

Politicians always look for silver lining behind clouds

OTTAWA REPORT

Recession has hit bottom - economy will improve

For those Halton Hills residents wondering about the future of Canada, you may have a say on the matter sooner than you think.

Halton-Peel MP Garth Turner said in a recent interview that as early as this fall there could be a Canada-wide referendum on the future make-up of Canada.

The question of national unity has to be answered by the country's highest authority and that's the people, said Mr. Turner.

The MP predicts the question of national unity along with the issues of the economy and the environment will continue to dominate this year's political

agenda just as these issues dominated last year's agenda.

Mr. Turner said Town residents are telling him they are sick and tired of Quebec's demands in order to stay in Canada.

Mr. Turner proposes that for the differences between English Canada and Quebec to be resolved the Federal government should end official Canadian-wide bilingualism and allow the provinces to develop their own respective language policy. As well, the government should transfer some powers to the provinces allowing them to be more autonomous, he said.



Garth Turner
MP
Halton-Peel
Progressive Conservative

On the issue of the economy, Mr. Turner says the recession has now hit bottom and will gradually improve through the

remaining part of the year. The MP agrees with many who say the Federal Government Goods and Services Tax introduced this past January has decreased spending more during the last four months than would have been the case had the GST not been introduced.

People now, however, are getting over the impact of the GST and have become more willing to spend, he said.

The MP qualified his optimism saying full economic recovery shouldn't be expected until the federal deficit is eliminated.

The Federal government predicts that goal won't be ac-

complished until 1995. Mr. Turner said the Federal government needs to become more heavily involved in the protection of the environment during the upcoming year. The government has a national packaging strategy in place but it needs to develop a similar strategy to deal with garbage disposal and the three R's, he said.

Pointing the finger at Ontario's Minister of Environment Ruth Grier, Mr. Turner said, "Ontario is in a state of paralysis over the environment."

The issue of garbage disposal is currently under the province's jurisdiction.

QUEEN'S PARK REPORT

NDP budget will stimulate the economy

It's no surprise North-Halton MPP Noel Duignan says being elected in last September's Ontario election was the highlight of 1990.

As the New Democratic candidate, Mr. Duignan was probably the last person people in the riding thought had a chance at beating Liberal candidate and incumbent, Walt Elliot.

Mr. Duignan admits he didn't expect to win the riding at the outset of the election campaign but when the final results were tallied and he was declared the winner, Mr. Duignan said he wasn't that surprised at the outcome.

Polls that his workers had con-



Noel Duignan
Halton North
MPP
New Democratic Party

ducted during the campaign indicated as early as 10 days before the election that he was the front runner, or at the very least, in a

close three-way fight between himself, Mr. Elliot and Progressive Conservative candidate Dave Whiting.

The recession is the major issue facing Halton Hills residents today along with the flight of Canadian jobs to the United States because of the free trade deal, said Mr. Duignan.

The provincial government is trying to spend itself out of the recession, said Mr. Duignan.

As a result of the recent Ontario budget announcement, the province's \$3 billion deficit has been increased to \$9.7 billion, and in this way, Mr. Duignan said, the economy will be stimulated.

Asked if the flight of jobs to

south of the border could have been caused by the province's uncompetitiveness, Mr. Duignan said no matter what the province did, a lot of Ontario industries can't compete with their competitors in the southern United States and Mexico because of the large wage differences.

The recession will continue to be the major issue in Halton Hills and the rest of the province for the remaining part of 1991, said

Mr. Duignan. He said that recovery will start in late summer but it will be slow. Jobs that have been eliminated during the recent recession won't be resurrected after the recession, he said.

Another big issue to be tackled this year is Canada's future and Quebec's future role in Canada. Mr. Duignan wouldn't predict what action he expects Quebec to take on the constitutional issue.

Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce optimistic about economic recovery

Halton Hills business people are optimistic that economic recovery is just around the corner but exactly when it will happen, no one is predicting, said Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce General Manager, Doug Penrice.

A lot of business people are optimistic about this year because consumer confidence appears to be on the rise, said Mr. Penrice. However, when the economic climate will return to the way it was before the start of the recession, Mr. Penrice said no one knows.

He predicts that not all sectors of the economy will recover at the same rate. "Companies in the automobile business and the building trades will take a little longer than other types of companies to reach full steam," predicted Mr. Penrice.

Asked why these two types of industry may take some time to recover, Mr. Penrice explained consumers will still take some time before they open up their wallets for the big ticket items such as cars and houses.

Mr. Penrice describes the past year as strange in some respects. While some companies have been severely impacted by the recession,



Doug Penrice

Other companies, such as Mold Masters and Curwood Packaging, have had a lot of business. That trend is continuing, he added.

These companies have succeeded where other have not, said Mr. Penrice, because they've focused a lot of attention on product quality and customer service.

These companies follow the motto "that when the going gets tough, the tough work harder," said Mr. Penrice.

Although the local business community expects the economy to turn around this year, Mr. Penrice says business owners will continue to be burdened with government bureaucracy that was so evident in 1990.


Mr. Penrice said in 1990 the most common complaint among business people was the amount of paper work they were burdened with from all levels of government. The paper work was

associated with the Goods and Services Tax, the province's Employer Health Tax, and the government requirement that businesses label all products containing any hazardous waste material. The labelling came

under the federal legislation referred to as WHMIS. "The legislation had a major impact," said Mr. Penrice.

Mr. Penrice says business should expect further government legislated paper work in the coming year because government doesn't run itself with the same "lean and mean attitude" that business must have in order to survive.

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