

Reflecting on the Tories' first 130 days

The summer is a good time to reflect on the state of our country.

I am proud to represent such a beautiful area of the country with the people that live in Wellington-Halton Hills. I am also equally proud to be part of a new government in Ottawa that is focused on getting things done. We have worked with the Opposition parties to find common ground to implement our policies. We have worked to restore trust and pride in the Government of Canada.

Part of restoring the trust that Canadians have in their government comes from doing what we said we would do during the election. It has now been four months since Canada's new government took office. During this time we have delivered four of our five priorities. We have kept the commitments we made to Canadians.

First, we brought forward new legislation aimed at ending a culture of entitlement and making sure that Canadians receive a full accounting of how their hard-earned tax dollars are spent. The Federal Accountability Act was the first piece of legislation brought forward by our government and passed in the House of Commons in June.

Second, we have cut the GST one per cent. It's no secret that Canadians are heavily taxed. That's why, in our first federal budget, our government brought forward almost \$20 billion in tax relief measures over the next two years. Reducing the GST to six per cent, providing a new \$1,000 Employment Credit, reducing taxes on private pension income for seniors and introducing a Transit Tax Credit are just some of these relief measures.

Third, to protect the Canadian way of life, we have introduced legislation to lengthen and toughen sentences to keep violent criminals and repeat offenders off our streets, ban house arrest for serious offenders, crack down on street racing, protect our

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youth against adult sexual predators and provide more police to tackle crime, especially white collar crime and terrorism. Canada has a reputation as a peaceful and law-abiding nation, where people can walk the streets of their community at night with no fear of becoming a statistic. We want to keep it this way.

Fourth, we are also keeping our promise to support families. Our government recognizes that each family is unique and parents must be able to make decisions that best meet the needs of their children, particularly in the area of child care. That is why we have put in place the Universal Childcare Benefit. Parents will receive, effective July 1, 2006, \$100 per month for each child under six to help meet the cost of providing child care. At the same time, our government is committed to working with community and non-profit organizations to create more child care spaces in Canada.

Another measure to help families, and one I am particularly proud of as Minister for Sport, is the Children's Fitness Tax Credit. This tax credit will take effect January 1, 2007 and will allow parents to claim up to \$500 per child a year in eligible fees for sports and fitness activities. We will release more details on this credit at some future date.

In addition to the five priorities, we have taken action to provide immediate assistance to farmers. I'm proud to say that we over-delivered on our com-

mitments to farmers. During the election we promised an extra \$500 million this year to assist farmers. We delivered an extra \$1.5 billion.

While we have accomplished much, the job is far from over. In the months to come, our government will build on these successes and seek to address other priorities that must be dealt with to improve the quality of life for all Canadians.

This fall, we will announce our "made in Canada" plan for a cleaner environment. We have already introduced significant, practical measures to reduce emissions, which include providing a transit tax credit to increase the use of public transit, and new public transit infrastructure investments. We are increasing the average renewable fuel content in gasoline and diesel fuel to five per cent by 2010 and working with industry to reduce sulphur in diesel, and the release of sulphur dioxide, metal pollutants, and mercury into the air. Moving forward, we will create a national Air Quality Health Index and introduce a Clean Air Act.

We will also continue our discussions with the provinces and territories as part of our efforts to restore the fiscal balance in Canada. In the coming months, we will deliver a fair national plan for federal fiscal transfers to the provinces, so that all Canadians, regardless of where they live, can move forward together. As Intergovernmental Affairs Minister, I will be involved in these discussions.

Just as we did in our first 130 days, we will set an ambitious agenda for the fall session of Parliament.

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Enjoy your summer with family and friends. I always appreciate hearing your ideas and concerns; we can be contacted at 1-866-878-5556 or chongm@parl.gc.ca

—Michael Chong is the MP for Wellington-Halton Hills

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The Last Five Years
by Jason Robert Brown
Directed by Danny Harvey
Aug 5, 11, 13, 24, 25, 26, 27

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by Vince Grittani & Rosalind Mills
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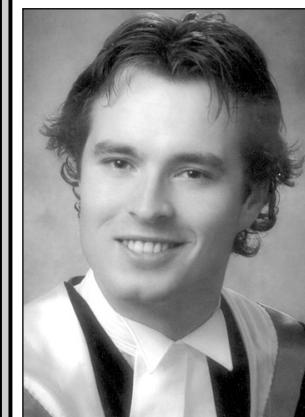
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Congratulations, Thomas, on being called to the Bar for the Province of Ontario on July 21, 2006. Thomas graduated from the Faculty of Law, Dalhousie University in 2005 following which he successfully completed a period of articles with Arnold, Foster Barristers and Solicitors, Georgetown, Ontario. Thomas will be joining Arnold, Foster as an associate lawyer.

Thomas M. Arnold,
Honours B. Com., LL.B

We are all very proud of you!



Congratulations, Cynthia, on graduating from McMaster University with an Honours Bachelor of Commerce degree and delivering the valedictorian address to the 2006 graduating class of the DeGroote School of Business. Cynthia has accepted a position in the marketing division of Reckitt Benckiser Inc., a U.K. based consumer packaged goods company with offices in Toronto.

Cynthia Arnold,
Honours B. Com.

We are all very proud of you!