

Bill proposes protection from pesticides

Pesticides are used by many different people for many different uses—in agriculture, municipal services and by individual homeowners. They fight plant diseases, wipe out weeds in gardens and also repel insects that ravage crops. Like most public policy issues, there are people in favour of using pesticides and those who would like to ban their use. Pesticides are an issue for all Canadians and the residents of Halton riding in particular.

Much has changed since the Pest Control Products Act was enacted in 1969. Scientific knowledge about health and environmental protection has greatly expanded. Canadians are better informed and more concerned about risks to their health and the environment and they want a greater say in how such risks should be managed.

Pest management technology has become much more sophisticated. Major pesticide users are better educated and trained. Federal, provincial and territorial pesticide regulators operate with greater transparency and in closer co-operation with one another. International harmonization has become a fact of life in pest management regulation. So, to modernize the act, Health Minister Anne McLellan has introduced Bill C-53.

Bill C-53 seeks to safeguard Canadians, especially children, from the health and environmental risks posed by pesticides. It would help ensure a safe and abundant food supply and has three main objectives.

First, it would strengthen health and environmental protection by requiring special protection for infants and children, taking into account pesticide exposure from all sources including food and water, considering the cumulative effects of pesticides that act in the same way, and supporting pesti-

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REPORT



Julian Reed

cide risk reduction.

The second objective of the bill is to make the registration system more transparent, by establishing a public registry to allow access to the detailed evaluation reports that Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency prepares on registered pesticides, by allowing the public to view the test data on which these pesticide evaluations are based, and by allowing the PMRA to share scientific studies with provincial, territorial and international regulators.

Third, Bill C-53 would strengthen post registration control of pesticides by requiring pesticide companies to report adverse effects; making it mandatory to re-evaluate older pesticides 15 years after they are registered; providing the Minister of Health the authority to remove pesticides from the market if the data required for a re-evaluation or special review are not supplied; and providing for increased powers of inspection and higher maximum penalties of up to \$1 million for the most serious offences.

The bill is presently being studied by the Standing Committee on Health and can be accessed at www.parl.gc.ca I invite your comments on this or any other issue.

—Julian Reed is the MP for Halton

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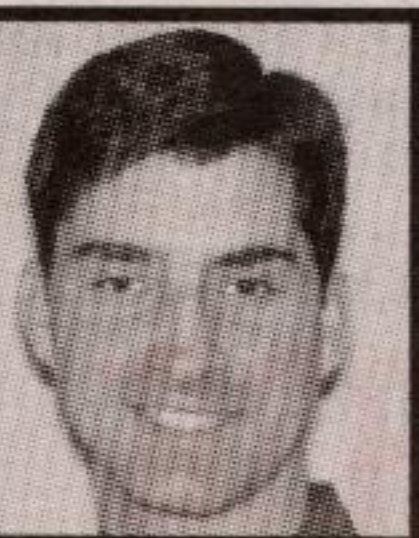
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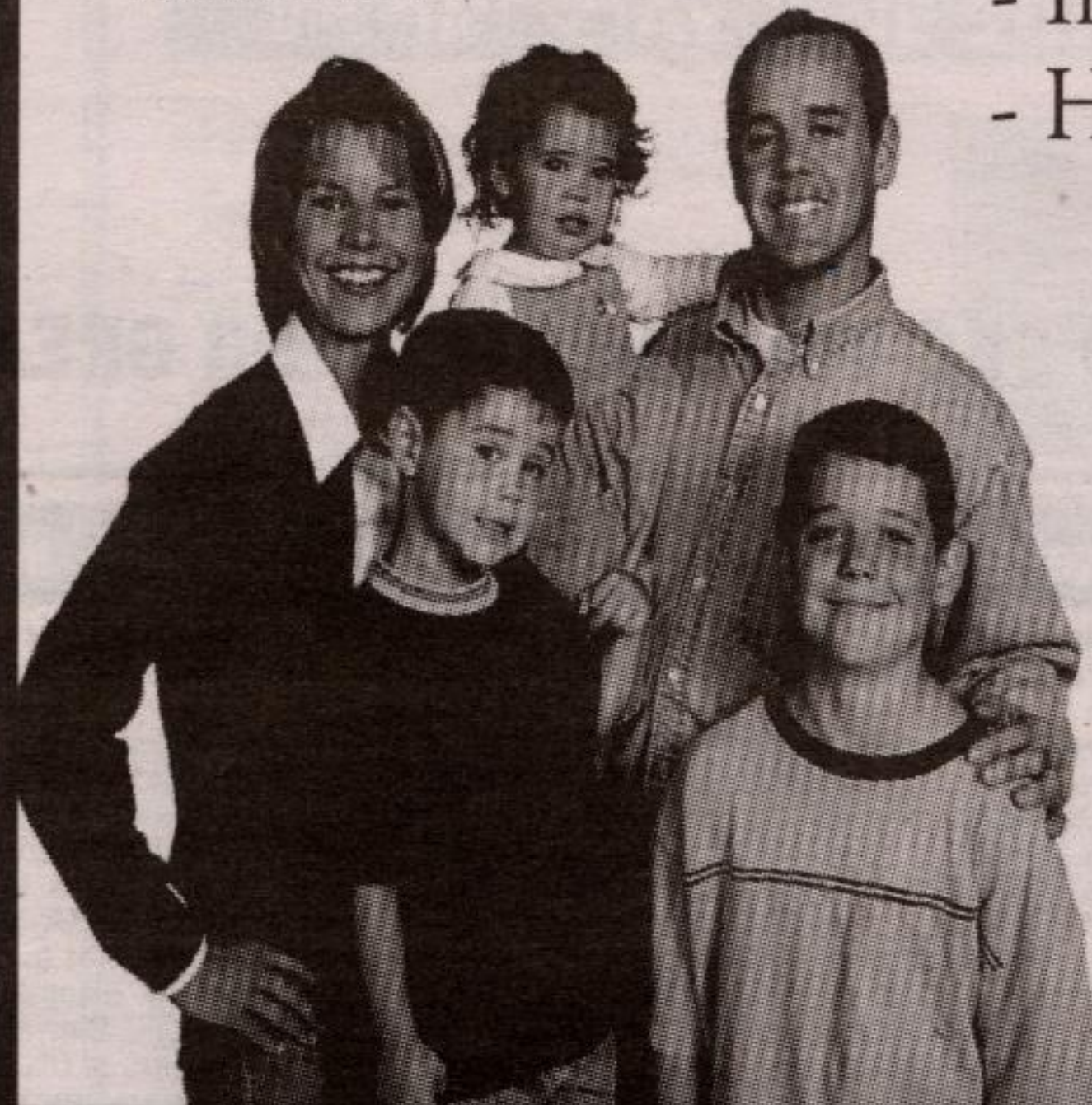
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