

Political Forum

Turner brochure not junk mail

You should have received by now, in the mail, a copy of a brochure called "What if?" It may look like junk mail, but I hope you take the time to read the thing.

In September I told you here that I'd be devoting my time not to sitting in Ottawa running meetings, but to pushing for changes in policy, and the way in which we are governed.

I told you that halfway through my time as a Member of Parliament I did not want to lose sight of the reasons I ran in the election. They included finding a fairer tax system, getting Canada out of hock and using common sense when it came to government spending. I also wanted to see a more open and accountable political system, more affordable housing and more action on the environment.

Well, I have learned some things in Ottawa.

Like, the government doesn't have all the answers. If it did, we'd have no deficit and lower taxes. I've also learned that the political opposition doesn't have them, either - I'd like to hear a workable alternative to the GST as much as the next guy. I've learned how cynical people are about politicians and how respect for national institutions is being torn down by special interest groups.

Then I've learned how your title in Ottawa means more than what you think.

So, enough! Time to ask ourselves, "what if?"

The brochure pulls together a number of ideas - some of them new, most of them not. Some are my own, and some are borrowed. All of them are things I would dearly love to see happen.

Garth Turner
MP

Halton-Peel
PROGRESSIVE
CONSERVATIVE



On the environment, I think we should have a national waste management strategy - and stop abandoning this function to local and regional governments. Only a cross-Canada effort to cut down on trash through recycling and education can really do the trick.

We in Canada should also be doing more to encourage the use of alternative fuels, like ethanol and methanol, which are less polluting and can be made from stuff like corn or natural gas.

We should put private property rights in the Constitution. It would be nice if we had this right before people in the USSR did!

Let's change the income tax system - going to a Family Tax Return so one-income families don't pay more tax than families with two earners and the same income. Let's reward volunteers and people who care for elderly parents by giving them tax credits.

It's time to make housing more affordable by joint ventures between government and business, by letting people use RRSPs for downpayments and relaxing zoning and building codes.

It's also time to open up the political process to the public - maybe through an elected Senate

or other kinds of mechanisms.

Let's pass an amendment to the Constitution guaranteeing a balanced annual federal budget and taking away from politicians the ability to spend more than they take in.

And more - like taking that integrated look at taxes which I wrote about here last week.

None of these things are currently government policy, but that doesn't mean they may never be. My brochure may make some of the political heavies in the government look over their shoulders at me. But maybe they'll also agree that there's always room for improvement.

And this is where I could use a hand.

The more response I get from people to one or two or all of these ideas, the better the chances of political action. If hundreds - or better, thousands - of people in the riding respond, then that carries a lot more weight in this crazy place than my voice alone.

So, please take the time to read "What if" and then fill out the card at the back and mail it to me. Or write me a letter. You can do either and not even have to buy a stamp.

In the 1990s, the old ways may not work.

We may be riding into the 21st Century on the back of 19th Century institutions.

Maybe it's time we asked, What if?



THE CORPORATION OF THE
Town of Halton Hills

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HOUSING IN YOUR COMMUNITY AN OPEN HOUSE

The Town of Halton Hills Planning Department is hosting an **OPEN HOUSE** to encourage residents and interested groups to offer their views on how the Town may plan for the future housing needs within Halton Hills.

This informal session provides an opportunity for you to drop in and find out how the Town is progressing, how its Housing Strategy will set housing objectives to the year 2011.

The Town's Consultants, who are responsible for the strategy, will be on hand to hear your views and give up-to-date information on the Study.

No formal presentation will occur, but display material will be available for anyone wishing to view it.

Residents are encouraged to attend to express their views, at this preliminary stage of the Study.

Time: 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Location: Town of Halton Hills
Civic Centre
1 Halton Hills Drive
Date: Thursday, November 29, 1990

Ad. No. 1329

Throne Speech explained

The Throne Speech should be seen as the culmination of a three-step process that began when the election campaign was called.

First was the election itself, when we tried to be as clear and straight as we could about the differences between us and the other two parties. We represent, to a significant extent, a different Ontario from that of the Liberals and Conservatives, and we campaigned on some of the important issues that distinguished us.

In particular, we campaigned on the general proposition that the government was governing too much in the interests of the rich, the privileged, the large corporations, and those who routinely had easy access to the traditional parties at Queen's Park. We said we would govern in the interests of working people, ordinary folks, those who were the most vulnerable, those whose voice rarely was heard within the world of government.

Once elected, and throughout the past two months leading up to the Throne Speech, we've repeated these major campaign themes, but in the somewhat different context of being the government. We've repeatedly made it clear that our government's main agenda is to help forge for ordinary Ontario citizens a more decent and more just society. We've also said that we want to open the doors of government to those who have been kept out until now. At the same time, recognizing the economic realities of Ontario especially in a time of recession, we've acknowledged that it's not possible to deliver on all our commitments as quickly as we'd like, and we've been straight about admitting this. We've also made clear our understanding that the private sector must remain the main engine of the Ontario economy, and have invited the business community work in partnership with our government on any number of initiatives from mitigating the effects of the recession to meeting the en-



Noel Duignan

Halton North
MPP
New Democratic
Party

vironmental crisis.

We've repeatedly said that we will show that we know how to run the store efficiently, but we'll run it in the interests of all our citizens, not our most privileged ones. Politics, after all, is about farm more than what each of us can get from the state and each other; it's about what we owe each other as well.

Our Throne Speech embodies these and other main themes. Although the realities of government mean we can't go as far or as fast as we'd like on some important reforms, and though some of our friends will be disappointed, I think this is a pretty good start.

I've outlined some of the key agenda items of the Throne Speech as follows:

We intend to fulfil our promises, but we are highly dependent on the economy

We are creating a \$700 million package to fight the recession and to create jobs

We will introduce a Safe Drinking Water Act to set standards for water treatment

We are placing a freeze on new nuclear power development

We will introduce an Environmental Bill of Rights in this session to give individuals more control over their environment

We will launch a "Fair Tax Commission" to recommend long term reform of the tax system

We will introduce, in the spring, a Bill to reorganize the delivery of car insurance to the driving public

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