

# Political Forum

## Ottawa Report

# The fight for less government continues

When I was elected to Parliament a couple of years ago, I said I wanted to fight for less government, a lower deficit and ultimately - lower taxes.

So, I voted to support spending cuts to VIA Rail, the CBC and special interest groups. I voted for the last budget which capped civil service salaries and imposed limits on how much the federal government can spend. After two years of asking that the GST be devoted to reducing the deficit - and not financing some new program - I was finally able to vote in favor of that.

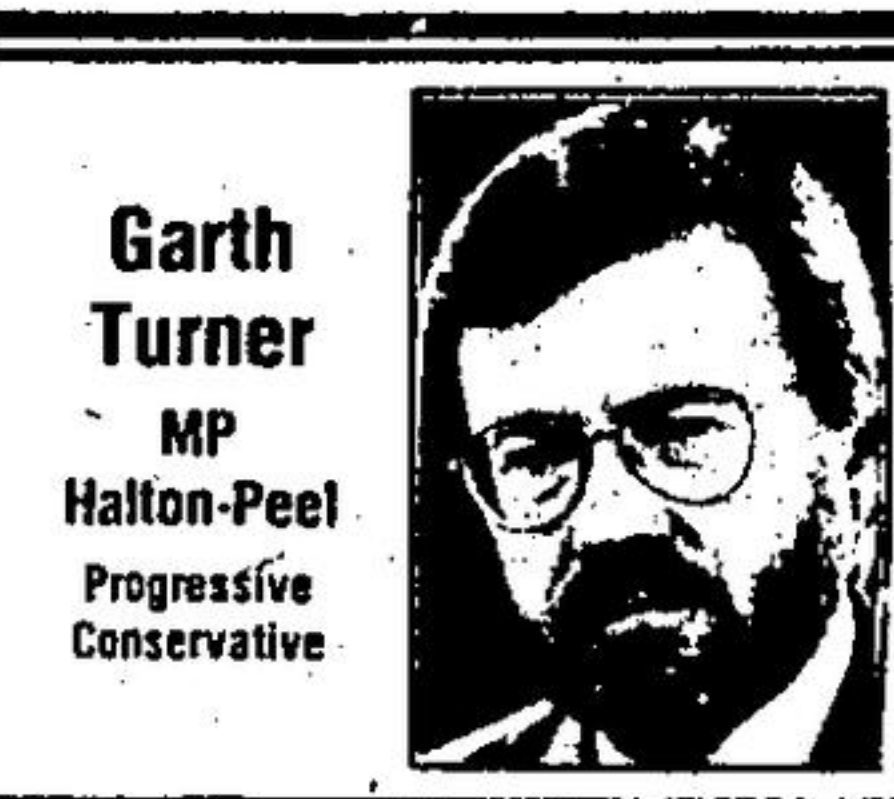
But all this is not enough. Until the deficit is zero, there's no hope that income tax rates can fall. The government says that should happen by 1994-5, while others say it has to come a lot sooner. I'm one of them.

In a few weeks we'll be getting a new Throne Speech. This is

when the government sets out the things it wants to accomplish in the coming session of Parliament. Over the last few months the prime minister has been asking for suggestions from people like me. I'd like to share with you today some of the things I have asked him, Michael Wilson, Don Mazankowski and others who matter, to consider. These are my goals:

- Freeze spending. That means no increase in pensions or family allowances for a specified number of years, to offset inflation. A freeze would save us \$3 billion a year, which come right off the deficit. The political advisors say Canadians would never accept this. I disagree.

- Make a tax system fairer. I wrote here last week about the need for a Family Tax Return, so that families with one income and a stay-at-home parent don't pay



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more tax than two-income families using daycare.

Making the tax system fairer could also mean a Family Care Credit, to offset the expenses of caring for elderly parents at home - instead of having no choice but to send them to an institution. And how about encouraging volunteers by letting them deduct minor expenses? Seems to me that in a country

with cash flow problems, volunteers are critically important.

- Reform our institutions. We've got a system designed in the 19th Century and we're dragging it like a ball-and-chain into the 21st Century. Abolish the Senate, or, at least make it elected. Make governments more equal - why do the people of Halton-Peel have one MP, when the same number of people in PEI have four?

- Make MPs more independent. More free votes. More power in committees to screen people appointed to be cabinet ministers. More checks and balances on the power and influence of inner government.

- Reduce the number of politicians. We have municipal, regional, provincial and federal governments. There is waste, duplication and overlap which makes Canada a more expensive, over-taxed and less competitive country. We have enough politicians for 100 million people, and that means the taxpayers are suffering under an unnecessary weight. Maybe we ought to solve our national problems by wiping out provinces and having only five regions (Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies, BC and North) - and having equal seats in the House of Commons.

- Put the right to own private property back in the Constitution. If Quebec separatists and Mohawk warriors get special attention, how about middle class

people who want their houses protected from the state? -

- Encourage a tax conference of all levels of government. Let's stop having one level of government tell another what to do - without providing the money. That's how our property taxes got so high. The government that spends the money should collect it - then we'd have more accountability as taxpayers.

- End the things that are dividing us. Like official bilingualism and multiculturalism. Let's make language policy follow common sense - bilingual where it's necessary, and fair. But also let's be tolerant. Above all, let's be Canadian, without the hyphens - stressing what we have in common, not what keeps us apart.

I don't know what will be in the Throne Speech, and can only hope that some of these things I've been working for, and promoting, are accepted. Canada is going through big changes, so we might as well throw open the doors and windows and do things right.

Over the past while a lot of people have written and called with their own suggestions. Others have come out - sometimes in droves - to Town Hall meetings to join in the debate. While not all the things written and said where what I might have wanted to hear, they were still important. So, thanks.

