip service to private property rights.

Nothing will happen quickly, of course. After Meech Lake failed the whole issue of changing the Constitution collapsed. It will take a long time before passions cool enough that we can start talking again. But when we do, this item should be on the table, right beside the future of Quebec, the rights of native people, recognition of

women and minorities and every other special interest group demand.

Two years ago, the Tory MP from Kitchener, John Reimer, introduced a motion in the House of Commons which said the Constitution should be amended "in order to recognize the right to enjoyment of property, and the right not to be deprived thereof, except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice."

That motion passed, and yet be after two years - nothing has happened. During the last round of constitutional talks, the issue wasn't even mentioned. Once it.

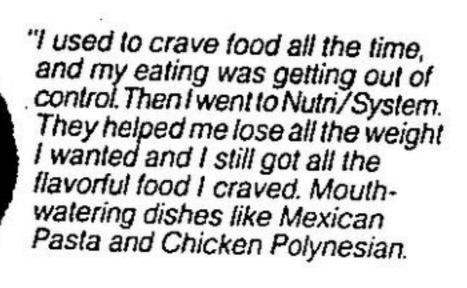
again, the middle class was left off the agenda because we're all too polite and patient. We're easy to ignore in a country where the extremists and the zealots and the lobbyists get all the attention.

No more. You and I should have some fundamental guarantee that nobody will come and take our houses away. It may be a small point, but it's important. In a country where home ownership is a basic fact of life, this only seems to be common sense.

So why has politics denied it?

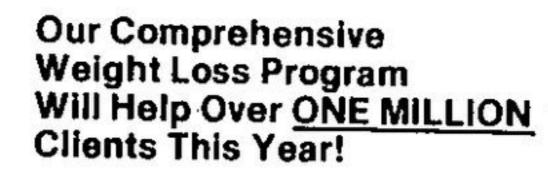
Let's try to find out. And then fix





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