

Political Forum

Ottawa Report

Too much taxation from different levels of government

I've told you before that this is not an easy time to be a politician. That was hammered home last week on Parliament Hill as a mess of truckers parked their rigs on the street and created traffic chaos.

They stayed there for ten days, with the trucks carrying signs saying "Canadian People Fighting Back," and "Honk if you want lower Taxes." Lots of people honked. Others wondered why the police would let them stay there, on a street where parked cars get towed away. Maybe the police want lower taxes, too.

In fact, we all do. That's why the introduction of the GST was so damaging to Ottawa. That's why the NDP in Ontario are having some trouble with \$1 billion in new taxes in the last budget. That's why there have been tax protest meetings in Caledon East and last week in Georgetown. It's why the Taxpayers' Coalition of Ontario has been growing so quickly.

Living in this country is not cheap. Last Thursday a United Nations study of 160 countries ranked Canada second (behind Japan) in terms of the best nation to live in. Our health and education programs were among the reasons - we sure have poured a lot of tax dollars into financing them, which is one reason taxes are high.

But there are others - like too much government, and, especially, too much debt. These are reasons which drove me into politics. Middle class wealth is under attack from all sides, and I deeply regret that.

This is why I've been supporting and promoting the tax protest groups. It's why I held that debt conference in Ottawa - to find solutions, other than higher taxes, to the problems we face. It's also why I'm trying to get the federal government to have a fairer Family Tax return; to hold a tax conference for all levels of government; and to find ways we can eliminate a whole



Garth Turner
MP
Halton-Peel
Progressive Conservative

level of government - because there's just too much of it.

One set of taxpayers has four sets of governments charging taxes. It's too much taxation, with too little that people can say about it.

The truckers outside my office were a symbol of the frustration this breeds. The recession has been cruel to a lot of people. Jobs have been lost and families have been hurt. Politicians of all

stripes have been blamed. I know about the people who call me Turncoat Turner - who thought I should have stood in the back rows of Parliament screaming at the government.

But I didn't do that. Instead, I have tried to lobby for change from within. There have been some successes, like asking for two years that all the GST money go to reduce the deficit. It finally happened. If we have to pay the tax, at least we should have a guarantee on where the money's going. In fact, we ought to have other taxes handled the same way, instead of just disappearing into the guts of government.

I have no idea if I'll be successful on other fronts. And I certainly won't try to pretend that any government, or political party, has all the answers. Nor will I apologize for continually asking for your input.

Frankly, it's hard to understand all the conflicting voices I hear at Town Hall meetings or in the letters to the editor. Some tell

me I'm wrong to urge people to rise up and be part of the political process. Others then complain that MPs are too distant, and don't listen.

I guess it just proves an old saying - you can't please everybody. So, I ask again for your comments - what can we be doing better? How can we get lower taxes through spending cuts? A thousand more jobs were cut in Ottawa last week at National Defence headquarters, and many military bases will be closed across Canada - is that satisfactory? Where else should we cut back?

To my mind, the most important thing we can do is work together - have federal, provincial and local governments singing from the same song sheet. What's the point of cuts in Ottawa when civil servants at Queen's Park are getting \$11,000 salary increases?

We won't get that common sense without public support. Think about it, and let me know.

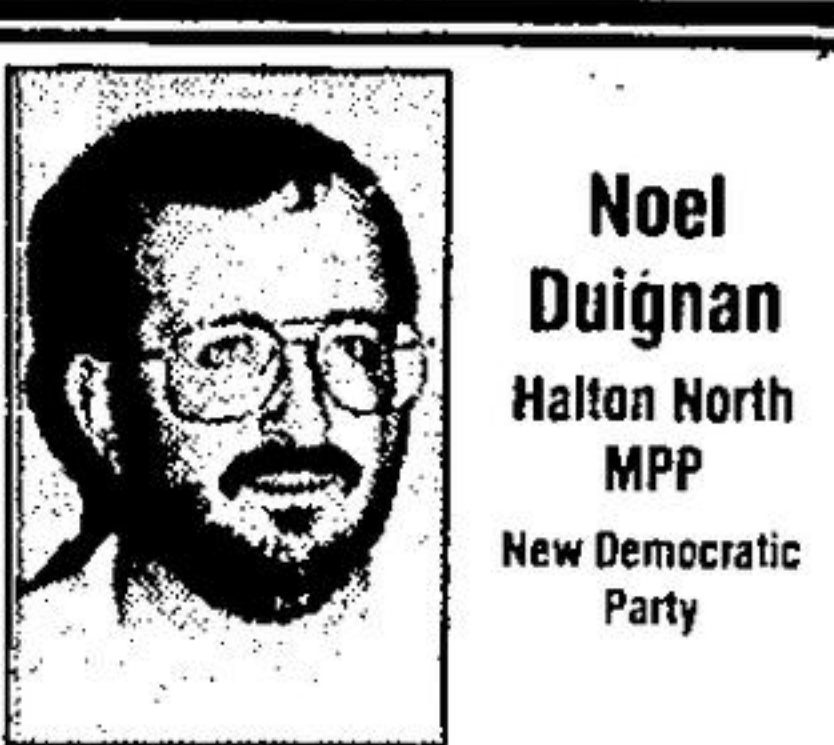
Queen's Park Report

Conservatives blamed for causing legislation disruption

A couple of weeks ago I mentioned that the Conservative members in the Legislature had been obstructing the business of the House since late April. Unfortunately, they continued to use delay tactics to keep important matters from being discussed.

