

# Political Forum

## Canadians should look forward to 1991

Ah, Canada. New Year's Day, and I opened up my Toronto Star to find the results of a new Gallup poll. "Only 18 per cent expect improvement in '91" the headline said. Now the interesting part of this was that the poll had been conducted in 37 countries - and the people polled in 34 of those countries were more optimistic than we were. In Hong Kong, where China is going to take the place over in a few years, and where people are scrambling to get out, 31 per cent were confident of a better 1991.

In Israel, where there is constant death and turmoil, people were 10 per cent more confident than Canadians. In fact, our confidence level was the same as in the USSR, where the stores have no food, civil war is at hand and the economy is simply crumbling.

Ah, Canada. A country where you can buy anything, travel freely, say what you please and enjoy free medical attention and world-class schools.

Why are we so grumpy and pessimistic? Surely things are

income tax forms that don't even require any calculations. Designed for seniors and lower-income people, they are the way all tax forms should be - one page long. I think that's progress.

Ben Johnson's going to run again. Our sailors, soldiers and pilots in the Persian Gulf are outclassing all other troops there. Car prices are the lowest they've been since 1967. Houses are much more affordable than they were a year ago.

I mean, let's put all this in perspective.

Sure, I know the economy is down after eight years of being up. I know the separatists in Quebec are talking big and whipping people's emotions. I know everybody's down on politicians. And I certainly know that the GST confused a lot of folks, partly because the Senate wanted to grandstand on the issue for eight months. But I think we're going to survive those things.

Surely we have more to be confident about than the people who live in Italy - where the inflation rate is the highest in the western world, and where no political party has the authority to govern. In

Italy, 43 per cent think 1991 will be better, compared to 18 per cent here.

And the Americans? They're determined to go to war. They've had a failure of the savings and loans industry. The mayor of Washington was busted for smoking crack. The economy is also in a recession, according to the White House. And, in the U.S., 48 per cent of the population thinks 1991 will be better than 1990.

You figure it out. Are we that badly off compared to the rest of the world; or are we just feeling sorry for ourselves?

I'll let you in on a secret. When I go to Ottawa, and I round the corner that lets me see the Peace Tower and the Canadian flag on the top of it, I feel a shiver of pride. It happens every time - when I drive in from being home for a weekend. Every morning when I head to the Parliament buildings. Even when I leave my office there to walk across the street to the House of Commons.

That may be corny stuff to admit, but it is still true.

I'm not giving up on Canada in 1991. Not by a long shot. I sure hope you're not going to, either.



**Garth Turner**  
MP  
Halton-Peel  
PROGRESSIVE  
CONSERVATIVE

not all bad. Interest rates are falling, for example. The prime rate is down from more than 14 per cent to 12.5 per cent, with many economists predicting something in the 11 per cent range by the end of next month. Lower rates are going to help people with mortgages to renew. They'll help encourage business investment, and bring a quicker end to the recession. They will help the feds pay less interest on the national debt.

Something else went by the other day that the newspapers ignored. Ottawa came out with new

### Queen's Park Report

## New beginnings

The New Year is always a time to reflect on the previous year and to look forward to new beginnings.

1990 was indeed a year of change, not only in central and eastern Europe, but in Canada as well, some examples being the failure of Meech Lake, the OKA crisis, and the change of government in Ontario.

On reflection, the September 6th election victory by the New Democratic Party was a chance given to the NDP to demonstrate what a social democratic government can do. I believe that the people of Ontario were prepared to look at an alternative to the two old parties. While there was probably an element of protest voting in the sense that people were saying "no" to old style politics and policies of catering to one element in our society - those that had power and money - just look at the way the Peterson Liberal Party presented itself in the mass media and how it actually governed. But the victory by the New Democratic Party was, in the end, a decisive one, and the NDP government is aware that the people in this province wanted change - change in the way governments in the past did business (deals done behind closed doors or through the "old boys network"). They want a more open style of government that consults and listens to more of them and that responds to the concerns of the majority, not like Brian and the PC Party in Ottawa. We intend to live up to that commitment and fulfill our "Agenda for People" over the next four to five years. We will act and spend wisely on behalf of the people of Ontario.



**Noel Duignan**  
Halton North  
MPP  
New Democratic  
Party

A number of constituents have asked me what happens when the assembly is not sitting. Generally, what occurs between now and when the Legislative Assembly returns on March 18th is that the Standing and Special Committees of the House meet to debate and to hold public hearings on government bills so that legislation and reports can be presented by the Committees to the House when it meets again in March. For example, I am the Chairman of the Legislative Assembly Committee, and we will be meeting for two weeks in February to deal with the review of the Freedom of Information Act. I am also a member of the committee on General Government, and we will be meeting for six weeks to deal with Bill 4 (rent control moratorium legislation) and to review, beginning February 18th, our government's new discussion paper on a permanent system of rent controls for Ontario.

If any constituent wants to appear before the Legislative Assembly Committee or General Government Committee, please call my office at 878-1729 so that the appropriate arrangements can be made.

## Resident fined

Halton Hills resident Sande De Santis received the maximum fine under the Town's littering bylaw during a Milton court hearing Thursday, confirmed Town Municipal Law Enforcement Officer Ron Stein.

Mr. De Santis, who didn't attend the hearing, was fined \$2,000 for not cleaning up his Tenth Line and Steeles Avenue property despite several requests by the Town to do so, said Mr. Stein.

The Town asked for the maximum fine because, "we wanted to set an example for the rest of the community. It's people's responsibility to keep their property in respectable condition as courtesy for their neighbors," said Mr. Stein.

Using the phrase "quite disastrous" to describe the property, Mr. Stein said it is cluttered with scrap metal, used machinery, wood, iron, beams, shale and other assorted litter.

The enforcement officer was first notified about the problem by a neighbor last July at which time he visited the property. A week later, said Mr. Stein, "I went back to the property and issued a notice of violation." Mr. Stein re-inspected the property in early August and instead of finding any improvement, Mr. Stein

said he found there had been an increase in the amount of shale dumped on the property.

Despite these notices, Mr. De Santis didn't try to contact the Town, said Mr. Stein, nor did he attend the Sept. 6 preliminary court hearing.

Since the Town's requests have fallen on deaf ears, "we hope the fine will trigger him, into taking some action," said Mr. Stein.

Mr. De Santis couldn't be reached for comment at press time.

He has 30 days to appeal the decision, said Mr. Stein.

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