

Our MPP Reports

by Ted Arnott

MPP Wellington - Halton Hills



In our British parliamentary system, a minority government can be one of two things.

At best, a minority government can represent an opportunity for cooperation across party lines, with elected Members working together to get things done.

At their worst, minority governments can mean legislative grid-lock, and shrill, partisan bickering that never ends.

Let's hope the former, not the latter, becomes the pattern in the Ontario's 40th Provincial Parliament.

It all starts with the Premier.

The approach and tone he takes will largely determine the duration of the Parliament, and thus the date of the next provincial election.

He would do well to follow the lead of Premier William Davis, who led a successful minority Government which lasted four years, from 1977-81.

Bill Davis proved a minority Government can be made to work, on behalf of all the people. It can be done.

Ontario's current economic challenges make a renewed effort at cooperation an absolute necessity.

Last month in this space, I wrote about the immediate need for a comprehensive jobs plan for Ontario. I said that the Government should take care to ensure that it provides opportunities to all Ontarians, not just one group or region.

Our actions must work to strengthen confidence in our Province's future. If we are to do anything positive in this regard, people need to see that the Government understands the economic stress they are experiencing, and is trying to find ways to help.

On November 3 I met with municipal councillors to discuss

economic development and other local issues in Wellington-Halton Hills. I followed up by inviting the new Minister of Economic Development to visit our Riding, as a gesture of non-partisan cooperation.

The very next day, we learned that Ontario had lost more than 75,000 full time jobs in the month of October alone. It was reported that this number represented almost five times as many lost jobs as the other provinces combined.

Surely this underlines the urgency of the jobs issue, and the need for an immediate response.

With the resumption of the Legislature on Monday, the Speech from the Throne and the Fall Economic Statement, the Government provided a chance to chart a new course.

The McGuinty Government must show that it's holding the line on spending. It must look for ways to give families a break. And it must waste no more time in taking effective action to encourage job creation.

On behalf of the Province of Ontario, I want to express appreciation to the members of the Royal Canadian Legion for their outstanding work leading up to Remembrance Day.

This year, I was able to attend observances or services in Acton, Erin, Glen Williams, Georgetown, Salem, Fergus and Elora. I want to thank everyone who came out to show their appreciation to our Veterans, and to remember those who sacrificed so much for the freedoms we enjoy today. We shall never forget.

Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott welcomes your comments. He can be reached at 1-800-265-2366. His website address is www.tedarnottmpp.com



HOT HORN: Members of the Kurt Lund Jazz Trio helped set a party atmosphere at the Rotary Club of Acton's wine and cheese gala on Friday at the Town Hall Centre. – Ted Tyler photo

Give Respect - Get Respect 'Join The Movement'

The Give Respect ~ Get Respect Join The Movement Bullying Awareness and Prevention Campaign enters its second year.

Last fall, a collaborative partnership to address bullying was struck between Halton Police, Halton Region, Halton District School Board and Halton Catholic District School Board. At that time, high school students Region-wide were challenged to develop messages and calls to action on the issue.

In May, participants were invited to a gala event where all of the submissions were unveiled and four winners announced. At the time, students were told that the winning submissions would form part of an ongoing campaign to

reduce bullying.

This week, coinciding with National Bullying Awareness Week, the winning poster, entitled "Words Can Hurt But They Also Can Heal" began appearing as an advertisement on buses in Oakville, Milton and Burlington. The poster, produced by a Lester B. Pearson High School student, depicts a young girl crouched down in a depressed state in front of a brick wall. Several snapshots 69of the girl from left to right show her evolution to a standing position and finally a leap of triumph. The words written below her starting on the left are oppressive and cruel, and change to those of acceptance and encouragement. It illustrates the profound

impact words can have on one's psyche.

A second winning entry – a "Give Respect – Get Respect" video from Milton District High School - is now part of pre-show movie screenings at the Galaxy Cineplex theatre in Milton. The video talks about the evolving forms of bullying, increased awareness and a call to youth to take action to stop bullying.

The first place entry from the 2011 Give Respect Get Respect Join the Movement campaign was a calendar containing positive messaging and posters submitted by T. A. Blakelock High School. Each Thursday is designated "Wear BLUE stand up against bullying" and Mondays convey a weekly goal such as "Support a student who has been subjected to bullying" or "Avoid judgments based on how others dress or talk".

Finally, a video from

E.C. Drury powerfully depicts the impact of bullying, its link in some cases to suicide and a call for youth to "Close the Door on Bullying". Recognizing the impact the video could have on some youth, members from each school board, Halton Region and the Halton Regional Police Service are working on a package to ensure the video is implemented appropriately with specific guidelines and follow-up requirements.

The 2012 Give Respect Get Respect Join the Movement program will focus on the power of students to create a respectful positive environment to prevent bullying. The challenge has been extended to include all Halton students from grades six through 12. For more information on the program, visit www.haltonpolice.ca under Community Policing in the Youth section.

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