We've sent the messages. Let's see what happens.

## Queen's Park Report

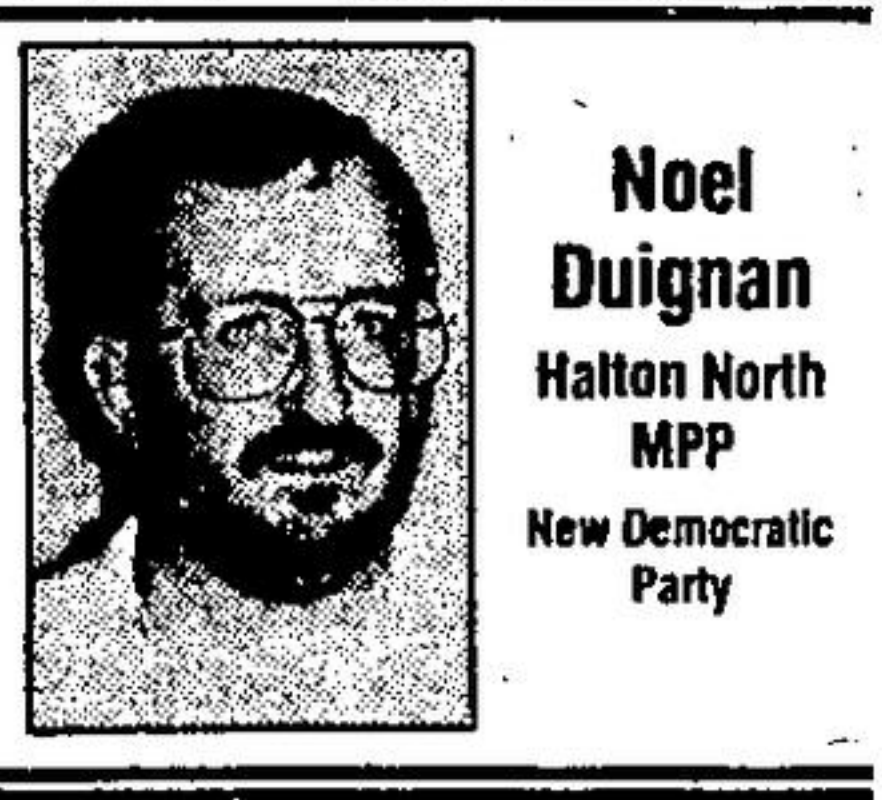
# Summer youth programs

### Summer Youth Programs

I would like to begin this report by saying how pleased I was to have Premier Bob Rae visit our riding on April 19, 1991. Business, labor, municipal and community representatives attended the event to hear Bob speak about our government's commitment to continue to assist Ontarians during the worst recession since the second World War.

As part of that commitment, we have acted upon your concerns about rental payments. I am happy to report that Bill 4, the legislation which places a moratorium on excessive increases, received third reading at Queen's Park on April 22, 1991. The moratorium will apply to rent increases taking effect from October 1, 1990 and will continue until new rent control legislation replaces the interim act. Under the freeze, most increases will be limited to the guideline percentages set each year by the Ministry of Housing. In 1990, the guideline was 4.6 per cent, and in 1991, it is 5.4 per cent. In spite of a court challenge recently initiated against the regulations, I share Housing Minister Dave Cooke's confidence that the courts will uphold the new legislation. Further information about the rent review system may be obtained by calling either 1-800-461-6767 (Toronto) or 1-800-668-9565 (Hamilton).

The Ministry of the Attorney General will again sponsor the Arrive Alive summer projects in communities across Ontario. The objectives of the program are to inform Ontarians that it is not safe to drive after consuming alcohol or other drugs that impair driving ability; to increase awareness and focus media attention on the impaired driving problem during the summer months when alcohol-related crashes and injuries are at a



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peak; and to provide worthwhile summer employment for Ontario students. Community, health and law organizations may apply for a grant to operate a summer project. The grant will cover the salary cost of two full-time or up to four part-time student employees and provide an allowance for supplies and expenses. Projects will be selected for funding on the basis of applications submitted to the Ministry by May 13, 1991. Further details about the program may be obtained by calling my Milton office at 878-1729 or by calling the Drinking/Driving Countermeasures Office at 416-326-4408.

My office has also received information on the Environmental Youth Corps program which gives interested youth the chance to earn money and gain excellent job experience while they contribute to the sustainability of Ontario's environment. Anyone between the ages of 15 and 24 (29 for persons with disabilities) can apply for jobs through the Corps. EYC projects are approved for funding by various host ministries and by now the EYC Approved Project List should be available. This list includes employer names, addresses and the number of positions offered at all organizations that have been

allocated funding for 1991. You can locate this list at your Canada Employment Centre for Students or obtain more details by calling the Youth Hotline at 1-800-387-0777.

The Summer Experience '91 Program (SEP '91) offers you the opportunity to acquire career-related experience with a wide variety of Ontario government ministries, their associated agencies or community groups. Age and other requirements are similar to those for the Environmental Youth Corps. A limited number of application forms and contact lists are available at my Milton office. Information about the approved Summer Experience '91 projects should now be available at Ontario Youth Employment Counselling Centres, Canada Employment Centres for Students or by calling the Ontario Youth Hotline at 1-800-387-0777.

And on a final note, my Queen's Park telephone number has been changed to 416-325-7859.

## Liberal meeting

Local residents planning to attend the Halton North Liberal Association fundraising dinner May 15 at Mohawk Raceway, should get a glimpse of the Ontario Liberal MPPs expected to seek the party's leadership.

Liberal Association President Richard Furlong said Monday the entire Liberal caucus has been invited to the dinner, and those interested will be permitted to address the audience on the leadership issue.

The party's interim leader is the province's former Finance Minister Robert Nixon.

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