Not only did they stop any debate on the budget but they prevented government legislation from being passed. Like any group, the Legislature has rules of procedure. Those rules - known as Standing Orders - have been manipulated by the Conservative Party to halt all work. Among other tactics, these 20 members have introduced bills with long titles such as the one that named hundreds of water bodies in Ontario. These titles must be re-read by the Speaker and then by a Clerk.

Not only has valuable legislative time been lost but the disruption has cost you money.



Noel Duignan
Halton North
MPP
New Democratic Party

The Conservatives have been draining the public purse of over \$1 million per week - hardly appropriate action for a party whose leader calls himself a tax fighter.

On a more positive note, I received a letter from Elaine Ziembra, Minister of Citizenship with Responsibility for Human Rights, Disability Issues, Seniors' Issues and Race Relations, about the 1991 National Access Awareness Week which began on May 26th and continues until June 1st. This important undertaking is meant to highlight the achievements of persons with disabilities and the issues affecting their full participation in the social and economic life of our country. The week was conceived by Rick Hansen as a grassroots initiative of organizations of and for people with disabilities.

A provincial steering committee with representation from more than twenty organizations met to coordinate activities in communities throughout the province and the themes of transportation, housing, employment, recreation and education are being used again this year. I've been asked by the NAAW Committee of the local March of Dimes organization to help out with their event at the Milton, Mall this Friday.

The NAAW Committee has made plans to hold a fashion show at lunchtime displaying garments specially designed for

the physically challenged. I will be pushing wheelchairs and I hope that you will come out to see the show and view the displays set up by the participating agencies.

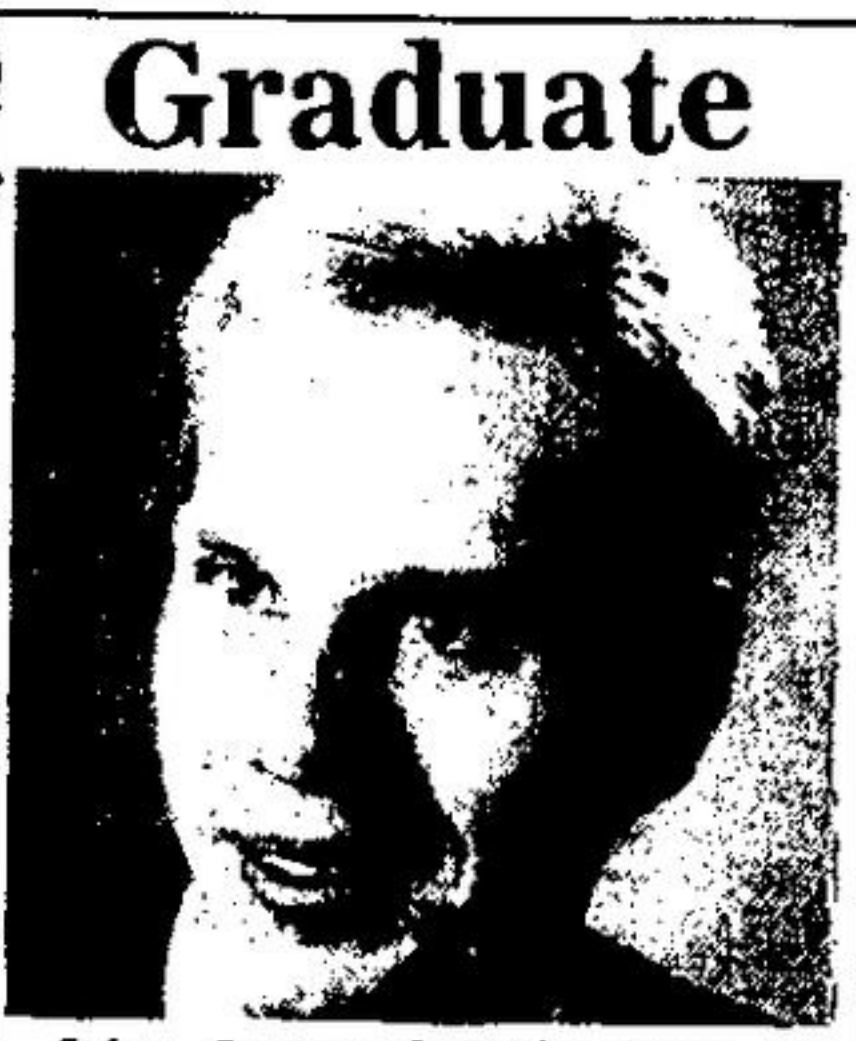
If you are interested in obtaining the Guide to Ontario Government Programs and Services for Persons with Disabilities, there are a few of these available at my Milton office or you might want to request a copy by calling

1-800-387-4456.

Ms. Ziembra also serves as Acting Minister Responsible for Women's Issues and in that capacity she announced the largest funding increase to date toward the prevention of violence against women. The funding will be aimed at strengthening community based services, improving law enforcement, and counteracting the myths and perceptions which allow violence

against women to continue.

Even conservative estimates show that one in four women is sexually assaulted in her lifetime and almost one in five Canadian men living with a wife or partner admits to using violence against her. If you are one of the many victims of violence, I urge you to call either the Sexual Assault crisis line at 875-1555 or the Halton Women's Place crisis line at 878-8555 for assistance.



Graduate

John, June and Cathy Lenz are proud to announce the graduation of their son and brother Andy from the University of Western Ontario with his L.L.B. (law).

He began articling on May 1 as a legal clerk at the Supreme Court of Canada in Ottawa for Mme. Justice L'Heureux Dube.

On June 22, he and Radka Kratky of London, Ontario, are to be married in Knox Church, Georgetown. They will be living in Ottawa after their wedding.

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