

EDITORIAL

With Paul Nolan

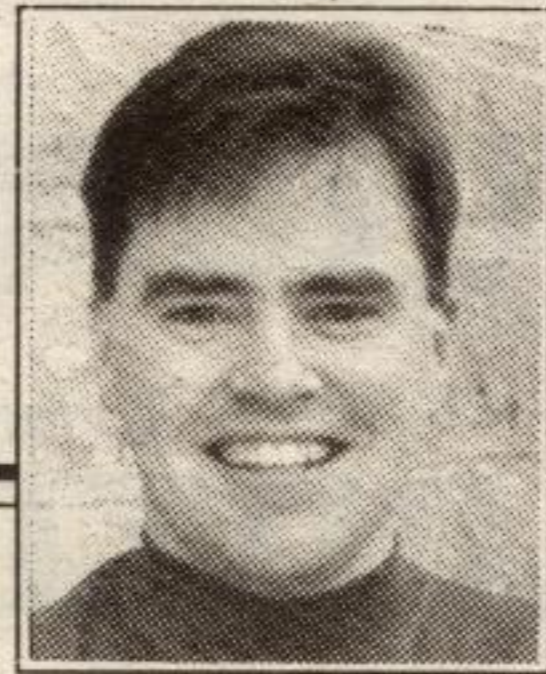


Photo-op! Photo-op!

While everyone's attention has been focussed on the federal election campaign, our MPP Noel Duignan hasn't disappeared, by any means.

We recently received the Halton North MPP's Fall 1993 "Riding Report." You know the Riding Report — it's that tabloid-size four-page newsletter that arrives in your mail periodically, filling you in on the great work the Ontario New Democratic Government has done since it took office in 1990.

(If you still can't place the Riding Report, it's the one printed with green ink and featuring a no-nonsense photo of the not-even-close-to-smiling Noel on the front page.)

If you haven't already sent the Riding Report to the blue box, run and grab it. Now open it up to Page 3 and check out the photo at the bottom right.

Can you believe it!? There's our man Noel getting up close and personal with none other than Toronto Maple Leaf superstar Doug Gilmour. Wow!

Above the photo is the headline "Noel with the Toronto Maple Leafs" and under the photo, the cutline begins "Noel Duignan meets with Doug Gilmour."

Come on, Noel — give it up! It looks to me like Gilmour is trying to hand back our MPP's pen after signing an autograph. It appears that Noel has that "primo photo-op" excited glint in his eyes (geez, he's almost smiling!) while Gilmour looks rather disinterested.

Please, please, please, won't someone assure me that our tax dollars are not being spent on this useless self-promotion! Especially after last week's bad news about the out-of-control Provincial deficit.

It makes you want to cry.

Last year Acton IGA received recognition as our town's top business. The Business of the Year award underlined a long list of community-building efforts by Dave and Mike Manes, along with the whole crew at the supermarket.

Here's another item to add to that list. As a local environmental project, the IGA will be planting 100 trees in our community in each of the next five years.

Dave Manes is hoping the Horticultural Society and local Boy Scouts might help plant the trees (at Fairview Cemetery this year), but if you can offer any additional assistance, call him at the IGA (853-1960) or Acton Bowl (853-0470).

Hats off to letter-writer Eileen Hutcheson! This week we're printing two of Eileen's *Letters to the Editor*. As the election campaign heats up, Eileen is switching into high gear.

It's great to see this citizen interest — and what better place to air comments than in your community newspaper?

LETTERS

Turner replies

To the Editor,

The Liberal candidate in Halton-Peel, Julian Reed, has criticized me for my actions regarding development issues in the community of Acton.

Those people who saw it might have been intrigued by Reed's allegations that Garth Turner "contributed to a state of turmoil in the community" and displayed "totally unacceptable conduct."

Reed alleged (without checking any facts) that I had information from a federal government agency which was important to Acton, and that I sat on this for two months waiting for an election call so I could take credit. As officials

from the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce said in a press conference last week, this is false and untrue.

The local Chamber asked me at a meeting on Aug. 31 to assist them by getting this information from the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Within a week I did that, receiving on Sept. 10 a memo the fisheries minister had signed (at my urging) on July 6. I released that information on Sept. 13. Julian Reed then issued his press release several days later, and has yet to respond to the Chamber's clear statement that he was wrong.

By the way, your readers might be interested in Mr. Reed's response at a recent all-candidates meeting in Acton when he was asked to comment on his actions and his failure to confirm facts: "Well, there's an election on," he said. There sure is. And truth is the first casualty.

Garth Turner, P.C. candidate



LETTERS

Justice reform now!

To the Editor,

A recent news item in the Toronto Star reminded us that prisoners will be able to vote for the first time in the upcoming federal election. This news came soon after a proposal to increase the wages of Provincial prisoners.

Isn't this just wonderful? Persons who commit crimes can live under protection and have a choice of whether or not to work. They get food, clothing, housing, education, health care, counselling and legal representation at the expense of the society they committed crimes against. They are paid a wage, and apparently can receive money from other sources while incarcerated. They are supplied with recreational facilities. Now, as an extra perk, they get to vote too. No wonder more and more people are taking up careers in crime.

It is a sad fact that prisons are presently better equipped for the comfort of inmates than hospitals are for that of their patients. This pandering to criminals is an insult to and an unnecessary burden on taxpayers! It is beyond any logic that a person who cannot or will not accept his basic responsibilities in society should have the same rights and better treatment than the law-abiding citizens who were his victims and who pay for his livelihood.

Politicians make excuse after excuse for the rise in crime. They quote faulty statistics and tell us

we are paranoid to fear for our safety. They say the common people just don't understand how the system works. That is probably true. How could intelligent people understand something that makes no sense?

Politicians say the role of the justice system is to rehabilitate, not to punish. Well, excuse me! I thought, as I'm sure many others do, that the role of the justice system was to protect society. We don't hear any success stories of rehabilitated criminals but we hear plenty about repeat offenders.

Politicians say that crime is the result of poverty. Nonsense! Crime is the result of weak character, misplaced values and lack of discipline, all of which can exist in any economic climate.

Politicians say there is no place in a civilized society for the death penalty. What makes them think that crime is more acceptable? Unfortunately, they will never know what the majority of Canadians think unless they ask. It is obvious they are not interested in the public's point of view.

With an election just around the corner, I wonder if the politicians who gave prisoners the right to vote would care to identify themselves.

Neither of the major parties nor the NDP have addressed justice system reform thus far in their campaigns. The prisoners' new eligibility to vote seems to indicate that they are, in fact, leaning toward even more permissiveness. I hope that all concerned voters will be watching closely for their party's policy on this issue.

Eileen Hutcheson,
Knox Avenue

WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR!

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